

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 1873**

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## ERRATA.

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Page 91, second column, lines 34 to 40 inclusive, *read*—"I was very much struck, some months ago, on seeing a cartoon in *London Punch*, representing Mr. Gladstone as a steeplechaser taking a fence, '*Irish Education*'; and the legend was 'Will he *clear it*?' implying that if he did he would be a clever rider."

Page 158, second column, *omit* the last seven lines.

Page 194, second column, line 22 from bottom, *read* "preside" *for* "provide."

Page 225, second column, line 7, *read* "half-a-million" *for* "million."

Page 235, second column, following Colonial Treasurer's speech, *read* "Question put and passed."

Page 366, first column, line 32, *read* "Skinner" *for* "Sinclair."

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 4 June, 1873.

Adjournment—Police Magistrate at Taroom.—Address in Reply to Opening Speech.

## ADJOURNMENT—POLICE MAGISTRATE AT TAROOM.

Mr. Groom moved—

That this House do now adjourn.

He did so for the purpose of drawing the attention of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary to a matter which he conceived to be of very great importance. He desired to ask the honorable gentleman, whether his attention had been directed to a case reported in the *Brisbane Courier* newspaper of Monday last, in the proceedings of the District Court at Roma, because, if the facts as stated by Mr. Blakeney were true, the police magistrate of Taroom, Mr. Sadleir, was unfit any longer to hold his appointment. It would seem by the report that the police magistrate, some time in January last, appeared in a billiard room at Taroom in a state of intoxication—that he there most grossly insulted a person of the name of Murphy, and that a disgraceful scene occurred in which he was mixed up—that he afterwards deliberately rode out to the station of Mr. Hirst, a justice of the peace, and, according to an affidavit made before Mr. Blakeney, applied for a warrant for the arrest of Murphy, and that although no information was laid against that person, a warrant for assault was granted by Mr. Hirst. Murphy was arrested and locked up on two charges, and when brought before the bench was fined £5 in one case, that brought by a man named Moore; the charge preferred against Murphy by Mr. Sadleir, was met by a cross summons, which, however, the sergeant of the police court had refused to serve on Mr. Sadleir. Ultimately a charge of using obscene language was preferred against Murphy, under the Vagrant Act, and he was fined by Mr. Sadleir, £5 3s. 6d. Well, Murphy had hardly left the court, when he was again arrested, and again fined £5 for obscene language. Now, he (Mr. Groom) had made some inquiries, and found that the man Murphy did not bear the best character in the town of Taroom.

Mr. MILES: He is a respectable decent fellow.

Mr. GROOM: The honorable member said he was a respectable decent fellow; at all events other persons said he was very cantankerous. It appeared that Murphy appealed against the decision of Mr. Sadleir and the other magistrates, and that when the case came for hearing before Mr. Judge Blakeney, neither the police magistrate or the police sergeant made their appearance; and although it was proved that a summons had been served upon Mr. Sadleir, he showed the greatest contempt for it. The result was, that the judge had to decide the case *ex parte*, and to quash the conviction of Mr. Sadleir, with certain costs against him. Of course, in making these remarks, he (Mr. Groom) had been merely speaking from reports which appeared in the *Courier* newspaper, but the details of which he believed were perfectly true. If they were, then all he could say was, that Mr. Sadleir was unfit to hold the office of police magistrate; besides that, it looked strange that an order of the court should be set at defiance. He believed that when Mr. Sadleir was appointed to the position of police magistrate, great doubts were expressed as to his fitness, and Mr. Hodgson, the then Colonial Secretary, stated that he had appointed him as a matter of friendship—that Captain Sadleir had been a candidate for the district for which he stood, and had withdrawn in his favor, and that, consequently, he had given him the appointment, on the principle that "one good turn deserved another." He (Mr. Groom) thought it was quite time the attention of the Government was drawn to the conduct of some of the police magistrates, and that there should be inquiry into the efficiency of those gentlemen. In the first Parliament of Queensland, a resolution was passed that those gentlemen should undergo a strict examination, and if that had been followed out, many appointments would not have been made. He thought the case of a young gentleman recently appointed, who had to learn his duties under the able tutorship of the skilful police magistrate of Brisbane, Mr. Rawlins, was one in point, and that if the resolution had been acted upon, he would not have been appointed; indeed, judging from reports, that young gentleman was hardly up to the mark. However, with regard to Mr. Sadleir, he thought that any man behaving as he had done, was unfit to hold the office of police magistrate.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he most decidedly objected to enter into a discussion of any man's conduct from statements contained in newspaper reports. He did not consider that he would be the least justified in debating the character of any man, be he whom he might, simply on a mere newspaper report, and he therefore decidedly objected to enter into a discussion on the subject introduced by the honorable member. The honor-

able member for Leichhardt had that afternoon given notice that he intended to ask the Government a question on the subject, and he thought it would have been in much better taste, if the honorable member for Toowoomba had waited for an answer to that question, which would be given in due course on the following day.

Mr. GROOM rose to explain that he had not heard the notice given by the honorable member for Leichhardt, but he had gone to the House with his mind made up to ask the question.

Mr. STEPHENS said he also had not heard the notice of question given by the honorable member for the Leichhardt.

Mr. MILES said that he had taken a very active part in reference to the appointment of Mr. Sadleir, and had always most strongly condemned it. Since that appointment had been made he had been appealed to several times with reference to the conduct of the police magistrate, but he had declined to have anything to do with it, and had referred the persons to the member for the district. He hoped the Government would make a full inquiry into the matter, as he believed that Mr. Sadleir was a disgrace to the bench, and always would be.

The question was put and resolved in the negative.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY TO OPENING SPEECH—*Resumption of Debate.*

Mr. FERRETT said that, in rising to speak to the amendment of the honorable member for Ipswich on the motion of the honorable member for Clermont, he must commence by saying that he had been a little taken by surprise to hear such an amendment under such circumstances; but before he proceeded further, he must do the honorable member justice by saying that he had brought forward his amendment in a very temperate and much to be admired tone, and that he should feel very proud indeed, if, in all their debates, there was the same tone observed by honorable members on both sides of the House. It might be the case that the honorable member had been known by honorable members on either side of the House to speak in a more forcible manner; but he certainly thought that the speech of the honorable member was effective, even if he did not speak in his usual forcible style. Having said so much on that subject, he would go more generally to the matter of the amendment. It certainly did appear strange to him that, after what the honorable member had stated to his constituents on the occasion of his last election, as to the position he should take in that House, he should have taken one in every respect so different to what he then stated; but he supposed that as all was fair in love and war, so the honorable member considered he was justified in the course he had pursued. He would, however, have

much rather seen the honorable member more consistent; and if there was to be a new Ministry, he would have preferred seeing a little more consistency among the gentlemen who aspired to office. For his own part, he might speak of the honorable member as having known him for many years—privately, he could speak of him as a friend, and publicly he could also speak of him in a very high manner. The honorable member had, no doubt, held a very high position in the colony, and he would like to see him hold it again, but under different circumstances from the present. He would not like to see him hold the position he aspired to under the present circumstances, whatever his feelings might be at another time. There was a time for all things, and he did not believe that the present was the time for the honorable member to take the reins of government from those who now held them. He might say the same of some of the honorable member's friends; and he thought it was an unfortunate thing for the Opposition—such as they saw on the benches opposite—that they had not, before they commenced the present campaign, consulted each other as to their plans, and travelled together a little more. Success in most things was gained, first of all, from well matured plans, and he was very sorry to say that he had not often seen that carried out in that House; but that, if the plans had been agreed upon, they had not been carried out. There had been a great deal said by honorable members opposite which he certainly did not think it was worth his while to go into—there had been a great deal said to very little purpose, and he did not think that anything he said could have any effect upon the division that was to take place that evening, or that any further debate could have any benefit, except for the purpose of giving some honorable members opposite an opportunity of showing their powers of talking; whether those honorable members would talk for the benefit of the country was quite another thing. From what he had heard up to the present time, the talking of honorable gentlemen opposite had been, not with the object of benefiting the country, but only to further their individual aggrandisement. Certain charges had been made against the Ministry in the most vague manner possible; and he had thought that the compact body he saw on the Opposition benches on the first day of the session, would have, in some way, matured their plans, and made some substantial charges against the Government in such a way as must have carried weight with them. But, on the contrary, the way in which the charges had been made could not possibly carry any weight with them, and never would, in his opinion. Whether the Ministry would stand or fall he had no knowledge, but they certainly did not deserve to fall upon such very vague charges as had been made against them. If charges were to be made, let them be made fairly,

openly, and honestly, and let the Ministry have an opportunity of meeting them in the same manner; but he had heard nothing to warrant him in giving a vote against the Government—no charges had been made out. He was no blind follower of the present Government, nor had he ever been of any Ministry—he had his own ideas of what was right and what was wrong. In fact, he could himself have brought forward charges against the Government, and could have substantiated them too; but it was a question whether the nature of those charges was such as to have warranted him in bringing forward a vote of want of confidence in the Government, without knowing where he could replace them with better men. Was he to go over for the sake of getting a place on the other side? He should hope that he had something more at stake than ever to do such a silly thing. He had been often told that he had such and such a case against the Government, and that he ought to make it good. Well, he had a case against them, and he hoped to make it good, but the present was not the proper time to do so, as it was not such a case as would warrant him to assist in turning the Ministry out of office. If other honorable members in their wild wanderings had been misled, he hoped he should never be. With regard to the particular charges which had been brought against the present Government, one was mismanagement; but if there had been anything approaching to mismanagement on their part, he would ask whether those honorable members who were aspiring to occupy their places had not ever been charged with something of the same kind? If they had been, where then was the advantage of turning out bad men in order to let in worse? If it could be shown that there really was new blood in the case, and that there was a chance of that new blood being better for the country than those who had held office before them, there certainly would be something in the amendment. But on the present occasion, after sundry trials had been made, men of business had expressed their opinions on the floor of that House, that those aspiring to hold office were not the men who should be entrusted with it. In speeches made on occasions similar to the present one, it had been asked whether, in the event of the Government going out, there were honorable gentlemen opposite to take their places? That was a question which had been asked by no less an authority than his honorable colleague, Mr. Thorn. It struck him that there were just the same five or six honorable members aspiring to office; and on several occasions he had heard his honorable colleague speak in the strongest terms against those gentlemen—particularly strong as regarded the honorable member, Mr. Macalister; particularly strong as regarded the honorable member for South Brisbane, and of his conduct whilst Treasurer, and many other matters. The honorable

member, Mr. Thorn, had apparently quite forgotten the statements he had made, not only in that House, but also elsewhere, in regard to the honorable member for Ipswich, and to those who were with him in office, and yet the honorable member was now found—where? Why, in the ranks of that honorable member. He was not aware that honorable members opposite had done anything to show their fitness to occupy the Treasury Benches. The honorable member for Ipswich had told the House a great deal about the Government doing wrong, but had he told them a single thing that the honorable members opposite had done right? He was sorry to have to speak of his colleague in any harsh way, but if he (Mr. Ferrett) had thought proper to go over to an Opposition when he had been returned by constituents pledged to the Government of the day, he thought he should have considered it right to go before his constituents and consult them before he took so decisive a step. But, instead of doing that, the honorable member had been away in East Moreton. That honorable member had also made a statement which he (Mr. Ferrett) was sorry to say did not quite accord with facts. He stated that he had brought a matter under the notice of the honorable Minister for Works, but that when it was found which way he was going to vote in the House, he received a reply not at all satisfactory. Now, according to a document which he held in his hand, he found that the honorable Minister for Works was applied to before anybody in that House knew which way the honorable member was going to vote—he thought he knew as soon as anyone on which side the honorable member intended to vote. The greatest point the honorable member had made for voting against the Government was, so far as he could understand, the Railway Act passed last session. Now that Act was an amendment on the former Railway Act, and was introduced for the purpose of authorising the Government to deal with lands to be resumed for railway purposes, in a very different way to what was the case before. He had objected to such a measure being passed, notwithstanding the way in which the matter had been put to him by the honorable Minister for Works. It so happened that he was inadvertently absent from the House when that measure was before it, or he would most strenuously have opposed it. Not so, however, the honorable member his colleague, who was in the House and actually countenanced it, and was, moreover, a supporter at the present time of those very members of the Opposition who assisted the honorable Minister for Works in passing it. If the honorable member had gone out of the House and induced others to do so, the Bill could not have been passed without the assistance of the Opposition; and yet now he had gone over to support the very men who helped to pass it. He would like to understand how

the honorable member could bring forward such a charge without showing that he was guilty of the very act with which he charged the Government; and yet he now wished to vote out the Government. If the honorable member thought that such an excuse as he had made would go down with such a constituency as he represented, he would find himself very much mistaken. There was a time when he thought better of his honorable friend, but that time was now passed. Then the honorable member had gone into another little affair—the little arrangement about the bridge at the Seventeen-mile Rocks. Now he (Mr. Ferrett) certainly joined the honorable member in his objections there, as he did not see the necessity of another bridge; but even that difference of opinion did not warrant him in now joining in a vote of want of confidence in the Government. He did not suppose the Ministry were altogether wedded to the bridge there, or even that they were wedded to that very Act which had passed in such an extraordinary way; and if the honorable member had done his duty, instead of acting as he had done, he would have given notice of motion to amend the Act of which he so much complained.

Mr. THORN did not think the honorable member understood what he was talking about—he was confounding one Bill with another.

Mr. FERRETT must ask the protection of the House, as he was not aware that he was in the habit of interrupting either him or any other member, whether voting against him or not. The honorable member, however, had thought proper to interrupt him, and that would induce him to go a little further. There was an old saying, that the more dirty water was stirred the more annoying it became; and if the honorable member would stir up what was not perfectly clean, he supposed some of the dirt would come to the surface. He had an object in standing up to address the House, as much so as his honorable colleague had an object in crossing over to the Opposition. He supposed there was no objection to his making use of the words used by the honorable member in a public place, although he would be the last to impute any motives. He had heard the honorable member say that he had remained on the Government side of the House out of office long enough, and that he would not any longer support any Ministry of which he was not a member. He now stood on the floor of the House and challenged the honorable member to deny making such a statement.

Mr. THORN: I deny it.

Mr. FERRETT was pleased to hear the honorable member deny it, as it showed how much the honorable member's word was worth; his denial had convinced him of what his assertion was worth. He could only hope that the honorable member's constituents would be as lenient with him as he had

been; but he could not forget the fact that he had known the honorable member for a very long time, and ought, therefore, to be a little merciful; otherwise he would have shown, in much stronger terms, the honorable member's sayings and doings. He had heard honorable members speak of the capacities for business of those honorable gentlemen who now aspired to office—in fact, he had heard the honorable member do so; but what could he think of the honorable member's own ability when he had stated, on the previous day, that he knew as much law as both the Attorney-General and the Minister for Lands?

Mr. THORN: That would not be much.

Mr. FERRETT: He had no doubt the honorable member thought so, and, no doubt, he thought equally highly of himself and his position in every other sense—what it might be he could not say, but he did not think the honorable member had been quite as careful as he should have been. The honorable member might have allowed little things to pass in connection with the Government, but he should not have allowed the big things to pass in connection with his own party. When he came to review the replies which had been made by honorable members on the Government side of the House to the speeches of honorable gentlemen opposite, he must say they had been most able; the speech of the honorable member for Western Downs, for instance, ought to have been most convincing. He thought that the charges which had been made against the honorable Minister for Lands had been most fully met by the statement of that honorable member. He thought the honorable gentleman had acquitted himself in a way in which he would like, some day, to hear his honorable friend, Mr. Thorn, acquit himself. He hoped also that, some day, the honorable member would be able to master his position as well as the honorable Minister for Works had mastered his, for there was no question that the manner in which the Works Department was carried out showed that it was in able hands. If for the benefit of the country it could be placed in more able hands, then so much the better. Of the other departments he really knew very little about; but he did know something about the Works, having very often occasion to go over them. Were there some specific charges against the Minister for Lands, and were they to come to his (Mr. Ferrett's) ears, he would be the first to ask that they should be investigated; but although he had heard of his honorable colleague not doing something, he had never heard of the honorable Minister for Lands doing wrong. There were at the present time very grave reasons indeed why the present Government should have the confidence of the country, and also very grave reasons indeed why they should not go out of office. It might be desirable sometimes to have a change, but, as he had said before, the present was not the time. If

there was to be a change, the time for it was after a new House was returned. He might not then be a member, but, for the benefit of the country in which he had spent so many years, he would like to see things carried on in somewhat the same style as they had been by the existing Government for some time. Honorable members on his side of the House had been called a squatting party; but he had not been returned by a squatting constituency; and, in regard to his personal connection with squatting, no one could ever say that he had in any way mixed it up with politics. He trusted that, whatever the result of the debate would be, the Government, which had gained throughout the Australias such credit, would be allowed to finish the present Parliament—whether they were allowed to hold office in the next Parliament or not, mattered very little to him; but he hoped they would not have a worse one. If it should happen that he was not again returned to the House, he only hoped that those honorable members who talked so much against a class Government and its supporters would find others enter the House as disinterested as he had been in all matters of business; and who would look after the interests of their constituencies as well and as conscientiously as he had done, and, as he believed, to their satisfaction, inasmuch as he had never met one who had accused him of a dereliction of duty. He had merely mentioned that to show that he was not, what some honorable members opposite would designate him, a party to a common contract to carry out what was called squatting government. With regard to what had been shadowed forth by the Opposition side of the House, as their policy, he would really like to know what their policy was. So far as he could find out, it was simply a desire to hold office. That was their determination at any price—that was their determination at any cost. Should those honorable members succeed in putting out the Government, he was very much afraid that they would see the most incompetent men on the Opposition benches get into office; for the most incompetent men, as a rule, were always the most eager to obtain it. He would leave it to the House and to the country, to see whether that would not be the case, should the attempt to turn out the present Government be successful. But whenever a new Government was formed from honorable members opposite, he trusted that whoever had the responsibility of forming it, would take care that it was composed of men who had succeeded in some path of life or other, and not of men who had failed in everything.

Mr. THORNTON said he should not feel justified in giving his vote on the present important occasion, if he did not give some expression to the opinions he entertained on the various topics which had been alluded to by different speakers on both sides of the House, and also upon the want of policy by

the Government. Now, if the present Government had met the House with a decided programme, there would have been no difficulty for every honorable member to decide whether he could support them or not; but the fact was, that the Government had come down to that House, wanting the Opposition to enunciate a policy for them. There was nothing whatever in the Speech from the Throne to go upon, or to support any Ministry upon. Various subjects had been very fully gone into by honorable members on both sides, but he would like to make one remark in regard to the railway. Now, it appeared to him regarding that question, that the Government had attempted to throw down an apple of discord, with the view of dividing the Brisbane members and splitting the vote on his side of the House. The Government were well aware that it would make no difference to any southern or western member on which side of the river the railway went, but that it must cross the river there was no doubt, as there was an immense amount of wealth in the southern portion of the colony, which would add considerably to the revenue when the railway was taken to the river bank, and facilities offered for the shipment of the various products, wool, hides, tallow, &c., from the trucks direct to the vessel. There was also the tin-mining interest, which was of very great importance indeed, and would be very materially assisted by the railway going on the river, no matter where, so long as it went to a Government wharf. The return from the tin mines had increased to an immense extent, especially in the portion of the district he represented, and he would like to know what the Government had done for it—not only as a return for the tin, but also for the value of the land which had been taken up. He did not believe that any portion of the colony had been so badly treated—and systematically so; and for the simple reason that the constituency had elected him in opposition to the Government. There had, however, been no inconsistency in his conduct since he entered the House in 1869; he had always followed the one course, and that he always intended to do. Again, the abuse which went on in various Government departments, when first the tin discoveries were made, were known to be something deplorable; and as an instance of that, he might mention that a brother-in-law of the present Minister for Works had been the first to put the original discoverer of tin out of his claim, whether by making use of any departmental knowledge placed at his disposal, he (Mr. Thornton) could not say; but it looked very much like it when a special train went up with the gentleman in question and some others, and that they had all the necessary papers. He was happy to say that, in his case, the claim afterwards turned out a duffer. There was also another industry which had lately been developed in Southern Queensland, namely—

copper. The public knew very little of it as yet, although there was an area of forty miles which was teeming with ore as rich as any found in Northern Queensland. He believed it only required the fostering care of Government to make it rise into an industry of great importance. He thought that with the facilities for smelting both tin and copper which was afforded by the coal in the district, which was pronounced by some authorities to be second in quality to none in the world, Southern Queensland was destined to take its stand, and rival the North in the extent of her mineral resources. Not that he would like to see any rivalry between the North and South, but both should march onward hand in hand in the path of progress, and should be treated by the Government with equal fair play. Had the Government given equal fair play to those industries in all parts of the country, and not tampered with them, he would have been happy to support them on the present occasion; but they had not done so, and neither he or his constituents would ever support them until they did so. He had heard with much satisfaction the amendment moved by the honorable member for Ipswich, and he fully endorsed it. It was one which, for its sagacity, had surprised the Government, and he believed they had never anticipated it. He should vote against the Government, and for the amendment.

Mr. GRAHAM said that when he proposed the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, he was not of course aware that an amendment would have been moved; and if at that time, judging the Government from the general tenor of their past conduct, he felt that he was able to give them his confidence, he was sure that he could say *a fortiori*, that he did so more fully now; for more worthless and paltry charges brought forward against a Government he had never heard. He had not, in fact, heard a single charge made against them that was worthy of an occasion like the present. He had heard the usual little charges brought against the Government at the opening of the debate each day, but there had been no distinct issue upon which honorable members should be called upon to vote. He might say, also, with the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Ferrett, that he had seen with some surprise certain honorable members who had supported the Government through the whole of last session, walk across to the other side of the House, and he was perfectly at a loss to understand why they had acted in that way. He had entered the House to support the Government with moderate support, whilst the two honorable members who had been their staunchest supporters had suddenly left them. There was not an honorable member who had been a stauncher supporter than the honorable and senior member for West Moreton, or a more bitter opponent of the Opposition; and he would ask that honorable member, who was renowned for his educational

endowments, his literary ability, and his splendid memory, to remember the terms in which he had spoken of his present colleagues last session. He had no doubt the speech of the honorable member on the previous evening, when he denounced in such vigorous terms the Railway Amendment Act, gave a clue to his opposition. The honorable member had mentioned that Act as one introduced for the purposes of corruption, and for the robbery of property holders; but he (Mr. Graham) thought it was a measure very properly carried, as it was meant for the protection of that class against unjust claims. However, the honorable member had gone, and there was an end of it. The only charge against the Government was, that they had no policy—that was the only one worth replying to: now he did not wish to go over the grounds which had been gone over by speakers who had preceded him; but he must say, that it had been abundantly proved that the Government had a policy, which had been eminently advantageous to the country. How could it be said that they had no policy, when they had initiated a completely new system of railway construction; which, perhaps, was not quite satisfactory to every honorable member, and he did not pretend to be sufficiently acquainted with railways to say whether it was satisfactory or not; but he believed it was a complete revolution of all railway systems in the Australian colonies, and perhaps in the world; and that in the North it would have the effect of giving a much longer line for less money, than the old system of large and expensive contracts. Now, he might contrast the policy of the present Government in respect to the construction of railways, with the policy of the honorable member for Ipswich, who had moved the amendment. The policy of that honorable gentleman, when he was in office, seemed to be one of making promises, and giving pledges which he never intended to fulfil. The honorable member, when he held the office of Minister for Lands and Works, pledged himself to the construction of certain railway works, but he failed to carry out the pledges he gave to their full extent. The honorable member commenced the southern line at Ipswich, and had it subsequently extended to Warwick, but he did not carry the completion of the line to Brisbane. Then, again, as to the Northern railway works, he left them in an altogether incomplete state. The honorable gentleman had only carried out his promise as to the Northern railway, to an extent that, while it involved a large expenditure, was comparatively useless. It extended from Rockhampton to Westwood, a distance of only about twenty miles. Now, he contended that if the honorable member had completed the northern line to the Dawson, as was originally proposed, instead of carrying out the line to Warwick, they would have now been in a far better position than they were. Of course he (Mr. Graham)



did not refer to the present importance of the Warwick line—an importance which it had obtained altogether from the discovery of the tin mines in the Stanthorpe District—for at the time the construction of the Warwick line was proceeded with, nothing whatever was known about the tin mines. Now, the railway policy of the present Government was, that the extension of the northern and the southern line should be proceeded with simultaneously. Then as to the land question, the policy of the present Government was such as, he believed, would largely conduce to the taking up of lands in the unsettled districts; and he believed that during the whole time the honorable member for Ipswich held the office of Minister for Lands and Works, not one acre of land could be taken up for permanent settlement in the unsettled districts. He had long been of opinion that the land system under the Act of 1863 was the best system they had ever had, and if the Act that was passed in that year had been amended in a few trifling particulars, there would have been none of the dummymg that had taken place under more recent Acts, and none of the land fights they had heard so much about lately, and which had placed the land question in a most unsatisfactory state. Now, he would ask honorable members to contrast the land policy of the honorable member for Ipswich, when he was in office, with the land policy of the present Government—the policy which had been inaugurated by the honorable the Minister for Lands, under the Act of 1868. He did not know if that Act gave him the power of proclaiming agricultural reserves in connection with all the inland towns in the colony, but he had done so.

Mr. MILES: Not all.

Mr. GRAHAM: Well, he spoke of the case of Springsure, and that of other townships he knew about, and he supposed that other towns had not obtained reserves because they had not applied for them. Now that was a policy which was attended with the best effects in the district which he had the honor to represent. The honorable gentleman at the head of the Lands Department had not made it his object to throw open lands that would be snapped up by capitalists, but to throw open only such lands as would be taken up by those who intended to settle upon them. Now that was a course of policy by which agricultural settlement would take place around the centres of population, instead of being scattered about in isolated patches, as it would be under the Homesteads Areas Act of last session. Under the policy of the present Government agricultural settlement would radiate around the towns of the colony, and the interests of both would thus increase together, and they would be mutually improved by each other. Then, the present Government had also a policy in regard to the matter of dummymg, of which they had heard so much of late. He remembered that the

subject was referred to last session, and the Government informed the House that they would act entirely on the defensive; and he had never heard any honorable member say anything against it.

