

Queensland



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Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 26 JULY 1876

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 26 July, 1876.

Gladstone Railway Survey.—Officer Commanding Volunteer Force.—Question without Notice.—Ways and Means.—Supply.—Ways and Means.—Adjournment.

GLADSTONE RAILWAY SURVEY.

MR. PALMER said he rose for the purpose of eliciting some information from the honorable the Colonial Treasurer why the order of that House, of the 8th of September last, had not been carried out by placing on the Supplementary Estimates a sum of £2,000 for a railway survey between Gladstone and Rockhampton. The order was very distinct:—

“On motion of Mr. Palmer, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Governor, relative to survey of a line of railway from Gladstone to Rockhampton. The Chairman having reported that the committee had come to a resolution, the same was then read to the House, at length, by the Clerk, as follows, viz.:—‘That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates a sum not exceeding £2,000 for the expenses of a preliminary survey for a line of railway from Gladstone to join the existing line from Rockhampton to Westwood.’

“Mr. Palmer then moved—

“That this resolution be adopted by the House.

“Question put and passed.”

He could not find any item of £2,000 on the Supplementary Estimates, and it was clear disobedience of the orders of the House. He hoped to hear from the honorable the Colonial Treasurer some reason for this, although there could be no just reason for not putting it on the Supplementary Estimates when the House had ordered it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he believed the omission had been an oversight, and at the same time, he might state, that a sum of £10,000 had been placed on the Loan Estimate for railway surveys, out of which the amount would be provided. He could only say, that the matter had escaped his attention; but it was not beyond being rectified, and it would be the duty of the Government to see that it was inserted before the Estimates were passed through committee.

Mr. PALMER said, the fact that a sum of £10,000 had been placed on the Estimates for general railway surveys had nothing whatever to do with the order of the House, which was for a specific sum of £2,000; and as the honorable the Treasurer had admitted that it was an oversight, he felt justified in asking that it be now added, by special message, to the Supplementary Estimates for 1875-6. He should not be satisfied until it was.

OFFICER COMMANDING VOLUNTEER FORCE.

Mr. MOREHEAD, pursuant to notice, asked the Colonial Secretary:—

Who is the Officer commanding the Volunteer Force of the Colony—when was he appointed, and by what instrument?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—

On the resignation by Mr. Hodgson of his commission as Captain of No. 2 Company of the Queensland Volunteer Rifle Brigade, on the 12th March, 1874, Mr. John McDonnell became the Senior Captain of the Force, and occupied the same position as that formerly held by Captain Hodgson. The only instrument Mr. McDonnell holds is a commission under the hand and seal of Governor Blackall, dated the 11th December, 1869, appointing him Captain of No. 1 Company of the Queensland Volunteer Rifle Brigade.

Mr. MOREHEAD moved the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to the answer that had just been given. The question he asked was a straight one, and the answer given was a crooked one. He asked the Colonial Secretary who was the officer commanding the Volunteer force of the colony, and he (the Colonial Secretary) answered by some allusions to Mr. Hodgson, who had resigned, and to the late Colonel Blackall, but had not given a direct answer to the House, which he maintained ought to have been given. He should not have risen, perhaps, to call attention to this had it not been for the answer he got from the same honorable member last night, when he asked him was it the intention of the Government to appoint a police magistrate at Thurgomindah, and the answer he got was that the police magistrate at Cunnamulla had been instructed to go there once a month. That was no answer to the question. Those were not the style of answers the House had been accustomed to, and he, for one, declined to submit to it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, in reference to the appointment of a police magistrate at Thurgomindah, the only answer that could be given was, that the police magistrate at Cunnamulla had been appointed to do the same duties at Thurgomindah, and, consequently, he was police magistrate of that district. Had the honorable member asked if it was intended to appoint a separate police magistrate at Thurgomindah, he should have given a different answer, but he could not possibly give a different answer to the one he had given to the question as put. With regard to the question just now answered by him, he might state that the appointment of a commanding officer lay with the Governor; no appointment to that position had been made, so far as he understood, but there had always been an officer acting in that capacity. It was not possible to say there was no one in charge of the Volunteers, because the senior Captain was the commanding officer; nor was it possible to state that a commanding officer had been appointed to that responsible position. Mr. Hodgson acted as commanding officer for some years, and so did Mr. McDonnell; but recently Mr. McDonnell had raised some objection about signing land orders, and other duties, and his reason was that he believed he had not the power to do these things, and if the matter—

Mr. BELL rose to a point of order. He thought the honorable member was out of order in making a speech on a matter that had arisen out of a question; and he was astonished that the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government had not thought fit to call his colleague to order. He submitted that the discussion was irregular, and asked for the Speaker's ruling.

The SPEAKER said: The honorable member for Mitchell moved the adjournment of the House for the purpose, as I understood, of debating the answer he had received from the honorable the Colonial Secretary; and, under these circumstances, I consider the honorable gentleman is in order in speaking on the subject.

Mr. BELL said, if the honorable member had objected to the speech of the honorable member for Mitchell, probably he would have been right, but he (Mr. Bell) now objected to his replying. It was thoroughly out of order, and the whole discussion was irregular.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not aware whether he was in order or not.

The SPEAKER: I said the adjournment of the House having been moved, the honorable member is in order.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had said all he intended to state, when the honorable member for Dalby interrupted him. He might, however, also state for the information of the honorable member for Mitchell, that steps were being taken to remedy the anomaly that now existed with regard to the Volunteer force. He had no wish to

answer questions in any other than a straightforward manner, but he had found it impossible to answer the question categorically without misleading the House.

Mr. PALMER said, with all due deference to the honorable the Colonial Secretary, he thought he might have given a very simple answer to the question. There was no commanding officer; and he might have said, Mr. McDonnell was senior officer of the Rifles, and Mr. Geary, of the Artillery. That was all the answer, and he (Mr. Palmer) could give it without referring to any documents at all.

Mr. McILWRAITH wished to call attention to the fact that the document which had been laid on the table that evening, instead of being the Auditor-General's Report for this year, was the report for last year. What they wanted was the report up to the 30th of June, 1876.

Mr. J. SCOTT said, in reference to the question as to whether the honorable the Colonial Secretary was in order, he should like the Speaker's ruling upon it, so that the point might be set at rest. The 79th Standing Order was:—

"In answering any such question, a member shall not debate the matter to which it refers."

Now he held that, if the question could not be debated, it could not be in order to move the adjournment of the House to debate it. He, therefore, asked for the honorable the Speaker's ruling, as to whether this course of action was to be followed in the future or not?

The SPEAKER: There is no doubt that it would appear to be at variance with the Standing Orders that the adjournment should be moved, but it has been the custom of the House to allow that practice, and to permit matters to be debated on the motion for adjournment. It will, therefore, rest with the House to say whether they desire to have the rule more strictly enforced in that respect. It has been the custom of the House to allow the utmost latitude in reference to such matters.

Mr. J. SCOTT said, with all due deference, he hardly understood what the ruling of the honorable the Speaker was. He was aware that a great deal of latitude was allowed in such cases. The question he put was this:—Whether a member could put himself right with the House, or in regard to a question which could not be debated, by moving the adjournment of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY submitted that the 79th Standing Order only applied where there had been no motion for the adjournment of the House moved. It simply applied to the question being put, and he took it that whatever could be discussed on the motion for adjournment, could be discussed immediately after the question had been answered, as well as on the following day. It had been the custom, on answers being given, to do so.

Mr. IVORY said, with all due deference to the last speaker, it had not been the custom,

so far as he was concerned. The custom had been to put a simple question, and a categorical answer was given; and if a member was not satisfied with that, he could table a motion. If honorable members were allowed to get up and debate questions like this at any time, there would be no end to debate.

Mr. PALMER said the honorable member who last addressed the House was perfectly right as to the practice of the House. It had never been the practice to debate a question and answer; nor did he believe a member could put himself right properly by getting up a debate by moving the adjournment of the House. It had certainly not been the practice since he had been in the House, and he thought it desirable that that practice should be adhered to. If a member received an answer he did not like, it might be possible to give notice of a question for the following day, or to give notice of motion to the effect that the answer was wrong. This was the second time this course had been taken since the last adjournment, and with those exceptions, he never remembered a case in the whole of his ten years' experience in which it had been done before.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it was in his recollection, that while the honorable member for Warrego was in the chair, it was attempted to be done once or twice, and it was invariably put down and stopped instantly. He could not now fix any particular case, but he was under the impression that the present Speaker himself was once ruled out of order for attempting something of the kind.

The SPEAKER: I think the motion for adjournment is irregular, and if my attention had been called to it at the time, I should have ruled the honorable member for Mitchell out of order.

Motion for adjournment put and negatived.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. BELL said he desired to ask the honorable the Premier a question without notice, and he did so with a view to giving that honorable gentleman an opportunity of fair play. The question was this:—Whether the report of the proceedings of the deputation which waited upon the Premier at Ipswich in regard to freights on the railway line between Ipswich and Brisbane, and the questions put to, and the answers of that honorable gentleman, as reported in the *Queensland Times* of the 25th instant, was substantially correct or not? There would be a debate upon this question within a few days, and it was only fair to the Premier himself, and to the House, to know whether that report was substantially correct or not.

The PREMIER said, in reply to the honorable member, he had to state that he had not had time to read the report of the deputation referred to; he had not seen it.

Mr. BELL then gave formal notice of his question.

WAYS AND MEANS.

On the first Order of the Day, "Ways and Means—Resumption of Committee," being called—

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved, that this order of the day be postponed until after Order of the Day No. 2, "Supply—Resumption of Committee." He said his reason for doing so was, that it would be necessary, he believed, to open the Committee of Supply with some formal vote on the Estimates, so as to enable the Committee of Ways and Means to be constituted for the consideration of resolutions which would be submitted in that committee. When the Committee of Ways and Means was constituted, he would proceed to make his Financial Statement.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Speaker left the Chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty; and the committee having agreed to a resolution, "That there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1876-7, a sum not exceeding £174, to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor," the same—after the suspension of so much of the Standing Orders as would admit of the reporting and adoption of resolutions from Committee of Supply on the same day on which they had been passed in that committee—was reported to the House and adopted.

WAYS AND MEANS.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means.

The COLONIAL TREASURER then said: Mr. Morgan—A Financial Statement, sir, is a matter of considerable interest to the general public; and I believe I may say from personal experience, it is also a matter of considerable anxiety to the person who is charged with the duty of making that most important announcement. On the present occasion there are special circumstances which conduce to make the statement particularly interesting to the colony, for we find, sir, that after a period of two and a-half years of prosperity we appear to have arrived at a time when a reaction has set in by which the Treasury, instead of presenting a surplus, shows a deficiency of £43,000, and when there also exists in the minds of many an undefined feeling of apprehension as to the future, and that we have now entered upon one of those cycles of depression which so frequently occur in colonial life. The causes, sir, of this deficiency, and whether this apprehension is based upon a sure foundation, or whether it

is merely one of those scares which at times take possession of the public mind, will be better understood in the course of my remarks. In making these remarks, sir, I must necessarily travel over ground which has been occupied by previous Treasurers, but I trust any discursiveness on my part may be overlooked in the consideration of my desire to place before this committee a full and impartial statement of the present position of the Treasury accounts, and that also in consideration of the committee being formed of many younger members who have not had the opportunity previously of hearing a Financial Statement, I may be enabled to induce them to bring to bear an intelligent consideration of the question of finance upon the whole subject which I, this evening, open. I purpose, sir, to deal with the present position of the finances, reviewing the transactions of the past year, and I shall then, sir, refer to our prospects for the ensuing twelve months. In accordance with the usual custom, tables have been prepared, which are placed in the hands of honorable members to enable them to follow me in my remarks; and in commenting on these tables I shall not deal with fractions, but the details may be filled by the reporters, who have also been furnished with tables. At the present time, sir, there are five main subdivisions of the Treasury accounts—the Consolidated Revenue Account, the Surplus Revenue Account, the Loan Account, the Savings Bank Funds, and the Trust Balances. Of these, sir, the Consolidated Revenue Account is by far the most important, embracing as it does all items of revenue, whether accruing from revenue operations, or from the investment of funds obtained by loan, and embracing the whole of the revenue receipts, with the exception of certain specific items which are included, under the authority of different Acts of Parliament, in trust balances, and which are represented under the general name of "Trust Funds;" and sir, it also deals with the general expenditure of the colony, except such items as may be authorised for the purposes of loan, and also to be defrayed out of the trust funds which I have just mentioned. If honorable members will now turn to the statement which has been placed in their hands—to table A—they will find that it shows a statement of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, from the 1st of January, 1875, to the 30th of June, 1876, embracing a period of eighteen months; and I may inform the committee why it is more comprehensive than usual in its character as to time. When my predecessor in office made the last Financial Statement, he brought his returns to the 31st of March, 1875; and as that was not a balancing period in the Treasury, nor the end of the financial year, it was desirable to frame the tables, as dated, from the end of the previous financial year, namely, the 31st of December, 1874, and the operations of the last eighteen months

