

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 31 MAY 1877

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that he (Mr. Miles) wished to know was, whether a promise had really been made. Of this he had satisfied himself; and, not believing in making promises and breaking them, he had come to the conclusion that the money should be handed over. It would not amount to more than £100, and there was a sum voted by the House for the volunteers out of which it could be taken. He, therefore, promised that the money should be handed over.

FORMAL BUSINESS.

Mr. GROOM moved for and obtained leave to introduce a Bill to divide the electorates of Aubigny and Warwick.

The following resolutions were passed:—

Mr. PALMER moved—

That there be laid upon the table of this House, Copies of all correspondence between the Government and the Health Officer and others, relative to the quarantining and subsequent release of the steamers "Brisbane" and "Kate."

Mr. PALMER moved—

That there be laid upon the table of this House, a Return showing,—

1. All appointments to the Government service, temporary or otherwise, since the date of last return furnished to this House; giving the names of the appointees, the dates of their appointments, and the salaries attached to their respective offices.

2. All promotions in same service, showing the dates of first appointments to the Government service, the positions previously held in the service, with salaries, and the office and salary to which promoted.

Mr. WALSH moved for leave to introduce a Bill for the Amalgamation of the Legal Profession.

The question having been put and passed, the Bill was introduced and read a first time, and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

By Mr. JOHN SCOTT—

That there be laid upon the table of this House, a Return showing,—

1. The number and area of resumptions for road purposes, including deviations, in 1874, 1875, and 1876, in each division of the colony.

2. The approximate time expended by the officers of the Roads Department in re-surveys and adjustment of selections consequent on such resumptions.

3. The money cost of such resumptions, specifying the amounts paid for fencing, for survey, and for land resumed respectively, in each division of the colony.

By Mr. PALMER—

That there be laid on the table of this House, all papers and correspondence in connection with the quarantining and subsequent release of—

1. The "Western Monarch."
2. The "Bobtail Nag."
3. The s.s. "Bowen."
4. The s.s. "Normanby."

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 31 May, 1877.

Privilege.—The Cadet Force.—Formal Business.—Naval Brigade.—Brisbane General Cemetery.—Railway Bridge near Stanwell.—Government Advertisements.—Adjournment.—Bank Holidays Bill.—Kennedy and Cook Electorates Division Bill.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past three o'clock.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. THOMPSON rose to a question of privilege. In the report in *Hansard* of this day's date, of his speech last evening, the first portion gave no idea of what he really said, while the latter portion was admirably reported. He, therefore, wished to repudiate the first portion of the report, because, while perfectly well aware of the difficulties attending the publication of a *Daily Hansard* with an insufficient staff, he felt it was his duty to set himself right with the House.

THE CADET FORCE.

Mr. BELL asked the Colonial Secretary, without notice, whether it was the intention of the Government to hand over the money promised last session to the Cadet force, and applied for by letter in December last?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Miles) said, as there seemed to be a great deal of obscurity about this matter, he sent for Major McDonnell, the Commander of the force, and was told by him that 10s. per head was promised for the Cadets. All

NAVAL BRIGADE.

Mr. BEATTIE moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Estimates the sum of £2,000 to defray the expense of forming a Naval brigade.

He said he did not think it was necessary that he should go into any very elaborate speech with reference to the desirability of organizing a defence force of such a character as that specified in the motion. He believed there was no defence force that could be more effective or more economically worked than a Naval brigade; and in asking the House for £2,000 for this purpose, he had taken as a basis the cost and manner in which similar brigades were constituted in New South Wales and Victoria. He found that in 1875 the effective force of the Naval brigade established in New South Wales was 313 men, including officers; and the cost to the colony was £5,076. There were 213 men at £12 per year; and attached to the brigade was what he should recommend to be attached to the brigade if established here—namely, a signal and torpedo corps of forty-seven men. He was satisfied that there would not be the slightest difficulty in forming such a brigade, because, in order to test the matter, he had inserted an advertisement in the public papers, requesting those who were willing to join to send in their names, and in forty-eight hours he had about 120 names put down, and amongst those who signed were many old Naval Reserve men and others who had been in Her Majesty's navy. These, he considered, were the men who should form the nucleus of the torpedo company, which could be easily worked in connection with the telegraph department. Of course there should be some electricians attached to the company, which he believed would be much more easily worked in connection with the Naval brigade than if it were under separate management and supervision. He also thought it would be advisable to have a cadet corps in connection with the brigade, which should be on the volunteer principle. These corps were now very popular in different parts of the colony, and he had no doubt that such a one as he suggested would be a success. He believed the proposition to establish a Naval brigade would commend itself to the minds of all honourable members, and he would simply conclude by moving the motion.