Mr. LILLEY: He had himself brought in a Bill on the subject, and it was printed.

Mr. GRAHAM: Well, he had heard of the Bill, but though he had asked for it he had never seen it. However, it was for the House now to consider the action that had been taken by the honorable the Minister for Lands in respect to this question; and in doing so they ought not to deal with any little errors that might have occurred in the carrying out of the business of the office, but should consider whether the honorable gentleman had, in all matters with which he had had to deal, acted corruptly or in good faith; and if the House found that he had acted corruptly they ought by all means to turn him out of office at once. A great deal had been said as to the case of Mr. Davenport, but he did not see that the charges which had been preferred against the honorable the Minister for Lands in respect to that case had been at all substantiated. But Mr. Davenport was not the only gentleman who had been prosecuted by the Government. There was also Mr. Williams, a large railway contractor. That gentleman made a claim against the Government for something between £20,000 and £30,000. Now the Government had been twitted with not having got rid of the claim of Mr. Williams as easily as they might have done, by the payment of £2,000 or £3,000, which it had been asserted Mr. Williams would have accepted in settlement of his claim. Well, he could not agree in that view of the case, for he could not believe in the Government paying any sum, however small, for the purpose of settling a claim which they did not believe to be well founded. He considered that the Government had taken a very proper course in respect to that case, and that the honorable the Minister for Works deserved the approbation of the Opposition, rather than their condemnation, in resisting the claim. If the Government had consented to pay a sum of £2,000 or £3,000 in satisfaction of the claim made by Mr. Williams while they considered it to be unjust, they would have placed themselves in a position somewhat similar to that of compounding a felony. If any man made a claim upon the Government, and a claim which the Government considered to be unjust, it would be their duty, on behalf of the public, to refuse to pay it. Then, as to the education question, he believed it was one upon which the Government were not agreed. But it was stated, the other night, by the honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, that the education question was one which ought not to be dealt with by the House as a party question; and, taking that as the opinion of honorable members of the Opposition on the

subject, it must, he thought, be admitted that the charge against the Government in respect to their policy in regard to that question altogether fell to the ground. He had carefully given his attention to the charges that had been made against the Government, and he must say that, with the exception of the one that the Government had not enunciated any policy, he had been unable to discover a single charge that justified the present debate. There might have been some errors committed by the Government, but he could not see that there was anything in their conduct that would justify the House in passing a vote of want of confidence in them. From all that he could gather out of doors as to their administration, or from the speeches of honorable members who had addressed the House, he must confess that he was unable to see anything that would justify the House in agreeing to the amendment which had been proposed by the honorable member for Ipswich. He must say that he considered it would be highly detrimental to the best interests of the colony if they were, at such a crisis as they had now reached in the prosperity of the colony, to come to any determination, from merely party feeling, which would have the effect of bringing about a change of Ministry. As to the railway policy which had been adopted by the present Government, he believed, if it should turn out as successful as it was expected it would, that in a few years hence they would have extensive railways in progress throughout the whole colony. From a personal inspection of the works now in progress, he was quite satisfied as to their substantial nature, and from all he could hear and see he believed that, should matters go on smoothly, the whole of the works would be completed in a very short time. He had been told by the engineers that, now they had got everything in working order, and had got the men upon the ground who understood the construction of the works, the expense of carrying them out would be increased by at least ten per cent. if there was to be even so much as a month's delay. He must say that it seemed quite clear to him that the sole question now at issue was one as to who should have the management of the coming elections. He thought that was the real question at issue, and no doubt it was one of very considerable importance, viewing it in a party light; but he would nevertheless call upon honorable members opposite to consider seriously whether, under all circumstances, it would not be better to leave the question of a change of Ministry alone until they had a new House elected?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, I hardly expected that I would have to address the House at so early a portion of the afternoon, but some honorable members opposite may say that I am never pleased as to the time I should have to address the House, and therefore, the less I may say on that point the

better. However, I may say that I thought some honorable members opposite would have replied to the speeches that have been made by honorable members on the Government side of the House, and that the debate would have been carried on in the usual style, by honorable members addressing the House from each side, in turn. But as it seems that honorable members opposite are not disposed to pursue that course, I shall endeavor to make out the best case I can. Now, I may remark, in the first place, that exception has been taken to the way I saw fit to conduct the business of the House last week; and great stress has been laid by honorable members opposite, and by the newspapers that were in the interest of the Opposition, upon the fact that the Government were afraid to meet the House. Now, I will inform honorable members that I had a perfect right to reserve to myself the right, as leader of the House, to decide as to the way I would conduct the business of the House; and I maintain that I was perfectly justified in the course I took last week, in not making a House when it did not suit my purpose, and it would not have suited my tactics, to do so. I have always maintained, and will continue to maintain, that the conduct of the Opposition, last session, in obstructing the business of the House, in the way they did, by endeavoring, while in a minority, to force the Government, that had a majority, to accept their measures, was altogether unconstitutional; but the fact of the leader of the House refusing to go on with the business of the country till his reserves came up, was a very different matter indeed. Now, I was quite well aware last week that one, if not more, of the supporters of the Government was coming up to my assistance, and I should, I think, have been a very bad politician indeed if I had allowed the question to go to a division before those reserves arrived. I therefore maintain that I was perfectly justified in the course I adopted last week. I have heard a great many speeches made by honorable members opposite since the House met last week, but it would really be something like fighting with mosquitoes to try and answer them. One might slap right and left and kill them by the dozen, but hundreds more would come to the funeral. Now, I must say that all the charges that have been brought against the Government are of the smallest possible character, and not any one of them, or all of them put together, would amount to such a charge as would be sufficient to justify the House in passing a vote of want of confidence in the Government. In the first place, the Ministry were charged by the honorable member for East Moreton with having forfeited the confidence of the House and the country, for not prosecuting one of the leading merchants of the town, because of a breach of the Customs regulations in connection with the importation of certain goods on his account. Now, I would ask the House

to say whether, supposing the party referred to had been as guilty as could be, and that the Government had refrained from prosecuting him, that would be a sufficient reason for turning the Government out of office? But the Government were fully satisfied by the evidence that was brought before them, that the merchant referred to, and who I must say had, with very bad taste on the part of the honorable member for East Moreton, been personally named, and I may, therefore, have no hesitation in again mentioning the name of Mr. Donkin—the Government, I say, were perfectly satisfied by the evidence that was placed before them, that Mr. Donkin was as innocent of the charge of smuggling as I was; and therefore, I maintain, the Government would not have done their duty if they had hesitated for one moment in relieving Mr. Donkin from everything like even complicity in the matter. The whole of the goods were forfeited, and that, in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, was as much as the Government could do. Now, I maintain, that there is nothing whatever in that charge; and I am perfectly satisfied that any honorable member, on going over the papers on the subject, could not fail to come to the same conclusion as I have come to. But even if the Government had committed a mistake in respect to that matter, would that be a sufficient reason for turning them out of office? Now, another awful charge has been made against me by the honorable member for East Moreton, and that is, that I sold some sugar on the part of the Government without passing it through the hands of an auctioneer. That, in the opinion of the honorable member, seemed to be a very serious matter indeed; and I confess that I actually did sell some sugar on the part of the Government without passing it through the hands of an auctioneer, and if that was such a sin that the Government ought to be expelled from office for it, certainly, by all means, let them be expelled. But the Government had a good reason for selling the sugar in the way they did. We had previously tried to sell sugar by auction, but when it became known that it was the property of the Government, everyone thought he might try and make some nice pickings out of it, and the consequence was, that the price offered for it did not amount to more than about a third of its value, and it was, consequently, withdrawn from public sale. Now, I instructed the Colonial Storekeeper afterwards to go round amongst the merchants of the city and get tenders for our sugar, and sell it for the highest price he could get, and he did so, and that was why the sugar was sold privately, and not by auction; and if that was a high and mighty crime, the Government was certainly guilty of it. Another charge that has been made against us is, that we sent a telegram to the honorable member for Rockhampton with respect to the extension of the Northern

Railway, with the view of securing his vote on the side of the Ministry. Now, I can inform honorable members that we did nothing of the kind, and that it has never been the practice of the present Ministry to send false telegrams to any one with the view of securing their votes. Then we were told that we were not worthy of the confidence of the House, because we did not go in a sort of a hole-and-corner way and endeavor by a bribe to purchase the abstinence of Mr. Williams from a lawsuit. Now, that charge meant neither more nor less than this, that the Government had not offered Mr. Williams two or three thousand pounds to forego his claim against them for thirty thousand pounds; but I can tell the House that the Government never had such an offer from Mr. Williams; and I do not think that anyone who knows Mr. Williams would give him credit for being such a fool as to make any such offer, if he thought he had good grounds for his claim against the Government. Now, as Premier, I took an active part with the honorable the Minister for Works in all the transactions with Mr. Williams in respect to his claim, and I must say that I never heard anything about an offer to settle it for two or three thousand pounds.

**AN HONORABLE MEMBER:** The honorable the Minister for Works, in the course of his speech last night, said that an offer of that kind was made by Mr. Williams.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** No. The honorable member must have mistaken what was said by the honorable the Minister for Works. What my honorable colleague stated was, that he had read of such an offer having been made. Now, there was another serious charge made against the Government by the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thorn, who, but only for the sake of his vote, I am sorry not to see on this side of the House, because if ever there was one nuisance greater than another, that any Ministry had to put up with, it was that of the honorable member. The honorable member was perpetually trying to put the Premier or some other member of the Ministry up to some little dodge or another, and I can assure the House that the honorable member would have brought me into very serious disgrace long ago, if I had been weak enough to listen to his suggestions. In fact, only but for the sake of his vote, I am delighted to have got rid of the honorable member. If he should be a member of the next or any subsequent Ministry, I can only say that I wish his colleagues luck of him; for if he does not bring them to grief, I shall be very much astonished. Personally, the honorable member might be a very good fellow enough, but he does not come up to my ideas as to what is required of a politician. Now, I can assure the House that the honorable member is a most artful dodger, and that he evinces great ability in that respect. I certainly hope, for the good of the country,

that if the honorable member ever becomes a member of any Ministry, he will not be made Minister for Education, for a worse position for him could not possibly be selected. The honorable member gave the House to understand, last night, that he knew more law than the honorable the Attorney-General, or than the honorable member now sitting next to him. Well, if he should be appointed to the office of Attorney-General, he might not do much harm, because he would have an able bar to assist him, but it is something too dreadful to contemplate, that he might possibly become a Minister for Education. Another of the charges which had been brought against the Ministry by the honorable member, related to the revision of the electoral rolls. Now, it is scarcely necessary for me to explain to honorable members, and especially to those who have had experience in the matter, that the Government has nothing whatever to do with the revision of the rolls. That is a duty that rests altogether with the magistrates of the colony; and there is no subject, I believe, upon which the people of the colony at large, and upon which I myself would be more ready to find fault with any Government, or with the Colonial Secretary, or any other member of any Ministry, than that any attempt should be made by them to interfere with the revision of the rolls. It was altogether unjust to bring it as a charge against the Government, that the electoral rolls had, through their interference, been unfairly revised. It has been made a particular charge against the Government in the matter of the revision of the rolls, that they had telegraphed to the clerks of petty sessions not to allow any claims that might be sent to them after the 31st of March. Now, I must confess that I am not aware that the Government or any member of it has a right to break the law, more than any other member of the community; and it is fixed by Act of Parliament that all claims for registration should be sent in not later than the 31st of March. Honorable members would therefore see for themselves how unjust it was to bring such a charge against the Government, and especially a charge that amounted to this, that they had been guilty of doing an illegal act. Now, as to the withdrawal of the criminal jurisdiction of the Court of Roma, the course the Government had pursued might appear to those who were not acquainted with all the particulars, to have been very harsh indeed; and if the criminal jurisdiction of the Court had been withdrawn because of one solitary instance of a conviction for cattle-stealing not having been obtained, I admit it would have been a very harsh and unjust proceeding. But when there was this fact, that it had been found to be almost impossible to obtain a conviction for horse or cattle stealing in the Roma Court; and when it had been reported, not only by the judge of the court, but also by the magistrates, that trial by jury

for cattle-stealing in the district was almost a farce, I think it will be admitted that the Government has not acted harshly in the matter, and that it was full time the inhabitants of the district should be brought to know that they would not be allowed with impunity to trifle with the administration of justice. Now, the honorable member for Toowoomba had in his usual style brought a number of sweeping charges against the magistrates before whom declarations had to be made by persons who wished to register their votes; but I have no hesitation in stating that assertions of the kind made by the honorable member I do not estimate at the value of the lowest coin of the realm. I have now been a member of the House for the last five or six years, and I have, during that time, heard the honorable member make many assertions against many individuals and against many public bodies of men, but I have never known of a single instance in which he has substantiated any one of them. And I now challenge the honorable member to prove any one of them. Never in a single instance, I repeat, have the charges which the honorable member has brought against any man, or body of men, or magistrates, been substantiated by him. I have myself temporarily suffered from the assertions that have been made by the honorable member, but only temporarily. One occasion escaped my attention till it was brought to my recollection last night by the honorable member for Warwick; and it was this, that the honorable member, in addressing his constituents not very long ago, made use of my name in a most barefaced and altogether unwarrantable manner. He accused me, although if he had taken the trouble he could have convinced himself of the untruth of the statement he made, of having been in a state of drunkenness on board of one of Her Majesty's ships in the Bay, and of having been turned out the vessel in disgrace; and he asked his audience whether, such having been the case, I was a fit man to continue to be the chairman of the Board of Education? Now, when the honorable member had the chance, while the vessel remained here, of obtaining correct information upon the point, it was his duty, if he considered himself to be a man of truth and honor, to have inquired into the particulars of the matter, before giving circulation to such an infamous lie; and if, after making the statement, he discovered that it had no foundation—that it was altogether as baseless as the fabric of a dream—he ought, as an honorable man, to have come forward in the House, and stated his regret for having made such a statement. Now, I am free to confess that, on discovering at any time that I have made any statement that was not altogether correct, I have always taken the earliest opportunity of confessing that I was in the wrong. I must say that a more unfounded charge was never made against anyone than that which

was made against me by the honorable member, and I firmly believe that it was made solely from political motives. I must say that, so far as I am aware, I have not one private enemy in the world; and, therefore, I am compelled to come to the conclusion that the charge which the honorable member made against me was made solely from political motives; and I now repeat that I certainly consider the honorable member should have taken the first opportunity he had, after the meeting of the House, of making an explanation. I may also inform the House that many other misstatements have been made respecting me from time to time, but it is a very strange thing that they never seemed to originate in Brisbane, or at any rate through the newspapers in Brisbane. They always appeared, in the first instance, in one of the Ipswich, or some other of the up-country papers, and then they were copied into the Brisbane papers, the editors of which were more to blame in the matter than the editors of the papers who first gave publicity to the falsehoods, because of their neglecting to avail themselves of the opportunity they had of inquiring as to what foundation there was for such statements. Now, a statement was made through one of the up-country papers, in the first instance, to the effect that there had been some difference between His Excellency the Governor and myself, and that I had, on that account, refused to attend the meetings of the Executive Council. Now, that was a statement that was as equally unfounded as any other. I would not have referred to those matters, but that I considered they afforded a convincing illustration of the way in which some political debates were got up; and probably, even on that ground, I would not have mentioned them but for the allusion that was made to them last night by the honorable member for Warwick. The attacks that have been made, and the reports that have been circulated, against the present Government, are almost innumerable, and I would have to occupy the time of the House the whole night if I were even to refer to them in detail. But there is one which I must mention, and that alone because of the high respect I entertain for the honorable gentleman by whom it was made. I am now referring to a statement that was made respecting the absence from the House at the present time of the honorable member for the Mitchell, Mr. Morehead. The statement was made by the honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, at a public meeting held in the Town Hall a few evenings ago. Now, I was sorry to find that the honorable member for North Brisbane imputed reasons for the absence of the honorable member for the Mitchell, which were altogether out of place, and which I believe the honorable member, in his cooler moments, would regret having advanced. The honorable member stated at the meeting that took place

in the Town Hall that the absence of Mr. Morehead was owing to some quarrel that had taken place between me and the honorable member. Now, I can assure the House that there is not the slightest shadow of a foundation for any statement of the kind whatever. So far from there having been anything like a quarrel, I may almost say there has never been so much as an angry word between us. The honorable member for the Mitchell, as well as the other honorable members on the Government side of the House, did not concur in all the measures that were brought before the House by the Government last session, and they expressed their opinions as freely against the measures of the Government, to which they objected, as any honorable member on the opposite side of the House did; and I can assure honorable members on both sides of the House that I was very glad indeed to hear them do so. But I very well knew that when it should come to be a question as to whether this Government was to remain in office or not, the votes of those honorable members were as sure as a rock in favor of the Government. I did not require to be assured by them as to how they would vote on the land question, for I was well aware all throughout the debate as to the way they would vote—even when they were speaking most strongly against the Government. Now, I maintain, therefore, that the assertion which was made by the honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, in the Town Hall, was most unfounded and uncalled for. The very idea of the honorable member for the Mitchell asking for his price, was in itself perfectly absurd. The honorable member for North Brisbane might think that every man had his price; and I believe there are some honorable members who have their price, and I might name one or two; but I do not think the resources of the Treasury would go far towards the purchasing of the votes of those honorable members. The attitude which has been assumed by the honorable member for Ipswich on this occasion, though I know of some of the fantastic tricks he has played in his time, has, I must confess, taken me somewhat by surprise. The honorable member stated, prior to his election, that this was a moribund Parliament, and that honorable members had declared, by an Act which was passed last session, that it would not be competent for the House to deal with any great political question this session. Now, I must say that, so far, the ideas of the honorable member are in accordance with my own, for I also consider that no question of great political importance should be taken up by the present House. The honorable member has called this a moribund House, and a variety of other terms; but certainly he did not lead me, or anyone else, to suppose by anything he had said that he would endeavor to take the lead in the House, or that this was a House which he thought would be competent to deal with questions of an important nature. The

honorable member has, however, apparently changed his opinions on that point, and I should have expected that he would have been about the last member on the Opposition side that would have changed his opinions; and I can tell the House that I very seldom change mine after I have made up my mind upon any question. But upon that point, as regards the honorable member, I may allude farther on in the course of what I shall have to say to the House. The honorable member for Ipswich has, in the course of his speech, asked the question, what have the present Government done during the time they had been in office? Now, I think I might retort upon the honorable member, and ask him to inform the House as to what we have not done. Is the telegraphic extension we have carried out on a large scale, up to the mouth of the Norman, and which has taken place since this Ministry came into office—is that nothing? Are the roads we have constructed, providing access to the door almost of every man in the colony, nothing? Are the bridges we have constructed over creeks, that if not altogether impassable were in the highest degree dangerous, nothing? Are the public offices, by the erection of which we have greatly added to the beauty of Brisbane, nothing? Are the public buildings that are springing up in all the principal towns throughout the colony, nothing? Is the dredging of the River Brisbane, especially to the great extent to which it has been carried out, nothing? Is the dredging of the Fitzroy River, in the improvement of which I must confess there has not been anything like a fair share of the public money expended—is that nothing? Are the improvements that have been made in every harbor along the whole coast of the colony, from its southernmost boundary to its most northern extremity, nothing? We have not even neglected the interests of the furthest north town in the colony, for we have sent to the most northern port in it, a very smart cutter for the purpose of suppressing the odious and abominable trade that has been going on for some years in that neighborhood; and which trade this colony has had nothing to do with, but which has been carried on by ships from the neighboring colonies—is that nothing? Why, if we had done nothing else during the whole of the time we have been in office, we deserve to receive credit from all the colonies for the steps we have taken for the suppression of this abominable traffic. I believe that in the course of a few months it will not be possible, from the action that has been taken by this Government, for a single instance of that disgraceful traffic again to take place. Now, on reviewing all that, I am constrained to come to the conclusion, that the objection of the honorable member to the present Government, is, not that we have done nothing, but, rather, because we have done so much, and on too economical a scale to accord with his

liberal views. The honorable member, I believe, cannot forget that the contracts for public works that were made under his guiding-hand were anything but economical, and, I believe he regrets that this Government has not gone on with the same extravagance that was rampant during his term of office. Now, instead of doing anything of that kind, we are trying to save the money of the colony as much as we possibly can; and by giving a judicious regard to the necessity for public works in the various parts of the colony, to expend the money voted for such works in a way that will be most beneficial to as great a number of the people as possible where the works are carried out. Now, the honorable member for Ipswich, and the honorable member for the Kennedy, have both attacked the Government on the subject of their railway policy. I did not take down the exact words of the honorable member for the Kennedy, but what he said was to this effect, that the Government were fostering corruption by having their railways carried out on a system of small contracts. Now, I am fully convinced that honorable members and the public also, when they have the opportunity of perusing the papers that have been laid upon the table of the House in respect to the construction of the railway works, will be fully satisfied that the Government have taken the best course they possibly could for the carrying out those works in the way that will be most advantageous to the colony—both as regards their stability and the cost of their construction; and as to the matter of cost, it is only necessary to recall the attention of honorable members to the statement that was read on the previous evening by the honorable the Minister for Works, showing the amount of expenditure that took place under the former system in excess of the contract prices, to obtain their admission that we were fully justified in entering upon the course of policy we have adopted; and until the non-success of the system is proved by experience, there is no reason why a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry should be based upon it. As to the charges which have been brought against us because of the way we floated the 4 per cent. loan, they have been so ably answered by my honorable colleague, Mr. Ramsay, that I feel it is scarcely necessary for me at all to refer to them; and especially as the honorable the Treasurer will also, no doubt, deal fully with that part of the question. I may, however, inform the House that in the opinion of monied men our loan has been the most successful of any that has ever been floated in the Australian colonies. I am quite satisfied that the course the Government took in respect to that loan produced great faith in the resources of the colony, and also in the ability of those who had the management of the loan. Another charge that has been very gravely pressed against us, has been, that we have not brought forward any measure for the reduc-

tion of taxation. Well, in a Parliament which being in a dying state, and that could not therefore be regarded as fully representing the feelings and wishes of the colony, it would have been the height of absurdity to have brought forward any measure proposing an alteration in the tariff, and a reduction in the general taxation of the colony. I certainly think that any large measure of that nature should not be dealt with till after very mature consideration, and that by a new Parliament. As honorable members are themselves fully aware, the circumstances of the colony have very materially changed since the last tariff was passed, and I think it would have amounted almost to utter madness on the part of the Government at present to have proposed any measure for a reduction of the tariff. But while I say so, I hope it may yet be found possible by the present Parliament to pass a short measure authorising the Government to reduce the duty on salt, which is almost daily becoming an article of more and more importance both to the pastoral and the agricultural interests of the colony. I hope the House will allow a short measure to be passed for the reduction of the salt duty, and thereby do something towards the saving of the lives of thousands of sheep and cattle—the property of agriculturists as well as of the pastoral tenants of the Crown. Now honorable members must be aware that the great destruction of sheep that has taken place from the want of salt has occasioned a loss not only to the proprietors, but also to the national wealth. I think that after viewing the matter in that light, honorable members will come to the same conclusion that I have come to on the subject, after mature consideration.