are accordingly recorded in these tables. The balance on the 1st of January, 1875, was, £39,466 6s. 9d. The Revenue for the six months ending on the 30th of June, 1875, was, £558,381 16s. 10d. The expenditure for the half-year ending on June the 30th, 1875, was £590,008 2s 8d., showing a reduced balance to the credit of the Consolidated Revenue on the 1st of July, 1875, the commencement of the last financial year, to the extent of £7,840 0s. 11d. Starting at that period, we find that the revenue for the twelve months amounted to £1,263,268 11s. 4d., while the expenditure for the same period represents the sum of £1,314,931 19s., showing a debtor balance of £43,823 6s. 9d. The causes which have conducted to this balance being on the debtor side of the revenue account, it will be more in place to mention in a subsequent period of my remarks. The next table, Mr. Morgan, table B, is a statement of the Surplus Revenue Fund for the last twelve months, which, as the majority of honorable members will be aware, was a fund which was constituted by the withdrawal of £240,000 from revenue account in the beginning of 1874, and which had formed portion of the surplus that had accrued from the funding of Treasury Bills issued to cover previous deficiencies in the revenue. This £240,000 was appropriated for the service of certain items which are generally defrayed out of loan, and the amount unexpended of this sum on the 1st of July, 1875, was £100,846 10s. 0d. The expenditure on that account for the year which has just expired was £53,979 15s. 2d., showing a credit balance of £46,866 14s. 10d. The services which remain to be still carried out to completion are enumerated at the foot of the table. Honorable members will observe that the total of the various items constitute the balance I have just referred to; and when the expenditure for these services has been defrayed, this distinctive branch of the revenue account will terminate. Table C exhibits a statement of the loan account, from the 1st July, 1875, to the 30th of June, 1876. On the 30th of June, 1875, the balance on this account stood to the debit £189,473 3s. 8d.; and in explanation of this, I may mention, that the expenditure on loan amounted to this sum at that time, in anticipation of a new loan to issue, and the reason why the account appears to have been not in funds, was owing to the depreciation which occurred on the sales of the previous loans. The expenditure during the twelve months just passed, amounted to £575,508 17s. 10d., and the account has been replenished during the same period by the sale of £1,164,100 worth of debentures, realising an average of about ninety and one-fifth per cent., and producing a net amount of £1,050,259 17s. 7d., and thus showing at the end of the financial year a credit to loan account of £285,227 16s. 1d. In connection with this statement of loan account I would

first direct the attention of honorable members to the debentures which remain on hand unsold. Those debentures are, I may say, *in transitu*, if not now actually in the hands of the Government bankers in London for realisation; they were despatched from the colony at the end of last April, and I believe that had telegraphic communication with England not been interrupted probably we should have heard of their sale before now. However, sir, this £509,400 of unsold debentures together with the amount of the debentures realised during the year represent £1,693,500 as against the amount authorised under the Loan Act of 1875, showing a discrepancy between the amount sold and on hand and the authorised amount of £21,800. This I may explain by saying that the £21,800 deficit in question were sold and taken to account during the currency of the previous financial year. In the early part of 1875 it was determined to issue £150,000 of depreciation debentures under the authority of old Loan Acts, and these debentures were printed and exchanged for a like amount of debentures under the Loan Act of 1872 held by the Savings Bank, and the debentures so obtained from the Savings Bank were offered privately in the colony with partial success, £121,200 being sold between January and March, 1875, leaving £128,200, of which £100,000 were sold in England, £14,100 was sold in Sydney, and the balance, £14,100, remain on hand, as shown in Table C. When the new debentures, in 1875, were issued the amount borrowed was returned to the Savings Bank and those interim debentures were cancelled. It will be observed, in connection with the loan account, that we have a credit balance to the amount of £285,277 16s. 1d., while the loan balances yet to be provided for represent £934,844 0s. 9d. The actual position of the loan account, therefore, will stand thus:—£285,277 16s. 1d. in cash; debentures unsold, £509,400, which may be estimated to produce, at ten per cent. discount, the same rate at which the previous loan has been placed, £460,000, which, with the former amount, would represent about £745,000 to provide for £934,844. the difference, £180,000, being represented by £24,724 over expenditure on Loan Account, and £156,000 the loss on placing the £1,164,100 debentures shown in the table, and the further loss which is likely to accrue on the half-million of debentures yet to be sold. Table B exhibits a statement of the Savings Bank Account from the 1st July, 1875, to the 30th June, 1876. The balance to the credit of this account at the beginning of the late financial year was £184,018 12s. The receipts for the year amounted to £453,696 10s. 1d., and the withdrawals to £490,186 8s. 5d., showing a balance to the credit of the account, at the end of the year, of £152,558 14s. 6d. It will not be out of place for me here to advert to the present position of the Savings

Bank operations, especially as operations connected with this institution are generally regarded as, to a certain extent, affording a gauge of the habits and prosperity of the industrial classes. We find that during the last twelve months, although the operations show a small increase, namely, £13,000, there was a decrease of £12,000 during the last six months; and it is curious to observe that these increases and decreases generally run together continuously for months—that is, one month seldom stands isolated as exhibiting a remarkable decrease without the following months being of a similar character—showing that there is evidently some inclination on the part of depositors to place their money in some other field of investment. The natural inference would be, that withdrawals from the Savings Bank account indicated something of a pressure upon the industrial and laboring classes. However, if this statement be analysed, it will be found that the deposits under £100 have increased by 201, notwithstanding that the aggregate deposits show a decrease of £15,948. The depositors between £100 and £200 show the large increase of 159 depositors, and £36,855 in money; but when we come to the depositors of between £300 and £500, we have an explanation of the apparent decrease, for during the past six months there have been withdrawals by 214 depositors, representing £45,000. I do not, therefore, think that these withdrawals of funds by men of comparatively larger means can be accepted as any indication of pecuniary pressure amongst the laboring classes. On the contrary, I rather take it that the present position of affairs indicates a greater confidence in the future of the colony, and that men who have, comparatively, large amounts of money at their command, instead of being satisfied with the rate of interest given by the Savings Bank, are now induced to invest what they have hitherto placed in that Bank in the development of colonial industries in such various fields of enterprise as present themselves. On the whole, therefore, we may consider this a healthy sign, especially when it is remembered that the Savings Bank ought not to be regarded primarily as an institution which aims at offering large rates of interest to men of means, as an inducement to place their money there. The object of the Savings Bank is, with a moderate rate of interest, to offer the advantages of a Government guarantee, and the opportunity of almost immediate withdrawal; and there can be no doubt that the true purpose of the Savings Bank is to encourage habits of thrift and economy amongst the laboring and industrious classes. Looking at these different aspects of the question, therefore, I certainly see many reasons for believing that what seemed to be unsatisfactory is really a gratifying evidence of prosperity. As having a distinct bearing upon our finan-

cial position, I will now mention to the committee how the Savings Banks funds are held at the present time. In Queensland Government 6 per cent. debentures £254,000 have been invested; in 4 per cent. debentures, £191,000; advances on mortgage, £3,400, which, I may say, is a relic of the old Moreton Bay Savings Bank. Then we have, in fixed deposits, £150,000, of which £100,000 is in the Queensland National Bank, and £50,000 in the Bank of Australasia; and drawing account, £9,000, representing the balance. I now pass on to Table E, and that is a statement of trust accounts from the 1st July, 1875, to 30th June, 1876. The balance, on the 30th June last year, was £42,500 2s. 6d., and the receipts during the year have been £74,168 1s. 8d. During the same period the expenditure has been £58,906 12s. 11d., showing a balance of £57,761 11s. 3d. In connection with the operations of this table, it may be interesting to some members of the committee to know how those funds are produced. They are thirteen in number, and consist of the Police Reward Fund, £5,794 17s. 7d., a fund which is furnished by the rewards given for the apprehension of offenders; the Police Superannuation Fund, £10,525 7s. 1d., is augmented by a percentage of 2 per cent. on the salaries of the force; Immigration Collections, £10,116 5s. 5d.; Assurance Fund, Real Property Act, £6,295 7s. 2d.; Sheep Assessment Fund, £3,807 16s. 11d.; Brands Act Fund, £2,351 14s. 1d.; Western Railway Account, £10,059 4s. 11d., and this fund, as its name implies, is provided by the proceeds of the land sales within the Western Railway reserves; Poundage, £3,034 14s. 10d., provided by the net proceeds of poundage fees paid into the Treasury and held for two years, after which time they are paid over to the hospital in the district where they were collected; Suspense Account, £1,589 3s., an account representing the money held in suspense pending the arrival of vouchers to the Treasury to enable the same to be appropriated; Gold Fields Homestead Act Fund, £326 7s. 3d.; Brisbane Drainage Act Fund, £2,766 15s. 8d.; Brisbane Waterway Act Fund, £259 17s. 10d.; and other Trust accounts, £833 19s. 6d., making a total for the thirteen Trust balances of £57,761 11s. 3d. Table F shows the disposal of the balances at the end of our financial year, 30th June, 1876, stating how the various sums to which I have referred have been invested. There is in the Union Bank at London and Brisbane the sum of £281,904 9s. 2d.; in the National Bank of Queensland, £100,000, which is a fixed deposit from the Savings Bank; Bank of Australasia, £100,000, being a fixed deposit, £50,000 on account of Savings Bank, and £50,000 on account of operations under the last loan. Then there is entered a balance of £16,737 in the hands of the Agent-General, and the deficit before men-

tioned of £43,823 6s. 9d. With regard to this balance said to be in the hands of the Agent-General, I ought to explain that it is more apparent than real, for it has been reduced by vouchers amounting to £12,000, which have arrived at the Treasury, making the actual balance £4,737 Os. 9d. Therefore, our actual cash position at the present moment is this, that we have £481,000 in the banks, and half-a-million of debentures yet to be realised, and which, if their sale meet our expectations, will together contribute an amount of £942,000. This embraces not only the Loan Account, but also the funds which are at present in the Savings Banks and on fixed deposits at the other banks. I next come to table G, and the first question which will here arise will be the consideration of the balance of the Consolidated Revenue Fund shewing the deficiency which has accrued on the past year's operations. This table is a statement showing the outstanding liability on account of unexpended votes, together with the balance of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, available in respect of the same on the 1st January, 1874 and 1875, and 1st July, 1875 and 1876 respectively; and I wish, in commenting upon this table, to place before the committee an intelligible account of how the deficiency has occurred. The outside public, I may in passing observe, as a rule, are rather sceptical as to the *bona fides* of a Treasurer's statement. I have frequently heard it observed that a statement of disbursements and expenditure can be thoroughly well understood, but that there is a sort of mystification introduced by Treasurers in two particular items, one being unexpended balances of votes, and the other lapsed votes. Now, I wish to place before the committee, information on those two items, so that they may be able to appreciate the present position of the Treasury Balances. To do that, I must refer to 1874, when the Consolidated Revenue was in credit £240,228. At that time it was deemed advisable by the wisdom of the House to withdraw from revenue the sum of £240,000, and place it to the credit of a special account called Surplus Revenue Account, leaving at the credit of the revenue account £228 15s. 4d. only, on the 1st January, 1874. At the time this amount was withdrawn there was a liability outstanding on account of services of the preceding year of £138,656 18s. 3d. Of this liability £30,133 11s. 4d. lapsed at the end of the financial year. The liability, therefore, on account of services of that year was £108,523 6s. 11d., which, reduced by the balance of the Consolidated Revenue Account, £228 15s. 4d., showed a liability in excess of assets of £108,294 11s. 7d. Now, sir, in 1874 the House was composed of a large number of new members. The Electoral Districts Bill had just been put in operation, and the consequence was, that the number of members

to this House was largely increased. I have no doubt that we were all rather sanguine in our expectations of the ensuing year with regard to finance, especially as we found a surplus of £240,000 stood at the credit of the Revenue Account, which could afford to be written off; and not only that, but I have no doubt honorable members had their own individual wants—the wants of their own districts—to impress upon the Government and to urge upon them to make provision for such wants. In this way probably rose a large provision in the Estimates of 1874 for the services of public works in that year. The consequence of this action, however, was that the Estimates of 1874 were largely increased, and accordingly we find, on the 1st of January, 1875, an undischarged liability of £242,024 5s. 11d., of this amount £52,316 13s. 6d. lapsed; the net liability, on account of previous year, was £189,707 12s. 5d., and the balance at credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £39,466 6s. 9d., reduced the liability in excess of assets to £150,241 5s. 8d. In the latter half of the year this liability still remained undischarged, for on the 1st of July, 1875, the table shows liability on account of services of previous year, £211,423 15s. 11d.; less votes lapsed, £17,407 13s. 11d.; net liability on account of previous year, £194,016 2s.; balance at credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £7,840 Os. 11d., showing a liability then outstanding of £186,176 1s. 1d. The Estimates-in-Chief for 1875-6 were £1,155,450, in addition to which there is Supplementary Estimate No. 1, amounting to £29,840, and Supplementary Estimate No. 2, amounting to £69,237 3s. 2d., the latter not yet passed, which will be found attached to the Estimates-in-Chief. I would here remark, that of this latter amount, the sum of £27,633 is for interest on account of debentures placed in the London market, and which was not provided for in the Estimates of 1875-6, which my predecessor placed before the committee. A further expenditure on account of the year 1875-6 is estimated to amount to £25,000, and details of items will be laid before the House at another time, and later on in my remarks I will indicate the services which it is intended to cover by this amount. The payments between the 1st July, 1875, and 30th June, 1876, amounted to £1,314,931 19s., showing a net liability at the present time of £158,611 6s. 2d. Before proceeding further, I may perhaps by a little amplification explain more fully the position of matters under this branch of my subject. The balance to the credit of the Consolidated Revenue on the 1st January, 1874, to the time the late Ministry took office, was £240,000; against this, however, there were liabilities on account of services of the previous year, chiefly unexpended balances of votes, amounting in the aggregate to £138,656; but as votes to the extent of £30,133 were allowed to lapse, this liability was reduced to £108,523; and, therefore, the credit balance