The PREMIER (Mr. Douglas) thought there could be no objection to go into committee to consider this question. He was personally of opinion that the honourable gentleman who had moved the resolution was perfectly capable of taking part in

effectually organizing such a force as he had described, and he hoped his services might be available for that purpose. He did not think this question could be considered apart from the whole question of the defences of the colony, which they would shortly have to consider. The two engineers who were at present visiting the Southern colonies would probably, before long, visit this colony, and probably they would recommend the defence of the river by some such force as this, which had been found to be not only effective in the neighbouring colonies but also highly popular. He had no doubt that if a Naval brigade were established, some of the most efficient members of the present Volunteer force would enrol themselves in it as being the most popular; and it would be not only more popular but more useful. It was not probable that, in the present state of the science of warfare, they should go into any extensive fortifications, because he believed that science would soon be reduced to the knowledge of the employment of those implements of warfare of which they had heard so much of late—namely, torpedoes. They were very destructive, and for defensive purposes perhaps they were the best means that could be resorted to. The Superintendent of Telegraphs had promised to arrange a body in connection with the torpedo corps in his own department, and this could be done at a small outlay. Mr. Cracknell had lately been in communication with his brother, who had just come out from Europe thoroughly informed as to the secret mode of working these torpedoes, and the services of both Mr. Cracknell and Captain Heath could be made available, if it were considered desirable to establish such a force as this. Of course, it must be understood that, though this sum might be authorized by the House for this purpose, the carrying of it out must, to a great extent, depend upon the recommendations of the officers to whom he had referred. He believed this was one of the best forms of expending money for volunteering purposes, and he was, therefore, quite willing to afford the honourable member some encouragement; and he hoped the question would be fully discussed by the House before it was finally decided.

Mr. PALMER said, while fully approving of the proposal, he did not think it should be left to a private member to bring such a motion forward. He considered it was the imperative duty of the Government, immediately the House met, to have brought the question of the defences of the colony forward. It seemed to him that they were living in a sort of Fool's Paradise—they fancied that no enemies would ever enter their gates. Notwithstanding the alarm in the neighbouring colonies, and the unsettled state of Europe, the Government had not

taken the slightest steps to provide for the defences of the colony, except to get out a thousand old Snider rifles, without any ammunition for them. This was the first time he had heard of a torpedo corps from the Premier; and he should like to know where it was to be, and some further particulars about it. He thought, instead of all the rubbish that was stuffed into the Governor's Opening Speech, there might have been some reference to a torpedo corps or providing for the defence of the colony; but nothing of the sort had ever been alluded to. He was particularly struck with one remark of the Premier. If it was not centralization with a vengeance he did not know what it was. He said such a brigade would be of great use in this port, but he never referred to the Northern ports, which were quite as worthy of defence as Brisbane; but whatever was done for Brisbane should also be done for the North. He had treated the question as a purely local one. How Mr. Cracknell was going to provide a torpedo corps for the whole colony he (Mr. Palmer) was at a loss to imagine; and it evidently never entered into the head of the Premier that provision of that kind should be made for any other port but Brisbane.