MR. W. SCOTT: What was the opinion of the honorable gentleman on the subject last session?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I stated last session what was my opinion on the subject at the time; and whatever that opinion was, I must say that from what has since come under my own personal observation, I consider the question of the reduction of the duty on salt is one that is deserving of the most serious consideration of honorable members of the House. Another of the charges that has been brought against the present Government by the honorable member for Ipswich is, that they have not proposed to bring forward a measure for the amendment of the Electoral Act passed last session. Now, I think it is rather too soon to ask that we should begin to amend an Act that has not yet been even acted upon. It would be a most extraordinary thing for the Government to propose to amend an Act before it had been brought into working order, and before they had discovered what were its defects. For my own part, I believe that when it comes to be carried out, many very serious defects will be found in it; but I do not think that we

should begin tinkering with it, as has been done frequently in the case of other Acts, before it is fully discovered how they are likely to operate; and it will only be after a general election that it will be discovered what defects there are in the Act. The election of the honorable member for Ipswich is the only election that has taken place under the Act of last session, and that election affords no criterion whatever as to what the working of the Act may be. The same remarks will apply to the charge which has been brought against the Government for not stating if it was their intention to bring in any measure for the amendment of the Land Act of last session. As we will have a large infusion of new blood into the House in the course of five or six months, and that also from districts which have not hitherto been represented, I think it would be monstrous on the part of the Government to attempt to introduce any measure dealing largely with the question as to the disposal of the lands of the colony. There can be no finality in the matter of land legislation, and the question will, no doubt, have to be dealt with somewhat fully in a year or two; but in what has been called a moribund Parliament, I would not attempt to deal with the question on a large scale. We have also been charged with not proposing to deal with the mining interest, and I must say that I think that is the most unfounded charge in the whole list that has been brought against the Government. I should like to know what Government that has been in office has given so much attention to the mining interest as this Government has given to it? What previous Government ever thought of sending a gentleman of so much ability and brains as Mr. Daintree to Europe, to direct the attention of capitalists and others by able lectures to the mining resources of the colony?—and to enable him to do so the more effectually, we furnished him with valuable specimens of the various mineral productions of the colony. The attention the present Government has given to the mining interests of the colony are only now beginning to tell; but the effect will continue to be felt for many years to come. Now I maintain that if we had done nothing more in respect to the mining interest than to send a man of such ability as Mr. Daintree to lecture throughout Europe on the mining resources of the colony, we are entitled to claim credit for having done a very great deal for the mining interest. But we have done more than that, for we have appointed commissioners wherever there was a chance of diggings being opened up. We have, in fact, looked very carefully after the interests of the digging community; and the result is, that at the present time there is not a more contented class in the colony. The honorable member for Ipswich has told the House that he was no financier. Now I am delighted to have discovered that there is at any rate one

point on which the honorable gentleman and myself perfectly agree; for I do not believe that the honorable member has a particle of financing ability in him. Indeed I very much doubt if he at all understands what financing means. But, be that as it may, it is very refreshing to find that there is one point upon which I can agree with him. The next subject that I wish to say a few words upon is education. I may say that I never promised to bring in an Education Bill as a Government measure. I well knew, sir, the difficulties that stood in the way of any Bill on the subject of education being agreed to by all the members of any cabinet, and I carefully guarded myself—and I think the honorable member for South Brisbane knows I did, at the Education Board, even—against the supposition that I would bring in a Government Education Bill. But that I meant to bring in an Education Bill, I think is clearly shown by my action. I have brought in an Education Bill, sir, and it has been read the first time. I have no hesitation in saying that, although I do not think the question of education should be settled as a party question, yet I should have been better pleased had I been able to have brought in the Bill as a Government measure. I confess that, at once. My whole heart and soul are in that Bill, or something like it; and it would have given me very much pleasure had I been able to have brought it forward as part of the Ministerial programme. But the feelings of my colleagues, one and all, had to be respected. On this subject some of them have very strong feelings. I do not blame them for that. When they joined me in forming a Ministry there was no question of education, or any such test, put to any of them. I say they had a perfect right—any one of them, or more—to refuse consent to the Education Bill being brought in as a Government measure. I bowed with the best temper I could to the decision. Although I did try to bring it in as a Government measure, yet I yielded at once when I found it was not in my power. I think I am correct in stating that I am not the first Premier—comparing small things with great—who has encountered difficulties on the education question and failed in making it a Government measure. I believe that more cabinets have been shipwrecked at home and in the colonies, during the last five and twenty years, on the education question than on all other subjects together. It is a subject that, I have no doubt, we all feel strongly on; and, for myself, ever since I have been able to form an opinion, it has occupied my thoughts. The Bill embodies the principles which I have long held and believe in. In the drafting of it I have had the able assistance of the honorable and learned member for Fortitude Valley—my gallant opponent for years. He himself drafted the whole of it, after numerous conversations on the subject between us. Finding, long since, that we thought very much

alike on this subject—I may say, for years—although opposed to one another on other questions in the House, yet we thought very much alike on the subject of education—I do not see for one moment, because men are in political opposition, that they should not join at any moment in any measure calculated to advance the interests of the colony or of the people, and in carrying out what they believe to be the correct mode of advancing those interests;—I sought the honorable member's co-operation and assistance. I owe considerably to my honorable friend the member for Fortitude Valley for the very handsome manner in which he came forward and drafted that Bill. In the course of the coming debate, it will be seen what an important share the honorable member had in the Bill. The Bill on the table differs very slightly from the original draft. I hope that he will introduce the original draft during the debate, and let it speak for itself. It was not for us to agree upon everything. In a word, it was not possible for two men to agree without question to every detail of a measure such as that.

MR. LILLEY: Very close.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Very closely. When the original draft is produced it will be seen how very closely we have agreed. But I could not agree upon every point; I have altered the draft of the honorable member to some small extent, but nothing very considerable. But, such as the Bill is, I have a very firm belief in it. I was very much struck, some months ago, on seeing a cartoon in London *Punch*, representing Mr. Gladstone as a stepple-chaser taking a fence. "Education Irish;" and the legend was, "Will he get over?" implying that if he did he would be a clever rider. I am quite prepared, as that right honorable gentleman was, to risk coming to grief on this education question. I will stake my whole political existence upon that Bill, in office or out of office, as a private representative or as a Minister of the Crown. In this House, I will try as far as I can, to carry through the principles embodied in that Bill. I shall not go into particulars, now, sir; but I do very thoroughly believe in those principles. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley has a great interest in me, as well as in very many other honorable members, and he shows it not only in this Assembly but in the country; in fact, he would model us all on his own plan, if he could; and the little lecture he read to me last night amused me vastly at the time, as it has done ever since. He would not only reform my politics, but my manners; he would make me positively a *fac simile* of himself. I presume he gives me credit for having a way of my own, and a will of my own. He gave me a little advice. Now I will give him a little advice. It is this: When he stands on that side of the House, and when he thinks he is making a hit, not to glance at the gallery. It is a very bad thing. If he stood on this side of the House, and looked



at the gallery, I should forgive him ; but as long as he stands on that side to address the House, it is an awful mistake to do that little bit of clap-trap. He did utter one very little bit of truth in that short lecture, when he said that I knew very well I should not get his vote. I knew it. We all knew it. Very many kind things have been said, because we were together on this education question : something dreadful would happen ! I knew as well, years ago, as I do now ; I knew all through, that I was not very likely to get his vote on a question of this sort now before the House especially. If I was head of the Ministry, and he knew I was right, so strong are the old feelings of party about him, the old feeling of being "Charley Lilley, the liberal member for Fortitude Valley," that, notwithstanding my being right, I believe he would vote against me.

MR. LILLEY : No, no.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : He said what was very true. I believe that in his heart he is with me—that it will be the worst thing for the country to turn the Government out ; but he was quite right in saying that I knew very well I should not get his vote. But I hope honorable members will not be afraid that I am going to follow the example they set last session—to read all these books which are beside me ;—they can disabuse their minds of that fear. I shall not read them. In the few remarks that I shall make I have to refer to each of them. The grand charge against the Government, as far as I can understand it from what has been spoken in this House during the present debate, is, that we have no policy, now ; that we never had any ; and that, in fact, the rag of the policy we thought was ours was stolen by us from the Opposition. Now, that is something like a charge, but it is so stupidly backed up with little things that have nothing to do with a question of want of confidence in the Government, that there is some trouble in getting at it—things that have nothing more to do with the question than an eclipse of the moon has to do with the July fogs next year. I shall endeavor to show not only that we have a policy now, but that we came into office with a policy ; that we have gone on consistently with that policy ; that we have carried out that policy ; and that we have the same policy still. We have never altered our policy except with the progress of the colony, as it was our policy, because it was our duty, to do so. I shall endeavor to show it by a few extracts from the Governor's Speech on each occasion of the opening of a Parliamentary session since we came into office. The fifth July, 1870, was the first day we, as a Ministry, met Parliament. In the second paragraph of the Governor's Speech is this :—

"Among the first and most important of those [matters of pressing importance], will be a Bill to enable a sum of money to be raised on loan, assured on the general revenue of the colony, sufficient to cover the outlay incurred on, and the

contracts entered into, for completing railways and other public works, and for immigration purposes."

And, in the last clause of the fifth paragraph, a Bill

"to provide for additional representation will be submitted to you."

In the seventh paragraph—

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

The eighth paragraph refers to the arrangements for the reduction of the charges on colonial and intercolonial telegrams. Now, sir, there was a certain policy laid down in that Speech—the construction of railways and public works, the raising of money by loan for such purposes, and for immigration, which latter was part of our programme when we came into office. It is shown that we had additional representation as part of our policy when we came into office. The establishment of railways was, I admit, upon a different plan from that we have succeeded in following out ; still, the Speech shows that the Ministry always had the idea of cheap railways for the colony. The next occasion of our meeting Parliament was the third session of 1870. The second paragraph of the Governor's Speech names the most important subjects of our policy :—

"A Bill to enable the Government to raise on the security of the general revenue of the colony a sum of money sufficient to cover the cost of Railway Works, Electric Telegraph Extension, and Parliamentary Buildings, for the construction and repair of roads and bridges, to carry on immigration, to cover the amount of Savings Bank deposits, to provide for the expense of building the steamship 'Governor Blackall,' and to meet the cost and charges of raising previous loans."

MR. LILLEY : Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Well, that shows we are carrying out our policy—our first policy and our present policy. The "Governor Blackall," we had nothing to do with ; she formed no part of our policy, but of that of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley.

MR. LILLEY : Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Well, sir, the fifth clause of the same paragraph of that Speech points to the necessity for a Bill

"to provide for additional representation."

That was still part of our policy. The sixth clause referred to a Bill

"to regulate and amend the laws relating to elections."

The seventh clause, to a Bill

"to fix the salary and allowances of future Governors."

And the ninth is one I shall not allude to—I shall leave that for honorable members

opposite—further than that it proposed the existing Act  
 “to equalise and reduce the salaries of Ministers of the Crown.”

I know that they will not like it, when they get into office. On the next occasion when we met Parliament, the first session of 1871, you will find pretty much the same programme. We proposed, then, in the fourth paragraph of the Governor's Speech, to introduce a Bill

“to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Parliamentary Elections,”

and a variety of other Bills; besides which, we informed Parliament that we should introduce a number of Bills which had been laid before the Houses in the previous session. Well, sir, I think this speech carried out pretty much the same policy as we claim to have held from the first and to hold now. The next time we met the Houses was in the session of 1871-2; and I find that the second paragraph of the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, then, says:—

“I would particularly draw your attention to the necessity which exists for increasing the representation of the colony, for which object a Bill will shortly be introduced.”

The seventh paragraph says—

“A Select Committee was appointed by the Legislative Assembly in its last session, with a view to ascertain how Railway Extension might be best carried out in a manner suited to the circumstances of the colony, but did not finish its labors. The matter is one which requires much consideration, and it is hoped that the same course which was pursued last session with reference to this subject will again be followed. In the event of your investigation resulting in a report favorable to Railway Extension, measures will be taken to carry out that recommendation, and you will be asked to provide the necessary funds.”

And the Bills which had not been carried through were alluded to again. I think that this shows that we had still the same policy. Then, sir, in the session of 1872, I find the following paragraph in His Excellency's Speech—

“Parliament was prorogued for the purpose of giving time to bring in a Bill for Appointing Additional Members, and the Re-distribution of Electorates, and for that purpose a Bill has been prepared and will be immediately laid before you.

“Several Bills which have already advanced some stages, will be re-introduced, as well as others which have been for some time prepared.

“The question of Immigration, and the working of the present Act, will require your most serious attention, experience having shown that the Act has not served all the purposes for which it was framed.”

The fifth paragraph—

“The Report of the Commission appointed by me, in compliance with a resolution of the Legislative Assembly, to inquire into and report upon the subject of Railway Construction, will be laid before you; and I trust that you may think

it advisable to sanction a measure, which, without over-taxing the community, or over-exciting the labor market, may gradually extend the benefits of Railway and Tramway communication to districts of the country at present difficult of approach, and continue the Southern and Western Line to such a point on the River, near Brisbane, as may seem advisable. In the event of a loan for such purpose being required, my Government will feel it their duty to include in it certain sums in proportion to the revenue derived from districts which will not be benefited by Railway Extension, to be expended in local improvements in those districts.”

Now, sir, I say that here is a policy laid down on our first entering office, which has been carried out strictly to the present day. We have consistently supported a good system of immigration. Feeling that the Act which was carried through this House, mainly by the instrumentality of the honorable member for South Brisbane, was, as I frequently experienced myself in regard to it, “a delusion and a snare,” we introduced a better Bill.

MR. STEPHENS: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am certain it was a better Bill—and we carried it through both Houses last session. I think that that action of ours shows that we were earnest in carrying out that part of our policy which we came into office with. Under the provisions of the Immigration Act of 1872, there has been a larger importation of immigrants than previously. We have been told over and over that the policy of the Government was to obstruct immigration. Now, Mr. Speaker, so far from having carried out any policy of the sort, I have expended, with the consent of the Government, since that Act was passed and since the loan for immigration was authorised, a very considerably larger sum for the purposes of immigration than that loan vote, over the three years which it was intended to cover. That we have done, and with the best effects, I am quite certain; for, putting aside the immigrants expected to arrive by the “*Alardus*,” there have been received in this colony, since the ships began to come out under the provisions of the new Act, 2,280 immigrants; and since that Act was passed, no fewer than 1,000 persons have been sent for by residents of the colony.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on both sides of the House: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: During a corresponding period, under the old Act, only 220 persons were nominated. I think this is convincing proof that the Government not only came in with a proper policy of immigration, but that when they were able to carry it out they did carry it out, and that our Immigration Act is working very satisfactorily. There is no doubt that with the machinery we have now at work, and our much abused Agent-General—much abused by the *Courier*, but not by any other paper that I have heard of—we could get out a considerably greater number of immigrants than were coming. We have information by

telegram that a very much larger number, I confess, than I like to see coming in one ship, has sailed from London in the "Royal Queensland."

MR. LILLEY: There is plenty of room for them, here.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is the ship I am talking of. I think the number of immigrants on board is larger than we ought to risk in one ship. I think it is a mistake for so many persons to be in one ship. I telegraphed to the Agent-General, to-day, that I think so. Yet, I understand that she is a very fine ship?

MR. LILLEY: What is the tonnage of the ship.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Two thousand tons, I am informed. I have no knowledge personally. My objection is not to the numbers coming here—we can take the people easily enough—but it is to too many persons coming in one ship. It is a great risk.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When Mr. Daintree commenced, honorable members must understand, it was not so easy to get emigrants to move towards Queensland. Very little was known about Queensland in rural England; the effects of the efforts of former Agents-General seemed to have died out. He has had to inaugurate a new system. Under the existing arrangements we could get more immigrants than we are getting, but, looking back to the evil results which followed the flooding of the colony with immigrants in former years, my constant order and instruction to the Agent-General has been: "Keep up a steady stream of emigration, but remember that the most fatal thing to the prosperity of the colony that can possibly happen, is too great an influx of immigrants at any one time." Now, some of us have lived long enough in the colony to know the evil effects of that. I hope it will not be followed out again, whatever Ministry may be in office. I hope the Government will carry out such arrangements as will ensure a steady stream of immigration, and not rush a lot of people into the colony suddenly or at one time. That would be injurious to us, because wages would go down below the proper figure, bad accounts would go home, and the reaction that would set in would be the worst thing for the colony that could happen, and the interference with our progress and prosperity would more than counterbalance any temporary good. I have said that the former Immigration Act was a delusion and a snare; it was a swindle to the people who had come out to the colony under its provisions. Although I opposed a good deal the legislation proposed upon it last session, I have felt it my duty to prepare a Bill to authorise the issue of transferable land orders in exchange for non-transferable land orders under the Immigration Act of 1869, and to provide for the disposal and cancella-

tion of undertakings under the said Act. I feel that it is a mere matter of justice to a number of deluded individuals who came out to this colony under that Act; and that it is time some notice should be taken of them, for the credit of the colony, and to protect the interests of those individuals. As the session proceeds, I shall consider it my duty to introduce the Bill. An honorable member told us, last night, that we have done nothing but passed the Brands Act; that that is the whole success of our Parliamentary career. It was the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Hemmant. Well, that is a very useful Act, but I never considered it any part of our political career to have passed a measure of that sort. It was introduced by me long before this Ministry had existence. An attempt was made to carry it through by Mr. Hodgson, a former Colonial Secretary. I was enabled to pass it last session. We have done a little more than that. Putting aside a number of small Acts, some of them Government measures, passed by the Ministry since we came into office, I say that the passing of the Act providing for Immigration to the colony of Queensland was something more than the Brands Act. I say the passing of Acts for Additional Representation, and for the Redistribution of the Electoral Districts of Queensland, last session, was a good deal more than the Brands Act. I say that the Act to Consolidate and Amend the Laws relating to Parliamentary Elections, passed the session before, was a good deal more—.

MR. STEPHENS: A good deal worse.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I say the Act for the Alienation and Management of Mineral Lands, and the Act for Establishing Homestead Areas and Extending the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868, were rather more than the Brands Act, or the policy that the honorable member for East Moreton and others on the same side of the House as he give the Government credit for. And, further, the Loan Act, to provide for Public Works and Immigration, went rather beyond the Brands Act; and I refer to the Act of last session as well as to that passed in the previous session. I think I have shown, as shortly as I could, that the Government have not only had a policy, but that they came into office with pretty much the same policy as they have carried out all through, and that they are prepared to go on with the same in the future as they have gone on with in the past. That we did not quite follow the policy of the Opposition is true, certainly: we did not let them have what they were crying for at the time they wanted it. We should have been very bad administrators of the public money if we had spent it as they desired. They put me in mind of a lot of children, who, having just had their breakfast, cried for their dinner. They were never satisfied. Rush to death! Spend money! The colony is ruined, unless you spend money! That is their policy. But we never had the same

policy. That our policy, thus resembled, in many respects the "rest and caution" policy of the honorable member for South Brisbane, which the House remembers, may be true. But he suddenly got out of that and rushed to the other extreme. Fortunately, at that time, we stepped in and checked the reckless extravagance—fortunately for the colony, which would never have arrived at its present pitch of prosperity if we had not. The new arrivals would have been driven from our shores. They would have come here and found the colony with an empty revenue chest; its liabilities would never have been met, in consequence of the extravagance of the Government. I do not say, no rational man would say, that the simple conduct of this Government has caused the prosperity that the colony now enjoys: we may have helped it on; and the plan that we have adopted, of opening the purse strings as it went on, and as the circumstances of the colony seemed to require, has materially aided the prosperity of the colony.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I freely admit that we have committed many errors—I should be an egotist if I were to say anything otherwise—but they have always been errors of judgment, never of intention. No Government that ever existed, or that ever will exist, could get on without committing errors. And the officers of the Government have committed errors, for which the Government are frequently blamed, and which no power of man could ever have prevented. But, I say, on the whole we have been a great deal more successful than the previous Government. Very little embezzlement has been heard of among the officers of the Civil Service, which was not the case before; and where error has been met, it has been checked promptly. It is not for me to tell honorable members opposite, many of whom have been in power themselves, of the many difficulties that Ministers of the Crown in this colony have to encounter. There are, I believe—it may seem ridiculous to say it, but I do say it—difficulties and annoyances thrown in the way of members of the Government in these small colonies, much greater in proportion than are encountered in the Imperial Government. You will find that the petty annoyances, drop by drop, that fill up the cup of the ills of life are exceedingly numerous, which Ministers of a great country like Great Britain are exempt from. But here, where you "live in glass houses," where every body knows his neighbor's business better than he does himself, I say that the amount of annoyance which Ministers of the Crown have to put up with, from individuals and from the Press, in one way and another, is really enough to do away almost with the satisfaction of governing the country and shaping its destinies. It is a heavy tax on the mind and spirits of any man to be subjected to such annoyances.

MR. LILLEY: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I say that a Minister of the Crown in Queensland who does his work, if you calculate the value of his mental and bodily labor, the wear and tear, earns double the salary he gets. But I will always maintain that it is not for pay or emolument that any man ought to give his services to the country as a Minister of the Crown. I think the amount of pay has very little to do with the subject; but I say that, as to mere remuneration for mental and bodily exertion, if Ministers of the Crown had double the salary they have they would be underpaid compared with any clerk in a merchant's counting-house or in a bank.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If I were to consult my own convenience, I would have retired from the Government long ago. Many of my friends know this, and have always known it. I would have retired rather than put up with the annoyances and troubles and responsibilities of the position I hold. Although Ministerial responsibility consists of the liability to be thrown out of office for failure in administration, there is the responsibility to your own conscience as well as to the country in the management of affairs. This, I feel, as any man must feel it; and I say that, if I were to consult my own ease, I should have gone out of office long ago, and have left the country to govern itself, so far as I was personally concerned. But, sir, I had to consider, amongst other things, that I could not give up the party that have stuck to me so honestly, and earnestly, and bravely, since I undertook the Government, in this House. I feel that I should have disgraced myself if I had forsaken them to consult my own convenience or my own feelings. This feeling, more than anything else, has kept me in office. At the present time, if I were to consult my own feelings, now, I should let the Opposition carry their amendment; and, after having served the country for three years or more as head of the Government, I should consider that I was fully entitled to retire, and to leave both sides of this House to work for and to guide this young colony. But when I look upon the very serious responsibility which is thrown upon my Government, at this moment, to carry out the policy which we have inaugurated and given effect to so far successfully; and when I look at honorable members on the other side of the House, from amongst whom, if we retire, a new Ministry will have to be formed—and amongst whom, although I might pick out one, two, or three gentlemen in whom I might have some confidence, yet I cannot see the materials of a strong Government—I feel that it is utterly impossible to place confidence in any Government that can be selected from the Opposition, and I feel it my duty to myself, my party, and the country, to fight out the present issue to the

last. That I should bow to the decision of a majority of the House, I have very little to be thanked for. It has always been my principle to give way to the majority. In fact, ever since I have occupied a seat in this House, there has not been an instance, I think—except when I have been waiting for reserves, when I have guarded myself, and when I would fight to the last and divide the House for weeks together—in which I have divided the House more than twice when against me. When fairly beaten by a fair majority, I have always given way to the majority. I have been frequently talked to by my party for giving way then; but I could not carry on under such circumstances for the sake of dividing. I cannot see on the other side a party with whom I consider it is safe to leave the Government of the country. If the vote of the House is adverse to me, and the majority shall prove upon the division to be against me, of course, I shall be relieved from all responsibility. If I go out of office, I shall retire without any fear, without one solitary regret, as to the state of things that I shall leave behind me. Although I am not unmindful of the dignity and honor of leading this House, and of being head of the Administration, yet I have had a very fair share of the troubles of Government since I came into the Assembly, and I could resign them with a sense of relief and satisfaction. There is, however, another reason why I consider a change of Ministry at the present time would be exceedingly inconvenient to the country. The revision of the electoral rolls of the colony ought to be finished by the end of this month; and we ought to be able in August to have them perfected, and all the arrangements made for a general election; and we ought, I think, to have the new Parliament elected by November, at the least. Now, I think that any change in the Ministry at this particular crisis would be a very unhappy change. I will go so far as to say, that I believe if we went from a bad Ministry to a better, the change would be for the worse at present. I believe you would throw things out of gear to a very considerable extent; you would complicate the working of the Electoral Act. Because, it is quite evident from the divisions in this House, that no Ministry formed from the Opposition can command a majority in this House. I presume that is self-evident to every one. The Opposition cannot even form a quorum, as was shown last week. How a Ministry from the other side of the House, who cannot even form a quorum, could carry on the business of the country, I am at a loss to see. They must apply for a dissolution.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition side of the House: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is a general election, at once, which throws the country out of gear for a time; and, by the time the new Parliament will have settled

down to business, there comes another general election.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: No, no.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Then, I understand that the policy of honorable members on the other side is to get into office and do nothing but call for a general election under the new Act?

Mr. LILLEY: I know nothing about it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have heard the honorable and learned member for Fortitude Valley say, "No, no," before, when he ought not to have spoken.

Mr. LILLEY: Not at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not necessary! I understand honorable members' meaning; it is self-evident. If we go out of office, they will come in and do nothing. It is very convenient. That is their policy! They will do nothing: they will hold the reins of power until absolutely forced by public opinion to call the House together, and they will call the new Parliament.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: No, no.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, I do not know what they will do, really. But their idea is to hold the reins of office, that is self-evident.

Mr. LILLEY: Let me explain once for all. I have no intention of going into office; not the least.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am not speaking of the honorable member; I am speaking of the intention of the party. I gather it from what he said, and from the "No, no," of the honorable member for South Brisbane.

Mr. STEPHENS: It is not necessary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If you are allowed to carry on the Government of the country, it is not necessary to meet the House! You may do without Parliament altogether. I am quite certain that the honorable member for South Brisbane would like to work the Government of the country without Parliament. I am quite certain that the honorable member would bring the terminus of the railway down into South Brisbane before he would call Parliament together; and he has a good colleague in the honorable member for Ipswich, who would cordially second him in that. He would do without a Parliament. I say if honorable members opposite think they are going into office to carry on for months without a Parliament which they know they cannot work—in which they can't get a quorum—what will the country say? Well, I can promise them that they shall not have a bed of roses, not even if they are resolved to carry that out.

Mr. MACDEVITT: A bed of lillies.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They will put us out of office, they will wait until the new Assembly are elected under the new Act. That is a very pretty arrangement. I do confess that I should like the Government to remain in office until the new House assembles—until the new Parliament meets. That will only be for a few months. I believe

that the new blood which will come in under the operation of the new Act, will so "transmogrify" the House that the Opposition will not know it. I see already many new faces on the other side. I was surprised at many honorable members opposite me, when the Act was passing through the House: many of them did not know what they were doing when they passed it. I was amazed at their blindness.

MR. THORN: Hear, hear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Even the honorable member for West Moreton, who cries "Hear, hear," will not find it so easy to get a seat in the new electorates. I think the working of that Act will quite astonish many honorable members who assisted in passing it. If it should bring in fresh blood, if it brings in only a few more men like the honorable member for Clermont, who addressed the House to-night, I say it will do incomparable good for this country.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is fresh blood of that sort that the country wants in the Parliament; not little tools of cliques, that will act only for cliques, and not fairly represent the constituencies that they are sent in by. What is the form here? There were a few men in Brisbane who made themselves industrious, and they returned the representatives of Brisbane, Fortitude Valley—

MR. LILLEY: No, no.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: And East Moreton. Well, their day is at an end. I have only one regret at present, and that is, that some of my friends should have thought fit to desert this side of the House. I will not impute motives, if I can help it; but I must say that the conduct of the honorable member for Rockhampton, in going completely against the wishes of the whole body of his constituents, is amazing. I am well aware of what is going on at Rockhampton—

MR. MACDEVITT: Ah, ha!

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As well as even the honorable member for Kennedy. Perhaps, you will be astonished that I have copies of the telegrams that have been sent from Rockhampton, from time to time. Perhaps, you will wish to know the price for which they say the honorable member for Rockhampton can be bought.

MR. FYFE: Mr. Speaker—The honorable member is imputing motives.

MR. LILLEY: I think the honorable gentleman has made a statement that he ought to withdraw.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am speaking of the copies of the telegrams: they say the price at which he can be bought. I do not say so. I tell you I do know that he is going contrary to the wishes of his constituents.