on the 1st January, 1874, might fairly have been put down at £131,700, which, after the transfer for special services of £240,000, left an excess of liabilities over assets of £108,295. On the 1st January, 1874, the excess of liability over assets was £108,294 11s. 7d.; on the same date in 1875, £150,240 5s. 8d.; on 1st July, 1875, £186,176 1s. 1d.; and on the 1st of July in the present year, £157,434 12s. 11d.; the difference, therefore, between this last sum and the liability on the 1st January, 1874, was £49,139, being the exact sum by which the services authorised by the late Government exceeded the revenue during the term of their administration, namely, two years and a-half. This excess on the 1st January, 1875, was £41,946; on the 1st July, 1875, £77,881, and that was during the last twelve months reduced to the sum before stated, namely, £49,139, showing an improvement on Revenue account during the last twelve months of £28,742. To account for the over-expenditure, I will state that the total sum on account of Roads and Bridges, which I have referred to previously as having been enlarged in 1874, was in this way:—In 1871, the sum was £38,690; in 1872, £43,697; in 1873, £41,047. This brings us to the end of 1873; I will ask the committee to pay attention to the amounts, voted under the same head, in the following years:—In 1874 it was £154,184; during the six months of 1875 it was £46,030; and in 1876 it will be £74,955—showing an annual average revenue appropriated for the services of Roads and Bridges of £41,111 for the three years ending 1873, whilst for the two and a-half years just passed, the annual average has been £110,067. In addition to these causes of deficiency in the Treasury balances at the present time, I would direct attention to the accumulation of interest on the public debt, a portion of which was not provided for in the Estimates brought down to the House last session. In 1873, the interest on the public debt was £248,000; 1874, £257,000; 1875, £278,000; and at the present time it stands at £346,000, showing an increase since 1873 of nearly £98,000, of which, as I have already stated, £28,000 was not provided, and forms part of Supplementary Estimate No. 2. to which I shall advert further on in my remarks. Now, sir, the question naturally arises, why are these unexpended balances left over from year to year, especially when there is a surplus of revenue? Why not, as an ordinary business man would do, make due provision for coming services before dealing with the appropriation of surplus. I will say that the only reason I can find in all previous Treasury statements for what I have mentioned is, that the unexpended balances one year are expected to average a similar amount in the ensuing year, and it will be obvious to the committee, that if an enlarged amount of expenditure be authorised in any

one year, and such expenditure be not provided for in the current year, it must form a very disturbing element in the calculations for the ensuing year, and it would appear that it is to a great extent owing to this cause that the position of the Treasury balances are shown to be in debit at the present time. It might also be considered desirable, in the face of these undischarged liabilities, to allow all balances to lapse annually and re-vote them, because Treasury statements deal with facts—with actual disbursements between one period and another. A system of this kind would very much simplify the transactions, but, perhaps, it would not be considered fair to honorable members who possibly had been to considerable trouble to get a certain amount inserted in the Estimates, but found the Government unable to proceed, during the current year, with the fulfilment of the work or service in which they were interested; if the matter had to be held over and re-appropriated. This system, therefore, although it would simplify the accounts, would carry a very great objection in itself, for it would put honorable members to the trouble of obtaining the re-insertion of amounts for their respective districts, which had not been expended up to the end of the financial year. In the statement I have made, referring to what I consider the improved condition of the revenue and its liabilities concurrently, I have estimated that votes to the extent of £45,000 will lapse, and thus reduce the undischarged liabilities at the present time to £113,000, which, added to the Consolidated Revenue balance, shows a present liability of £157,434 12s. 11d. Now it may be said, and with some show of reason, that while I claim that the balance of the revenue, and the undischarged liabilities of the Government together show a general improvement, yet that I establish that improvement by assuming that £45,000 will lapse on votes, and that if these votes do not lapse, instead of any improvement being shown, there would be a deficiency, and an aggravation of the position as regards the present state of the finances. I would say, in reply to this, that lapsed votes may be defined under two heads: certain votes must lapse from the inability of the Government, from want of information or otherwise, to proceed with the expenditure, either during the current year or within a reasonable time thereafter; and again, votes must lapse when an expenditure cannot be strictly carried out in accordance with Estimates sanctioned by the House. In this latter case, on Executive authority, expenditure connected with departments has to be defrayed, while the original amount necessarily lapses; so that, in some cases, the amount of these lapsed votes ought to go to the reduction of the Supplementary Estimates, which are brought up to the House for consideration, and are generally considered as so much unnecessary or

extravagant expenditure. The £45,000 to which I have adverted as likely to lapse, does not comprise any services, more particularly works of public utility, such as roads, bridges, and buildings, in which honorable members would be likely to feel special interest; but it comprises sums which must necessarily lapse on services which cannot be carried out during the present year. I will briefly mention some of them, although we cannot ascertain the exact position of these lapsed votes till the 30th of September; that is to say, the actual lapsing of the votes cannot be regarded as complete till the end of the audit year. The items which I have before me, however, are £800, Schedules and Governor's Establishment, chiefly His Excellency's travelling expenses; in the Colonial Secretary's Department there will be about £4,000 for Charitable Allowances, and £2,000 in the department. In the Education Department the large amount of £17,500 is estimated to lapse, and illustrates my previous statement that it lapses in consequence of expenditure not being required in the precise direction authorised by the House, in the Estimates of last year. In this department it is estimated that about £17,500 will lapse, for this reason, that in the first place the sum of about £800 was not required for the salary of a general inspector and other expenses, and again in school salaries there is an amount of £15,800, a much larger provision having been made than was necessary, on the supposition that a great increase would be made in the teaching strength under the new administration of the department. For buildings for Orphanages, which had not been proceeded with, and the money for which is not likely to be appropriated during the ensuing three months, £600 will lapse. In the Colonial Treasurer's Department, £3,000; in the Lands Department, £1,100; Public Works Department, chiefly salaries, £3,000; salary of Engineer-in-Chief for Railways, £1,500; Electric Telegraphs, £5,000: in all representing about £47,000, which I assumed in my statement as £45,000. That is the position of the votes to lapse and the liabilities undischarged for the previous year. Table H. is a statement of the Consolidated Revenue Funds, and I would direct the attention of honorable members to it, as the table has been framed on a more comprehensive basis than former tables have been, and will be found, I think, very useful to honorable members in following my remarks, and also for reference in connection with the expenditure for the ensuing twelve months. This table furnishes a statement showing the estimated and actual receipts and expenditure for the year ending 30th June, 1876, with estimated revenue and liability for the ensuing year. It shows the Budget estimate and actual receipts for 1875-6, and on the other side it shows the liability on the 1st July, 1876, for services of the several

departments of previous years. I shall merely now, in dealing with this table, refer to the operations of last year. The Customs revenue, which was estimated at £500,000, did not quite come up to that estimate, reaching only £494,710. But, I may mention, that notwithstanding it has not come up to the expectations of my predecessor, it has shown an advance on the previous year's actual receipts of £18,500, and I believe that, but for the exceptionally broken weather which was experienced during the latter part of the financial year just ended, namely, the month of June, when the Customs receipts showed a marked decrease, the estimate of revenue from the Customs would have been exceeded. It may be necessary to mention here, that the amount of duties remitted by the alteration of the *ad valorem* duties, and by the last alteration in the tariff, represent for the past year a remission of £85,000, and shows a total loss since the tariff was altered of £175,900. In connection with this subject I may also inform honorable members that negotiations have been opened with the Government of New South Wales for the abolition of the border duties between that colony and Queensland, and that the offer made to the Government of New South Wales by my predecessor was to accept in lieu of the duties collected on the border a sum of £3,000 a-year, at the same time prohibiting tea and the introduction of tobacco. The matter is under the consideration of the New South Wales Government, and they have not as yet formally intimated their acquiescence in the arrangement proposed. I think that if they are prepared to entertain it, the matter should be re-opened, and we should then see if it cannot be managed on a more satisfactory basis, for I think it is only a half-way mode of settling things to propose that two articles which form a very large item indeed in the border customs receipts should be left out. These two commodities, I may say, produced one-third of the total amount of border customs receipts, amounting to £4,000, during the last twelve months. I may also state, that negotiations have been opened with the Government of South Australia with the view to introduce reciprocity in regard to the admission here of articles of South Australian product, and the admission into that colony of articles of Queensland manufacture on mutual terms. Owing, however, to the late change of Government in South Australia, these negotiations have been delayed. In view of a general system of federation between the colonies, which I think we should strive to promote by the abolition of the border customs duties and by reciprocity treaties, I hope that the whole question will be urged upon the consideration of the various colonial Governments. I believe that we may have an opportunity of discussing the matter with the Colonial Treasurer of New South Wales, who is expected

to arrive here shortly, and I trust that we shall be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of it. Excise, which honorable members will see was estimated to yield £30,000 last year, only gave £27,972, and this in the face of a very large increase in the production of colonial rum. We find that the production of that article has increased more than 50 per cent. during the last year—that whilst the quantity manufactured in 1874-75 was 217,000 gallons, in 1875-6 it was 350,000; at the same time we find that that increased production has not promoted or encouraged a taste for local consumption, but that the production which now takes place is for the purpose of exportation, or chiefly so. We find that during the last three years, notwithstanding the great increase in the production of the article, almost the whole surplus production has been exported. In 1873 the amount consumed was 62,562 gallons and the amount exported 61,871 gallons; in 1874 the amount consumed was 76,755 gallons and the amount exported was 91,753; and in 1875 the quantity consumed was 80,620 gallons and that exported amounted to 153,359. In the transactions in land we find a decrease in the first line, namely, auction and selection purchases; the estimated revenue from that source was £30,000, whereas it only produced £12,475. The actual operations, however, represented £31,000, but of that amount £25,108 was paid in land orders, and, therefore, the net cash receipts amounted to only £12,475. The purchase of mineral lands shows a slight excess on the amount estimated; instead of £3,000, £4,987 was derived from that source. From pre-emptive purchases under the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 the revenue received was considerably larger than was anticipated, being £33,920 as against £20,000. This may be accounted for, I think, by the resumptions which were made last year. Rents under the Acts of 1868 and 1872 amounted to £150,943, thus exceeding the estimated revenue from that source by £15,943, or nearly £16,000. This I attribute to the increased facilities given for settlement through the resumptions which were made in 1875. Survey fees and other receipts, also, show an increase on the estimate. The revenue from rents of lands for pastoral purposes has come up to the estimate, amounting to £136,000, an advance of £6,000 on the previous year. The gold revenue arising from miners' rights, &c., shows an increase of 50 per cent., showing that there has been a large addition to the number of gold miners during the last financial year, owing to the great attraction caused by the discoveries in the North. Stamps duty shows a very trifling increase on the estimate of last year, and postage shows an increase of ten per cent. There are other items mentioned with which I will not take up the time of the committee, but will just refer to railways. The estimate from them was £150,000, whilst the actual

receipts have been £152,101. This, which seems a small advance, may be attributed to the goods traffic on the Southern and Western Railway having been delayed through the non-completion of the bridge at Oxley; for I think honorable members will agree with me, that a large addition to revenue from that traffic may be anticipated in future. The item, Miscellaneous Receipts, shows an increase from £22,000 to £34,158, but this may be accounted for by the interest accruing from the bank deposits being credited to that item. On the other side of the account we observe the expenditure which has taken place during the year ending June 30, amounted to £1,314,931 19s., including £306,075 for interest on loans, and that the total amount of liability on July 1st of this year is £346,254; that includes interest accruing on debentures either now placed or to be placed in the market. Table I contains a statement of revenue votes (including Supplementary Estimates No. 2 of 1875-6) and expenditure on account of roads, bridges, and public works for the year ending 31st December, 1873, and 1874, the six months ending 30th June, 1875, and the financial year ending 30th June, 1876. It will be seen from that the unexpended balances for 1873 amounted to £30,560 5s. 7d.; in 1874, to £109,267 4s. 9d., the six months ending 30th June, 1875, to £85,791 3s. 9d.; and for the year ending 30th June, 1876, to £30,297 15s. 11d.; therefore, our position with regard to unexpended balances of roads, bridges, and public works is reduced to the same position that it was in 1873. I think in view of this very small amount available, that the Government are warranted in their action in introducing a loan vote of £100,000 to provide for roads and bridges, and I think that such action will be commended by the committee. It would be extremely undesirable to repeat the mistake of 1874, by framing the revenue estimates on such a large scale for those works; and instead of doing that, the Government propose to supplement the ordinary revenue and the balances now outstanding from loan. Table K contains a statement of the Land Order Account, and shows a balance on land orders outstanding on the 30th June, 1876, of £15,405 10s. 3d. Now, this item of land orders, which is viewed with so much apprehension by a Treasurer as interfering with his cash anticipations, so far as the issue under the Act of 1872 is concerned, will entirely cease in March next. These land orders have been issued to full-paying passengers who have been twelve months in the colony: they have been issued to full-paying passengers, and they represent a total amount of £36,295 to be retired before this disturbing element in a Treasurer's accounts will be expunged. Of the land orders issued under the Act of 1869 there are at present outstanding sufficient to represent 24,282 acres.