Mr. BAILEY said he knew that if he opposed this motion he should be flying in the face of public sentiment or feeling, but he did not approve of the science of murder—this scarlet fever which appeared to be spreading from Europe to Australia. As for £2,000—he asked would £100,000 or £150,000 be sufficient to provide for the defence of the colony? And it was absurd to get a few men as volunteers, and a few boys as a torpedo corps, and fling defiance in the face of an enemy. They were not able to defend themselves, and would not be for many years to come. The population of the colony was too scattered, and he believed the taxpayers would prefer seeing roads made from their farms to towns, instead of keeping a few officers and ornamental soldiers.

Mr. WALSH said he looked upon this motion as almost unconstitutional. He asked, how could the Government allow their Financial Statement to be anticipated, and their Budget changed, by accepting such a motion as this? He had never heard of such a thing; and the duty of the Government was to have told the honourable member that they could not accept such a motion before the Financial Statement was delivered to the House.

Mr. BELL said he was in favour of this motion, and he hoped that even if the Government had fallen into some small error it would not militate against the passage of it, because he believed it was a very useful resolution. In reference to what had fallen from the honourable member

for Wide Bay, with regard to a much greater expense which might arise in connection with this force, he (Mr. Bell) did not think it was at all prejudicial to the motion, because, unless such expenditure were for some useful purpose, the House would not sanction it. He did not care what the expense might be, so long as it was necessary for the best interests of the country. They knew the time had now arrived when these colonies must look about for some means of defence, however small; and he believed this nucleus would form a valuable commencement. He should therefore support it, and he also thought the honourable member for Fortitude Valley deserved credit for having brought the matter under the consideration of the House.

Mr. PETTIGREW contended that the whole colony required defence, and not merely Brisbane, or isolated portions of it. He advocated the establishment of a militia, so that every man in the colony could fight for the land of his adoption as their forefathers had done for theirs. The question was one which should have been brought forward by the Government, and not by a private member; and he should, therefore, object to £2,000, or 2,000 pence, being expended for such a purpose.

Question put and passed.

BRISBANE GENERAL CEMETERY.

Mr. WALSH moved—

(1.) That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the suitability, or otherwise, of the Brisbane General Cemetery for use as a place of interment, at present, to meet the requirements of this large and increasing city, and whether another site could not be found which would be more accessible, and involve less expenditure of time and money to persons concerned.

(2.) That such Committee have power to send for persons and papers, move from place to place, sit during any adjournment of this House, and consist of Mr. Palmer, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Beattie, Mr. Garrick, and the mover.

Great complaints had been made as to the unsuitability of the present cemetery, both in regard to its position and the means of access to it. Anyone visiting it must be struck with the unsuitableness of the soil for burial purposes; and his object in asking for the appointment of this committee was, that they might carefully investigate the matter, and bring up a report which would induce the Government to remedy the evil.

The PREMIER said there could be no objection to the appointment of the committee for the purpose of inquiring into this matter, which had been before the House on several occasions. A considerable sum of money had been spent upon the present cemetery, which, unfortunately,

was not so accessible as it might be, and it was possible that, on investigation, the committee might suggest some mode of approaching it more easily than they could at the present time. After the expense that had been incurred, he did not think it would be advisable to close the cemetery; but with the growth of the city it might be necessary to look out for an alternative site. He knew that on the North Brisbane side there was a necessity for another cemetery. The inhabitants of Lutwyche and the Pine River had petitioned the Government on several occasions on the subject, but it had not been found possible to allocate any land for the purpose. He was afraid that no suitable site at present in the hands of the Government could now be found along the railway line; but the matter was one which might be fairly investigated by a select committee. Although it might not be deemed desirable to enter into any immediate expenditure, yet it was just possible that the committee might discover some site along the line which it would be advisable to acquire. The expenses of interment in the cemetery were a serious tax on the poor, especially to those inhabiting the Northern side of the city and the suburbs in that direction, many of whom had to travel seven or eight and even ten or twelve miles to get there.

Mr. PERTIGREW maintained that his constituents were as much entitled to a cemetery as the inhabitants of Brisbane. Where did the money come from for this purpose? If from a loan, could any township apply for it? If the money was only available for Brisbane he should certainly object to it, for if there was a fund for the purpose, all the graveyards of the colony should be fenced in, and not left exposed, as they too often were, for horses and cattle to trample upon.