MR. LILLEY: It does not interest me.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I certainly do not mean it, individually. Though I address the honorable member for Fortitude Valley,

when I say "you," I mean the Opposition. Mr. Speaker is so addressed. I do not mean to individualise. I say that I have copies of those telegrams making this statement. But I am astonished at the conduct of the honorable member in going over to the other side of the House. With other honorable members who vote from conviction, or from any other feeling that default ought to be visited upon the Ministry, I cannot be offended; and although I regret their loss, I do not cast the slightest reflection upon them. Any man has a right to his opinion, and to vote according to his convictions. If I was the most ardent supporter of a Government that I thought had done me or my constituency wrong, I should vote against them. I respect a man who votes according to his convictions, and believes that he is in the right. But when we see honorable members leave one side of the House to go to the other, and when we know how the ropes are pulled, we have a right to form our own conclusions. They are forced upon us. I said over and over again, last year, that if any honorable member does not feel that he can vote for the Government, he has a perfect right to vote as he likes. I suppose we shall get to a division some time to-night, and I am quite prepared for the result. I trust, however, we shall hear the eloquence of the honorable member for South Brisbane before the debate closes. I may say that I was called upon rather unexpectedly to address the House, and I was in hopes that honorable members on both sides would have addressed the House before I was called upon, but finding that there was a pause in the debate, I threw myself into the breach. I have no reason to complain of the conduct of the Opposition. I have met, on the whole, a bold opposition from them, and I have not a word to say if they think fit to put out the Ministry. I think they have made a mistake, some of them, but I have not the slightest ground of complaint of the conduct of honorable members opposite. I am quite prepared to go in for a division, and we shall see the result and abide by it.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. GROOM rose for the purpose of making an explanation in reply to something which had fallen from the honorable the Colonial Secretary, in reference to statements made by himself to his constituents. The honorable gentleman had been slightly mistaken as to the circumstances, as he had not made use of the strong language imputed to him by the honorable gentleman. He had not altogether been a quiet observer of what was going on, but two or three individuals informed him of the circumstances which he mentioned to his constituents, namely, that the honorable gentleman had made use of highly improper language on board the steamer "Kate," and also that he was put off from one of Her Majesty's ships in a state similar to that in which he had once appeared at Rockhampton.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You are merely repeating a libel.

Mr. GROOM: He was merely repeating information given to him; and if his informants were wrong, he would be most willing to take the denial of the honorable the Colonial Secretary, and would withdraw the allegations he had made. However, he believed that it had been the common talk in Brisbane and on the Downs, and had even been made the subject of newspaper comment. In one case he believed the honorable gentleman had instituted an action for libel against a newspaper; at least, so he (Mr. Groom) had been informed by the proprietor of the journal in question, who afterwards told him that he had been grossly misled. He had made the statements, but as the honorable gentleman had denied the correctness of them, he was quite prepared to make every apology to the honorable gentleman.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said that, before making any observations on the main question before the House, he must be permitted to set himself right in regard to a question raised by the honorable the Colonial Secretary, in reference to certain remarks made by him (Dr. O'Doherty) in another place. The honorable member seemed to imagine that he had acted unjustly and ungenerously towards two honorable members who had been supporters of the present Government, in mentioning at a public meeting that those gentlemen would most probably demand a price for coming back to Brisbane to support the honorable member and his Government. Well, he could assure the honorable Colonial Secretary, and other honorable members of that House, that he had not the slightest intention—as any person who read the context in his speech would perceive—of imputing anything approaching dishonorable conduct to one or other of those two gentlemen. In fact, he imagined, that any person who read the context would see at once that he had described those gentlemen as the very contrary to any who would lend themselves to any such conduct. Although, possibly, every honorable member in that House might or might not have his price, yet there were various descriptions of prices—in fact, that term “price” was, in the English language, capable of a very wide interpretation; for instance, there was the price paid of old to Judas Iscariot, thirty pieces of silver for the worst act of treachery a man could commit. But it was not for a moment to be imagined that he (Dr. O'Doherty) would impute to any honorable member of that House that he would take such a price as that, nor that it had been found in this colony that any man was capable of taking such a price; and he was in hopes that in the future history of it no one would ever be found to take a price of that sort. But, again, there was another interpretation to be put on that word “price.” He might put his interpretation upon it—that the term of “price” did not mean one only by which a

man would not pledge himself to support the Opposition unless for the sake of the thirty pieces of silver; there was another form of price—there was the price which he was told had before now not been unfamiliar to certain gentlemen on the Treasury benches; there was the price paid for convenient railway deviations; that was a price generally paid to gentlemen, probably friends of those in power, but who became doubtful in their allegiance. Great deviations were the order of the day, and it was a very convenient form of price to make deviations for the convenience of those who were at all wavering in their support. He did not know that there were honorable members who would be guilty of accepting such a price as that, because, after all, it was very slightly removed from criminality—slightly removed from the form of price he had already alluded to. There was still, again, a third form of price, and he would say again that it was that form of price he meant when he spoke of the two honorable members. He was glad to see on the floor of that House one of the honorable members to whom he had alluded. He would say that it was well known to honorable members, and also to many persons who were witnesses of the proceedings in that House at the close of the last session, that from the time the honorable the Colonial Secretary caused the dead-lock to cease, by yielding to the demands of the people's representatives—from that time the two honorable members, Messrs. Wienholt and Morehead, were distinguished by their opposition to the Government—in fact, the honorable members made no secret of that, especially the honorable member, Mr. Morehead, who stated openly his discontent with the policy pursued by the Government. Had any honorable member forgotten what the honorable member, Mr. Wienholt, stated with reference to the renewal of immigration? He presumed those were the honorable member's own views, and that he was a conscientious opponent of an immigration scheme which contemplated the spending of public money for bringing immigrants into the colony. The honorable member, Mr. Morehead, had persistently followed in the same way; and not only upon that question, but also upon the great question of the extension of railways, the views of those honorable members were especially opposed to the policy pursued by the Government—he spoke particularly with reference to the extension of the Southern and Western Railway, which was in contemplation at that time. He contended, therefore, that, looking at the conduct of those two honorable members, and at the fact that the honorable the Colonial Secretary had stopped the proceedings of the House, in order that those honorable members might have time to return from Sydney, it was perfectly legitimate for him to express the opinion that those honorable members would take as the price of their votes, the return of the Government to that policy of which they were the sup-

porters during the first two years of their existence as a Government. There had been nothing further from his intention than to cast any aspersion on the character of those gentlemen personally, or on any other member of that House; and, as far as he was concerned, he would ask the House to put aside any impression of that kind; and he did hope it would be the last time they would hear anything of the sort. And now with regard to the question at issue that evening. There was no doubt that the speech which had just been delivered by the honorable the Colonial Secretary was a very able one indeed, and, speaking in the language of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, it was a very temperate exposition of the honorable gentleman's policy, and was an attempt to show that his policy at the present time had been the policy of his Government from the time they took office. The honorable member had read extracts from speeches from the Throne delivered since he had been in office; but, in the name of goodness, did the honorable gentleman expect the House to attach the slightest importance to those deliverances? Did the honorable member not know that those deliverances were worth just as much as the paper they were written on? So far as the speeches were concerned, they were put forward, until last session, simply to delude the people of the country; and a policy was put forward that there was not the slightest intention on the part of the Government to ever have carried out—until the dead-lock, when the stand taken by the Opposition forced upon the Government a policy. He would defy the honorable members of the Government to stand up and protest against that statement, and he would defy them to convince one person in the country that they were not driven into that policy. Since they had been driven to accept it, he was not prepared to say that they had not made a generous attempt to meet the wishes of the people, so far as it was possible for a Ministry, backed up by only the pastoral interest, to carry out a policy that would meet the approval of the public generally. He had had occasion himself frequently to see the working of the honorable the Colonial Secretary's department, and also that of the honorable Minister for Works; those two departments, as the representative of the people, he had frequently had occasion to visit, and he, for one, must say, that although he met the Government boldly, and told them that they had not the confidence of the country, he still was bound to do full justice to them where it was merited. He would say of those two honorable gentlemen, that they set an example to all future Ministers of the Crown as to the zeal with which they carried on the business of their departments. He would be doing great injustice to the honorable Colonial Secretary did he not say that it was more due to the able assistance given by that

honorable gentleman than anything else, that he had been partly instrumental in passing through the House, last session, that very important measure, the Health Bill. Were it not for the generous assistance of the honorable Colonial Secretary he would not have been able to carry through that measure, which he held to be second in importance to none in the colony. Since that Bill had been passed, the honorable member, in his position of chairman of the Central Board of Health, had been most active in the matter of drawing up a code of regulations by which all parts of the colony would be as carefully protected from the ravages of infectious disease as any part of the British dominions. As he had said before, he would not be doing justice to that honorable gentleman if he did not give him full credit for what he had done. But that was beside the present question. It was impossible that any set of men—of educated men selected from the pastoral interest of the colony—the “Dukes of the colony” as Mr. Trollope was pleased to call them—could do otherwise than show a large amount of intelligence in carrying on the departments of the Government; but that had nothing to do with the main issue before the country at the present time. Were they to be placed in the position, as pastoral tenants of the Crown—without having placed a policy before the country and that House, and that on the last occasion on which it would be possible for them to do so before a general election—to pull the wires, and return into that House a pastoral Government for all time to come? That was the main question at the present moment, let the Government burke it as much as they could. He was one of those who could not feel that confidence in those gentlemen, that would justify him in giving them his support, speaking as he did as a representative of the North Brisbane constituency. But he would go further and say, that on the main questions put forward for honorable members giving their confidence to the Government—put forward especially by the honorable the Premier and the honorable Minister for Works—for their attempting to dislocate the machinery of the Government at the present moment, the new policy of the honorable Minister for Works with regard to the construction of the railways was one of the strongest reasons why they should not grant them their confidence at the present moment. It did appear to him that the system which had been put forward, and which had been explained more completely in the correspondence that had been laid on the table, between the Government and Mr. Ballard, so far from being satisfactory to the country, was a policy which would be fraught with the greatest risk and danger to the future of the colony. The honorable member for the Kennedy had, on the previous evening, very ably dissected the plan of the honorable Minister for Works, and he thought that out of the mouths of the Government themselves



the strongest condemnation would be given to that system. The system was simply this, that for the future, the Government of this colony should hand over to one individual, who was appointed engineer and contractor of the railways, unlimited power, unchecked in any way, to construct those lines. He wished it were possible to take a different view of it; but, looking at the correspondence which had taken place between the honorable Minister for Works and Mr. Ballard, he thought he could show that out of that correspondence alone there was the most decisive proof of what he had stated. He would just take a few extracts from the different letters, to prove the correctness of what he had said. In No. 9 letter there was the following memo. of the Executive Council, initialed by all the Ministers:—

"Ministers recommend upon the within memo. of the Commissioner for Railways, and Mr. Ballard's letters, 3rd and 22nd July, 1872, that the services of Mr. Ballard be secured, salary £800 per annum, with travelling expenses added.

"As an addition to the salary named, the Government to be prepared to consider any claim to a bonus which Mr. Ballard may be able satisfactorily to establish arising out of savings effected in the works through his, Mr. Ballard's, agency.

"The Government to appoint a consulting engineer to the Northern Railway and the staff required to enable Mr. Ballard to carry out his operations, the Secretary for Public Works to arrange details."

That would show that the Executive Council themselves conceived that there should be, in addition to Mr. Ballard, a consulting engineer appointed for that line. Further, on the memo. of the honorable Minister for public Works:—

"It is submitted, therefore, that Mr. Ballard's services may be secured, upon the understanding that a consulting engineer will be appointed by the Government, to whom all designs, plans, specifications, &c., of important works will be submitted for approval before execution; but that otherwise his, Mr. Ballard's, actions will not be hampered in the construction of the works as an agent or constructing engineer."

Then, in a letter from Mr. A. O. Herbert to Mr. Ballard, it was stated:—

"The Government, however, will appoint an Engineer-in-Chief, who shall act as, and be styled 'Consulting Engineer to the Great Northern Railway.'"

Next, they had what Mr. Ballard's opinion was in reference to the matter:—

"My ambition was to be appointed Engineer-in-Chief for your Northern Railway, with the powers of a contractor's agent. Without this title, and the authority implied by it, I could but ill perform the duties I was prepared to undertake.

"If you cannot trust me as such, of course there the matter ends; but the 'Consulting Engineer,' with whom I am 'to confer,' who is to aid me

and give me 'every assistance,' would—or rather, *might*—hamper me, and would be too much like a superior officer, to enable me to carry out with vigor and success the simple operations connected with the construction of a cheap railway."

Now, in that letter, Mr. Ballard distinctly refused to accept the appointment, unless a consulting engineer was done away with. But, there was a further attempt made to bring that gentleman to terms, and a proposition was laid before the Crown Solicitor, as to whether it would be possible to retain the services of Mr. Ballard in that way. To that, the Crown Solicitor replied in the following terms:—

"It is quite impossible to frame any agreement upon the papers and correspondence submitted to me, as nothing has as yet been agreed upon.

"From the short conversation I had with you yesterday, I understood that Mr. Ballard required, amongst other things, to be appointed Engineer-in-Chief (without any superintending superior officer), to have the absolute power of entering into contracts on behalf of the Government, to carry out the proposed works, and to have absolute power of dismissal over the officers and employés. He also claims, by his letter, to be appointed Engineer-in-Chief of the Northern Railway, with the powers of a contractor's agent; and he says, without this title, and the authority implied by it, he could not undertake the work.

"I am of opinion that the Government cannot agree to Mr. Ballard's terms, for the following reasons:—

"By our Railway Acts the Commissioner for Railways is the person to enter into all contracts for the construction of such works, and he cannot depute his power to another. All engineers, surveyors, and other officers necessary for the execution of the duties of the Commissioner, except minor appointments, are to be made by the Governor in Council, and cannot be dismissed but by the Government.

"By the Railway Act of 1864 the title of Engineer-in-Chief was done away with, and officers, to be called Chief Engineers of Railways, are to be appointed, and their duties are to be defined by the Governor in Council.

"Mr. Ballard seems to consider a cheap railway the great desideratum. What the Government want, I take to be the construction of works, approved of by them, at a less price than a large contractor would tender to perform them for. This may be carried out by Mr. Ballard, as a Government officer acting directly under the Commissioner for Railways; and if by following the plan proposed by him a saving is effected, he would be entitled to such percentage as may be agreed upon. In this way there would be every incentive to economy of construction. At the same time, the incentive might be considered by the Government so strong as to require them to have some disinterested officer to superintend the works whilst in progress, to see that they are faithfully performed.

"And I would submit that, in whatever manner the works may be carried out, if the principle of allowing a percentage on savings is adopted, a rigid supervision of the works whilst in progress should be insisted on."

He wished honorable members particularly to notice the words—

“Mr. Ballard seems to think a cheap railway the great desideratum.”

From that correspondence he failed to see that there was a single check placed upon Mr. Ballard.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am sure the honorable member does not wish to be unfair; if he will read No. 17 he will see that the objection of the Crown Solicitor was immediately adopted by the Government.

Dr. O'DOHERTY had seen it—it was a telegram to the effect that the Government declined to enter into the arrangement. Now, what he had failed to see was, that the Government in any subsequent arrangement had been able to keep any check on Mr. Ballard. He would leave it to any honorable member of the Government to show that what he had stated was incorrect. He had very carefully read over the correspondence, and moreover, had discussed the matter with gentlemen outside who were well informed upon it, and he would say most emphatically that Mr. Ballard was at the present moment constructing that Great Northern Railway without there being one simple check upon him, as to whether that line would be properly constructed. He was perfectly aware that in order to meet the objection in the Crown Solicitor's letter, an arrangement was made with Mr. Ballard, that before constructing any portion of the line, the plans should be sent to Brisbane; but would anyone tell him, after the experience the colony had had of the manner in which contractors would construct those works, that the mere sending of the plans to the office of the Engineer-in-Chief, in Brisbane, would be any check whatever on the way in which those works were constructed in the North? There was no supervision, and it was the more dangerous to the colony, when already a large portion of our railways had been constructed in a similar way. Why, it was well known that they sent a contracting engineer to finish a line from Toowoomba to Dalby.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He made a cheap line.

Dr. O'DOHERTY would grant that, but the line had to be constructed over again.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: Well, then, the records of the House very wrong, inasmuch as it had been made a gross complaint by that House, year after year, that it was a waste of public money, and that that line was in the utmost degree of faulty construction, and that from its very commencement it had to be reconstructed. He would repeat, that from the example they had had of that very system, it was not very encouraging that they should be called upon to place their reliance upon any uncontrolled contractor or engineer. He would be very sorry indeed if in those re-

marks he was supposed to throw any discredit on Mr. Ballard, who, he was thoroughly convinced, was the best man in all the colonies that could be got for anything of the sort; and he was also convinced that Mr. Cross, who was occupying a similar position on the South-western Line, was also the best man for his work; but he still said, that the system was bad and rotten, and was a dangerous principle. Probably its fault would not be discovered for a long time; it might be not until an accident occurred long after the completion of the line, and then whom had the country to blame? What faith could they have in Mr. Ballard that the line would not be of faulty construction? Probably the line over the Main Range might not have cost more than any other railways in any other colony, had it not been constructed until Ministers had had experience, and were no longer victims of designing contractors. He would say, however, that the thousands of pounds expended on that line, over the Range, had not been thrown away, when they took into consideration all the precautions which had been taken that the line should be well constructed. “The proof of the pudding was in the eating,” for he ventured to say that, probably, in no Australian colony, or even in any part of the world, could they find a line carried over a range 2,000 feet high—a most dangerous range in fact—that had been at work for six or seven years without a single accident either to life or limb occurring upon it. Why, he had had a case of instruments lying there for years, everything beautifully polished and in order, waiting to be called upon; but fortunately for the colony, and unfortunately for his profession, they had never had a single call for any accident; it was extremely creditable, the way in which that line was carried out. He would warn the colony, and every man in it, that the system initiated by the honorable Minister for Works was of a most dangerous character, because there was no single check or any guarantee that the lines would be constructed with due regard to the safety of those who travelled upon them in future. He conscientiously took that view of the matter, and he was not alone in his opinions, as he had spoken to gentlemen who were as well qualified to form an opinion as any honorable gentleman on the Government side of the House—impartial men too; and from what they had told him, he was inclined to regard it as a most dangerous principle. Moreover, independently of the question of safety of construction, there was another objection to the new fangled system of the honorable Minister for Works—new fangled, although it was an old exploded system. That objection was, that there was no absolute security given to the public as to when those lines should be finished under the system of constructing the lines in little pieces—15 miles here and 15 miles there; and he could not see how, in the

construction of a great work, intended to remain for years one of the great arteries of traffic, such a system could be either a safe or an expeditious one. The House had no guarantee that such a system of construction might not occupy years in the construction of a few miles of railway. He looked upon it as an extremely dangerous system, and one that there was no excuse for the honorable member to have introduced. During five years they had been constructing railways, and in that time had received the fullest information to guard them against the designs of any future contractor—they had been bitten severely by those gentlemen, and what better education than that could any Government have? There could not be a man found who, after studying all that had occurred—the arbitrations and the trials in court, and all that had taken place—who could make similar mistakes in drawing up future contracts. At least, that was his opinion, and as far as regarded the strip of railway between Brisbane and Ipswich, he had heard men of experience say it was one of the simplest works that could be put before contractors; that there would be at least sixteen contractors tendering for it, and that it could be completed for very much less than the honorable Minister for Works could complete it for under his system. He did not wish to criticise the engineering points at all; but on reading over the correspondence with Mr. Ballard, he could come to no other opinion than that the arrangement made with that gentleman was one most dangerous to the colony. He did not care to enter generally into any other question, as the one he had touched upon was that which had most prominently dropped under his notice in the apology for a policy which had been put forward by the Government in the Speech from the Throne; and there had been so many able speeches made already, that he would not detain the House longer. As he had said before, he agreed with honorable members that the question at issue was simply whether there should be a Government in power at the time of the approaching general elections who only represented the pastoral interest, or whether those elections should be conducted by the representatives of the people. No honorable member could be surprised that he had no confidence in those gentlemen, and in their having a longer pull at the wires. They had had the opportunity several times, and had always returned a stronger number of their own supporters to that House; and he confessed that that want of confidence was owing to the admirable way in which the honorable Minister for Lands had administered his Bill, and owing to the way in which the honorable the Colonial Secretary had handled his redistribution, which he had remarked honorable members of the Opposition had been fools enough to swallow. He was of the strongest opinion that if the present Government were allowed to pull the

wires at the next elections, they would see the one great interest—that of the pastoral tenants—still continuing to overshadow the future of the colony. He did not wish to say one word disparagingly of the Government, or of their ability to carry on the departments under them; but he would say that it would be a great misfortune to the colony if they remained in office to have the control of the next elections.

MR. WIENHOLT: It was not his intention to have taken part in the debate, for, after the unanswerable and admirable speeches he had heard from honorable members on his side of the House, he could see nothing new left for him to say. His name had, however, been brought up by the honorable member who had just spoken, and he must say that after the insults offered to himself and the honorable member for the Mitchell, by that honorable member, and the insinuations he had put forward against them at a public meeting—to the effect that they would demand terms from the Government before they took their places in the House—the explanation given by the honorable member that evening had not been at all satisfactory, and was not sufficient for him, at all events. The honorable member said there were various descriptions of terms—and so there might be, and the honorable member might look upon it as such; but if so, he (Mr. Wienholt) could only pity him. As far as regarded himself, the honorable the Premier knew that immediately he found he could not leave by the steamer in time to enable him to be present at the opening of Parliament, he sent a telegram saying that he would be up by the next boat, and he did come. That was all that took place; and he would tell the honorable member for North Brisbane, and other honorable members, that as long as he had a seat in that House, he would not make terms with any party. He had listened very attentively to the speeches made by the honorable members opposite, and had also read those which were made before his arrival; and as far as he could see, their chief complaint was that the Government had adopted the policy of the Opposition. But if that was all, what fault could they find with the Government? Could they say, as representatives of the people, that they found fault with the Government for adopting their policy?

MR. KING: How about the lands?

MR. WIENHOLT: It appeared strange to him that the Opposition should make such a complaint as that—that the Government adopted a policy which the Opposition pretended was for the welfare of the people. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, complained very much—in fact, it was the only fault he found—that the Government were constructing the railways on a system dangerous to the country, namely, by small contracts. Now, he was quite convinced that the small contract system was the

best—that it was working well, and that it would work well. He was satisfied that the railways were being carried out admirably, and that the Government had appointed capital men to take charge of them—men in whom surely honorable members must have confidence. If honorable members were confident that the Government had employed the proper sort of men, then he would say that no better system could be adopted. The honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, said that the colony had already attempted the same system in the line from Toowoomba to Dalby; but even supposing that system had been tried before, and it had not been successful, in consequence of incompetent men having been placed in charge, there was no reason that, in the hands of a Government who were able administrators, such a system could not be carried out when proper officers were appointed, and he believed they were such as would give general satisfaction. He believed that one reason why the present Government should remain in office was, that they should have every chance of carrying on, as far as possible, that policy of railway construction which they had initiated. There had been a great deal said about the feelings of the people outside against the Government. Now, he believed that the feeling of the people of the colony generally—even of those of the city—was greatly in favor of the present Government; and he believed that one of the strongest proofs of the able administration of the country was, that notwithstanding the unrelenting and persevering attempts of the Press of the city to cry down the present Ministers, a general feeling of confidence in them was shown everywhere. They all knew the influence the Press had upon the people; and he himself was aware that many men who ought to know better, read leading articles in papers, and implicitly believed what they read; and if that was the case with men of education, how much more must it be with the unthinking portion of the community, and how much more must they be misled by an unscrupulous Press! He could only say that the Press of the city had done enormous injury. The honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, found fault with the Government, in addition to their railway policy, that they were supported by what he called the squatting party. The honorable member said that the administration had been good, and that the policy of the Government had been generous; but that they were supported by a squatting or class party; and, therefore, because the honorable member thought that—because they were supported by the pastoral tenants and carried on a generous policy—they were not deserving of the confidence of the country. He would be exceedingly sorry to see the present Government go out of office, and he believed, if they did so, it would be for the evil of the country. He was quite sure the country would not have confidence in any other form of Government. The general

election would take place in about two months and the honorable member appeared to think that great strength would be given to the Government by their pulling the wires; but how it could do so, he (Mr. Wienholt) was not aware, except by the employment of unfair means; and he was quite sure the Government would not stoop to do anything of that sort, or anything that was unfair to the country. But from the anxiety of honorable members opposite to get hold of what they called the wires at the next election, he was quite sure they had some motives which they would not explain to the House. It struck him that it was very curious to see the honorable member for Fortitude Valley supporting a number of honorable gentlemen as a future Government of the country, whom the honorable member so lately denounced in such strong terms. But he presumed the honorable member's principles were to oppose, and his policy to follow, those gentlemen whom he lately denounced in the blackest language. He should certainly oppose the amendment.

Mr. MILES regretted that after the very strong speech they had just heard, the time of the House should be taken up by the few remarks he had to make. He would first of all say, that he had never heard the honorable the Premier make a more temperate speech than he had made that evening. His chief charge against the Government was against the honorable the Minister for Works. That honorable gentleman had told them over and over again that his chief desire since taking office had been to do equal justice to all persons in the community, and that he had always endeavored to carry out that principle; but he would remind the honorable member, that before he took office, a sum of money had been voted for the extension of the telegraph from Roma to St. George; and that, although the honorable member had gone so far as to call for tenders, he had never accepted any of them. He believed the same course had been pursued in regard to the Mount Perry line, and that, because the honorable member had a political opponent there, he had cancelled the tender. So it was all very well for the honorable member to come forward and talk as he had done—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I may inform the honorable member that I have nothing to do with the telegraph lines.