These land orders are not now convertible; the period under which they could be exchanged—a forty acre land order for a £20 land order—having expired, but they are still available to the holders to take up land subject to stringent conditions. In reference to the Volunteer land orders, certificates have been given for 159 land orders; I do not think these call for any special comment, except that they are available for taking up either 50 acres of country land or five acres of suburban land. Appended to the land order statement is a table showing the Immigration for the year 1865, 1873-74-75 and 1875-76 respectively, from which we observe that, whilst in 1865 the number of full paying, assisted, remittance, indented, and free passengers amounted to 12,936; for the year 1874, 9,580; for the six months ending 30th June, 1875, 2,453; and for the year ending 30th June, 1876, only 5,364. Honorable members will see that there is a considerable reduction between the number in 1874 and the last year ending June 30th. I may mention that it is estimated that there will be about 1,800 to arrive within the next three months, and, perhaps, about 500 more before the end of the year, so that in all, the arrivals will not materially exceed 2,300 up to 31st December. I mention this to show that there is no ground for the apprehensions that have been entertained and expressed by many persons as to the large number of immigrants expected to arrive, and the urgency which has been expressed by many honorable members for the prosecution of public works for the purpose of giving employment to those immigrants on their arrival. I think that the danger has been overrated of there not being sufficient employment for the people who may come here. The percentage of full-paying passengers for the year ending June 30th, 1876, was 9 per cent. Of assisted, remittance, and indented, 36, and free, 55 per cent. The expenditure on account of Immigration for 1874-5 was somewhat large, being from loan £68,804, from revenue £7,387, from surplus revenue £60,645, from immigration collections £15,793, making a total of £152,629. During the last twelve months the expenditure has been from loan £68,483, from revenue £11,092, and from immigration collections £16,286, making a total of £95,861. Whilst on the subject of Immigration I may mention that the balance unexpended, as shown in Table C, namely £187,968 3s., is considered to be sufficient to provide for eighteen months' operations. Referring to the undertakings (to repay cost of passage) shown in Table K, it will appear that there were undertakings overdue on 30th June, 1876, amounting to £29,751, which amount has been written off as the time within which they could be received has elapsed. £7,395 have been retired in June, and £20,822 are not yet due. The whole of the last amount I have mentioned will be open for cancellation next March, by which

time the twelve months allowed after date of arrival of the immigrants will have expired, and any undertakings not paid within that time will, as usual, be cancelled. Table L deals with the operations of our railways. The Southern and Western Railway shows for the last twelve months a considerable increase on the preceding year. During the year ending 30th June, 1876, the receipts were £132,318 5s. 10d. and the working expenses £83,952 1s. 6d., making the net earnings £48,366 4s. 4d. The length of line open appears to be two miles less than it was in the previous year, but this is on account of the deviation at Ipswich. In connection with this matter I may mention, that the Brisbane and Ipswich extension has contributed one-eighth, or £15,817, of the total amount of receipts, whilst the length of the line constitutes about the same proportion of the whole. This is caused by the great increase in the passenger traffic, and we may reasonably expect that now the line is opened to the interior without any break, there will be a still greater increase, and that it will be a good paying line for general traffic. The Northern line last year, for the first time, showed a small profit of £3,016 6s. 6d. over the working expenses, and it would appear that this is an illustration of the soundness of the theory that the longer you extend a railway the better it pays. It is to be hoped that this is the forerunner of a much larger revenue from that line, and that its continuous losses for so many years will be succeeded by a surplus. Table M shows a return of the value of the goods exported from the colony from the year 1860 to the year 1875; those during last year show considerable fluctuation. We find, sir, in copper there has been a reduction in the quantity exported to the amount of £38,000. The cotton industry seems to be virtually extinct, the exports representing only £8,183 in value, a decrease on the previous year of £24,600. The product of gold shows an increase of £27,600. In colonial rum, owing to the enlarged production to which I previously referred, there is an increase of £8,000. The sugar industry, which seems to have suffered so much during the past twelve months, exhibits a marked decrease of £38,000. In tin, also, there is a large decrease, £120,000. In wool, the decrease amounts to £84,000; but in hides, including sheepskins, there is an increase of £21,000. Under the head of "Miscellaneous," there is an increase of £84,000. However, the whole of the reductions on the leading products to which I have adverted, represent a total of £141,000 as contrasted with the operations of the preceding year, and reduce the value of our exports per head from £22 9s. 7d. in 1874, to £19 18s. 1d. in 1875. Of course, the increase of population to a certain extent augments this apparent reduction in the rateable value of our exports; but still the fact

cannot be concealed that our exports have suffered a large diminution, especially in some which are our most important national products. At the foot of the table is a return showing the totals of imports for the colony from 1860 to 1875 inclusive, and distinguishing direct trade with Great Britain from other places; and without taking up the time of the committee unnecessarily by going into details, I may state the result is, that the imports from Great Britain represent £1,262,041, and from all other places £1,932,301, forming a total of £3,194,342, showing an increase of £361,000 on the imports of the preceding year, and making a rateable increase in the value of our imports per head of £17 12s. 5d., as against £17 7s. 3d., in 1874. This table is, I may say, also affected to some extent by the increase in our population, but it shows that we have not yet reached the rate of import, which appears to have culminated in 1873, of £18 13s. 6d. per head. Tables N and O deal with the position of the banks in the adjoining colonies as well as in Queensland; and as the operations of our financial institutions may be considered as the pulse of the communities, it may not be inappropriate to refer in detail to their operations. In Victoria, we find the notes in circulation represent £1,382,612 3s. 11d., and the deposits represent £13,734,967 17s. 11d., making a total of £15,117,579; whilst the advances amount to £17,852,348 10s. 4d., showing that the colony of Victoria is in debt to the banks, £2,734,000. In New Zealand, the note issue is £871,328 12s. 8d.; deposits, £5,068,818 0s. 3d., representing a total of £5,940,000, while the advances and discounts made by the banks amount to £8,823,103 19s. 3d.; so that, we find that colony, indebted to the banks to the extent of nearly £3,000,000. In New South Wales, we find the note circulation £1,114,410 15s. 4d.; the total deposits £13,650,892 5s. 1d., making a total of £14,765,000, while the advances and discounts made by the banks to the colony, represent only £12,483,712 13s. 3d., showing that the banks there are in debt to the colony to the extent of £2,282,000. Now, sir, this result in connection with New South Wales may be attributed to the fact that there is a large amount of Government deposits lying in the banks in that colony. In Queensland, on reference to table O, it will be observed that, in 1874, the note issue was £351,322, showing an increase on the previous year of £63,467. The deposits were £2,374,824, showing an increase of £307,000. The total amount of deposits and note issue amounted to £2,726,000; the advances and discounts to £2,680,029, showing that in 1874 there was an increase on the previous year of £526,331, and also showing that the banks were in debt to the colony at that time about £46,000. In 1875 the note issue decreased by a small amount, a couple of thousand pounds,

and stood at £349,592, and the deposits amounted to £2,705,900, showing an increase of £331,000 as contrasted with the former year. The discounts and advances amounted to £3,451,646, showing a very marked increase of £771,617; and showing also that the colony was in debt to the banks at the end of the year 1875 to the extent of £396,000; in addition to which, I would mention that the coin and bullion, to the extent of £600,000 in the coffers of the banks, I have excluded from the comparative statement, so as not to interfere with the position—and it will not interfere with the position of the banks at the end of last year or the present year, seeing that the amount of coin and bullion is very nearly the same. Table P exhibits the comparative statement of the Consolidated Revenues of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, for the year ending on the 31st December, 1875; and the chief object of remark in these tables, is to note the sources from which the revenues of the respective colonies seem to be chiefly derived. In Victoria, we observe the Customs and Excise together contribute 40 per cent. of the total revenue, being at the rate of £2 1s. 1d. per head of the population. In New South Wales, we observe the Customs and Excise constitute only 24 per cent; and in our own colony, we find that these two items contribute 48 per cent. and provide the chief means of revenue, as contrasted with the other sources; and in South Australia, Customs and Excise provide thirty-six per cent. The territorial revenue of Victoria provides only twenty-four per cent.; in New South Wales forty-eight per cent., and in Queensland and South Australia, it contributes in each colony only thirty-three per cent. The public works revenue of the colony of Victoria is considerably in excess of all the other colonies, providing twenty-six per cent., or £1 6s. 6d. per head of the population; while in New South Wales it is only sixteen per cent., and in Queensland only thirteen per cent., and in South Australia twenty-two per cent.; thus placing Queensland in the lowest position in regard to the productiveness of its public works.

MR. McILWRAITH: No.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: It is the lowest on the table I have read—Victoria, 26 per cent.; South Australia, 22 per cent.; New South Wales, 16 per cent.; and Queensland, 13 per cent. In table O, we find a return of the population of the colony for the year 1875; and the chief feature in connection with this table, and one of peculiar significance at the present time, is to show from whence the excess of arrivals is chiefly derived. We find, sir, while the table represents an addition of 15,000 to our population, that only 7,500 of this amount appears to be derived from emigration from Great Britain and the Australian Colonies; the other 7,500 being composed of Chinese and South Sea Islanders. I shall, further on in

my remarks, deal with the aspect of immigration as presented by this table. In connection with this, I would mention that the Census returns, which have just been furnished, show that the population of the colony is 173,162, of which number 27,809 are resident in the districts north of Cape Palmerston, of which we hear so much, and the residue, in the southern and western districts, represents 145,000, so that the population north of Cape Palmerston may be fairly estimated at 15 per cent. of the whole population. Table R deals with the tonnage of shipping inwards and outwards for each port of the colony for the year 1876 as contrasted with the preceding year, and exhibits the increase of trade; but I need not take up the time of the committee by going into details in connection with this table, as I fear I have already occupied the attention of honorable members on these matters of detail at too great length, if not tedious prolixity. At the commencement of my remarks, Mr. Morgan, I solicited the attention of the committee to these statistics, so that they may be enabled thoroughly to understand the position of the various operations of finance and statistics during the past twelve months. I would now, having dealt with the operations of the past year, request the attention of honorable members to table H in connection with its operations in the future. It will be observed that the Budget Estimate for 1876-7 shows a total increase of £127,000 as upon the actual receipts of the last financial year; and in connection with this table I shall first refer to the item of Customs, which has been estimated to produce £535,000, as against £494,710 received during the past year. I may say, sir, that this estimate has been very carefully considered, and has not been put down for the mere sake of presenting anything like an attractive appearance in the Budget Estimates. It is, I feel justified in saying, reduced below the departmental estimates; and I think honorable gentlemen who have connection with commerce will corroborate what I state, when I say that a very reasonable advance in the Customs revenue may be reckoned upon and regarded as probable for the ensuing six or twelve months. Owing to the broken weather which has occurred in the early part of the year, a large quantity of goods have not been liberated from bond and sent to their destination in the country, and the Customs returns, even during the last few weeks, show a very marked improvement indeed upon the operations of last month, and fully justify the opinion which I entertain, that the sum of £535,000, or a larger amount, will be received under this head of receipts during the present year. Excise cannot be estimated beyond what was estimated in the past year. £30,000 is put down; it did not quite realise that amount last year, but as the gradual increase is about ten per cent., I am content to accept that as a fair estimate