Mr. J. SCOTT said this was not the first time this question had cropped up in the House, and the principal reason why action had not before been taken was that already a large sum of money had been expended on the cemetery. But before that money was expended the unsuitableness of the cemetery was pointed out by many honourable members, and it was shown that either the cemetery should be removed, or that better means of access should be provided. Time had been allowed to slip away until a suitable site could not be secured now for less than five or six times what it would have cost a very few years ago.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was quite of opinion that the committee asked for should be granted, in order to set at rest the uncertainty of the public mind on this subject. He had on a previous occasion pointed out the unsuitableness of the present site, on the ground that, from its position, it would soon be surrounded by habitations, when it would be necessary to move to some place where the

population was less dense. In a few years, indeed, it would be absolutely necessary—if only for sanitary reasons—to close the cemetery at Toowong. The interments that had taken place up to the present were not so numerous but that the bodies could easily be removed; and a portion of the land might be set apart as a public reserve, for which the monument erected to Governor Blackall would be a graceful ornament. There was no doubt that a cemetery should be approached by railway, and a necropolis might very properly be formed somewhere between Brisbane and Ipswich, which might be suitable for both towns. Owing to the existing cemetery not being central, funerals were often attended with great expense, which fell heavily upon the poorer classes. He thought that before the number of interments was very largely increased a new and more suitable site should be found.

Question put and passed.

RAILWAY BRIDGE NEAR STANWELL.

Mr. BUZACOTT moved—

That there be laid upon the table of this House, Copy of all correspondence and petitions relating to the proposed construction of a bridge over the Northern Railway line at Cameron's cutting, near Stanwell; also, copy of all reports from the Engineer for Roads, C.D., and from the Engineer-in-Chief, Northern Railway, in reference to said bridge.

Mr. MACDONALD said he was disappointed to find that the honourable member for Rockhampton had not given any reasons for his motion. It appeared to him that the Secretary for Works ought to be exceedingly gratified to find that he had so far succeeded in satisfying the wants of Rockhampton, that the member for that constituency had to travel some fourteen or fifteen miles beyond his own electorate in order to find something to complain of. The bridge referred to in the motion was situated in his (Mr. MacDonald's) constituency, and he had never heard any reason why it should be objected to. He considered the work one of the greatest importance to a large number of intelligent industrious settlers; and he could not help thinking that a feeling of common courtesy should have prompted the member for Rockhampton to have informed him (Mr. MacDonald) if he had known any good reasons for objecting to the construction of the bridge. He (Mr. MacDonald) was well acquainted with the locality, and had every confidence in the good sense of its residents; and with the permission of the House he would explain how the work had been undertaken. Early in 1875 he received a requisition from a number of persons residing near Stanwell, urging upon him to ask the Government to place upon the Estimates a sum of money for the purpose of having a

bridge constructed across the railway line half-a-mile on the Rockhampton side of Stanwell. They pointed out the serious inconveniences, delays, and losses to which the public were daily subjected from having to wait at the level crossing, where the gate was always shut half-an-hour before and after the passing of every train. He represented the matter to the then Secretary for Works; and, after considerable delay, was informed that the roads engineer for the Central division had reported unfavourably upon it. Early last session a deputation from the Grace-mere and Stanwell Improvement Committee met him in Rockhampton, and among other things they urged upon him was this bridge. When he referred them to the answer he had received from the Minister for Works, they assured him that the roads engineer had been grossly misled, he having been met by the only two persons in the district antagonistic to the bridge, who, in the absence of those who were really interested, persuaded him that it was not required. He represented this matter to the Minister for Works; and ultimately provision was made in the Estimates, and in due time the money was voted, and the bridge was commenced some months ago. He had heard that the member for Rockhampton had sent down a petition praying that the work might be stopped; and had accompanied that petition with a letter setting forth other reasons why that course should be taken. But he was now informed that the signatures to that petition were obtained under false representations. He had in his hand a telegram from Rockhampton, dated the 23rd May, relative to this subject. The telegram was to the effect that several persons desired to withdraw their names from the petition praying for the stopping of the bridge, representations to them being incorrect. Then followed the names. He thought it out of place, and coming with a very bad grace from the member for an adjoining district, to interfere with anything connected with his (Mr. MacDonald's) electorate without giving him notice of it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was true that the bridge referred to was in the Blackall electorate. The proper time for the member for Rockhampton to have objected to the construction of the bridge was when the Estimates were before Parliament. This was a trivial matter, and he should offer no objection to the production of the papers moved for.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. IVORY moved—