Mr. MILES: The honorable member called for tenders at any rate. But that was not the only charge he had against him, for the honorable gentleman had talked a great deal about opening up thoroughfares, and of making roads in East Moreton. No doubt the honorable member had done so, but he believed that it was a great misfortune that the House should have entrusted the honorable member with the expenditure of so much money without having more control over it. The honorable the Minister for Works was now having a dam constructed at Roma,

though he had no Parliamentary authority whatever for doing so; but the honorable gentleman might be able to give some explanation to the House for it; and the real reason for it, he believed, was that he intended, at the next general election, to become a candidate for the representation of Dalby. But in addition to that, the amount that was voted for the construction of a road between Roma and Condamine was now being expended within the municipal boundary of Dalby. Now, on the Loan Estimates of last session, there was a large sum placed for the extension of the means of telegraphic communication between some of the towns of the colony; and he then had a motion on the paper proposing that a portion of the amount should be expended on a line from Roma to St. George. Now, he was assured, when the loan vote was before the House, that if he would withdraw his motion, provision would be made for the extension of the line from Roma to St. George; but, up to the present time, nothing of the kind had been done, but the telegraph wires had been extended in other directions to places of much less importance. Now, the only reason he could imagine for the line not being carried from Roma to St. George, while it was being carried between places of much less importance, was altogether owing to the circumstance of his sitting on the Opposition side of the House. As to the withdrawal of the criminal jurisdiction of the District Court of Roma, he was perfectly amazed when he heard of it, and he believed that some very strong pressure had been brought to bear upon the Government to take such action as they had done in the matter. The case on which the jury refused to convict was one of alleged cattle-stealing from the station of Bowen Downs, which belonged to Morehead and Young; and it was because the jury did not return a verdict against the prisoner that the jurisdiction of the court was abolished, and the whole of the population of the district put to the inconvenience of having to travel upwards of a hundred miles for the prosecution of any criminal case in which they were concerned—no matter how trivial the case might be. Now, he understood that the evidence of the principal witness in the case upon which the criminal jurisdiction of the court was suspended, was both untrustworthy and very deficient in some most important particulars, and, he believed, that if proper inquiries had been made, it would have been found that such was the case. From all that he had been able to ascertain about the case, he must say that it was the most extraordinary thing he ever heard of, that the Government should cast a stigma upon the population of a whole district because a jury declined to return a verdict on behalf of the firm of Morehead and Young. He was quite satisfied that great pressure must have been brought to bear upon the honorable the Colonial Secretary before he would have taken such a course as he had

done in this matter. Now, there was another case tried some time previously in the same court, with respect to the passing of a cheque that was dishonored by the bank when it was presented for payment. The jury in that case convicted the prisoner, but the judge denounced them for having done so, as their verdict was altogether against the evidence. The honorable the Colonial Secretary had said that it was impossible, almost, to get a conviction from a Roma jury in some cases; but he could tell the honorable member that, in one instance at least, and as to the particulars of it he had himself some knowledge, a Roma jury actually returned a verdict against an innocent man; and on his being brought down to Brisbane, and the circumstances of the case having been fully inquired into, he was very soon set at liberty. Now, he would ask, if it would not have been more warrantable for the Government to have abolished the jurisdiction of the court on the ground of a jury having convicted an innocent man, than on the ground that a man, who might have been guilty of the crime laid to his charge, had been acquitted? He maintained that the action which had been taken by the Government was altogether illegal, and that they had no power to do as they had done. For the same reasons as they assigned for the abolition of the criminal jurisdiction of the District Court of Roma, the Government would be as fully justified in abolishing the criminal jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of the colony. Now, as to the charge which had been brought against the Ministry, in the matter of their declining to open up the lands of the colony for the purposes of settlement in certain districts, he could inform honorable members that petitions had been sent, from time to time, to the Minister for Lands, from the inhabitants of Roma, asking that certain lands in the district might be proclaimed open to purchase and occupation; but those petitions had never been listened to. The honorable the Minister for Lands had spoken very strongly as to the liberality of the present Government in the matter of the opening of the lands for settlement, and especially under the Homestead Areas Act of last session; but it appeared to him a somewhat singular thing, that, and in the face of such a statement, none of the lands leased by the honorable the Treasurer, and which had been proclaimed open for selection, had been taken up; and more than that, not a single acre had been taken up of the proclaimed areas on Jondaryan—the run held by the honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Wienholt. Now, his great objection to the Government remaining in office was because of their having exercised their power in the partial way they had done in respect to the settlement of the people on the land under the Homestead Areas Act of last session. The Ministry had, under the powers they possessed by that Act, thrown open to

selection the lands held by their opponents; but they had not done so in the case of the lands held by their personal friends and their political supporters. A great deal of stress had been laid by the honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, on the great amount of expenditure by the present Government in the erection of new public offices in Brisbane, and the beautifying otherwise of the city. Now, he must say that he did not see the city had been beautified to any great extent by any public buildings the Government had erected; and he maintained that it would be more satisfactory to the colony if the Government were to give their attention to the throwing open of the lands of the colony for settlement, rather than to the beautifying of the city of Brisbane. Now, he believed that the honorable the Minister for Lands had received several petitions for lands in the district of Roma to be thrown open to settlement, but he had paid no attention to them; and he believed that the reason for that was, that the lands which had been applied for belonged to the supporters of the Government, and, therefore, they could not be interfered with. Now, that reason, if there was none other, would be sufficient to justify him in voting against the Government. The honorable the Colonial Secretary had said that the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba had made many charges in the House against people, both in their public and private capacity, and he laid great stress upon the point, and asserted, that in no single instance had the honorable member ever substantiated any of the charges he had brought forward. Now, by way of proving to the honorable gentleman that he had not been correct in making such a sweeping assertion, he would take the liberty of reminding him of the charges the honorable member brought forward, as to the treatment of some Polynesians, and of the way in which he had established the truth of those charges; and there was also the case of a gentleman who, even on the strength of his own admissions, was dismissed from the position he held at the time in the Civil Service. He did not wish to mention the name of the gentleman to whom he referred, but he thought he had said enough to satisfy the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, that the accusations he had made against the honorable member for Toowoomba, of having brought charges under the notice of the House, none of which he had ever substantiated, were not altogether correct.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had listened with the utmost attention to the whole of this debate; and he had expected that the honorable member for South Brisbane would, by this time, have addressed the House. He did not mean to accuse the honorable member of having retained his seat purposely to obtain any advantage, but he thought the honorable member would himself

admit that he would obtain an advantage by his not addressing the House until he (the Colonial Treasurer) had done so. Now, he must say that the charge which had been brought against the Government in the amendment on the Address in Reply, had come to assume a very different aspect from what it had at the commencement of the debate. At the commencement of this debate, a series of charges were made against the Government, all of which, as he considered, had been successfully refuted. The arguments which had been put forward by honorable members opposite had not maintained, to any extent, the charges that had been brought forward against the Government, in the amendment proposed by the honorable member for Ipswich. Now, it appeared to him that the sole object of the amendment, and, of course, the sole object of honorable members who supported it, was to oust the present Government from office; and that, no doubt, chiefly in order that they might have the manipulation of the general election that would have to take place shortly under the provisions of the Electoral Act that was passed last session. That, he believed, was the principal reason for the attacks that had been made upon the Government; and he further believed that it was well understood—not only in the House, but out of it—that such was the real object of the charges that had been brought against the Government. Now, he did not think the Opposition should have taken the position they had taken of attempting to disturb the stability of the Government at a time of so much importance to the colony as the present, and especially on the small grounds they had advanced in justification of their doing so. The honorable member for East Moreton had brought forward the charges against the Government on financial grounds; but those charges were, he thought, of such a nature that the Government would have no difficulty whatever in refuting them. The honorable member had attacked the Government for the credit they had taken to themselves in the Opening Speech for the present prosperity of the colony. Now, that might, under certain circumstances, be a very fair ground of attack; but the honorable gentleman in making such an attack seemed to have altogether forgotten the fact that, about two years ago, one of the charges then brought against the Government was that the colony was not in a prosperous condition. Now, he thought, if the Government were to be blamed, as on that occasion they had been for the want of the prosperity of the colony, they were fully entitled to take credit to themselves for the prosperity that subsequently existed in the colony during their tenure of office. The honorable member had also referred to the action the Government had taken towards the head of a highly respectable mercantile firm in this city, because of an infraction of the Customs regulations in the matter of certain goods that had

been consigned to him. Now, as the honorable the Colonial Secretary had informed the House, the gentleman who had been referred to had nothing whatever to do with the evasion of the Customs regulations that had been attempted. Now, he could not relieve the honorable member from the accusation that had been made against him of having alluded to that case in a most indelicate manner, by dragging in the name of the gentleman to whom he referred in the course of the remarks he considered it to be necessary to address to the House; although, as he very well knew that gentleman had no opportunity whatever of defending himself against the charges. Before making such charges as he had made, the honorable member should have asked that the papers relating to the case should be laid on the table of the House; and if he had done so, and had in that way fully informed himself upon the subject, he might not have spoken in regard to it in the way he had done.

Mr. HEMMANT: There had been no time to do so.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Well, if there had been no time to do so, the honorable member should have taken that and other circumstances into consideration, before making such charges in the House as might have inflicted very great injury on a gentleman who occupied a high position amongst the mercantile community of the colony. Now, without being asked to do so, he would, in order to the satisfaction of the honorable member for East Moreton, as well as of other honorable members, on the subject, lay the papers on the table of the House; but he would not trouble the House by entering into any details upon them at present, as he felt fully satisfied that the Government was in a position firmly to confront any motion that might be brought forward on the subject; and if honorable members would only read the papers for themselves, he was convinced they would be satisfied there was no ground whatever for the charges that had been brought against Mr. Donkin. It was quite true that the goods had been confiscated, but not, in any way whatever, on account of any conduct on the part of Mr. Donkin; and, indeed, the Government considered the case to be of so grave a nature, that knowing all the circumstances of the case, they felt it to be their duty to take steps to protect Mr. Donkin against any charge of even complicity in the matter so far as he was concerned. The Government asked the law officers of the Crown for their opinion on the subject, and the opinion that they expressed was, that there was no evidence whatever to justify them in entering upon any prosecution against Mr. Donkin. The honorable member had also brought it as a charge against the Government that, on behalf of the Savings' Bank they had sent in tenders for the 4 per cent. loan, at 90, while they knew that the minimum had been fixed at 86. Now, he deemed it would be considered a

sufficient reply to that charge to remind the House that the Government were the managers of the Savings' Bank as well as the advertisers for the loan; and they also considered that it would be to the interest of the colony to maintain the price of the loan at a high a rate as possible. But besides that they had to pay  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to depositors on their investments in the Savings' Bank; and the tender of the Government, at 90, would exactly enable them to meet that amount of interest for which they were responsible. The honorable member, in the course of his speech, had read some statistical information he had received from the Audit office, and he then went on to remark that he could not understand why it was, that although barely a month previously the Government had a balance of nearly a quarter of a million to their credit, the loan account had now been overdrawn to the amount of about £17,000. Now, he would inform the honorable member that, at the time to which he referred, the Government had to make provision to meet a bank overdraft amounting to £61,000; to retire Treasury Bills, £100,000; to meet Savings Banks' withdrawals, arising in consequence of the Amended Act, £50,000; to meet London engagements, £120,000; making, in all, £331,000. The amount that was realised by the loan was £435,000, so that the balance that was left to meet future expenditure was £104,000. Now, the general account of the colony, on the morning of the opening of the tenders, shewed that there was a bank overdraft to the amount of £61,000; and that the trust account was in credit to the amount of £215,000. Now, the Government requirements and their anticipated receipts stood in this position:—To meet bank overdraft, they required £60,000; to meet Treasury Bills, £100,000; for Savings Bank purposes, £150,000; and to meet engagements in London, £120,000; amounting, in all, to £430,000. To meet that, they had or expected to have trust funds to the amount of £215,000, and from anticipated sales of debentures £435,000, leaving a balance in favor of the Government of £220,000. Now, on deducting the amount that was due to the sinking fund, £126,000, it would be seen that the Government had remaining about £100,000 for future expenditure. As a matter of fact, the loan account was at present overdrawn to the extent of £17,000, while the revenue account was in credit to about £100,000, with a loan expenditure of about £30,000, and with £25,000 of Treasury bills to be provided for on the 31st of December next. Now, he thought that those figures would be accepted as a satisfactory refutation of the strong charges that had been made against the Government for the way in which they had floated the loan. The honorable member for East Moreton had taken exception to the statement that was made by the honorable member for Western Downs with respect to the advantages that had been

best—that it was working well, and that it would work well. He was satisfied that the railways were being carried out admirably, and that the Government had appointed capital men to take charge of them—men in whom surely honorable members must have confidence. If honorable members were confident that the Government had employed the proper sort of men, then he would say that no better system could be adopted. The honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, said that the colony had already attempted the same system in the line from Toowoomba to Dalby; but even supposing that system had been tried before, and it had not been successful, in consequence of incompetent men having been placed in charge, there was no reason that, in the hands of a Government who were able administrators, such a system could not be carried out when proper officers were appointed, and he believed they were such as would give general satisfaction. He believed that one reason why the present Government should remain in office was, that they should have every chance of carrying on, as far as possible, that policy of railway construction which they had initiated. There had been a great deal said about the feelings of the people outside against the Government. Now, he believed that the feeling of the people of the colony generally—even of those of the city—was greatly in favor of the present Government; and he believed that one of the strongest proofs of the able administration of the country was, that notwithstanding the unrelenting and persevering attempts of the Press of the city to cry down the present Ministers, a general feeling of confidence in them was shown everywhere. They all knew the influence the Press had upon the people; and he himself was aware that many men who ought to know better, read leading articles in papers, and implicitly believed what they read; and if that was the case with men of education, how much more must it be with the unthinking portion of the community, and how much more must they be misled by an unscrupulous Press! He could only say that the Press of the city had done enormous injury. The honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, found fault with the Government, in addition to their railway policy, that they were supported by what he called the squatting party. The honorable member said that the administration had been good, and that the policy of the Government had been generous; but that they were supported by a squatting or class party; and, therefore, because the honorable member thought that—because they were supported by the pastoral tenants and carried on a generous policy—they were not deserving of the confidence of the country. He would be exceedingly sorry to see the present Government go out of office, and he believed, if they did so, it would be for the evil of the country. He was quite sure the country would not have confidence in any other form of Government. The general

election would take place in about two months and the honorable member appeared to think that great strength would be given to the Government by their pulling the wires; but how it could do so, he (Mr. Wienholt) was not aware, except by the employment of unfair means; and he was quite sure the Government would not stoop to do anything of that sort, or anything that was unfair to the country. But from the anxiety of honorable members opposite to get hold of what they called the wires at the next election, he was quite sure they had some motives which they would not explain to the House. It struck him that it was very curious to see the honorable member for Fortitude Valley supporting a number of honorable gentlemen as a future Government of the country, whom the honorable member so lately denounced in such strong terms. But he presumed the honorable member's principles were to oppose, and his policy to follow, those gentlemen whom he lately denounced in the blackest language. He should certainly oppose the amendment.

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selection the lands held by their opponents ; but they had not done so in the case of the lands held by their personal friends and their political supporters. A great deal of stress had been laid by the honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, on the great amount of expenditure by the present Government in the erection of new public offices in Brisbane, and the beautifying otherwise of the city. Now, he must say that he did not see the city had been beautified to any great extent by any public buildings the Government had erected ; and he maintained that it would be more satisfactory to the colony if the Government were to give their attention to the throwing open of the lands of the colony for settlement, rather than to the beautifying of the city of Brisbane. Now, he believed that the honorable the Minister for Lands had received several petitions for lands in the district of Roma to be thrown open to settlement, but he had paid no attention to them ; and he believed that the reason for that was, that the lands which had been applied for belonged to the supporters of the Government, and, therefore, they could not be interfered with. Now, that reason, if there was none other, would be sufficient to justify him in voting against the Government. The honorable the Colonial Secretary had said that the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba had made many charges in the House against people, both in their public and private capacity, and he laid great stress upon the point, and asserted, that in no single instance had the honorable member ever substantiated any of the charges he had brought forward. Now, by way of proving to the honorable gentleman that he had not been correct in making such a sweeping assertion, he would take the liberty of reminding him of the charges the honorable member brought forward, as to the treatment of some Polynesians, and of the way in which he had established the truth of those charges ; and there was also the case of a gentleman who, even on the strength of his own admissions, was dismissed from the position he held at the time in the Civil Service. He did not wish to mention the name of the gentleman to whom he referred, but he thought he had said enough to satisfy the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, that the accusations he had made against the honorable member for Toowoomba, of having brought charges under the notice of the House, none of which he had ever substantiated, were not altogether correct.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had listened with the utmost attention to the whole of this debate ; and he had expected that the honorable member for South Brisbane would, by this time, have addressed the House. He did not mean to accuse the honorable member of having retained his seat purposely to obtain any advantage, but he thought the honorable member would himself

admit that he would obtain an advantage by his not addressing the House until he (the Colonial Treasurer) had done so. Now, he must say that the charge which had been brought against the Government in the amendment on the Address in Reply, had come to assume a very different aspect from what it had at the commencement of the debate. At the commencement of this debate, a series of charges were made against the Government, all of which, as he considered, had been successfully refuted. The arguments which had been put forward by honorable members opposite had not maintained, to any extent, the charges that had been brought forward against the Government, in the amendment proposed by the honorable member for Ipswich. Now, it appeared to him that the sole object of the amendment, and, of course, the sole object of honorable members who supported it, was to oust the present Government from office ; and that, no doubt, chiefly in order that they might have the manipulation of the general election that would have to take place shortly under the provisions of the Electoral Act that was passed last session. That, he believed, was the principal reason for the attacks that had been made upon the Government ; and he further believed that it was well understood—not only in the House, but out of it—that such was the real object of the charges that had been brought against the Government. Now, he did not think the Opposition should have taken the position they had taken of attempting to disturb the stability of the Government at a time of so much importance to the colony as the present, and especially on the small grounds they had advanced in justification of their doing so. The honorable member for East Moreton had brought forward the charges against the Government on financial grounds ; but those charges were, he thought, of such a nature that the Government would have no difficulty whatever in refuting them. The honorable member had attacked the Government for the credit they had taken to themselves in the Opening Speech for the present prosperity of the colony. Now, that might, under certain circumstances, be a very fair ground of attack ; but the honorable gentleman in making such an attack seemed to have altogether forgotten the fact that, about two years ago, one of the charges then brought against the Government was that the colony was not in a prosperous condition. Now, he thought, if the Government were to be blamed, as on that occasion they had been for the want of the prosperity of the colony, they were fully entitled to take credit to themselves for the prosperity that subsequently existed in the colony during their tenure of office. The honorable member had also referred to the action the Government had taken towards the head of a highly respectable mercantile firm in this city, because of an infraction of the Customs regulations in the matter of certain goods that had

been consigned to him. Now, as the honorable the Colonial Secretary had informed the House, the gentleman who had been referred to had nothing whatever to do with the evasion of the Customs regulations that had been attempted. Now, he could not relieve the honorable member from the accusation that had been made against him of having alluded to that case in a most indelicate manner, by dragging in the name of the gentleman to whom he referred in the course of the remarks he considered it to be necessary to address to the House; although, as he very well knew that gentleman had no opportunity whatever of defending himself against the charges. Before making such charges as he had made, the honorable member should have asked that the papers relating to the case should be laid on the table of the House; and if he had done so, and had in that way fully informed himself upon the subject, he might not have spoken in regard to it in the way he had done.

Mr. HEMMANT: There had been no time to do so.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Well, if there had been no time to do so, the honorable member should have taken that and other circumstances into consideration, before making such charges in the House as might have inflicted very great injury on a gentleman who occupied a high position amongst the mercantile community of the colony. Now, without being asked to do so, he would, in order to the satisfaction of the honorable member for East Moreton, as well as of other honorable members, on the subject, lay the papers on the table of the House; but he would not trouble the House by entering into any details upon them at present, as he felt fully satisfied that the Government was in a position firmly to confront any motion that might be brought forward on the subject; and if honorable members would only read the papers for themselves, he was convinced they would be satisfied there was no ground whatever for the charges that had been brought against Mr. Donkin. It was quite true that the goods had been confiscated, but not, in any way whatever, on account of any conduct on the part of Mr. Donkin; and, indeed, the Government considered the case to be of so grave a nature, that knowing all the circumstances of the case, they felt it to be their duty to take steps to protect Mr. Donkin against any charge of even complicity in the matter so far as he was concerned. The Government asked the law officers of the Crown for their opinion on the subject, and the opinion that they expressed was, that there was no evidence whatever to justify them in entering upon any prosecution against Mr. Donkin. The honorable member had also brought it as a charge against the Government that, on behalf of the Savings' Bank they had sent in tenders for the 4 per cent. loan, at 90, while they knew that the minimum had been fixed at 86. Now, he deemed it would be considered a

sufficient reply to that charge to remind the House that the Government were the managers of the Savings' Bank as well as the advertisers for the loan; and they also considered that it would be to the interest of the colony to maintain the price of the loan at a high a rate as possible. But besides that they had to pay 4½ per cent. to depositors on their investments in the Savings' Bank; and the tender of the Government, at 90, would exactly enable them to meet that amount of interest for which they were responsible. The honorable member, in the course of his speech, had read some statistical information he had received from the Audit office, and he then went on to remark that he could not understand why it was, that although barely a month previously the Government had a balance of nearly a quarter of a million to their credit, the loan account had now been overdrawn to the amount of about £17,000. Now, he would inform the honorable member that, at the time to which he referred, the Government had to make provision to meet a bank overdraft amounting to £61,000; to retire Treasury Bills, £100,000; to meet Savings Banks' withdrawals, arising in consequence of the Amended Act, £50,000; to meet London engagements, £120,000; making, in all, £331,000. The amount that was realised by the loan was £435,000, so that the balance that was left to meet future expenditure was £104,000. Now, the general account of the colony, on the morning of the opening of the tenders, shewed that there was a bank overdraft to the amount of £61,000; and that the trust account was in credit to the amount of £215,000. Now, the Government requirements and their anticipated receipts stood in this position:—To meet bank overdraft, they required £60,000; to meet Treasury Bills, £100,000; for Savings Bank purposes, £150,000; and to meet engagements in London, £120,000; amounting, in all, to £430,000. To meet that, they had or expected to have trust funds to the amount of £215,000, and from anticipated sales of debentures £435,000, leaving a balance in favor of the Government of £220,000. Now, on deducting the amount that was due to the sinking fund, £126,000, it would be seen that the Government had remaining about £100,000 for future expenditure. As a matter of fact, the loan account was at present overdrawn to the extent of £17,000, while the revenue account was in credit to about £100,000, with a loan expenditure of about £30,000, and with £25,000 of Treasury bills to be provided for on the 31st of December next. Now, he thought that those figures would be accepted as a satisfactory refutation of the strong charges that had been made against the Government for the way in which they had floated the loan. The honorable member for East Moreton had taken exception to the statement that was made by the honorable member for Western Downs with respect to the advantages that had been

derived by the colony from the way in which this loan had been floated, as compared with those that had resulted from previous loans. Now, for the information of honorable members, he would take the liberty of reading a summary statement showing the gross proceeds of previous loans, and the rates of interest that had been paid upon them. He found that the amount that was raised by loan in 1861, was £129,432 11s 5d., and that the interest came to £5 14s. 9½d. Then, the loan in 1863 produced £715,488 12s. 8d., and the amount of interest on the net proceeds came to £5 18s. 8d. The loan for 1864 produced £954,252 14s. 7d., and the interest upon it was at the rate of £6 12s. 1½d. The loan for 1866 produced £1,082,838 6s. 8d., and the interest came to £6 13s. 3½d. The loan for 1870 produced altogether £696,189 10s. 11d., and the interest came to £5 18s. 1½d.; and the loan for 1872 realised £435,825 11s. 8d., and the interest upon it amounted to £4 11s. 10½d. He thought that those figures afforded full and sufficient proof that the argument of the honorable member for Western Downs was not open to the objection that had been brought against it by the honorable member for East Moreton. Now, he must say that he thought there seemed to have been a desire manifested on the part of the press of the colony to cry down the value of the debentures. The leading newspapers in the other colonies had encouragingly noticed the experiment that was being initiated by this new colony, but the press of this colony had not done so; and the course that was taken by the leading metropolitan journal was altogether adverse to the sale of these debentures. He must say he considered that the Government had not obtained the full credit they were entitled to in respect to the success that had attended the floating of this loan, especially as at the outset they had the opinion of some of the leading financiers both in the colonies and in England against them, and he could not refrain from mentioning that the honorable member for South Brisbane had, through the columns of his paper and otherwise, given the weight of his authority as a financier, to obstruct, as far as he possibly could, the success of the loan. That was all of the transaction, which was one that, perhaps, the honorable member for South Brisbane might find greater grounds for objecting to than the negotiations of the Queensland loan. Perhaps it would not be well for the House that he should, at this time, go at any length into so dull a subject, in which it had been necessary to introduce so many figures. It was almost unnecessary, indeed, looking at the refutation which his honorable colleague at the head of the Government, and his other colleagues who had spoken, had given to the charges made against the Government during the debate. It was unnecessary, too, because the Opposition had shifted their ground, and the debate had

taken a definite turn. The position of the Government upon this question was as good a one as they could hope for, under the circumstances.