of what will be produced from Excise during the ensuing twelve months. Sales of land, auction, and selection purchases, we find reduced from £30,000 to £15,000, and this is an estimate which, I presume, will not be cavilled at, seeing that it approaches very closely to the amount actually received during the year just expired. The pre-emptive purchases under the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 have been estimated at about ten per cent. on the amount purchased last year. It is, however, an estimate that may be considered a haphazard estimate, which will depend upon the view pastoral tenants hold of their position with regard to any future land legislation that may take place; but when I state that at the present time there are in the Treasury vouchers to the extent of £13,000 actually to be paid within a few days, I do not think it will be considered that I have exceeded the mark, because I think it may be fairly estimated that the balance of about £20,000 will be fully realised, it not exceeded. Rents and assessments of runs, for which £136,659 was received last year, have been estimated at £148,000; and I may mention that the rent list at present in the hands of the department shows a total of £146,000, so that the small amount by which that list has been exceeded is one that cannot be objected to or disputed. The gold revenue has been estimated at the amount which has been received during the past twelve months. The estimated increase in the receipts from duty stamps has been made up to about 15 per cent. on the amount actually received last year; and last year I would mention exhibited an increase of £6,000 upon the preceding year, so that in this item, great care has been exercised not to make an over-estimate. The items under the head of "postage" have been set down at an advance of ten per cent. on the amount which was received last year. Harbor and light dues are put down the same as last year; and electric telegraphs have been set down at an increase slightly above 10 per cent.; but I think, when it is considered that telegraphic communication with Europe may be shortly expected to be resumed, it will be admitted that a larger revenue in all probability will be received during the ensuing twelve months than we have received during the past year, in consequence of the interruptions to which I have referred. The revenue from railways has been estimated at £195,000. This item, perhaps, above all others, may be open to comment, but at the same time it has been carefully considered; and we must bear in mind the traffic which will be induced on the Southern and Western line in consequence of the opening of the Brisbane and Ipswich extension, which is now available for goods traffic, from which it was precluded during the last twelve months. The whole matter has been carefully gone into by the department, and although the estimate may

create some doubt in the minds of honorable members as to its being attained, I think it is one that will prove to be correct. Fines and fees of office need no comment. Miscellaneous receipts have been put down at £44,000, an advance of £10,000 on the amount received last year; and I will merely mention that this will be provided by the accruing interest on the amount of bank balances, which are not likely to be entirely absorbed during the current financial year. Now, in regard to the estimated expenditure, if honorable members will turn to their Estimates, they will find the total increase of expenditure represents £139,371 on the estimates of the preceding year, while the Budget estimate of receipts represents an increase of £127,000 on the actual receipts of that year. Referring to the expenditure, the first item of increase is in the schedules, £6,754; and I may mention that £6,700 of this amount represents the allowances for the non-vested schools, which have been withdrawn from the ordinary revenue estimates, and are now placed in schedules; and this will account for the apparent want of increase in the Department of Public Instruction, lower down in the column. Under the heads "Executive and Legislative," there is an increase of £1,410, which is chiefly induced by making provision for the expenses of His Excellency's tour to the North, and also in providing additional short-hand writers, and other expenses connected with the Chamber. The Colonial Secretary's department shows an increase of £19,974, and of this sum, the police constituted £9,000; Government printing and "Hansard," £2,800; the Volunteers, £2,300; and Miscellaneous services represent the balance. The Department of the Administration of Justice shows a decrease of £2,200; Public Instruction shows an increase of only £1,500, but in conjunction with this must be regarded the £6,700 in the schedules, being the subsidy to non-vested schools, which previously appeared under this department. In the Colonial Treasurer's department, there is an increase of £4,933, chiefly caused by the requirements of the Customs department, harbors and pilots, and lighting. The Department of Public Lands exhibits an increase of £5,148, chiefly caused by surveys of runs. In the Public Works department, there is an increase of £24,553, of which £3,000 will be required by the department; £11,600 by the Southern and Western Railway, £5,200 by the Northern Railway, and about £5,000 for roads and buildings. The Postmaster-General's department shows an increase of £8,317, which is absorbed by conveyance of mails, departmental expenditure, and electric telegraphs. The Auditor-General has an increase in his department to the extent of £1,200. The interest on debentures, which is not shown in the comparative statement, was £278,412 in the Estimates of 1875-6, the amount required to provide

for the interest accruing on the 30th of June, 1877, will be £346,254, showing an increase of £67,812, and in all, an increase of £139,371 upon the expenditure of the preceding year. The Supplementary Estimates, which are bound up with the Estimates-in-Chief, and which represent a total of £69,237, are actual payments from the Treasury, closing on the evening of the 30th of June, 1876. And I think it my duty to mention in connection with these Estimates, that they have been framed with the desire to place the committee in possession of the public expenditure which took place under the different heads, up to the evening I mention. In anticipation of the closing of the financial year, letters were sent to the various heads of departments to send in all vouchers before the 30th of June; and every voucher received up to four o'clock on that afternoon was provided for, and makes its appearance in these Supplementary Estimates. The first of these items refers to schedules; and embraces interest, £27,633, and refundments, £650, which did not require any parliamentary sanction, having been defrayed under authority of Acts of Parliament. The residue of the Estimate is for general services, and amounts to £40,000; and in this it will be observed that an item of £4,283 17s. 9d. is for Public Instruction, carrying out the statement I made in an earlier part of my remarks regarding the manner in which votes lapse, and expenditure becomes necessary in a different direction to that authorised by the Assembly on the Estimates-in-Chief. This £4,283 may be fairly regarded as not intimating any injudicious expenditure, when we consider that £17,000 in the same department has been allowed to lapse. In addition to this Supplementary Estimate, a further sum of £25,000 will very likely be required for the services of the past year. It is impossible, at the present time, sir, to place any detailed account of that expenditure before the committee, but when the details are ascertained, it will be placed before the House in the form of a further Supplementary Estimate. I may, however, mention the services which are claiming this additional assistance. The Police Department requires £6,000, and in addition to that, the Colonial Secretary's department will require £3,000 for the census: Public Instruction requires £6,000; £2,000 will be required for surveys of lands; and £8,000 for public works, railways, roads, bridges, and buildings. These items constitute the main portion of the £25,000, which, as I have already stated, will be asked for from the House in the shape of a final estimate for the year 1875-76. In the course of my remarks, I have pointed out the operations of the receipts and expenditure during the last year, and I think I may now deal with the present condition of the Loan Account, before entering into the question of fresh loans. I have already pointed out that

there is on Loan Account £934,844 still to be expended; the cash balance is £285 277, and there are half-a-million of debentures which will make, say, £460,000, representing a total of £745,277, available for the services enumerated in the tables which have been under the consideration of the committee this afternoon. It may now be well for me to point out the principal expenditure on Loan Account during the next twelve months. In order to show the position in which the finances of the colony would stand at the end of the financial year, if no other loan be introduced. It is estimated that the expenditure on emigration from England to the colony will amount to £90,000; construction of railways, £426,000—it being the intention of the Government to push on with all due expedition the construction of the Roma line, as well as the Northern Railway; electric telegraph, £60,000; harbors and rivers, £52,000; roads and bridges, £55,000; water supply, £22,500; making a total of £695,000. Assuming this amount of money to be expended during the ensuing twelve months, and also that expenditure on surplus revenue account, under the services which appear in table B, amounting to £46,000, the total expenditure will be £735,500; against which we have in the Bank and in debentures £942,000, so that we should be operating upon the full amount of our available funds to the extent of £735,000, leaving only £200,000 available for the requirements of the Savings Bank fund and other trust funds. In the face of this, I think it will be absolutely necessary and prudent on the part of the Government to introduce a Loan Bill this session, and not to deal with Loan Estimates as they have been dealt with in the past. I take it that to authorise expenditure on services under Loan Estimate, unaccompanied by a Loan Bill, is open to grave objections, and I believe the principle is one that is not adopted in the other colonies. The Loan Estimate which has been appended to the Estimates-in-Chief represent services to the extent of a million; this amount will have to be supplemented owing to the depreciation, which has already ensued upon the sale of the last loan, representing about £180,000, and it will also have to be supplemented by such other services as it may be deemed desirable to incorporate in the Bill. It is not my intention to deal with the special items in this Loan Estimate, but I refer to the amount of £600,000 on account of railways, being advances towards construction and contingent on the Railway Reserves Bill passing. If expenditure were to take place on the railways I have mentioned in the present state of our loan balances, we should absolutely withdraw every available pound the Government possesses from the banks in which it is now deposited; and I think it is desirable, in the face of the necessity, sooner or later, to float a Loan Bill to do so at once rather than adopt such a course. Nay, more, that it

would have a very prejudicial effect upon the interests of the colony generally, as it would necessarily entail a restriction of banking facilities, especially on the part of such banks as have possession of the Government funds. While I am on this subject, I may as well refer to a statement made in this House about the desirableness of placing a Loan Bill on the market, for the purpose of raising funds to be employed as deposits in the local banks. I am quite right in stating that the majority of the banks are not anxious to have such deposits, unaccompanied by a share of the Government account; and I do not think it is desirable to place a Loan Bill on the market, to raise funds merely for the sake of placing them in the banks in the manner suggested.

MR. McILWRAITH: Who suggested it? To what statement does the honorable gentleman refer?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: There was a statement made in the House about the desirableness of placing debentures on the London market, and pending construction, to place the whole amount in possession of the local banks, so as to enable them to trade with it.

MR. McILWRAITH: Who made the statement?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: The statement was made, and reported in "Hansard." The only other item of pressing necessity at the present time is that of £100,000 for roads and bridges, which, after the reference I have made to the very exhausted condition of the revenue vote for roads and bridges will, I think, commend itself to the approval of the committee as a vote that should receive as early consideration as possible for the purpose of meeting requirements of improvements in the districts which are mentioned in the schedule representing this vote. I shall not to-night ask the House to follow me into the details of the items of this estimate, but I would point out a typographical error which has occurred with respect to the Benevolent Society of Brisbane, against which a sum of £3,000 is stated. I may now mention that it is not the intention of the Government to have this asylum erected at Brisbane; the intention was to have it in some convenient position along the line of railway near Ipswich, and in such a site as would be found most convenient to remove the inmates from Dunwich to the building when it was completed. The exact locality, and other matters of detail, will be submitted to the committee when this vote comes on for discussion. What I would say then is, that it will be absolutely incumbent upon the Government if any of these services be authorised, to provide, this session, for a loan, and for placing the debentures so authorised on the London market. The debentures cannot, however, possibly be placed there till earlier than next February or March, and

the intervening period will be occupied in preparations. But in view of the construction of any of the items here, it will be absolutely necessary, seeing the state of our present finances, to have a loan and debentures to such an extent as may be deemed desirable to proceed with the construction of the proposed public works, and to transmit the debentures forthwith to London for realisation. I will now turn to the position of our revenue account, and the proposals respecting it during the next twelve months. The table concerning this shows a total liability on the 1st of July of the present year of £1,483,272 6s. 2d. The votes which are expected to lapse for the services of this year, as enumerated by me, amount to £45,000, and this will reduce the estimated liability to £1,438,000 odd. The deficiency is £43,000, and we estimate that the Supplementary Estimates will amount to £60,000. It is useless to ignore the fact that Supplementary Estimates cannot be dispensed with; but it will, of course, be the endeavor of the Government to reduce them as much as possible, and the reason why this £60,000 has been considered sufficient is, that there will be no necessity during the ensuing year to provide for any additional interest, even if any portion of a new loan can be passed, as the interest received from the bankers for the money which will be temporarily deposited during the construction of public works will be sufficient to defray the interest up to the end of the present financial year upon the additional loan; therefore, the amount of liability, including the Supplementary Estimates, would represent £1,542,000; and it is estimated that an undischarged liability out of this sum will remain unexpended next year to the amount of £150,000, which will still further reduce the liability to £1,390,000, being the amount of the Budget Estimates of Receipts. Figures may be made to prove anything, but I claim for these, which have been placed before the committee, that they have been collated with a view to give impartial information as to the statistical condition of the Treasury, and not with any view to political considerations. We anticipate, with every reasonable probability, an increase in revenue, owing to its general elasticity. But we must not shut our eyes to the fact that the progress and settlement of the colony is now synonymous with the progress of expenditure. Our revenue may increase, and no doubt the advance which I have to-night pointed out will still go on; but in addition, it cannot well be doubted that the increase of expenditure will be fully maintained. Every mile of railway, every new road, every new gold field, every additional settlement of territory will furnish new claims for financial assistance. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary at the present time, that the revenues should to a certain extent be supplemented, being of itself not sufficiently elastic to provide for the inexorable increase in expenditure as well as to cover a deficiency which the transactions of