That a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit during any adjournment of this House, to inquire into and report on all matters connected

with Government advertisements appearing in the public prints.

2. That such committee consist of the following members:—The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Kingsford, Mr. Tyrel, Mr. Macrossan, Mr. Fox, Mr. Thompson, and the Mover.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could hardly understand the object the honourable member had in view in making this motion, more especially as all the facts would be included in the return moved for by the honourable member for Warwick. No doubt a large sum of money was expended by the Government in advertising, and if the honourable member wanted information on that point he would find it in the return referred to. He would strongly advise the honourable member to withdraw his motion until it was seen whether all the information he required was not contained in the return which would shortly be laid before the House.

Mr. PALMER said that, after the rumours that had been circulated as to the manner in which the Government distributed their advertising favours, they ought to be the first to agree to this inquiry. Some very curious returns had been laid before the House during the last session or two—returns which honourable members knew were not correct. This was not a party question, and a more unprejudiced committee than that proposed could not be selected from this House; and a committee could elicit many important facts which were not likely to be found in a return.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no wish to keep anything back from the House, but was anxious to afford all the information in his power.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that, as was tolerably well known, Government sent their advertisements to all the papers in the colony. They were not like the honourable member for Port Curtis, who, when he was at the head of the Government, gave the advertisements to the papers who supported him and refused them to all the rest.

Mr. PALMER: It is not true.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It can be proved. He only gave the Government advertisements to the newspapers who supported his party.

Mr. PALMER: It is false, like your usual statements.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not in the habit of making false statements in this House; and I know that when the honourable member for Port Curtis was in office he refused to give an advertisement to the *Northern Argus*.

Mr. PALMER: I say it is false.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he had the information from the proprietor of that journal himself. Every publicity should be given to Government advertisements,

especially those calling for tenders, for the country gained largely by the practice. When he first entered the Post Office he went in for economy in advertising, and the result was that so little publicity had been given that no tenders were sent in. He changed the system with the best results. He failed to see what good this committee would do; and the result evidently aimed at was, to censure the Government for advertising in all the newspapers in the colony.

Mr. WALSH said that when the Colonial Secretary suggested that the committee should be held in abeyance until the return referred to was laid before the House, he felt inclined to agree with him; but when an honourable member got up and made such self-convicting statements as the Minister for Works had done—especially when that honourable member stood arraigned at the bar of public opinion for unfair distribution of the Government advertisements—it was time for this Assembly to assert its rights. The Colonial Secretary had told the House that all the information required would be found in a certain return; and the Minister for Works, who was said to be the great offender, directly got up and made the most groundless charges against the honourable member for Port Curtis. He should be ashamed of the Government if they were going to conduct their defence in such a style as that presumed upon by the Minister for Works. But this motion asked for a little more than was likely to be found in the return. It asked not only to know the expenditure during a given time, but to inquire into and report upon all matters connected with Government advertisements appearing in public prints. It was freely rumoured in town that all these advertisements did not go through the Colonial Secretary's Office—that they were paid for from contingencies, and that the Colonial Secretary's Office knew nothing about them. That might or might not be so, but such was the rumour. That was one of the subjects which this committee would have to inquire into.