Mr. STEPHENS was understood to say that he was not prepared to follow the Colonial Treasurer in the figures he had laid before the House; but it appeared that the honorable gentleman had been arguing against a newspaper. Instead of troubling the House at so late an hour, he might say at once that if the honorable gentleman would send him the figures, to-night, with any remarks that he felt disposed to make upon them, they should all be published. It was quite wrong to lay the blame upon him (Mr. Stephens) of anything that appeared in the *Courier*; but he would say that he quite approved of what had appeared in that paper. He thought it would tend to the better temper of the House if he let the *Courier* clear itself, and he should not allude to that further. The first time the Government came before the House after election, he voted for a resolution exactly similar to the motion now before the House; and it might fairly be expected that he should vote for this one. He did so on the grounds that they were a class Government, consisting of members of one class of the community, that class being Crown tenants; that they had seized the reins of power for the purpose of using power in their own interests, being their own landlords. He should vote for the motion to-night on the same grounds. Events had proved, as events would prove, that he and those who voted with him were right. When a class maintained power for self-interest, even when it blindly thought that its own interest was coincident with the public good, it would take but one course; that was, bribing individuals and constituencies to consolidate its power. That could be seen from almost every speech of Ministers in this debate; it was shown to be a fact. The House had heard no defence from any Minister of the conduct of the Government, except this—"See the public works we have done." They did not refer to the care they had thus taken of themselves, as a class; but he did not hesitate to say they had done so at the public cost. They had been spending the public money, in their own interests. Every speech of the Ministry was an appeal to keep them in power, based upon the fact that they had spent public money from Nerang Creek to Cardwell. They had shown no higher appreciation of the position of a Government, nor of their functions, than that, and they rested upon their expenditure of the public money. From the beginning of their course to the present time he might follow them and find it all the same. But he should only allude to what had occurred in Brisbane, where there were contractors and other persons paid by the Government, going round the town endeavoring to excite opposition against the members for the city, and the argument used in almost every case was, "See what

money the Government have spent here." To maintain power for the interests of their own class, the Government endeavored to blind, as they wished, the constituencies by the expenditure of public money. But even in this matter they did not, in the House, confine themselves strictly to facts—or, rather, they did not take any pains to give them. He alluded to the clearing of the Brisbane River, which those Ministers had taken credit for. It was necessary that he should state again what he had already stated—that the only credit that the present Government deserved for the clearing of the river—a work very properly and carefully carried out, he admitted—was for spending the money and carrying out the plans which had been provided for them by the previous Ministry. He was not aware that any more money had been expended than what had been provided for the work by the sale of the dredge. The works, he thought, were stopped when that money was gone. The plan for clearing the river was prepared by the Postmaster when he (Mr. Stephens) was Treasurer; and the work could not then be carried out, only because the purchase money for the dredge had not been received. Postal and telegraphic communication had been taken credit for by the Government in the same way. They seemed to have forgotten that the line to Normantown had been projected preparatory to the extension of communication with England, and to take care that this colony should be in the position to take advantage of the connection *via* India; and that the line was in course of construction before the present Government came into office at all. Mr. Douglas was Postmaster-General when the plan was initiated. To this Government he (Mr. Stephens) gave credit for spending the money and carrying out the plan previously provided for them, but for no more. If they only referred to the facts of the case, they would find that those works had been initiated by honorable members who were now in opposition. They only carried out the works, which any Government must have done, when the money was voted by Parliament. He could not see that therein was any reason why they should be kept in office. A great deal had been said about the Government having a policy; but he was inclined to give them no credit for having had, or for having, a policy of their own. The Premier had read a great deal from the Governor's Speeches to show what the policy of his Ministry was since they came into power in 1870. But he (Mr. Stephens) remembered a Governor's Speech, delivered in 1870, also, when his honorable friend, the member for Fortitude Valley, was Premier, and he observed that there was not a single thing in all that was read, from first to last, of the policy which the present Government claimed, to-night, that was not to be found in the one Speech which he referred to;—it was the

shortest of them all, and it contained the whole of what had been spread over several Speeches. There were Bills for education and various other matters promised; and, further:—

"You will be asked to sanction and provide for the extension of the Railway from Ipswich to Brisbane in the Southern, and from Westwood to the Dawson, in the Northern Division of the Colony; for the construction of additional Telegraph Lines, for the improvement of our Harbors and Rivers, and for Water Supply to various districts and places.

"A Bill will be introduced containing the powers necessary to enable the Government to guarantee interest on moneys to be expended, by individuals or companies, in the construction of cheap lines of Railway."

Again—

"To prepare the way for the introduction of Bills for a Re-distribution of Electorates and a revision and improvement of our Electoral law," certain arrangements were proposed. Also: "an investigation into the state of the laws affecting Gold Mining."

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Hear, hear.

Mr. STEPHENS: But he should not detain the House: there was everything in that Speech of the policy claimed by the present Ministry. Yet, every Minister who had spoken in this debate had said they had a policy of their own! That was it! The House must presume, if they had one, that that was the one. The Government, from the policy of their predecessors under the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, had taken a little, now, for one Speech, then something more for another, and again a little more, as it was necessary, until finally the House saw that they had taken it all, and they now adopted it as their very own. Railway extension would not do, at first, because some of their supporters would not stand that; but they were quite sure that it would have to come some day, and they had staved it off as long as possible. They took their predecessors' policy, with a reservation: a piece now, with a readiness to take the balance when they were forced, but not before, and they had at last got to the railways. One honorable member had said that the previous Government were hopeless, and that the present Government had exercised great judgment in promoting the prosperity of the colony. The previous Government were hopeful of the prosperity of the country, and they desired that the public works should be initiated at a time when it could be done with economy; and so that the works should be completed, not before they were required, but when the prosperous times set in. They did not desire to put off those works until prosperity had arrived, when the cost would be greatly increased, and the labor market would be brisk; they required that the country should have the benefit of getting the works done

as cheaply as possible. It was exceeding want of sound judgment, he contended, to postpone the making of the railway extensions; it was bad policy, to put them off to dear times, when the works would cost a great deal more than if initiated before. No one knew now what they would cost. Yet, the only defence the Government had, was, that they had spent money judiciously; and, said they, it was necessary that they should be kept in office that they might continue to do so. He denied that any works would be stopped by a change of Government, as had been represented. He denied that the Government had spent the public money judiciously or fairly; but he maintained that much of the loans had been spent in bribery, not only to constituencies but to individuals. But that it was so late, he should give a few instances in proof of his assertions. The Government had given reasons why the House should go to work immediately, and why there should be no change of Government, to disturb the progress of the business of the country. How was it that they left the country nine months without a Parliament? It was necessary that the Supreme Court Bill should be passed, and that the railway should be proceeded with. Those were really the only things in the Speech. The Government had put the meeting of Parliament off as long as possible, and then said, "You must not turn us out of office, you will stop the public works, and there will be no money spent at all." How had they passed the recess? He did not wonder that they wished to put off the meeting of Parliament as long as possible. From the Premier's suggestions as to the course the Opposition would take in the event of succeeding to office, it appeared that he thought it was perfectly impossible for anybody to carry on the Government but himself; and he had fallen into a trap. With reference to the lawsuits in which the Government were engaged during the recess, he could not help saying that they must have had some very bad lawyers to advise them. Every Minister who took part in the debate, spoke as if Williams had no claim against the Government, when he sent in a claim for £30,000, ignoring the fact that a jury gave him a verdict for £13,000. With all the lawyers that the Government had, they could not help the contractor proving that they owed him that amount. It was perfectly clear that it would have been better to have compounded the matter for a few thousand pounds—for an amount that the costs of the action would cover. They spoke of him as if they did not owe him a penny, as if he had been trying to cheat them; whereas, he had succeeded against the Government. If they had not a good case, to hinder him from getting a verdict, it was their duty to have avoided going into Court, and to have saved the country much discredit and disgrace. Then there was the case of Davenport, about which he (Mr. Stephens) should make only

one remark. The House had been told that the Government had therein followed not a policy of aggression, but of resistance. He thought it was very like aggression, when they lodged the *caveats* against Davenport, to whom the Crown grants had been issued. When the Government allowed those deeds to be prepared under the circumstances stated, they were in fault, by their own showing. When Davenport got possession of the deeds, the fault was theirs. It did not appear that the fraud was in getting possession of the deeds, but in the acquisition of the land originally. What right, therefore, had the deeds to be prepared? Nothing could have justified the lodging of the *caveat*, except fraud in getting possession of the deeds. It seemed to him most objectionable, and he knew that a very considerable number of the Government's supporters agreed with him, that, just at the time the Government were endeavoring to negotiate a loan, they cast doubts upon the Crown grants of the colony. A proper desire for the public credit would have made them careful. If they were aware that the deeds had been improperly issued from the department, they should have regarded it as a mistake, an error of judgment; but they should not have acted as they did when a loan was put upon the market. However, if there was fraud in the original getting possession of the land, the whole blame was with the Government in preparing the deeds. He (Mr. Stephens) must have a word or two with the Treasurer about his loan. The honorable gentleman had been misinformed as to the value he had put upon the debentures. Several persons had asked him his opinion as to their likely value, at the time of issue; and he had told them that he expected the limit would be £90 or £92. Afterwards, he said the limit ought to be raised two per cent., which would make it £94. Upon the information he gave to two or three persons, friends of his own, tenders were sent in at £90.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Very few.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: You have not many friends with money.

MR. STEPHENS: He knew a few of them dropped it heavily afterwards. One of those persons, who had a little money at the Savings Bank, called on him, one night, and showed him debentures and a cheque-book or deposit slip, telling him that he had bought and paid for debentures at £90. Well, he found that the Colonial Treasurer was selling debentures here at £90, when the price in Sydney and Melbourne was stated in the newspapers to be £94. He thought that the Colonial Treasurer should know it, that it was without his knowledge, and he took the best way of mentioning it to him; and, if the same thing occurred next week, he should do it again, and think that he was quite right in making it public. The honorable member for Western Downs had approved and de-

fended as an excellent thing for the Government, the sale of the debentures at £86; and he crowned his argument by saying that only a few were sold at £94. Well, eight per cent. was too much of a difference. Two or three per cent., to float the loan successfully, would have been reasonable, and would have allowed a fair profit; but eight per cent. was too great altogether. There was only one other subject he (Mr. Stephens) wished to allude to. There had been a great deal of boasting about the new system of railway construction. If the present Government went out, the advantage would be lost. What was the plan? It was not new; but it was a plan that had been tried and discarded long ago in England. By it the Government had discarded every one of those checks which long experience had proved to be advisable in the construction of large public works.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY and the Hon. R. RAMSAY: No, no.

Mr. STEPHENS: He should be happy to be interrupted if the honorable member for Western Downs would show him any checks that were kept—if he would show him one check. He had read the correspondence carefully, and it informed them that every check that was usual was abandoned. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, had shown how completely the whole thing had been handed over to one gentleman, Mr. Ballard—doubtless a good man—who insisted upon having the total and sole control of everything given to him, who was to be allowed to appoint and discharge everyone, and to do everything as he liked. When the Crown Solicitor could not permit that, because it was according to law that everything should be in the hands of the Chief Engineer of Railways and the Government, what did he (Mr. Stephens) find? A letter was written to him by the Minister for Works, in which that honorable gentleman said Mr. Ballard's duty was to lay out the works—"the selection of the best line of railway, and the construction of the same;" and

"the Government will appoint, to assist you in your duties, such engineers, clerks, time-keepers, &c., as are required," &c.

The Government stuck to the letter of the law, and, although the Crown Solicitor said certain things were to be done by the Governor-in-Council, yet there it was as plain as possible that every check was removed. One officer was excepted from the control of the gentleman who was invested with such great powers. The honorable member for Warwick was horrified last night, because somebody had said that that officer was a relation, or married to a relation, of one of the Ministry.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: After the appointment was made.

Mr. STEPHENS: It was only known that he was going to be married? He should not

have alluded to it, but for the honorable member for Warwick.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. If anybody was responsible for that appointment, he was. He selected the gentleman from having watched his career for years, and from what he knew of him from other parties. At the time his appointment was suggested, and at the time it was made, there was no notion of the marriage which had brought about the relationship of that gentleman with a Minister of the Crown. It was wrong to bring those matters up in the House; but they had been mentioned. At that time, the Postmaster-General had no idea of being married—he (the Colonial Secretary) did not think the honorable gentleman was acquainted, if so, the acquaintance was very slight—with the sister of the lady whom Mr. Martin had married.

Mr. STEPHENS: It was very distasteful to him to make those references; but he must say that in this case the Colonial Secretary had exercised that skill for which he was famous, of picking out the most unfit men for particular offices; and the gentleman who had been appointed railway cashier was about the worst the honorable gentleman could have fixed upon for that office. And a nice fix he had got into with his police magistrates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Never.

Mr. STEPHENS: It was as well that the House should know the facts. The expenditure upon the railways would amount to about £480,000. For all that could be gathered from the papers which had been laid on the table, the House did not know whether the plan about which the Government were so enthusiastic would not involve an expenditure of £200,000 more upon the railways. The existing lines had cost that amount over and above the contract prices; and, because of that, the Government thought that the simplest way of carrying out the new lines was to have no contract. The new lines could not, like the others, cost more than the contract price—because there were no contracts! But under their arrangements, how did he know when the lines were to be finished, or what they were to cost! The gentleman in charge of the works was irresponsible until he should, say, betray his trust; and even then, how he was to be kicked out did not appear. All the money might be spent on half of the line; but everything that was to be done was to be decided by that gentleman. It did not matter to the argument that Mr. Ballard was the most competent man in the country. If he was spending his own money, the arrangement would be all very proper, and the Minister for Works was treating him as if he was. Suppose that something happened to Mr. Ballard—then the system would be proved wholly wrong, as experience everywhere had shown it to be. The Government condemned large contracts, in which he (Mr. Stephens) joined with them; but

they could have let the works out on small contracts, by which they would have been able to maintain all proper checks, instead of abnegating their own functions. The honorable member at the head of the Government accepted the responsibility of appointing the accountant.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Recommending him.

Mr. STEPHENS: It was the same thing. Would the honorable gentleman tell the House what previous experience that officer had of the difficulties likely to arise, and requiring technical knowledge, in his position? Could he tell the House, if public report was true, that another public officer had to be sent up to Rockhampton to teach the cashier his duties; and that he was so unsuccessful the first time, that he had to be sent up again; and that the Government thought they were paying too highly by the arrangement?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was not true. The honorable member was asking a question: there was not a word of truth in it.

Mr. STEPHENS: He had not heard the Premier say so. He would tell the Minister for Works, for his comfort, that he did not know anybody outside who would take his word for it; and, notwithstanding his denials, which the House had heard before, honorable members knew that the officer was a perfectly incompetent one, in his present position. There was some little difficulty in the matter. The person who had charge of the Northern Railway had never been able, as was known in the Audit Office and the Treasury, to present his returns properly. But that was going into details. What he wanted to point out, was, that in addition to the irresponsible man who had the control of the large expenditure for the Northern Railway, the only person who had any pretensions to be under ministerial direction, was one totally unqualified by professional knowledge or experience for the position he occupied. As a class Government, and as one who had no claim to his support as a Government, who had used the public money for the purposes of bribery, they could not expect to have his confidence, and he should vote against them.

Mr. HANDY: When he approached the question before the House, and when he should give his vote upon it, he meant to do so as an independent member. He meant to do so apart from coercion, apart from dictation, and apart from bounce of any kind. He thought that every honorable member would concede that when he was elected as a representative of the city of Brisbane, he was not to be influenced by any agitation whatever; that he was not to be forced, coerced, or blackguarded into giving his vote. He could not help expressing himself in those words, for he had been subjected to very painful observations—painful not only because addressed to himself individually, but because

they were forced upon him by persons who ought to have been the last to have done so. That must have been done to bounce and coerce him. Not only that, but the most infamous insinuations and falsehoods had been circulated in the town about him. He was in the House now to put himself right, and he hoped that when the excitement of this time was all over, and people had had the opportunity to calmly think what was for the interests of the colony, and for their own interests in particular, the course which he should pursue would be approved of. Only on Saturday last the population was called together in this city, and he had no hesitation in denouncing it as a most improper course for members to pursue who attended at that meeting; it was degrading to him, to the House, and to themselves, for honorable members to attend that meeting.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: Hear, hear.

Mr. HANDY: He used the judgment of a man far superior to himself in saying so; and when he troubled the House with a quotation—he thought they would have patience with him—it would be admitted that he was correct. That meeting was called to coerce him in giving his vote in the House. He had told honorable members that he had not communicated to anyone how he should vote, and until he had concluded, he meant to reserve to himself what way he would vote. In the "Debates on the Constitution Bill," in New South Wales, in 1853, he had the words of Mr. Wentworth, to whom and to whom alone the honor of a public funeral was given recently; and what did that gentleman say? On a question then pending before the Legislature of the colony, as the present question was pending before the Assembly, when the meeting of Saturday was held, a public meeting was held in Sydney and attended by several members of the Council; and of them Mr. Wentworth spoke:—

"I do not know whether it is worth my while to refer at all to the proceedings out of doors yesterday in regard to this question. But I cannot help expressing my deep regret that so many members of this House should, by taking part in these proceedings, have forgotten alike what was due to themselves and to the dignity of the Council. (Cheers.) I feel that by the part they have taken in this matter, they have destroyed the freedom of the representatives of the country: they have degraded the position which the Legislature of the country ought to occupy; and I lament much to see some honorable members, my friends, and who have on most occasions acted with me, consent to sink from the rank of representatives to that of mere miserable delegates."

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

An HONORABLE MEMBER: No, no.

Mr. HANDY (*reading*):

"My honorable and learned friend says 'No, no;' but I ask the House can any honorable members who have identified themselves with the proceedings of yesterday act in this House as free agents?"



Dr. O'DOHERTY: Yes.

Mr. FYFE: Like eagles in a dove-cot.

Mr. HANDY (*reading*):

"Why, if the arguments they have put forward were refuted to their own absolute conviction—if the declamation and reasonings, if they could be called such, used at that meeting, could be utterly demolished—blown into thin air—if it could be proved to demonstration that the Constitution this Bill offered was calculated to secure on the most permanent basis the free institutions, and the moral, social, and material interests of the colony, they could not now support it. They had become the delegates, the pledged delegates of a noisy and intemperate faction, and they must continue in that degraded position to the end. . . . I do feel regret, however, of no common kind, that the honorable and learned member should have committed himself in a manner so inconsistent with constitutional freedom, and that he should have descended from his high estate to degrade himself to the rank of a mere delegate."

That was the language of Mr. Wentworth in reference to a parallel case to this.

Mr. LILLEY: Very different.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL and Hon. R. RAMSAY: Hear, hear.

Mr. HANDY: He was speaking of members who attended a public meeting while the Council was in session, and pledged themselves to the course they would pursue. He (Mr. Handy) totally disapproved of the conduct of those honorable members who had attended that meeting. Why did they not call their meeting before the assembling of Parliament? He did so; and the honorable member for Fortitude Valley did so. Why did not his two colleagues do the same? Why did they wait until the question of want of confidence was raised against the Government, when they were required in the House to do their duty as honorable men? They called a public meeting. For what purpose? The evening paper answered that, in the following words:—

"An advertisement in another column summons the electors of North Brisbane to meet their two senior representatives, Messrs. O'Doherty and Edmondstone, at the Town Hall, to-morrow evening. Although the object of the meeting does not appear on the face of the announcement, it is just as plainly understood that the two city members have invited the attendance of their fellow-citizens for the purpose of considering the defection of their colleague, Mr. Handy."

What could any man call that but coercion? Could honorable members justify themselves? Was he to be called in judgment by Dr. O'Doherty, in the Town Hall? If he was to be, he must hold a very miserable position as a member of the Legislative Assembly. But it was not the first time that Dr. O'Doherty stood in judgment in that hall upon members of the House. To attend the meeting was improper while a case was pending in the House; and he (Mr. Handy) believed in the principle laid down by Mr. Wentworth, which was the proper one for a

gentleman to act up to who was a member of the Legislature. He had spoken to the people of Brisbane before the session commenced. If he was not let into the secrets of the Opposition, that was not his fault; but he was not to be driven into a course contrary to his conscience and judgment, and he reserved to himself the right to vote according to his conscience and judgment.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear,

Mr. HANDY: So much for the public meeting. Motives had been attributed to him, he was insulted by the language used, and he was prejudged. Several members of the House addressed that meeting; certain ex-members, Billy Brookes, and Mr. Simon Fraser; a young gentleman named G. H. Newman, who took a little flutter preparatory to the general election, and who he (Mr. Handy) heard, some time ago, was to oppose him. He left the future to the people of Brisbane. If he was worthy of their confidence they would elect him; if they thought he was not worthy of it, he should feel that he had done his duty for their advantage and for that of the general public. But while he held a seat in the House, he would not be bounced or coerced to vote any way. Mr. Fraser addressed the meeting and most distinctly imputed improper motives to him, and prejudged him. He said:—

"Dr. O'Doherty had told them that evening that, in order to give the Ministry any chance of successfully meeting the Opposition, it would be necessary for them to make a bargain with a long-headed Scotchman; it occurred also to him (Mr. Fraser) at the time, that to give the Opposition a chance of success it would be necessary to make a bargain with an Irishman. He (Mr. Fraser) was not a member of the Legislative Assembly, and, therefore, he had not the same delicacy in dealing with Mr. Handy as was very properly displayed by his colleagues. He was, however, one of Mr. Handy's constituents, and if what they heard concerning that honorable member was true, he had a just right to canvass his conduct. In dealing with this question, he held they had nothing to do with small details. They had to look at the broad distinctive principles which separated the two parties in the past, and ever should separate them. If they did not send members into the House to be merely delegates, and bound their hands, they at the same time sent them in pledged to some great leading principles. They had sent in Mr. Handy to oppose the present Government, and support the action of the Opposition. And he (Mr. Fraser) could hardly understand the feelings of honor possessed by a man who could boast of riding thousands of miles in the liberal interest, and yet made it his point to stand aloof from them on the present occasion."

Who was this Mr. Fraser who had dared to speak of him (Mr. Handy) in that way? Three years ago, Mr. Fraser rode on a very high horse, and called a meeting in the Town Hall, to condemn Mr. Lilley, then the head of a Liberal Government, and now the champion of the Liberal cause; and he was supported by Dr. O'Doherty—for whom he (Mr. Handy)

had a very great respect, and of whom he did not wish to speak offensively. If he spoke offensively, he hoped it would be remembered that he was speaking under great irritation; he did not wish to give offence. When the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was in Sydney, three years ago, Mr. Fraser called a meeting to give an account of his stewardship; but hardly a syllable did he give of that, but turned upon the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, behind his back, and said he was in the company of improper persons—he was rolling in the mud—that the devil might be reformed, but that Mr. Lilley was beyond redemption. And that was the man who came forward to criticise him! What did he care for Mr. Fraser? His opinion he valued very little, although one of his constituents. Mr. Brookes was one who wanted to turn out the Liberal Ministry, and who, while a member of the House, held a contract to supply hardware to the Government. And the honorable member for Kennedy had addressed the meeting, and was very kind indeed. He said—

“There were streams of corrupting gold flowing in large volumes out of the public offices of the city,”

to corrupt the inhabitants of Brisbane. “But,” said that honorable member,

“he would tell those who laid themselves open to that imputation, that if they had collared the purse, they would probably be like a notable example in history who preceded them long ago, who was also a purse-bearer, and meet with a similar fate;”—

meaning Judas Iscariot. And that idea was repeated by the honorable member for Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, this evening.

DR. O'DOHERTY: Hear, hear.

MR. HANDY: The honorable member for Kennedy said further, when addressing the mob outside the House—the people ought not to be addressed by a member of the Assembly when a case was pending in the House—and what he had said was repeated by Dr. O'Doherty, this evening—that they were doing the work of getting rid of a Government that had no policy:—

“Half of that work had been done, and he thought it unnecessary to ask if they were to continue the fight, when up to the present they had nothing but laurels.”

Did the honorable member want more than that; did he want office? He wondered, if the honorable member was speaking on behalf of the Opposition, what he meant; certainly he was not speaking on his (Mr. Handy's) behalf. Mr. Brookes was another gentleman who addressed that meeting, and he made use of the following words:—

“With regard to this gentleman who was misbehaving himself—perhaps when he was told by such an important and influential meeting as this that while he had the honor of representing this constituency, he had also the duties of a representative to perform, he would perform that duty.

Duties of this kind were debts of honor which should be honorably paid. No constituency would press harshly against any member, and he thought that Dr. O'Doherty went a great way when he said he would leave himself entirely in the hands of his constituents. They did not want him to do this. They elected men of brains, of education, and of consistency to represent them—men upon whom they could depend to faithfully carry out their desires at all times, and especially in times of temptation.”

Now, Mr. Brookes, when he spoke of temptation, imputed wrong motives to him. He had mentioned that gentleman before, and no doubt he was anxious to get a return of Government patronage. The next speaker was the honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, and of his speech he could not help saying that it was one continued attempt at coercion of him as his colleague. If any honorable member read that speech, he would see that, throughout, the honorable member summoned everybody in Brisbane to use their influence to coerce him (Mr. Handy) to vote with the Opposition. The honorable member entreated them to see that their votes were not rendered nugatory by the action of the other honorable member:—

“There was no doubt whatever that Mr. Handy's absence from the Chamber on those two days had enabled the Government to stave off what would have been an inevitable vote of the Chamber on their conduct. As he had said before, he believed that Mr. Handy was acting under a mistaken view, and he sincerely trusted that if the constituency took his (Dr. O'Doherty's) view of the matter, they would use their legitimate influence with him to attend the House on Tuesday next, and take the course he should take in view of their interests.”

In fact, the honorable member went on repeating the same thing over and over again, and calling upon the crowd to make him (Mr. Handy) vote. But was he to be carried at the tail of the honorable member? Was it because the honorable member was one way of thinking that he was bound to support that way? When the people of Brisbane elected him, they elected him as an independent member, and to follow his leader; but he had no leader now, and was in that House to exercise his own conviction. And who was the leader he was to follow? If it had been the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, there would be something like order; but that honorable member had stated over and over again that he was a free lance, and not the leader. He had been elected, most decidedly, whilst the dead lock was going on, and whilst the liberal policy was being forced into existence, and he had promised to support his leader; but when he had no leader, when the honorable member, Mr. Lilley, repudiated that position, and abdicated it, he could not do more than do what he always would do, namely, endeavor to carry out those principles which he conceived to be for the benefit of his constituents. What he

had to consider was, whether he should give his vote as a conscientious representative, or merely under the judgment of a meeting at the Town Hall. He would say again, most distinctly, that he would not be forced to give his vote any way, but would give it according to his best opinions and judgment; and in order to come to a proper conclusion, he had been carefully studying all the points. It was true he might be blamed for his absence on the Thursday, but certainly not for Friday, as the honorable member for Toowoomba was then absent. He intended to give his vote on two points; the composition of the two sides of the House was one, and the other was what he considered to be the best policy for the country at the present time. Now, as to the advantages and the disadvantages of the present Government, he might say that there were many faults he could find with them; he did not quite approve of the manner in which persons had been placed on the roll of magistrates by the honorable Colonial Secretary, who were not thought by the public to be proper persons to be on the roll. He did not approve of the litigation which had been carried on by the Lands Department; and there were various other matters, all of which he wished to see attended to, and of which he had notices in his pocket. On the other hand, he believed that the honorable member at the head of the Government was very sincere in what he said. To the honorable Minister for Lands he gave credit for the administration of his department, although he had been rather unfortunate, and he believed that it would be very difficult to find a Minister for Lands who would be bold and honest enough to make the affidavit the honorable member had made. Of the Government generally, he could say that they were compact and consistent, although they might have their faults. On the other side, there was the Opposition. In the first place, there were honorable members there for whose opinions and judgment he entertained the highest respect; the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, for instance, of whose judgment and patriotism he had always felt the greatest admiration. There were also other honorable members; but then he asked himself, where was their consistency—where their policy? He could not understand, although he had tried to do so, how the Opposition were connected together for the present purpose of vote of want of confidence. How the honorable member for Fortitude Valley could support the honorable member for Ipswich was a puzzle to him—

Mr. LILLEY: No. I support the principle.