the last year disclosed. I have no doubt many honorable members think this is a very convenient time to revise the whole tariff, and to dispense particularly with one item, the *ad valorem* duties which, after the illustration such a system of taxation has received in Victoria, cannot in any way be deemed as a valuable adjunct to our Customs regulations. Many honorable members, I dare say, are of opinion that the present Customs tariff is capable of considerable improvement. In this opinion I concur, but I cannot see that the present is a convenient time to remodel it; for, unless it can be approached in an intelligent comprehensive spirit, not primarily actuated by the exigencies of the Treasury, as would be the case were we to attempt it now, I think it better to leave any reform unattempted where interference would be unwise, and the results would be far from satisfactory. I should be glad to see my way to dispense with the *ad valorem* duties, and I believe, from what we have recently learned in Victoria in connection with this tax, that its abolition would be a matter of general congratulation, both on moral and commercial grounds. But with a deficit, I cannot consent to a sacrifice of £70,000. I am aware that it is contended that its abolition would not entail any loss of revenue, inasmuch as it is asserted that a corresponding increase in consumption of other dutiable articles would ensue. It is endeavored to be shown that similar results would attend this relinquishment to those which attended the famous free-trade policy of Sir Robert Peel; that whereas in Great Britain, in 1841, 1,163 commodities were taxed, producing a revenue of £22,000,000, in 1862, when 1,119 commodities had been exempted, causing a direct loss to the tariff, under the diminished number of articles, of a net aggregate of ten millions sterling, yet the revenue accruing from the 44 articles remaining, produced over £24,000,000, or two millions beyond the revenue of 1841; and that, therefore, the increased consumption of our dutiable commodities would compensate for the abandonment of the *ad valorem*. I cannot, however, admit that the withdrawal of the *ad valorem* duty would be attended with any increase of consumption of tea, tobacco, or the majority of articles which, at present, contribute to revenue. I need scarcely refer to the well-known principle by which revenue can be increased. There are three methods by which revenue may be made sufficient for the wants of a nation—First, by measures which will effect an improvement in the social and pecuniary condition of the people, so as to enable them to increase their consumption of dutiable commodities; second, to improve taxation, so as to lighten its burdens on the people; third, by retrenchment of expenditure. I do not think at the present time it will be found practicable, nor for many years to come, in a new country like this, to reduce expenditure very much, if at all. Every possible economy ought to be made and practised, but I do not

think it will be found convenient, in view of the daily growing requirements of the colony, to exercise a reduction of expenditure. We must, therefore, look to legitimate means of increasing our revenue. It has been said that our Customs duties, although imposed for revenue purposes, are largely protective in character, and indeed it is impossible that in a country like this, capable of producing a considerable percentage of the commodities we import, that they can be otherwise. In Victoria, Customs and Excise represent 40 per cent. of revenue; in New South Wales, 28 per cent.; in South Australia, 36 per cent.; and in Queensland, 48 per cent. I think it might be admitted in the face of this, that we shall have to look sooner or later to more direct modes of taxation. We cannot expect relief from public works revenue. Looking to the other colonies, I find that public works furnish the following contributions to the revenue:—Victoria, 26 per cent.; South Australia, 22 per cent.; New South Wales, 16 per cent.; and Queensland, 13 per cent. Our population is increasing too slowly to justify us in relying in the future solely on Customs and Excise, and we shall, therefore, have to look boldly in the face two methods of increase, that is to say, either income tax, or increase in territorial revenue. As to income tax, it would be decidedly objectionable, and would carry with it in operation all the demoralizing effects of the *ad valorem* duties, for its collection would be surrounded with all the difficulties which encompass that impost. Incomes in this colony are, at the present time, much too fluctuating in their character, and too much dependent on the condition of the colony itself to be fairly considered as offering a means of providing an addition to the revenue in the shape of an income tax. In territorial revenue we have a forcible proof of how this has assisted the Treasurer in the colony of New South Wales. That colony furnishes from the land 48 per cent. to the revenue, Victoria furnishes 24 per cent., and South Australia and Queensland 33 per cent. each. It may be interesting to honorable members to note that at the present time New South Wales, as the result of her land legislation, has a balance of four millions due to the Treasury, which is bearing interest producing £75,000 to the general revenue. I think, however desirable it may be that we should look to territorial revenue for an increase in our resources, that such a measure should follow, and not precede, the more important question of local taxation and disbursement, by means of local boards or bodies, of the funds so raised. Apart from the actual necessity of providing for and carrying out expenditure, which can be far better and more economically carried out by local supervision, I think it is better to arouse in local bodies a sense of the necessity of providing for their own wants and require-

ments, and to teach them to rely upon themselves rather than to fly to the Government for everything they want before they themselves contribute one penny. I think before the question of any increase to our funds from territorial revenue, beyond the increase which we may look for under the head of additional selections taken up in the resumptions the Government intend to propose, should be made; and also the increase to the funds that may be looked for in the increased price in land, which will no doubt be slightly in excess of the average price hitherto—I think, beyond the moderate increase that may thus be looked for—the larger question of territorial revenue must be deferred, until local taxation has been considered, and the machinery in connection with it has been set in motion. I think, Mr. Morgan, that the present time is not an unfortunate time for considering dispassionately the position of the colony. There are many honorable members of this committee, who, like myself, have had long colonial experience, and who remember a long period of severe depression which has been followed by a comparatively short period of prosperity, and we may bring our experience of those two periods to bear on our policy in the future. I think it may be asserted, that the colony has made general progress during the past twelve months. We find that, notwithstanding the vicissitudes which have beset some of our principal producing interests, notwithstanding the great fluctuation which has taken place in the wool market at home, and the present depressed price of that most valuable staple of export, it must be conceded, that during the last twelve months the colony has made very considerable progress. We find that during the past year our Electric Telegraph lines have been extended to 5,229 miles, or 337 miles more than they were in the previous year; and that our Postal Services have been extended over 14,702 miles, as against 13,925 in the previous year, being an increase of 777 miles. The land taken up by selection during the past six months has amounted to 290,015 acres as against 198,641 acres taken up in the first six months of 1875, and the number of runs has increased from 603 in 1874 to 696 in 1875. Then, again, in 1874 there were 29,012 children attending the public schools, whereas last year that number was increased to 33,643, whilst the increase of schools has been 231, as against 230. These figures, I submit, all indicate that notwithstanding the vicissitudes through which several of its most important interests are passing, the colony is still making solid and substantial progress. The reason I trouble the committee with these figures is, to show that there is nothing to justify any timidity, or mistrust, as to the progress of this colony in future. I believe that no matter what Government may be in power, so long as they introduce ordinarily judicious measures, the colony herself

will progress, and I believe the chief thing at present in dealing with the finances of the colony is to see that a certain amount of care is bestowed on the administration of those finances, to endeavor to guard against extravagance, to provide against what is termed, in colonial parlance, log rolling, and not to create unnecessary expenditure for the sake of indulging in temporary and artificial prosperity. There are many works included in the Loan Estimate which will have to be provided for, and which will cause an expenditure that will doubtless attract to the labor market of this colony a number of persons, and prevent anything like the stagnation which has been referred to in this Chamber of late. Therefore I do not think, looking at our financial position, that we are now called upon to make anything like a complete revision of our tariff. At the same time I think that there is now a good opportunity offered to us to improve our revenue from facts disclosed by the Immigration returns. The returns from which I have quoted show that at the present time one-half of the people coming into the colony is a colored population, and I believe myself that it will be found impossible to exclude the Asiatics, who come especially for the purpose of getting gold. I do not see why we should not under judicious circumstances obtain an increase to our revenue, and it is under this head that the Government propose to increase its resources. I have already shown, Mr. Morgan, that the estimate of expenditure I have read for the year which expires on the 1st July, 1877, will be covered by the revenue and also the Supplementary Estimates which I anticipate will be found forthcoming next year. However, to provide a certain amount to cover any deficiency that may arise, and also any fortuitous expenditure which may be required, we propose to increase the duty on rice, and also to raise the price of miners' and business licenses, issued to the Chinese. Last year, duty at the rate of £2 a ton was paid on 2,200 tons of rice; and we propose to make it one penny a pound, which is equal to £9 6s. 8d. a ton. Now, that alteration will not be sufficiently burdensome to prevent rice from being an article of domestic use, nor will it be incommensurate with its commercial value; and when we consider that 1,400 tons of this commodity have been landed at Cooktown, we may presume that it is chiefly consumed by those colored races, whose arrival in such large numbers in this colony we have to deplore. In connection with that additional taxation, there is now before the House a Bill dealing with miners' rights and business licenses issued to Chinese. At the present time, miners' rights are issued at the rate of 10s. each, and business licenses at the rate of £4 each. By a return obtained in regard to the number of miners' rights and business licenses which have been taken out during the present year, it appears that 6,560

miners' rights have been taken out by Chinese and 283 business licenses. The amount that would accrue to the Treasury from an increased duty on rice from £2 to £9 6s. 8d. per ton would be £15,400. The amount charged on 6,000 miners' rights, if raised from 10s. to 60s., would be £15,000, and on 280 business licenses at £10, there would be an increase of £1,680. That is assuming the numbers taken out this year to be the same as last year; that, however, is a matter, of course open to comment, for it is impossible to say whether the increase in the price of miners' rights and business licenses will be productive of the result I anticipate; that is a matter which can only be ascertained by experience. That would produce to the Treasury about £32,080. There has been an expression of opinion very frequently in this House as to the desirability of remitting the stamp duties on releases of mortgages. £2,400 only has during the past year been received from that source, and I think that on equitable grounds it might be remitted, but that in such cases where it was found on releasing mortgages that the full amount had not been paid on them, the deficiency would be charged on release; in ordinary cases it was proposed to reduce the released stamp duty to a more uniform sum. In connection with the figures with which I have troubled the committee, I may say that the increases proposed represent £32,080, which, allowing for the remission of the stamp duty, estimated at £2,000, will give £30,080 revenue beyond that which is shown in the Budget, and the amount would stand as follows:—

Total Liability, 1st July, 1876 (table H) £1,483,272
Less—Votes to lapse 45,000

			£1,438,272
Revenue Deficit	...	...	43,823
Estimated Supplementary Estimates	...	...	60,000
Proposed remission of Stamp Duty	...	...	2,000
			£1,544,095

Budget—Estimated Revenue	...	...	£1,390,000
Additional—expected from Rice, 2,100 tons at £9 6s. 8d.	...	...	15,400
Miners' Rights, 6,000 at £3=50s.	...	...	15,000
Business Licenses at £10=£6	...	...	1,680
			1,422,080

Difference	...	...	£ 122,015
Estimated Unexpended Balances, 1st July, 1877	...	...	150,000

Estimated Cash Balance, 1st July, 1877 £ 27,985

On the 1st of July, 1877, our position would, therefore, be the deficit on 1st July, 1876, of £43,823, extinguished, and in addition a balance in hand of £27,985, making a total improvement of £71,808; or, viewed in another way, and putting down the unexpended

balances on 1st July, 1877, at £150,000, less votes to lapse £45,000, and estimated cash balance £27,985, we have a net liability of £77,015 as against £157,000 on the 1st of July, 1876; showing an estimated improvement for the current year over the transactions of the year just expired to the extent of £80,000. I have endeavored to show my reasons for not disturbing the tariff, and honorable members should bear in mind that at an earlier period of the evening I showed taxation had already been remitted to the extent of £175,000; I therefore think it is injurious to interfere with it until there is a thorough revision of the tariff, and that such revision should not take place until we are prepared to assimilate it with New South Wales and Victoria and also to supplement it by some other source of revenue. In concluding my remarks, it is a matter of regret that the condition of the market as regards the great, natural, and leading produce of the colony is so depressed; but I think honorable members will agree with me that the present depression may be only temporary. I believe that it has been caused principally from the dullness of trade of all kinds in England from the absence of speculation, and also from the large importations of South American wools. At the same time, I think there is nothing to justify the apprehension that the market will not soon recover from its depressed state, or that greater confidence will not soon be restored. I again repeat that I see nothing in the present to justify mistrust or timidity in the future, nor do I see any cause whatever for disturbing our fiscal arrangements beyond providing what is required for next year. I may mention that instructions have been wired to the various collectors of customs to levy the increased duties on rice, resolutions referring to which will be submitted to the committee. The money so collected on the increased tariff will be held in suspense pending the approbation of the House of the action taken by the Government. I may conclude my remarks by saying that the details which I have had to lay before the committee have been comparatively dry and uninteresting, but in regard to the colony I thought it only my duty, in entering upon office, at the present time to make my review of the past year as comprehensive as possible, and chiefly statistical in form. I now beg to move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there be raised, levied, collected, and paid, in lieu of the duties of customs now levied upon the undermentioned goods, when imported into the colony, whether by sea or land, the duty following, and such duty shall be payable also upon the goods mentioned which are now in any bonded warehouse, that is to say—

Rice, per reputed pound, one penny.

That it is desirable that, in lieu of the stamp duties now levied upon mortgages and transfers

and releases of mortgages, there shall be levied and paid the duties following, that is to say—

1. *Mortgages to secure a sum certain.*

Upon any mortgage to secure the repayment of any sum certain—

Not exceeding £50	s. d. 5 0
For every additional £50 or fraction of £50	5 0

Upon any transfer in whole or in part of any such mortgage one-half the amount originally paid or in the case of mortgages made prior to the 18th day of October A.D. 1866 one half the amount which would have been paid thereon if they had been made after that day

Upon any release in whole or in part of any such mortgage the sum of ...	2 6
And in case any further advances shall have been made upon the security of such mortgage then for every £50 or fraction of £50 of such further advances the additional sum of ...	5 0

2. *Mortgages to secure the repayment of future advances.*

Upon any mortgage to secure the repayment of future advances the amount whereof is not stated at the time of registration 15 0

Upon any transfer in whole or in part of any such mortgage for every £50 or fraction of £50 of the largest sum which shall at any one time have been due upon the security of such mortgage 5 0

And for every £50 or fraction of £50 which shall be due upon the security of such mortgage at the time of the transfer a further sum of 2 6

Upon any release in whole or in part of any such mortgage 2 6

And a further sum calculated at the rate of five shillings for every £50, or fraction of £50, of the largest sum which shall at any one time have been due upon the security of such mortgage but deducting therefrom any amount which shall have been already paid as stamp duty at the aforesaid rate of five shillings for each £50 upon any transfer of any such mortgage.