Mr. PALMER said that, as a matter of personal explanation, he might perhaps be allowed to say that the charge brought against him by the Minister for Works did not contain one word of truth. So far as he (Mr. Palmer) was concerned, while he was in office he never condescended to order in what papers advertisements should be inserted. Upon this point he could with confidence appeal to the heads of departments. The general instructions were, that Government advertisements should appear in the principal papers—the papers having the largest circulation. Beyond that he never interfered—except, perhaps, when some complaints were sent, and those he referred back to the department concerned. The honourable gentleman's statement was,

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therefore, untrue, even if he had the authority of the editor of the *Argus* for making it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS begged to say that the member for Port Curtis, in his explanation, had not contradicted his statement. He (Mr. Thorn) would repeat, that the *Northern Argus* and the *Ipswich Observer* could get no advertisements during the time the member for Port Curtis was in office, and the proprietors of those papers had told him (Mr. Thorn) it was because they took action against his Government.

Mr. PALMER: It is simply untrue.

Mr. JOHN SCOTT said that unsupported statements like that made by the Minister for Works were utterly worthless, and he was surprised that the member for Port Curtis should have taken notice of it. Had not the honourable gentleman had something to conceal, he would never have opposed the committee.

The PREMIER said his honourable friend had not opposed the committee. He (Mr. Douglas) was surprised to hear the member for Port Curtis refer to incorrect returns laid upon the table of the House, and use the statement as an argument that the committee ought to be appointed because the Government could not be trusted to lay correct returns upon the table.

Mr. PALMER: I did not say anything about the Government not being trusted.

The PREMIER said the honourable member's remark was probably one of those unsupported statements that had been referred to. If it were a deliberate statement it would be well, in the interests of the public, to have it substantiated, because if incorrect returns were laid upon the table, a higher offence could not be committed.

Mr. WALSH: There was a notorious instance last session, and I called your attention to it.

The PREMIER said he should be happy to have his attention called again to such a case, and he would undertake that, so far as he had the power, the accuracy of all returns should be complete. With regard to the subject of the resolution, he admitted it was difficult to deal with. He had had to deal with it, and knew something of the difficulty—the honourable member for Toowoomba having moved for returns with reference to the advertisements in connection with the Western Railway Reserve, respecting which it had been desirable to make a special arrangement. One reason why it was difficult to deal with this question of advertisements was, that there were all sorts of claims sent in from different districts, until it became scarcely possible to keep the expense within the limits authorized by Parliament. His own opinion was, that the only test there should be applied in these cases was the amount of circulation enjoyed by the paper. The object to be attained was

publicity, and he was aware that applications were sometimes made on the ground that certain newspapers supported a certain party in the House; but these he had never considered to be sufficient grounds, and would not consent to grant any application upon them. Of course, it was not easy for a Government to decide which newspaper had the largest circulation; that was another difficulty. In connection with the sale of the Western Railway Reserve, he made arrangements with Gordon and Gotch to advertise in the best mediums in the colony. This course gave great dissatisfaction, and he had all sorts of complaints from country papers, asserting that he had cut down the charges and refused advertisements; whereas his only object was to get the thing done as cheaply as possible. He should not object at all to a committee, but it ought to be appointed by ballot.

Mr. MORGAN said he had no doubt that the committee might do very useful work. The returns he had moved for would be of course correct, so far as they went—for it could not be expected that any member of the Government had any interest in giving false information; but he thought that the remarks of the Premier, the effect of which was that some pressure had been brought to bear from the proprietors of country papers, especially those who supported the Government, showed that something more was wanted than what he had asked for in his returns, which would, he hoped, be laid upon the table in a short time. The appointment of the committee asked for by the member for Burnett would give an opportunity of finding out where this pressure was brought to bear on the Government departments, and he hoped, therefore, the Ministry would not oppose the appointment of the committee, though he was sorry that the honourable member did not wait until the returns referred to were laid upon the table.

The PREMIER: I shall demand that the committee be appointed by ballot.