Mr. HANDY: He remembered very distinctly, after his election for the Mitchell, attending a meeting of the Opposition, at which he was one to elect the honorable member for Ipswich their leader, to conduct their business. Well, the honorable member was elected, but the most extraordinary pro-

ceeding took place when the House met, for the honorable member was nominated for the Chair, and abandoned his party. Was that a man, he now asked himself, that anybody could follow? He recollected the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, on the occasion of a vote for a pension to the late Speaker, Mr. Elliott, saying that he would not hold out a stronger temptation to a Speaker than his position; he would not vote for a pension to a man probably who might end a long life of political treachery by taking the Chair; and he also recollected the same honorable member going to the Downs to confront the honorable member for Ipswich; he also recollected him ejecting the honorable member out of his Government: therefore, it was an extraordinary thing that the honorable member could now support such a man.

Mr. LILLEY: A question of principle.

Mr. HANDY: It was strange that a question of principle would bring an honorable member to support the very man he denounced from the hustings at the election for Eastern Downs. It was strange also that the honorable member for Wide Bay, last session, should, because he was dissatisfied with the Additional Members Bill, have skeddaddled in the middle of the dead lock, leave his party to fight out the battle, and never appear again during the session. He therefore could not be blamed if he had some doubts as to the combination of honorable members of the Opposition. If he went further, there was the honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, and the two honorable members for East Moreton. Well, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was anything but pleased at the conduct of those honorable members last session, as honorable members would perceive on referring to "Hansard" of last session, page 988. When he remembered all those incidents, he naturally felt inclined to reserve his judgment, and consider what was best to do—whether he should follow the honorable member for Ipswich, and the party after him, and give his vote against the Government. Should he support such an heterogeneous party as the Opposition was, or what? Taking all things into consideration, he followed the question farther, and came to the real question before the country—the policy of both parties. On the one hand, there was a promise from the honorable member at the head of the Government that he was sincere in his wish to carry through the Education Bill before the dissolution of Parliament, and there was no reason to doubt that honorable member; and if he would give a guarantee that he would carry it through—a Bill he (Mr. Handy) approved of with all his heart—he thought it was the best thing that could be done. It ought not to be made a political question at all, and he would regret to hear it made a party question at elections, as it would be a most unfortunate thing for a young colony to see religious discord and bloodshed. On the other side, there were

elements of disunion on that question, whilst he would rather see that Bill pass than anything else. There was another question, a local one, which preyed strongly on his mind, and that was the railway question. He had to look at that in the way in which it was viewed by the Government and by the Opposition, as it was a question affecting every person in North Brisbane, and was one which every owner of property must look upon as of great importance. He had in his hand a memorial addressed to the members of North Brisbane in favor of the policy of the Government, and it was signed by 600 persons, including some of the most respectable, influential, and thinking residents in the city, and was, therefore, a document he could not despise or overlook. He knew what the opinion of the meeting on Saturday night was, and knew also what a crowd could be gathered on a Saturday night; and whilst he valued their opinions, when he saw men of influence putting their names to paper, he must hesitate as to the course he should pursue. The Government had declared that they meant to carry the railway across the river at Oxley, which was most decidedly to the interests of the people of North Brisbane; and, if that were alone to decide his judgment, he was bound to support the Government, unless, indeed, the Opposition would carry it that way themselves. At any rate the Government were pledged to do it, as they had announced it in the Speech from the Throne, and the plans and sections had been laid on the table. As to the relative merits of the two lines there were some figures, which would probably be interesting to the people of Brisbane, and also to the honorable members of that House. The distance between the point approved at Oxley, and the distance across the river at Oxley down on the north side, was about the same distance, within one-sixth of a mile, as to South Brisbane. Now, the cost of resuming property on both lines had been valued at the following amounts. The line coming to South Brisbane would cost, as regarded the value of land and other property to be resumed, £51,569, whilst the value of land, &c., *via* Oxley, would be £8,841, making a difference of £42,728 more on the south side than on the north. Now, he considered that that was a matter for the deep consideration of every honorable member of that House. Was that difference to be paid for the value of property, &c., at South Brisbane more than on the north side? But, again, the total expenditure to the south side from Oxley, without crossing to the north side, was £139,842 2s. 6d., and the total cost on the north side, including the bridge at Oxley, was £134,201, making a difference in favor of the railway coming from Oxley on the north side, of £5,640. That also, it must be remembered, covered the cost of a bridge at Oxley, which would be £35,159, at least that was the estimated cost by the Engineer-in-Chief; and he had

authority to say, that Mr. Cross, the bridge engineer here, would take it at that price to-morrow, and build it for that sum if the Government would give it to him. So far then as regarded the question of railways, that was the plan proposed by the Government on the one side; and they had promised in the Speech to lay the plans, sections, and field-books on the table of the House. He judged the work not as a representative only, but as an inhabitant of Brisbane, and he would say that the line ought to cross the river at Oxley; whereas, if it went to South Brisbane, it never would cross the river. The Opposition said they would take it into North Brisbane by the present bridge; he believed the honorable member for South Brisbane was a member of the Corporation when that unfortunate structure was started, and he believed the honorable member had taken the whole weight of it on his back, and now made it a stalking-horse. The Government were pledged to bring the line in, in the cheapest manner for the whole colony; and also, he believed it would be the most useful route for his constituents. It was more than likely that the terminus would not continue in the heart of the city, as the most proper place to take it to deep water would be at Eagle Farm Flats; but if it was brought to the South side, he was very much afraid that the bone of discord would be raised by-and-bye, because he suspected the presence of the honorable member for West Moreton on the Opposition benches, and also the presence of the honorable member for Ipswich; there was too much sprinkling of Ipswich joined with South Brisbane, and he would, therefore, sooner see the question settled, once for all, than see it go on. As to the policy of the Opposition on the same question, he must say that he placed very little confidence indeed in that of the honorable member for South Brisbane, although that honorable member and others had given a distinct promise that the line should cross the river. He had been rather surprised by a statement made by the honorable Minister for Works on the previous day as to the Executive Minute made by the honorable member for South Brisbane, and he had challenged the honorable gentleman to produce it, and there it was before him. The third paragraph of it was in reference to the best mode of approaching Brisbane—that was when the honorable member for Ipswich was Minister for Works, and the word “South” was altogether written in a different handwriting to the contract. He could scarcely believe the honorable Minister for Works when he had said so on the previous day. Afterwards, when it was initialled, it was stated that “Ministers recommend.” It was perfectly amazing to him when he saw it, and he could hardly believe his eyes. And so when the honorable member for South Brisbane had a hand in that, and now came and promised to bring the line to North Brisbane, he (Mr. Handy)

must hesitate before he believed it. At the same time, also, when the honorable member for Ipswich was Minister for Works, there was a letter addressed to him by Mr. Thorne-loe Smith, the engineer, about the site for a railway terminus at South Brisbane; one paragraph of which was, "opposite Parliamentary Buildings." Now, the intention of the honorable member for Ipswich, to have the railway terminus on the south side, was thus clearly shown. Again, on the 23rd May, 1870, Mr. Smith wrote to the effect that the new survey finished at the Alice-street ferry, and in order to allow ample length of line for station purposes, and so on; which was another proof of the intention to have the terminus on the south side. It was generally known that during the administration of the honorable member for Ipswich, large contracts were given out, and that both engineers and contractors made fortunes out of those contracts, and afterwards went out of the colony to spend them; but the policy of the present honorable Minister for Works was to give the work out in small contracts, so that men of small means could take them and benefit by them, which was a distribution of work which the people, especially the poorer class, should encourage. Another authority had stated that it would be evident that the intention at that particular time—he referred to the Macalister Administration—was, that the railway should come to South Brisbane, and there only, the terminus being opposite to Bell's store, or just where the honorable member for South Brisbane had some land to sell. He must, therefore, consider which was the best place for the people of North Brisbane; and when he had received the memorial which was signed by those people who were accustomed to consider the amount invested in property, all of which would go to ruin if South Brisbane was to be the terminus, he was bound to consider well what course he should pursue. He believed that whatever way he voted, the people of Brisbane would say, when they had time to think over it, that he deserved credit for calm judgment, and for not rushing into the gap too hastily.

Mr. J. SCOTT: At such a late hour as the present, it might be said that it was hardly necessary that he should make any observations, nor was it his intention to do so at any length. He had long ago made up his mind which way he should vote, and, after listening most attentively to the speeches which had been made by honorable members opposite, he had not heard anything to alter him in the conclusion he had arrived at, but rather on the contrary, he had a great deal to confirm him in that conclusion. Now, the Government had been twitted by honorable members opposite with having no policy; but of the Opposition, although they had not put forward any policy, two honorable members, one for North Brisbane and the one for South Brisbane, had shadowed forth very

clearly what the policy of the Opposition would be in regard to the Northern Railway. Both those honorable members stated that the policy now being pursued by the Government in reference to that line was not a right one, and that the men to whom the responsibility was left were not the proper men; so the inevitable deduction from that was, that the moment the Opposition came into power, the works on the Northern Railway would be stopped, and that every obstacle would be put in the way. The whole end and object of honorable members opposite, if once they got on to the Treasury benches, would be to do as they had done before, namely, to work for the aggrandisement of the South, and for the evil of the North. There had been no Ministry in power who had ever given the North anything like fair play until the present Government took office, and from those gentlemen there had been something like fair play, and something like just Government; and had he had no other reasons for giving the vote he intended to give, the statements made by honorable members opposite, as to what would be the case in regard to the Northern Railway, would make him vote against the amendment.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: I never stated anything.

Mr. J. SCOTT would beg the honorable member's pardon. The honorable member stated that the principle was a bad one, and that the contracts should be given to large men.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: No.

Mr. J. SCOTT: He held that one of the principal points of the policy of the present Government was, that the railways should be made economically, and by degrees; that large sums of money should not be expended at once, but should be extended over a considerable time. Another point was, that the labor market should not be so disturbed as to interfere with private enterprise that was going on. But the Brisbane people were not contented with that, they wanted large sums of money expended in the South, and the works on the Northern line stopped; and he believed that if honorable members opposite were in office to-morrow, they would do that. They would most probably call for tenders for the Northern line, and then stave off accepting them, from time to time, and the result would be that the line would be stopped. Northern members knew very well what those honorable gentlemen had done before, and he would warn one Northern honorable member who had taken a seat at the back of the House, that one result of the amendment would be, to injure his constituents. Things in the North were now rising out of the state of depression in which they had been; but if there was a change of Government, the first thing would be the stoppage of the line, and then woe to Rockhampton and the North. He intended to vote for the motion, and against the amendment.

Mr. LILLEY said he was not at all astonished to hear any statement that might be made by honorable members on the other side of the House with the purpose of depriving the Opposition of any portion of the credit that was due to them for anything they had done while in power. The honorable member who last addressed the House seemed to say that the proposition for the extension of the Northern Railway emanated from honorable members now on his side of the House; but he would show to the honorable member that such was not the case; and that, on the contrary, it emanated from the Opposition, when they, of course, were in power. In the Opening Speech of the session of 1870, when he (Mr. Lilley) was at the head of the Government, there occurred the following passage, and he would ask the particular attention of the honorable member to it:—

“You will be asked to sanction and provide for the extension of the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane in the Southern, and from Westwood to the Dawson in the Northern Division of the colony.”

Now, that was a specimen of the value of the statements that had been made all along as to the railway policy of the Government being their own; whereas, as the passage he had read showed, it originated with the Opposition, and was only adopted by the present Government because of its being forced upon them. Now, every honorable member would, he thought, be guided as to the decision he might come to in giving his vote on this occasion by considerations for the constituency he represented. And he wished at once to disclaim the imputation that had been made against him, that he was moving in this matter from anything like a personal motive. He was acting with the Opposition in this matter solely as an independent member of the House. It had been said by the honorable the Minister for Works that he had made some bargain with the Opposition; that he should take some place in the new Government, should the honorable member now at the head of the Government have to retire; or that some other inducement had been held out to him to vote against the Government. Now, nothing of that kind whatever was the case. He was sorry the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Handy, was absent, because he believed it might do him some good if he heard what was thought of the course he had pursued on previous occasions, and which he was about to pursue now, as he alleged, on public grounds, and not from personal motives. Now, it would be found that in 1870, honorable members, with whom he was to vote to-night, on this side of the House, were to be found, in a large majority, voting for putting him out of the position which the honorable the Premier now held. If anyone, therefore, were to be moved by vindictive motives, or to put aside his sense of public duty, in voting on this ques-

tion, he thought it might almost be allowed that he would be somewhat justified in doing so, because the attacks that were made against him charged him with impurity of life, neglect of public duty, recklessness in the expenditure of public moneys, by entering into contracts that were not for the benefit of the colony—and other misconduct of a wholly personal character; and those charges were all made against him from personal or otherwise interested motives. Now such a motion made against a man from personal motives, if anything could, would have been likely to have induced him to depart from the strict line of public duty under circumstances like the present. But did he turn round and vote against the men who then voted against him, and vote with the party who had opposed him? Did he vote with his personal friend, and, let him say, his strong personal friend, at the head of the Government? Did he, under such circumstances, turn round and vote against the men who vilified him, and who voted against him, and cast him from office with apparent disgrace? No. He did nothing of the kind; but, on the contrary, he voted with them, because they professed, at all events, to be guided by those principles which had been the guiding political policy of his life. Now, if he had any influence over the mind of Mr. Handy, he would ask him, as an honorable man, before he recorded his vote—he would ask him, in the interest of truth and justice, to give it to the maintenance of that policy which he was returned to uphold; and, therefore, against the present Government. Now, he asked him to do that before it was known, by any honorable member in the House, how he was to vote. The honorable member was elected to oppose the present Government; and he was elected not merely to follow him (Mr. Lilley), but to support the leader of the Opposition, whoever he might be, in opposing the existing Government. The honorable member had kept those with whom he had always acted up to the present time in total ignorance as to the way he intended to vote on the present occasion. Now, for his own part, he would inform the House and the country that he was to vote against the Government, and why he was to do so. The honorable member at the head of the Government and he, were, as he had stated, warm private friends, and it was well known that they had been engaged together, for several months past, in the preparation of a measure which, should it be passed by the House, in anything like the shape it was in when it left their hands, would, he believed, be of very great benefit to the rising youth of the colony. Now, it was impossible for anyone to be associated with the honorable member in so intimate a way without coming to form the highest esteem for him; but, notwithstanding all that, the honorable gentleman had never had any occasion, throughout the whole of the time they were so closely

engaged together on that important work, to come to any other conclusion than that he was to vote against the Government. Now, there had been a very great amount of rubbish talked against the Government, and there always was a very great amount of rubbish talked on such occasions as the present; but there was one very substantial complaint against the present Government which they had been judicious enough not to raise, and which he might yet refer to. Now, his own reason for voting against the present Government was this, that they obtained their present position by violence, and that they had maintained it by violence to the Constitution. There was, for example, the five months' adjournment which they obtained—and which had been delicately mentioned as somewhat of a strain on the Constitution, though it was, what he would call, by a more proper term—a violation of the Constitution. They had also stolen the policy of the Opposition, which was, he maintained, another unconstitutional proceeding;—but they had carried it into effect only so far as suited their own purposes. Now, he thought it was a somewhat arrogant statement of the honorable gentleman to make, that no five or six honorable members could be found on the Opposition side of the House that were so sufficiently agreed in a policy as to be able to form a Ministry, and that he and his honorable colleagues might, therefore, expect that they would continue to hold office *quamdiu se bene gesserint*. It had also been urged over and over again in the course of the debate that the Opposition had not stated what their policy would be if they succeeded in defeating the Government. Now, he would tell the honorable members of the Government and their supporters, that the Opposition were not bound, in bringing forward a motion of want of confidence, to give any reason for doing so. It was sufficient to them to say that they could not trust the Government. It was better to put such a motion in a somewhat more extended shape, but it was not required of them that they should do so. It was quite enough to assert that the Ministry had ceased to hold the confidence of the House. Now, in the case of a Ministry that had, by unfair means, or even by fair means, repeatedly lost a working majority, as this Ministry had, and had, nevertheless, obtained repeated dissolutions, some of which, if not penal, were nearly penal, it was a contempt of the Constitution, to continue to hold office. It was altogether wrong for any Ministry to hold office for one moment longer than they could command a working majority; and if the Government should be saved in this instance by only the casting vote of the Speaker, it would be most discreditable for them to remain in office. Now, as he could honestly inform the House, he had no place to ask for in any future Ministry that might be formed; and he hoped

no one would think there was anything of the kind in his supporting the amendment of the honorable member for Ipswich. When he left the place now occupied by the honorable the Premier, he resolved that nothing but a power which he could not resist would ever drag him back to the Treasury benches. He had been shamefully treated at the time by the Press and by honorable members in the House; but he treated those charges that were made against him with scorn. He felt he could not, with benefit to the country, continue to hold office any longer; but still he felt that he possessed a power to be useful to the country, in holding a seat in the House, though out of office; and he believed that he had out of office effected some very important reforms; and he had in one case, in particular, removed out of the way of the Ministry a serious obstruction over which they could not get themselves. If they were sincere in their policy at the time for the amendment of the Constitution Act, why did they not take steps for the repeal of the two-thirds clause? But not only did they not do so, but on coming back to office, after an appeal to the country, they actually declined to give effect to the repeal of the two-thirds clause; and the Government, he thought, would excuse him if he said he refused to believe they were sincere in their expressed intention to repeal the clause. Now, in the Opening Speech of 1870, the Government would find all that the honorable the Premier mentioned in his Bill, and in the very temperate and clear address which he had delivered to-night; and not only so, but they would find much more that it would be advantageous to the country for them to carry out, if they should continue in office, by, it might be, the casting vote of the honorable the Speaker. It had been stated that he had spoken as severely of the honorable member for Ipswich, whom he now supported, as he had spoken of Mr. Handy. Well, he had spoken severely of Mr. Macalister, but that was because the honorable member deserted the policy he previously advocated; but when he came back to that policy, and which always had been his own policy, why should he not support him? Then as to the Minister for Works, had he not also spoken severely of him?—but the honorable member was opposed to his policy. Now he was asked not to vote with the honorable member for Ipswich, who, if he came into office, would carry out his policy, but to give his vote to the honorable the Minister for Works, who had been always opposed to his policy. That he most certainly would not do. Honorable members who took a deep and earnest interest in public questions, but who differed in politics, would always speak severely of each other in the warmth of debate. Now there was the honorable the Treasurer. That honorable gentleman spoke severely against him in 1870, but had he ever spoken severely of

him on that account?—though he might have done so, when he forsook the policy he previously supported, and went over and supported the policy of the present Government. Now he maintained that he had never shown any want of charity to any of his political opponents. If he were animated by the dark spirit of the honorable the Minister for Works—if he were as fully possessed of a rancorous and bitter spirit as that honorable gentleman sometimes seemed to be, the House would scarcely be large enough to hold them. But he had a better spirit. He knew the value of public spirit, and he knew the value of pluck; but he also knew the miserableness of the press of the colony, and how to value its low tone. He was speaking of the character of some portions of the press, not of all. He knew that some of the writers for the press were fed by the mere rumors of the public streets; and he knew also that in public life in these colonies there was a great want of public spirit amongst public men themselves; and neither were they always fair or just in the opinions they expressed of the acts and purposes of each other; and he had learned, from long experience, that it was a wise thing for public men to deal tenderly with the characters of each other, and that if a public man committed an error—and no doubt they had all committed errors in their time—his having done so should not be pressed too far against him. He did not see that they should continue harping against a man for ever. Now, those were his views in respect to the conduct of public men; but he fought now against the present Ministry, because he considered they used violence in getting into office—because he considered their conduct was characterised by violence in claiming as their own, as they had done, what was the policy of the Opposition—and that in the face of the Opposition. Now, in the face of all that, in the face of fresh allegations made by them as to their policy, he must say that he could not trust them. He did not wish to go into the case of the dummies. He would only say that he had no affection for dummies, and he was not sure but the honorable the Minister for Lands was now acting honestly to bring the dummies to justice. The present Ministry had also boasted of the tariff they had brought in as being their own; but it was not their tariff. It was a tariff they found prepared for them when they entered upon office. They obtained a dissolution and went to the country, and here at the end of "Hansard" for 1870 was the Governor's Speech for the dissolution. Now, that Speech set forth the four important heads of the policy upon which the Ministry went to the country, and which were set forth in the amendment that was carried to the Address in Reply. The first of those four important matters that were embodied in the amendment was—

"Encouragement to the development of native industries."

Well, in the remarks made by His Excellency the late Colonel Blackall, on the subject, we find this statement—

"The Governor concludes that the first amendment raises an important question of protective duties."

That, as he had stated, was one of the questions upon which the present Government went to the country. Another was—

"A general railway policy, completion of existing lines, and opening up the interior."

Well, they had opposed that policy, and yet they went to the country upon it. The next point was—

"A repeal of the two-thirds clause of the Constitution Act of 1867."

That they opposed, but went to the country upon it. Then there was—

"The northern question of Separation"—

and though they opposed that, they went to the country upon it. Now, he must take permission to say, that so long as honorable members on this side of the House had been under his guidance, either as Premier or as leader of the Opposition, the North had always had the fullest justice done to it. As to all this liberal policy which the present Ministry professed to have carried out from the beginning, it was opposed by every other member of it. Then, when he came to consider their previously expressed views and opinions in regard to the land question, he could not look upon their present professions in respect to dealing with the lands of the colony, as at all sincere. In the first speech delivered by the Governor on behalf of the present Ministry, there was nothing whatever said about opening the lands, or about anything of the nature of a protective policy, or some other parts of the policy they now proposed to carry out. It was a humdrum statement altogether. Now, he presumed that the honorable member had that speech prepared, as many other speeches were prepared, so that as delicate allusion as possible should be made to those subjects which the Ministry had no intention to carry out. As to their railway policy, had not the honorable the Colonial Secretary frequently said that when all other lines in the colony were completed, it would be quite time to begin making the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane? And yet they were now actually carrying out that policy as being their own, whereas it had actually been forced upon them. The Secretary for Public Works had spoken strongly in support of the railway being brought to North Brisbane, crossing the river at Oxley Creek; but considering what were the views of the honorable member formerly in regard to that railway at all, a reason might not improbably be found for his anxiety to have the terminus in North Brisbane, in his cordial detestation of the honorable member for South Brisbane; and would it not be a rare stroke of policy to



have the line brought to North Brisbane, and so make sure that the property of the honorable member for South Brisbane should not be improved by it? They all knew that the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Handy, was accused of remaining in the library one day last week and so preventing a House being formed. Now he could tell the House that the honorable member on the day referred to walked up with him to the House, and he went into the library and remained there. He (Mr. Lilley) was aware that without him they would not be able to form a House, and he himself urged upon him to come in and make a House, but he declined to do so. The honorable member, however, might yet do right, and vote in support of the policy which he was sent into the House to support; and not commit the outrage he would commit by voting in support of the present Ministry, and that, on the shadowy excuse, that they were carrying out the policy of the Opposition, and, therefore, they had no right to complain of him. And there never was, so far as some of their policy was concerned; for he never heard of a more immoral political proceeding than that of a Ministry adopting the policy of their opponents. What right had they to claim as their policy, the policy which they had always resisted and opposed in every way? Now, he entirely objected to the Ministry carrying out the policy of the Opposition, and everyone knew that certain ideas were best carried out by those with whom they originated. Now, it was well known that all the names to the petition requesting the honorable member to vote with the Ministry, were the names of those who had been always the political opponents of the Opposition.

Mr. HANDY: Well, he did not know it.

Mr. LILLEY: The honorable member did know it; he challenged him to look him in the face and deny it.

Mr. HANDY: There were many of the names to the petition, those of gentlemen who were among his staunchest supporters when he came in to support the Lilley Government.