Mr. PALMER said he understood an arrangement had been come to with the honorable members on the Treasury bench, that the debate on the Financial Statement was to be adjourned until next week. It was hardly necessary for him to say that it would be impossible to go on with the debate to-night with the mass of figures they had had placed before them. And there was no necessity whatever for carrying the motion increasing the duty on rice and the stamp duties, because, as the honorable the Treasurer knew, the moment the question was mooted he was at perfect liberty to raise those duties to-morrow morning, and pass them to the suspense account, until the motion was confirmed or refused by the House. He hoped the honorable the Colonial Treasurer would him-

self see the necessity of at once moving the adjournment of the debate.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he agreed with the reasonableness of the request of the honorable leader of the Opposition, that a future evening should be appointed to have this question debated. With regard to the collection of the duties referred to, he might mention that instructions had been wired to the sub-collectors of customs, at the various ports in the colony, to collect them to-morrow morning, to be held in suspense until the action of the Government was confirmed by the approval of the resolutions. If next Tuesday evening would suit the views of the committee, he was willing to move the adjournment of the debate until that day, so as to give honorable members an opportunity of considering the statement he had just made. He might state that there would be no delay in its publication in "Hansard," as arrangements had been made, by which, he believed, it would be in print to-morrow morning, which would afford honorable members an opportunity of revising it.

Mr. MCILWRAITH said, the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, in his remarks that evening, made reference to certain statistics with respect to the population of the colony, taken, he believed, from the late census returns, but he had seen no statement of the kind published yet. He should like to know whether honorable members would be placed in possession of that information, upon which the honorable the Colonial Treasurer founded certain arguments, before they resumed the financial debate next week? He had been anxious for a considerable time to see those returns, and he thought they ought to be furnished. He also wished to refer to the fact, that the Auditor-General's report laid on the table that evening was only down to the 30th of June, 1875, and he had expressed his surprise that it had not been brought down to a later date; but he had since found it was quite according to law. When he previously referred to the matter he was not very well acquainted with the provisions of the Audit Act, and he certainly understood that the audit of the accounts of the colony put before them would have been brought down to a much later date than 30th June, 1875. He was under the impression, that under the provisions of the new Audit Act those matters would be more satisfactorily arranged than they were before; but he did not think they had ever been in a worse position than at the present time, when, at the end of July, 1876, they were called upon to discuss financial matters, and the latest information they had was dated the 30th of June, 1875. He wished to call the attention of the Government to this matter, as it was one they should try to remedy. He did not see the use of honorable members coming here to discuss a question of that kind with stale information

before them. He had not the slightest doubt the Auditor-General was in a position to place valuable information before the House, if the proper machinery had been set to work. That gentleman had acted strictly according to law, but he (Mr. McIlwraith) thought the law did not meet the position of the case. They wanted that officer to give them information on the financial position of the colony up to a much later period than fifteen months before the matter was discussed in Parliament.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said, with reference to the figures referred to by the honorable member for Maranoa, he might state that they were obtained from the Registrar-General. He (the Colonial Treasurer) had only dealt with the total population of the colony, dividing it into two parts; and he could not give the honorable member the information he asked, as to when the census itself would be completed. Probably his honorable colleague, the Colonial Secretary, would be better able to answer that inquiry. With regard to the remarks of the honorable member concerning the report of the Auditor-General, while he (the Colonial Treasurer) quite concurred in what had fallen from him, he would point out that the report was virtually up to the 30th of September. The audit of the accounts of the colony necessarily required three months beyond the financial year, as it embraced the whole transactions of the year, and it was necessary to ascertain the amount of lapsed votes, and to deal with the re-appropriation of unexpended balances. Had the House met at an earlier period this year, the same cause of complaint would not have arisen, which had been very reasonably referred to by the honorable member for Maranoa. It was due to the alteration in the financial year that they were placed in that position. If the financial year had terminated as usual on the 31st of December, they should have had the report of the Auditor-General in May or June. They could not possibly have it before, because three months must intervene between the closing of the financial year and the detailed report as to the position of the colony, for the reasons before stated.

Mr. MCILWRAITH said he was aware of that fact, but it was wrong to say the statement was virtually up to the end of September. It professed to be up to the 30th June, 1876, and not one moment later; and that was all the information they had from the Auditor-General.

Mr. GROOM said he would like to point out, in reference to fixing the financial debate for Tuesday next, that some honorable members would be unable to attend on that day. The exhibition of the Royal Agricultural Society at Toowoomba would take place on next Wednesday, and several members had, no doubt, made arrangements to be there, and it would be almost impossible to take an important debate of that kind on next Tuesday.

Perhaps that would be a convenient time to ask the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, would he be kind enough to inform honorable members what arrangements had been made to accommodate the House or the public on the occasion he referred to; because he ventured to say, that owing to the peculiar way in which the Railway Department was now managed—in fact, no other department was managed in the same way in Queensland, or at any rate in the other colonies—no information was given to the public with regard to excursion trains next week, beyond a few placards placed in the railway stations, which nobody looked at; and he did not believe there were twenty persons who knew what arrangements had been made. On one or two occasions, owing to the mismanagement and stupidity of the Railway Department, hundreds of pounds had been lost to the revenue. It had been hoped that the head of the department would have been able to provide some scheme which would be satisfactory to the public; but the management seemed to be getting worse instead of better; and he thought if the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government wished to distinguish himself as a reformer, he could not do better than make a good reform in that department, which would be of great benefit to the public. He should like to come to some understanding as to whether they were to have an adjournment next week, because it would assist him in his attendance in the House. He had no wish to obstruct or retard the business of the House by proposing an adjournment, but he knew there were several honorable members opposite who would like to be present at the agricultural show next week, and it would be well to come to some understanding as to the course to be adopted.

The PREMIER said he might state that he saw the Commissioner for Railways the other day about the advertisements respecting the running of trains, and he was informed that they were out. He had not seen them himself, and he now understood that they had not been inserted in the newspapers, and he would see that they were inserted in the provincial and metropolitan papers. With regard to the suggested adjournment over next week, he thought it would be very unfair to the northern, central, and Wide Bay members, who could not go to their homes every night or every week, like members living in the southern portion of the colony. It would be most unfair that they should have their time frittered away, especially as the season was approaching when they would require to attend to their usual avocations. That being the case, he did not see how he could consent to an adjournment over next week. Of course he was in the hands of the House, but still he objected to it as being unjust to those honorable members, for whom he had great interest. It must also be remembered that there are only two Government

business days in the week, and an adjournment over Tuesday or Wednesday next would be a complete waste of time; and he understood the honorable member for Port Curtis would not consent to the financial debate taking precedence to-morrow. Perhaps that honorable member was not aware that arrangements had been made by which the speech of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer would appear to-morrow morning in "Hansard"; and if that honorable member would give up to-morrow for Government business, to his mind very little harm would arise from adjourning next week. Without that he should decidedly oppose the adjournment until he heard some expression of opinion from honorable members opposite.

Mr. BELL said he thought he could congratulate the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government on having put the very best appearance on going through the solemn farce of attempting an opposition to the proposed adjournment over next week. He complimented him on having done that part of his duty in a far better style than any business he had done since they had seen him in his present position, and it seemed to suit his character without a doubt. He had no doubt the honorable member himself hoped to see the show. He (Mr. Bell) hoped to see it, and he thought most honorable members would see it, as they had always done. He thought there was nothing in the position of the country this year different from any previous year which should prevent them from seeing that show. The Financial Statement had been made so artistically that it worked their blood up to boiling-point before they got to the burst of fresh taxation to meet Chinese importations, and it would bear thinking of seriously until after the Agricultural Show. There had been one thing mentioned by the honorable member for Toowoomba which he should like to refer to for the consideration of the honorable the Premier, and that was the very bad management that seemed to him to exist in connection with the Southern and Western Railway at this time. He thought, since it had been in existence, he had never seen greater mismanagement than he had seen latterly. From what he had seen, he was led to the belief that there was not the same vigilance under the present system that used to exist, and he thought it was time the honorable the Minister for Works should look into the working of that department. With reference to the Auditor-General's report which had been referred to, he thought the honorable the Colonial Treasurer had omitted to make a promise to the House which he considered he might have made, and that was, that they should have some further statement from the Auditor-General up to the latest point that it could be given; because, notwithstanding the statement of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer that this report was down to September of last

year, it was, as the honorable member for Maranoa had stated, only to the end of June.

The COLONIAL TREASURER; No.

Mr. BELL: It might take three months to bring it from the 30th of June, but the report before them had only to do with figures up to the 30th of June, and if it were otherwise, then the document pretended to be what it was not. It said plainly it was up to the 30th of June, 1875.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said, perhaps the honorable member would permit him to explain. It dealt with all expenditure on account of the services of the preceding financial year up to the 30th of September. The financial year terminated on the 30th of June, but expenditure on account of that year was permitted up to the 30th of September, and included in the report of the Auditor-General up to the former date.

Mr. BELL: Then why was it said to be up to the 30th of June? He was afraid this new financial year was not a success: it was beginning to show itself together with the new Audit Act. But, however, he thought it only right that the honorable the Treasurer should promise them to insist upon having, for the information of the House, such substituted report as the Auditor-General could furnish, which would assist honorable members very much, and he could see no reason why they should not have it.

The PREMIER said the honorable member had made grave charges against the Railway Department, and he should like him to point out the defects in the management of that department at the present time. It was all very well to make vague charges, but he wanted him to state what the defects were. The honorable member must bear in mind that he (the Premier) had only been a very short time in the Works Department, and that he had had very little time to look into departmental matters; but if he pointed out any defects—which seemed to be very difficult to do, for he had not mentioned a single one—he (the Premier) would see that they were quickly remedied.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he quite sympathised with the honorable member for Dalby with reference to the report of the Auditor-General, but he would beg to remind that honorable gentleman that the Auditor-General was the servant of Parliament, not of the Executive; and if it were considered desirable to obtain further information from him, he thought Parliament should express its opinion to that effect to the Auditor-General. That officer was not the servant of the Executive; he was placed in an independent position as the trusted servant of Parliament, and he thought it would be well if Parliament would convey its wishes to him, if it were desirable; and he thought it was very desirable that they should have further information, the furnishing of which the law did not enjoin. If a resolution of the House was

conveyed to the Auditor-General in proper form, no doubt it would effect the desired object. With regard to the question of railway management, that again he would not say was absolutely a matter for parliamentary jurisdiction; but he thought it would be very desirable that it should be taken up by a Parliamentary Committee, because in that way honorable members could really satisfy themselves on many points which could not be inquired into in that House. Many matters of detail might be thoroughly sifted in committee which could not be brought before the House; and he advised the honorable member for Dalby to take up the matter himself, and form a committee. He had plenty of leisure time to devote to the purpose, which he (the Secretary for Public Lands) was sorry to say the Government had not; and he was sure if the honorable member did so, it would be of great profit to the country, and satisfaction to Parliament. He did not think it was so much the Railway Department that was at fault, but that honorable members were not satisfied, and had not in their possession information they desired to have on various points. He might refer to the fact that the report of the Commissioner for Railways that had been laid on the table lately, alluded to the same question—to the prevailing discontent; and he thought a perusal even of that report would satisfy some gentlemen, that their objections had not the grounds which, in their minds, he believed they had. He thought, for the satisfaction of honorable members and the satisfaction of the public mind, it would be far better to move for a committee to have the matter thoroughly investigated.

Mr. PALMER said, if the suggestion of the honorable the Minister for Lands was carried out, and the House ordered the Auditor-General to furnish a further report, it would be telling him to make bricks without straw. It was impossible for him to send in a report unless he had the Treasury returns. The 24th section of the Audit Act provided:—

“In addition to the statements required by the last preceding section the Treasurer shall not later than six months after the end of every financial year prepare and transmit to the Auditor-General for the purpose of being examined and laid before Parliament a full and particular statement of the expenditure of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for such year.”

It therefore rested entirely with the Treasury, and he had no doubt, if the Treasurer furnished the Auditor-General with the proper returns, he would have a statement from the Auditor-General in a very short time. He agreed with previous speakers that they made a great mistake in altering the financial year. He never thought it was a good plan; he thought they were taking a leap in the dark, and experience had shown that they had done so; and it would be better perhaps to leap back again, and make the financial year terminate at the same time that it did formerly. Whether it would be

wise to go back at once to the old system, he was not prepared to say at that moment, but he was very much inclined to think it would be. The result, so far, had been anything but good. With regard to the adjournment for the show at Toowoomba, he had been ten years in the House, and he had heard the same arguments always used; but it always resulted in an adjournment, and he was perfectly sick of it; whether one side or the other voted against it, the result was invariably the same. He remembered the late member for Carnarvon opposing it over and over again to the top of his bent, and carrying a division against it, and at the same time he actually had his ticket for Cobb's coach in his pocket, and was the first man off in the morning, and members knew it, and enjoyed it. He objected to adjournments as much as any one. He did not want to attend the show, and he did not know whether he should go at all; but he knew the Premier was at that moment dying to go there. He believed nothing on earth would keep him away but absolute necessity—not being allowed to go.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: He wants to show himself.

MR. PALMER: Well, he might exhibit himself. They had not had a live Premier of that weight before, and perhaps he would go there and exhibit himself. Whether they adjourned or not, he was satisfied, from his experience, that the result would be the same—if they did not adjourn there would be no House, and no business would be done. As for the suggestion of the Premier to give up to-morrow for the discussion of the Financial Statement, if he could see anything to be gained by it he would be willing to consent to it, but he could see nothing to be gained by it. The Treasurer's statement had been made in a different form from that which had been usually adopted. For some years past the Treasurer had usually written his statement, and he believed this statement would have been more connected and more easily understood by the committee if it had been written. At all events, it would have been very materially condensed, and have occupied one-half the time. It would be ridiculous to ask them to discuss it to-morrow; they could not possibly get at the figures. They wanted to check the Treasurer's figures, and that honorable gentleman had given them such a voluminous statement that it was not possible to collate those figures in a short time, and say whether the statement he had made was correct or not. It would be quite time enough to discuss the question next week, and it was fully understood by the honorable the Treasurer before he commenced his statement that there should be an adjournment of the debate. If an adjournment was wanted for next week, notice could be given to-night, and it could be decided to-morrow. He should vote against it as a matter of course, as he always had done.

The **COLONIAL TREASURER** said he could not allow some remarks from the honorable member for Lort Curtis to pass without comment. With reference to any delay that might be imagined to attach to the Treasury in furnishing returns to the Auditor-General, he might state that every return required from the Treasury, on which the report was based, was in the possession of the Auditor-General in December last; and it was now the custom day by day to send to his department returns of receipts and expenditure as they came into the Treasury. With regard to the request of the honorable member for Dalby, that he should obtain from the Auditor-General a supplementary return for the information of the House, he considered, as his honorable colleague had said, that the Auditor-General being an officer of that House, he had a right, on such matters, to receive instructions from the House. The Auditor-General had, though a delay might have occurred just at the present time, performed what was required of him under the Audit Act, namely, the laying of a statement of the preceding year's transactions within a certain number of days after the beginning of the session, on the table of the House; at any rate the requirements of the Act had been complied with.

MR. MOREHEAD said the honorable member the Colonial Treasurer had not only wearied the House by a mass of figures, but was now taking every opportunity of talking about the Auditor-General, his figures, and his duties.

MR. MACROSSAN hoped, before the honorable gentleman left the chair, the Colonial Secretary would give the House some information respecting the census returns, to which the honorable member for Maranoa had called attention. It reflected very little credit upon the Statistical Department of Queensland, that three months after the taking of the census not a single return had been laid upon the table. Every member of the House must agree with the honorable member for Maranoa, that it was a matter of importance to have the census returns at the earliest possible moment; with those returns before them, honorable members would be much better able to discuss the Bills brought before them, for they would possess a good deal of essential knowledge respecting the distribution of population and other kindred subjects. He hoped, therefore, the Colonial Secretary would see his way to stir up the gentleman at the head of the Statistical Department, in order to lay the returns, or at least some of them, upon the table without delay.

The **ATTORNEY-GENERAL** said it was strange that not a single night of the present session had passed without the usual exhibition from the honorable member for Mitchell. With regard to delaying the Auditor-General's statement, he begged to call the attention of

the honorable member for Port Curtis to the following clause in the Audit Act:—

"In addition to the statements required by the last preceding section the Treasurer shall not later than six months after the end of every financial year prepare and transmit to the Auditor-General for the purpose of being examined and laid before Parliament a full and particular statement of the expenditure of the consolidated revenue fund for such year classified under the same several divisions and heads as shall have been employed in the appropriation thereof and of the said trust fund for the same period and also of the said revenue and trust fund for the same year together with an account of all votes which have lapsed under authority of the eighteenth clause of this Act and of the balances of votes brought forward and available for future expenditure. And in the said statement of expenditure of the consolidated revenue fund shall be included in addition to the payments which have been made within the said financial year (on account of the appropriations for the service of that year) all sums which shall have been paid during the first three months of the following year on account of the votes of the past year as well as the amount of the appropriation in each case."

Mr. PALMER: Well, that is exactly what I said.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, the Attorney-General was always attacking him, and he could only account for it from the fact that he was the first member of the House to expose the honorable gentleman's dummying transactions. This, the Attorney-General, he expected, would never forget; and as he was the first to move for a return of the fees pocketed by the honorable gentleman, he would probably never forgive him either. Thank goodness he (Mr. Morehead) had no stain on his character as the Attorney-General had—a slur that his reputation would never survive. It was disgraceful that he (Mr. Morehead) could not comment upon the Colonial Treasurer's statement without the Attorney-General attacking him; any member of the House had a right to speak without being called to order by that sneering sycophant, who was now Attorney-General of the colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In reply to the honorable member for the Kennedy I beg to say that a preliminary statement of the census—an analysis, I should rather say—will be laid upon the table to-morrow.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC LANDS said, the honorable member for Mitchell had demeaned himself in the terms he applied to the Attorney-General: those remarks were precisely of the sneering kind he had applied to the honorable gentleman, and the honorable member would do his natural humour, in which he was not all wanting, and his geniality much more justice if his language was less bitter.

Mr. MOREHEAD was glad to know that he was not one of the "inferior" members of the

House, since it took a couple of Cabinet Ministers to attack him.

Mr. LORD hoped the census returns, to be laid on the table, would refer to both North and South.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is a preliminary statement, that is complete, so far as it can be, for every part of the colony.

Mr. McILWRAITH begged to say, that in bringing forward the subject of the Auditor-General's returns, he had no intention of reflecting upon the credit of the Treasurer or Auditor-General; his comments were upon the system. He had brought no charge against either official, not being in a position to say who was to blame; his own opinion was that the blame rested in the Act itself, and he had moved for a committee, believing that a large amount of information would be collected that would throw light upon the matter.

Mr. J. SCOTT said the statistics of the colony were very peculiar. They were published in eight or nine parts, one or two appearing at the beginning of a session, and the rest seldom appearing till the following year. If the officer at the head of the Statistical Department could not publish returns within a reasonable time he ought to have an increase to his staff, for it was a strange anomaly that the publication of returns like these should be scattered over some eight, ten, or fifteen months, as had been the rule during the last two or three years.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had been only in the office a few days when application was made for additional clerical assistance in the Statistical Department, and he at once authorised the additions asked for. No doubt these returns, to be of any service, must be published within a reasonable time. He had done everything in his power to push them on, but some of the returns could not be got from the extreme parts of the colony without considerable delay. At the same time he thought the returns ought to be printed, whether they were complete or not.

Mr. STEVENSON, referring to the honorable member for Toowoomba's proposal for adjournment, said, the House might as well be asked to adjourn for the Clermont, or Rockhampton races and show. It was most unfair to northern and central members, that they should be brought to Brisbane to transact the business of the country, and be subjected time after time to such adjournments as these. The House met on the 23rd of May, and there had been scarcely half-a-dozen business days.

Mr. BUZACOTT had on previous occasions opposed these adjournments on principle, but believed in the present instance an attempt to carry on the business of the House during the Toowoomba Show would be a failure. He should, therefore, succumb to what he was sorry to say was a necessity.

Mr. IVORY was sorry to be compelled to agree with the honorable member for Toowoomba. At the same time, the incident showed very little proper feeling on the part of some honorable members towards their co-representatives, or towards the country, and it was hard that the whole business of the country should be put off for a show at Toowoomba. If there was a division, he certainly should vote against the adjournment.

Mr. GRAHAM thought that one of the strongest proofs that the Toowoomba Show was worth going to was, that if there were no adjournment, there would be no House.

Mr. HALY said these repeated adjournments were great hardships; he was very anxious to go to the show, but, out of respect to the northern members, would vote against the amendment, and follow up his vote by being in the House, too, on the day of the show.

Mr. FRASER was not personally interested in the matter, but was of opinion, that adjournment or no adjournment, it would be impossible to make a House on the days referred to. That being so, the Speaker, Clerk, and other officers of the Assembly ought not to be required to be in attendance when nothing would be transacted.

The PREMIER said the time had arrived when the House ought once for all to object to adjourn the House at the dictum of any honorable member, or for any show in the colony; public business was of too much importance to adjourn the House for this or that show, and he hoped if the motion were negatived, honorable members would come down and transact the real business of the country.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier was the biggest show in the colony, and might be seen in the House every evening. There was plenty of time to consider the adjournment without coming to an immediate vote.

Mr. MACROSSAN, as one of the northern members, must say the sympathy that had been expressed was entirely misplaced. He thought it a matter of importance that members should go and see the Toowoomba Show: most of them were anxious to encourage the settlement of land, and from this point of view agricultural shows were very important. Seeing, therefore, that there was no probability of forming a House, and that it was necessary under those circumstances to compel the officers of the House to attend, he should vote for the adjournment.

Mr. GROOM gave notice that to-morrow he would test the opinion of the House on the question.

The House resumed, the Chairman reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on the following day.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said that seeing the House was not inclined to do any more business that evening he should move its adjournment. He must express his regret at the remarks which had fallen from the honorable member for Kennedy, who, instead of wishing to push on the business of the country as rapidly as possible, was in favor of a long adjournment, on the ground that the show at Toowoomba being an agricultural show, it was very important that northern members should have an opportunity of attending it. He could assure that honorable member that, from his experience of previous shows at Toowoomba, they were almost purely pastoral exhibitions. For his own part he was most anxious to get on with the business before them, which was much needed by the country; and he was afraid moreover that if constant adjournments took place, their Parliament would soon resemble those of New South Wales and Victoria, and be constantly in session. He would move—

That this House do now adjourn.

Mr. GROOM said that the honorable member at the head of the Government should remember that if there had been any delay in the public business, it was attributable to the late Government, of which the honorable gentleman was a member, not having called the House together until the day before the Queen's Birthday; it was not the fault of the House at all. He considered that, in moving the adjournment of the House until the 8th of August, he should be facilitating the public business, as he knew that there were several honorable members who intended to go to the Toowoomba show; in fact, he believed that there were some who were delegates from the Brisbane Society. In reference to the statement of the Premier, that the show was not an agricultural one, he must inform that honorable gentleman that he was quite mistaken, as it was for both pastoral and agricultural exhibits. They had heard the honorable the Colonial Treasurer in his Financial Statement, deploring the fall in the price of wool, which had an immense effect upon the country, and he was at a loss to know why there should not be a show at which that industry, which was paramount in the colony, should not be represented. He was quite sure there would not be a House on the following day, as honorable members naturally wished to have time to read, carefully, the statement which had been delivered that evening. He would move—

That this House at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday, the 8th August.

Mr. LORD said he would suggest the adjournment should be made for three weeks, so as to allow himself and other members to go home. If they were going to adjourn until the 8th August, they might just as well extend the adjournment to three weeks.

Mr. BAILEY said he had been long enough in the House to know how useless it was to attempt to resist an adjournment, as there were always a sufficient number of honorable members to carry it. He thought it would be a happy day for the country when Parliament met at the little town of Gladstone, as until it did so, there would never be a chance of getting on with the public business. So long as the members came to Brisbane, where they were surrounded with dissipation in the form of races, shows, Queen's birthdays, &c., there would be no getting on with business.

Mr. PALMER said he would repeat, that he had listened to a similar debate to the present every year since he had been in the House, and to the same cuckoo reasons as those put forward by the honorable the Premier. He was sure that if the reporters would turn back to past sessions, they would find that, whenever an adjournment had been proposed, the same objections had been raised, and the same result had followed, namely, that the debate had ended in an adjournment. A certain number of honorable members would go away whether the adjournment was carried or not, although he for one should not, as he had too much regard for the Premier to leave him. He was not strong enough that evening to fight for the adjournment, although, were all his party present, he should be; but he could keep the honorable Premier playing, and the business of the country would not progress one bit, so that the honorable member might just as well yield with a good grace. As had been stated, if the House had been called together at the proper time the Estimates would have been passed, and honorable members would now have returned to their homes; it was entirely the fault of the Premier, who was the remaining member of the late Government, that the business of the country had not all been finished. At the same time he must say, that he could not see what was to be gained by an adjournment to the 8th August; he thought there was nothing to prevent them meeting on Thursday, the 3rd August, and giving up that day and Friday to the Government for the transaction of their business.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. McLEAN said he would strongly advise the honorable member for Toowoomba to accept the suggestion of the honorable member for Port Curtis. He was in favor of an adjournment, but must certainly oppose one so long as to the 8th August.

The PREMIER said he would recommend the honorable member for Toowoomba to withdraw his amendment, as he should be willing to add to his motion the words "until Thursday, 3rd of August."

Proposed amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The PREMIER moved—

That this House do now adjourn until Thursday, 3rd of August.

Question put and passed.