Mr. LILLEY: Well, he maintained that the names were those of consistent opponents of the Lilley Government; and if the honorable member did not know it before, he knew it now. But they all knew that the petition emanated from the Government, that it was prepared by their agents, and that it was hawked about by their railway valuator. Now, what was the use of asking any educated man to believe that petition, or him, that on the strength of its assertions, he should not vote in a way that would not embarrass the present Government, but in a way that would afford them the opportunity of elucidating their policy? The policy of the present Government seemed to be a very dark one, and one that was always getting darker. It seemed to go on from dark, darker, to darkest; and that it required a very great deal of eluci-

dation indeed; but that was very likely to be the case, for they seemed to have got a hold of the policy of the Opposition and had not yet been able fully to make it out. The honorable member might have thought it was a very clever thing to do, but he thought it was anything but an act of political honesty to do so, and so secure the substantial benefits of office. It had been charged against the Opposition that they had not in the course of this debate announced what their policy was to be; but no sane man in opposition would think of doing so, and it was quite time enough for them to intimate their policy when, on getting into office, they were called upon to do so. Now, as to their railway policy, the honorable member, Mr. Handy, affected to believe that it was the intention of the Government to bring the railway into North Brisbane, and that it would be the policy of the Opposition to bring it into South Brisbane; and he founded that opinion on a Executive Minute that was signed by him (Mr. Lilley) as well as by the honorable member for South Brisbane; but that Executive Minute had reference to a survey that was first proposed by Mr. Herbert when he was Premier, and when he (Mr. Lilley) was Attorney-General. Now, when the survey was first contemplated, it was discussed between himself and Mr. Fitzgibbon whether the line should not be brought to North Brisbane and down to Eagle Farm Flats; and, at that time, it would have been a great benefit to have got the line as far even as five miles on this side of Ipswich; and it had always been the desire of the Government to have the line brought from Ipswich to North Brisbane. It would hardly be believed by those who were not conversant with all the particulars, that the Opposition had had such a fight to get this twenty-five miles of railway; an extent of line, which, under the improved appliances that had been discovered, might be constructed in a few months. Now, the Executive Minute that had been founded upon by the honorable member for North Brisbane, would not justify him in voting with the Government. The honorable member had said there was a difference of opinion amongst the members of the Opposition, as to some of their policy, but there was also a difference amongst the members of the Government on a measure of great importance, and that was on the question of State education; and that there was such a difference, was shown by the fact that there was no mention made of the measure in the Opening Speech; and if that was the question, the honorable member, Mr. Handy, was most anxious about, as he affected to be, there was the more reason why he should vote with the Opposition—why he should vote with those whose policy he had always approved of, and whose policy he had been returned to support. Now he thought he knew mostly all the people of Brisbane pretty well, and he had no hesitation in saying that the meet-

ing which had been referred to, consisted wholly, as far as he could observe, of electors of Brisbane, and a more respectable meeting of electors he had never seen. The honorable member had told him that he would be bound by the decision of the meeting.

Mr. HANDY: No; what he said was, that he would consider well what might be said at the meeting.

Mr. LILLEY: He could only say that that was not what was said to him by the honorable member. What he said to him was, that he would consider himself to be bound by it; and that he would be influenced by it, and would be guided by it.

Mr. HANDY: He said he would not be bound by it.

Mr. LILLEY: He did not wish the honorable member to be bound by all that took place at the meeting; but he said he would be guided by it; and so he ought to be guided by the opinions of the large body of his constituents. If the honorable member had allowed himself to be influenced to pursue a narrow course on this railway question, he ought not to have allowed himself to be so, instead of being guided by the opinions of the great body of his constituents. It had been said by the honorable member for the Western Downs, that when the present Ministry had entered upon office they found that their predecessors had been reckless and hopeless. Now he could tell the honorable member that he, when he was in office, was both buoyant and hopeful as to the state of the colony; and no one who was hopeless and reckless as to the future of the colony, would, as he had done, have entered into a contract for the construction of three steamers for a mail service of their own that would have placed them beyond the power of a company that had a monopoly of the steam service of the colony; and he was sure that the merchants of the colony would be glad if they now had those three steamers running in these waters. The honorable member for Western Downs had also said that the policy of the present Ministry was written in the history of the colony for the last three years. Now, that was quite true, for it had been the subject of discussion, both in the House and out of it, for all that time. As to the tariff, roads and bridges, and railways, their policy was all to be found in the Opening Speech of the session of 1870. Then, as to telegraphs, the honorable member had said that this Government had carried them out to the Gulf of Carpentaria, but the work was begun under his (Mr. Lilley's) administration; and all the material was ordered from England before the present Ministry came into office. Now, it was to be remembered that he was in office for seventeen months during a period of the greatest depression the colony had ever witnessed; and what the present Ministry had done since they came into office was a mere fleabite to what he did during that

time for the general benefit of the colony. Amongst other measures he brought in an Immigration Bill and a Pastoral Leases Bill; and such was the opposition of the members of the present Government and their supporters to his Immigration Bill, that he had to tell them that if they would not consent to it, he would throw the Pastoral Leases Bill in the fire. Now, he could tell the House that those gentlemen who were so strongly opposed to him on that occasion had derived great benefits from the Pastoral Leases Act, but which they had repeatedly denied. The measure was not all that he could have wished it to be, but it was the best he could possibly get. Now, whatever might be said about the squatters, though he deprecated their presence in the House as a political party, he knew, and would freely admit, that they were the back bone of the country in the matter of industry, and he was glad that the Bills affecting their interest, which he had succeeded in passing, had tended to their prosperity. As to the ability in administration, which had been shown by the honorable the Premier since he entered upon office, he did not mean to say that he had not in many ways shown his wonted ability in the matter of administration. He did not base his opposition to him on anything relating to the excellence of his administration; but he took broader grounds for his opposition, and they were those which he had now stated to the House. If he had said anything to wound the feelings of any honorable member, he hoped he would be forgiven. He knew that he always expressed himself warmly and earnestly, when he spoke upon a question of the kind now before the House, and that whether in the House or out of it; but it was at all times far from being his wish to wound the feelings of anyone; but he would wish to win back to a proper course anyone who had swerved from what he believed to be the proper policy for this colony—and which policy he had been elected to support. One thing he would like to ask, and that was, that the honorable the Premier should state his reason for asserting that he would continue to retain office even if he should only be saved by the casting vote of the Speaker. It was also, he considered, a most arrogant assertion for the honorable member to make, that there were not men on this side of the House to form a Ministry that would be capable of carrying on the business of the country; for the proper authority might see that there were men on the Opposition side of the House capable of carrying on the Government of the country; and he maintained that it was the duty of any Ministry at once to cease to hold office when they ceased to have a working majority in the House. And for the Premier to give that as a reason for holding on to office was a mere flimsy and somewhat arrogant assumption. It was by no means his duty to say who should or

could hold office. The moment that he was not in possession of a working majority in the Assembly—that was his own rule, as laid down by himself—he was bound to give way. This was his own Parliament; it was the second or third—at all events, he had had two dissolutions—since he came into power; and he had lost its confidence virtually. He had lost the majority that had enabled him to work, as the vote of to-night would determine; and by that alone should he be guided. He had no reason to base his refusal to quit office upon any assumption on his own part that he could not see men on the Opposition side of the House who could carry on the Government of the country. It was his plain duty, when he ceased to have the power to conduct the business of the Parliament, to retire. That he would not, it would be mere presumption on his (Mr. Lilley's) part to say. It would be left to the honorable gentleman himself to determine, after the division was taken. But that he would consent to remain in office by virtue of the casting vote of the Speaker, it was hard to believe. Bear in mind that he (Mr. Lilley) spoke as an independent member. It could matter little to him, personally, who held office: but he had a public duty to discharge apart from all considerations of party or self-interest. He had nothing to expect from either side by his conduct, his vote, or his voice on this occasion; but he should give his vote against the Ministry to-night.

MR. CRIBB was understood to say that, as self-interest had been talked of so much, the railway deviation did not affect him in the slightest degree.

MR. EDMONDSTONE: It was absolutely necessary that he should say a few words on the motion of want of confidence. Unfortunately the honorable member for Brisbane, Mr. Handy, was absent from the House, to whom he desired to say a few words; and, first, that he always held it to be the duty of representatives who were sent to the House in a "bunch," to vote together if possible, and not to incur any mischance of splitting their votes, and thus disfranchising their electorate. He was at one in this matter with his colleagues for Brisbane ever since he came into the House. When, lately, he found that Mr. Handy was not likely to vote with Dr. O'Doherty and himself, he put a direct question to Mr. Handy, to ascertain how far his apprehension was justified. In the first instance, he got an evasive answer. He mentioned the subject to his other colleague, who said he considered it was their duty to take the advice of their constituents. The result was the public meeting on Saturday evening; and, according to the views of that meeting, Dr. O'Doherty and himself were perfectly justified in the action which they had taken. When he called the meeting, it was not with the slightest idea of degrading Mr. Handy, or that degradation would come upon him in consequence of his

defection—if the honorable member still chose to complete his defection. There was not the slightest doubt that when he nominated Mr. Handy at the hustings, that honorable member intended to follow the course of action of the party whose support he had in his election; and from that fact, he considered that the honorable member was pledged in some measure to act with the party with which he (Mr. Edmondstone) was always connected. Mr. Handy having left his party, or, rather, seeing that there was a likelihood of his defection, he considered it to be a duty, under the circumstances, to try if it was not possible to bring the honorable member into the ranks to work with his party. However, the matter had now gone too far. Such a desertion, such a defection, must be deplored. The honorable member's speech showed most distinctly that he was not going to vote with the Opposition, his ostensible reason being, that the railway, forsooth, was to come to a particular spot. The deviation of the railway from the line originally surveyed, was simply an act of the Government to bring about contention between the members for North Brisbane, and to create a misunderstanding in that party of the House that they belonged to. But the time could not be long before there would be a new House; and if there should not be a change of Ministry now, a change was not far distant. He felt certain that the country would not allow the Government to remain in the hands of the gentlemen who now held it. A more paltry Speech than that with which the session was opened never emanated from a Ministry. There was not a syllable in it about the absolute necessities of the country. Notwithstanding that general prosperity was enjoyed, and that the Treasury was full, that the revenue was rapidly increasing, not a word was said about reducing the immense taxation of the country. No thanks were due to the Ministry for the prosperity of the country or the healthy state of its income. Prosperity reigned, thank God! in all the Australian colonies; it was as great in the south and the east as it was in Queensland, and it was high in Great Britain. The cause was, that capital from certain sources was plentiful, and industry was active, and both were productive. A great deal had been said about what the Government had done for the city. The Ministry had done their duty simply in erecting public works; and for that he gave them credit, but for not a whit more. The honorable member for South Brisbane had shown how the deepening of the river had been brought about. The honorable the Colonial Secretary had stated how the Government came to build the Post Office. If the present Government had adorned the city, previous Governments had prevented the Corporation from doing justice to itself and the city. The Corporation had to thank the present Government for a small return of what the city had been despoiled of. He referred to the

lands which had been taken from the city. The return of four or five allotments had enabled the Corporation to build the culvert at the outlet of the creek which as a sewer was a source of offence and a public nuisance to the city—and an eyesore to every stranger who arrived. The Government had earned some little popularity by that Act; but they ought to give the whole of the land back to the city—so as to enable the local authorities to form a complete system of sewerage for Brisbane before an epidemic should break out. Perhaps it was thought that as doctors ought to live, the creek should be left open! He hoped, however, that no dire calamity would befall the city. In reference to what had been said by the Minister for Works about the railway, he must say that it was not material to the citizens what way the line should be brought into Brisbane; and all the members for Brisbane, north and south, were determined not to quarrel about the way it was to come. He hoped that the Opposition would not differ upon that point. Four lines had been surveyed, three on the south side of the river, and one on the north side. When the engineer's reports and the valuations were before the House, and honorable members could judge of the cost of each line, they could consider the whole subject and adopt the cheapest line to construct and to maintain. Vested interests were, of course, to be considered as between the larger and the smaller number of inhabitants in the country lying between the termini. It was clear that the vote on the motion of want of confidence would have been settled at ten o'clock, if his colleague—though he could call him his colleague no more—Mr. Handy, had not come forward to state his intentions and his grievances. He (Mr. Edmondstone) had been twelve or thirteen years in the House, and he never saw anything like the conduct of that honorable member, who had damned his party by what he had done. He voted with him last session, and on occasions which he now regretted; but he always voted believing that he had right on his side, and for the good of the colony. He blamed Mr. Handy, not for his vote, but, having been elected for Brisbane on the understanding that he was to join the party of which the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was the leader, and which included the other members for Brisbane, and having worked with the party consistently to the present time, he deserted now when an important trial of strength was at issue between the two sides of the House. A great deal had been said about the conduct of the Ministry, and he should refer to it. Until the time had arrived when they must have the vote of the honorable member for Rockhampton, that constituency was neglected by the Government; then, however, anything that he asked for was given, and great services were rendered to his constituents that they never would have asked for. There had been

a good deal of working and management by the present Ministry to retain power, as there had been a good deal of "log-rolling" under the Herbert Ministry for the first railways, when the North was tempted with its short line of thirty miles. On the question before the House, he (Mr. Edmondstone) should vote against the Government.

Mr. GRIFFITH, on rising to address the House, said it was perhaps fit that he, as the youngest member in years, and the youngest in standing, with the exception of the honorable member for Clermont, should do so last. He regretted that he had not an opportunity to speak earlier in the debate, because he had intended to make certain substantial charges against the Government in detail, which induced him not to give his confidence to them, but which he would refrain from stating at so late an hour of the night when there was no member of the Government to answer him. It appeared to him, though perhaps he had no right to form a confident opinion, that a great number of honorable members on the Ministerial side had entirely lost sight of the great principles of constitutional government. They seemed to think that instead of there being a Government by party, we were to be governed by men. It was with them a question not of principle but of individuals; and he thought that every speech that had been made on the Ministerial side had proceeded upon the assumption that the present Ministry were the fittest men to govern the country. He entirely dissented from that doctrine. As men, he believed there were not five or six members of the community more respectable than they; but he did not see why he, the representative of a constituency which had returned him on liberal principles, and professing liberal opinions, should vote for them as a Government. This was a question not of men but of measures; and, in considering whether he could give the Government his confidence or not, he had to bear in mind what had been their policy. He had listened attentively during the debate to hear the policy of the Government, and their speeches were principally devoted to the representation that they were the fittest men to hold office, because of their expenditure of the public money which had been placed at their disposal for the time being. There had been no talk of policy, at all, in the proper sense of the term. It was the duty of every man who aspired in any degree to be a statesman to look into the future; and, judging the future by the past, what would honorable members take to be the policy of the Government? They had to consider the present state of the colony. Remember that this was the last session of this present Parliament; that a new Parliament was to be summoned under the new law—a law which was unknown to the people of the colony;—that the Government had already done, by means described by the honorable and learned member for Fortitude Valley, and were doing, all they

could to obtain the control of the general election, now near at hand; that the new Parliament would have the management of all the lands in the settled districts of the colony now held under lease from the Crown, which, if they did not fall in during the existence of the new Parliament, would, at any rate, have to be determined during that Parliament; and that, therefore, it was of vital importance to the gentlemen who held leases, the pastoral tenants of the Crown, in the settled districts—it was to their interest, at any rate—to exert all the means in their power to secure a majority in that Parliament, that they might not be ejected summarily by the people of the colony from the possession of those lands. This was a serious thing, which should be considered by any man who had to give a vote. The Government was not the Government of the Premier, Mr. Palmer, but it was a Government supported mainly by gentlemen who were interested to some extent in the welfare of the colony, but whose private interests conflicted with the general interests of the colony. Therefore, it was of vital importance, on this occasion, that if the Assembly did not repose confidence in them, honorable members should not, for any such reasons as had been expressed by Ministers, allow them to conduct the Government any longer—simply because of fear of some temporary derangement in the Public Works Office, which was the principal reason urged why honorable members should not vote for the amendment. He judged the policy of Ministers by the past. He concluded that if they should be able, by any means, to secure a majority in the next Assembly, to secure the manipulation of the next general election, with the experience they obtained during the last two general elections, and moreover with the means at the disposal of the Minister for Works—which that honorable gentleman was not ashamed openly to boast of, and that he could bribe any popular constituency in the country by a small expenditure of public money—it behoved honorable members to vote in such a way as to prevent the continuance of the present party in power.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I never said anything of the sort in my life. I do not think I could bribe any constituency in the colony.

Mr. GRIFFITH: He understood that the honorable gentleman contradicted the assertion that he had openly boasted that he could bribe any constituency. Of course, if the honorable gentleman did that, he (Mr. Griffith) must observe the Parliamentary rule, and not say any more about it—if the honorable gentleman did say so?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I do say so.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The House knew that that honorable gentleman had at his sole disposal and control enormous sums of money. It was of vital importance that the best interests

of the country should not be prejudiced by such expenditure, even to be controlled by a party. Looking to the future, he (Mr. Griffith) foresaw that if the present Ministry retained office for twelve months, and that if the question of the disposal of the lands of the colony—not only in his own district, but in West Moreton and on the Downs, and up the coast—came under consideration in a Parliament elected under such a Government, that Parliament would not be indisposed to grant facilities which a Parliament elected under another Ministry might not concede to the Crown tenants. He did not care who succeeded them in office. He did not, for one, wish to be a successor of theirs. But he must say that so long as that party remained in power—an accidental party—a Government formed by accident, and kept in office by violence—so long was there danger to the best interests of the country. That was the chief reason why he should vote against the Government. The House had been treated by the honorable the Colonial Secretary to some most extraordinary arguments—that the Opposition could not form a quorum, and that if they got into office they could not make a House for business. Did the honorable gentleman mean to say that if the Opposition came into power, he would not be one to form a House?

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. GRIFFITH: It was a mere *brutum fulmen*, and such as should never be used as argument. The general tone of the honorable gentleman's speech this evening was better than that of any speech he before delivered in the House; and he (Mr. Griffith) had listened to it with great pleasure. But the remarkable cards that he had tried to play, with respect, for instance, to the salt duty, which the honorable gentleman contemptuously refused to entertain last session; and to the land orders, which also he strenuously opposed, last session, when the question was defeated by a majority of twenty-one to three—those were trumps which he played too late in the game to be regarded as the policy of the Government. The Minister for Works had contended that the country was in jeopardy, should a change take place; and that it was governed by the best men. He (Mr. Griffith) agreed that the country was in jeopardy, and that it never was more so; and that was why he opposed the honorable gentleman on this occasion, and at any other time when it might be his duty to give a vote. It had been claimed for the Government that their administration had been good; and, really, that was the highest argument put forward by the other side. The Minister for Works had, at great length, justified his administration. It was his duty to expend the public money voted by Parliament for the interests of the colony. Giving him credit for what he asserted, had he done more than any other Minister would have done in his place? How did he justify his

conduct with respect to the railway? That question ought to have nothing more to do with the decision of the present question before the House than the construction of a railway to the moon! It was a mere local and temporary question, and it ought to have nothing to do with the destinies of the colony. It had been too long a bone of contention; it had been a curse to the colony! The money was voted for the work last session, and it should be done with. The honorable member at the head of the Government stated, not very long ago, that if a railway was constructed from Ipswich to Brisbane, it would not be finished during his administration; and if his Government continued the tactics they had adopted, it would not, unless they hoped to hold office during the existence of the next Parliament. During last session the Government procured the approval of the House of the plans, sections, and so on, of the line from the present terminus at Ipswich towards Brisbane; and it was to be supposed that they would have carried out the works. On the contrary, they proceeded with a small portion between the two termini; and, instead of commencing at Ipswich, the line was commenced at nowhere. And, now, the bone of contention was thrown down again, and Parliament was called upon to decide something further in connection with the railway; and thus the question was made use of again to divide a party. If the honorable the Secretary for Public Works knew, last year, that the line approved of was not the right one, why did he bring it forward? Why was the approval of Parliament now to be thrown aside? Why were the House called upon to pass a resolution which the honorable gentleman knew as well as he (Mr. Griffith) they had no power to pass, except as a means of party tactics? There had been a great deal of talk about dummyming, and it had been suggested that the members of the Opposition were supporting dummies. Some honorable member might be aware that he was professionally engaged in the cases before the court, and he should therefore speak with extreme care upon this question. But he had to say a word to the Minister for Lands. He should assume that every word which had been said by the honorable gentleman was true; and that the lands obtained by certain gentlemen, of whom Mr. Davenport was one, had been obtained by fraud; and out of his own mouth he would convict that honorable member. The Minister for Lands had said that when he came into office he found that the frauds had been committed, but that rent had been received for the lands; that it was no use to do anything then, that things might as well go on; and that the Government might as well receive the money, because their position could not be altered then. He (Mr. Griffith) held that the Government of a country where, as in Great Britain, the Queen was called the parent of the country, should be the protector of all her subjects; but in Queensland, the Queen appeared to be the

defrauder, the oppressor of her subjects. What did he find? The frauds alleged were done three years ago. If an individual was dealing with another individual, and found that he was being defrauded in respect of a lease, would it not be his duty to let the party know what he had discovered, and to refuse to receive any rent or to make the position any worse? Most certainly, if he knew anything of law. Since the Equity Court was founded, no man could make the position of another worse and take advantage of it. If a man who had been defrauded lay by and put another who had committed the fraud in a worse position, he should not be able to take advantage of it. That was, as he (Mr. Griffith) understood it; if that was not the law, he did not pretend to know what the law was. If that applied to the Crown, if the Crown was bound by equity, then the Minister for Lands had been guilty of a gross fraud, by allowing the fraud he had condoned—by receiving rent for the land which had been obtained fraudulently. Was it the duty of the Crown to lie by and take a man's money, and put him in a worse position than before; and then to turn round and say—"Now, sue for your title"? Out of his own mouth the Minister for Lands was convicted. As the administrator of the Government, as the representative of Her Majesty—who could do no wrong!—he was guilty of fraud on the people of the colony, or on an individual whose rent he had received. And he could not deny it. The honorable member for Warwick had asked, would not the Opposition, if they came into power, go on with those cases against the dummies? They would go on with them. What would be the gain to the parties by a change of Ministry? Was the honorable member for Warwick himself interested in dummyming? If he was, it could be understood why he should vote for the Government; because, if the Minister for Lands had acted in the manner which he (Mr. Griffith) had endeavored to point out, it was to the interest of the honorable member for Warwick and his friends to support the Government and not the Opposition. During the three years the Government had been in office, they had initiated no policy; and he could expect nothing better in the future. They would prevent the settlement of the land going on as long as possible, or they would give the land in small dribblets, as they did last session, of eight square miles at a time; and they would keep the people away. He (Mr. Griffith) had dealt with the Minister for Works and the Minister for Lands, and now he should say a word to the Attorney-General before sitting down. He wanted to know why the only important measure in the Governor's Speech was a Bill to remove doubts as to the power of the Government to appoint an acting Judge? No member of the legal profession ever entertained a doubt on the subject but the Attorney-General himself. It was necessary, now, to introduce a Bill to remove doubts, which existed

only in the mind of that honorable and learned gentleman, upon a subject to which attention was called last session, when the first illness of Mr. Justice Lutwyche occurred. Why was it not necessary, then, to bring in a Bill? or, why was not Parliament called together sooner than the end of May to deal with the subject? No answer had been given to this, though it had been mentioned by the honorable member for Ipswich in his speech. If such was the way the Government of the country was to be carried on by gentlemen who were themselves estimable, the sooner it was taken out of their hands the better. At an earlier period of the debate, he should have said why the Government should be placed in the hands of the Opposition, or some other members; but the reasons he had given were, he thought, sufficient to every honorable member who had at heart the welfare of the colony at large as opposed to the welfare of a class, to justify him, and he should cordially vote for the amendment.

Mr. W. Scott said, before going to a division, it would be as well for him to say a few words, as they might happen to go before his constituents, why he should vote against the Government on this occasion. He had been advised by his constituents to support the amendment, and he should do so. In the first place, he found fault with the Minister for Lands, who had been perpetually making mistakes, not by his own act, but on the part of the Government. The Homestead Act and the Mineral Lands Act were both very great mistakes. They had been very much praised in the Governor's Speech, and the Parliament was told that the Homestead Act had been taken great advantage of. It had been taken advantage of, but in an improper way. As to the Mineral Lands Act, he assured the House that it clashed very much with the gold miners, as he could instance. He could not understand the argument of the honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, when he, in a very good speech otherwise, referred to the manner in which the debentures had been disposed of. The debentures had been disposed of at £34, and the Bank of New South Wales now asked £94. There was no better criterion of their value than the bank quotation. Depend upon it, the debentures were worth what the bank asked. The Minister for Works had behaved in a very extraordinary way with the money placed at his disposal for public works. Indeed, he was becoming a very popular man in some of the constituencies where he had been most unpopular. He (Mr. Scott) assured the House that since his return to Brisbane, he had found that some of those persons who used to run down the Minister for Works some months ago, and talked about him in the most abusive manner, now praised him highly. But, he should mention one case that had occurred in his own district:—£500 had been voted for public works at Mount Perry, a part of the country that had been

very much neglected by the Government, as they had neglected all the mining districts of the colony, except Stanthorpe which had a Brisbane opposition stirring them up. Tenders were called for, and one was accepted. He had seen the letter from the Colonial Secretary's Office, dated 7th January last, accepting the tender. The police magistrate was instructed to inform the tenderer to proceed with the works at once, the only thing to wait for being a telegram appointing a site for the works. The contractor engaged men and waited for a few weeks. Then he (Mr. Scott) was consulted, and he wrote to the Attorney-General, who was then acting for the head of the Government. In his answer the Attorney-General told him that the tender was too high, and that he would have to come down with a supplementary estimate before the works could be carried out. After this, the contractor himself wrote to head quarters; and he (Mr. Scott) had a telegram in his pocket from the Works Office, telling the contractor to go on with the works, and giving him £25 more than the amount of his tender. That contractor, he assured the House, had been an open enemy of the Minister for Works at Maryborough. The vote was for £500; the tender was for £335; the Attorney-General wrote officially to him that the tender was too much, and that the vote would have to be supplemented before the works could be proceeded with; and the Minister for Works gave the contractor £360. Could he (Mr. Scott) support a Government who would do that?

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

Ayes, 15.	Noes, 15.
Mr. Palmer	Mr. Lilley
" Walsh	" Stephens
" Bramston	" King
" Bell	" W. Scott
" Clark	" MacDevitt
" Royds	" Groom
" Buchanan	" Hemmant
" Wienholt	" Griffith
" Graham	" Thornton
" J. Scott	" Edmondstone
" Cribb	" Miles
" Handy	Dr. O'Doherty
" Ferrett	Mr. Macalister
" Thompson	" Thorn
" Ramsay.	" Fyfe.

The SPEAKER said: In giving my casting vote I am influenced by the belief that in the determination of a question of purely party character, obviously raised for the purpose of displacing a Government, it would not be in accordance with my duty to throw my weight into the scale in such a way as to manifest party predilection, or to precipitate the result aimed at. The question is resolved in the affirmative.

The question of the adoption of the Address, as moved, was then put and affirmed, after a division similar to the foregoing, upon Mr. Speaker's "casting vote."

A third division was taken with a like result, upon the question of the adjournment of the House for the presentation of the Address.