Mr. IVORY said that in approaching this question he was entirely and solely actuated by public motives; he had no private end to serve—had no personal predilections one way or another. He found that rumours were abroad of such a description that he considered it to be his duty, failing others, and having plenty of time at his disposal, to inquire into the matter; and the way in which his proposal had been met, especially by the remarks of the Minister for Works and the Premier, during this discussion, made him surprised at the course pursued. Had this course not been taken he might have been contented with the advice of the Colonial Secretary, and proceeded no further in the matter; but as it was quite clear there was need for inquiry he should persist in his motion. In naming

the committee, the form of which seemed to be objected to by the Premier, he begged to say he was actuated by the most disinterested motives, and nominated the gentlemen who appeared in the resolution, so that it might be as impartial as it possibly could be. In the first place, he discarded every member who was in the remotest degree, as far as his knowledge went, connected with the public Press. He then proceeded to choose two members from the Government side of the House; then he chose two from the other side; next he went to the cross-benches and selected two impartial gentlemen who he thought could devote time to the inquiry. He, therefore, challenged any member to name a committee more unbiased in every way than that he had named.

The first part of the resolution was put and passed; and the Speaker announced that a ballot would next take place for the committee.

The ballot having been taken—

The SPEAKER announced that the committee had been elected as follows:—Mr. Ivory, Mr. Fox, Mr. Miles, Mr. Macrossan, Mr. Kingsford, Mr. Tyrel, and Mr. Thompson.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. STEWART rose to call the attention of the House to the issue of the *Hansard* of last night's debate. He would have done so at an earlier moment, but was unwilling to interfere with the regular course of business. In reference to the discussion that took place last night immediately on the adjournment of the debate on the Railway Reserves Bill, it seemed that those honourable members who spoke after 9 o'clock had not been reported so fully as previous speakers. He saw that it was stated, as a reason for the adjournment, by one honourable member in his speech, that speeches delivered after 9 o'clock could not be given as fully in *Hansard* as those delivered before that hour. He wished to know if that was to be the case or not. If that was to be so, then the House had better adjourn at 9 o'clock, or go into committee work. He confessed he felt surprised at finding that the speeches delivered last night by himself and other honourable members had not been reported. He was under the impression that the *Daily Hansard* gave fair reports of whatever was said in the House. Now, however, it appeared that such was only to be the case up to a certain hour. He had already written to the principal shorthand writer, to complain on a previous occasion that the remarks attributed to him in the *Hansard* were not at all like what he had really stated; they could not in any way be made to appear like what he had said; they had entirely misrepresented the matter. He thought it would be very

well for honourable members to get some information as to the reporting, and whether they could not be reported better. When the former complaint was made against *Hansard*, he for one had thought it was too early, with only one day's experience, to say that the work was not well done. He thought that something would have to be done to have the reports made in the right way. During last session and in previous sessions he had always been fairly reported. In the case referred to, the report did not represent what was said. He was told there were complaints from more than one member on this point. He moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. GROOM simply rose to claim the indulgence of the House in connection with this matter. It had already been brought under the notice of the Printing Committee. There was no breach of privilege in stating to the House how the matter stood at present. In consequence of what took place on a previous occasion, two reporters had disappeared altogether, and had never made their appearance in the gallery from that day to this. The result was that Mr. Senior had been placed in great difficulties in endeavouring to get competent reporters to take the place of those who had so suddenly disappeared. The House must bear this in mind, that shorthand writers competent to report Parliamentary debates were very scarce in the colonies; also that the Parliaments of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia were all in session at once. So far as Melbourne and Sydney were concerned, Mr. Senior had endeavoured to obtain the very best reporters; but he had found extreme difficulty in obtaining them. He might inform the House that the *Hansard*, even in its present state, could not have come out at all if Mr. Senior had not availed himself of the assistance of his cadets, who had made such creditable progress in their profession that they were able to assist that gentleman very much by taking notes from his rehearsal. Honourable members must also bear in mind that the Government Printer was compelled to employ new hands, who were ignorant both of the style of work and unaccustomed to the manuscript copy which they had to set up. His attention had only recently been called by one of the reporters to an inaccuracy arising from this cause, in which the Minister for Works was represented as saying that millions of money had been obtained, whereas the copy plainly enough was a quarter of a million. For printers' errors like this the head of the *Hansard* staff ought not to be held accountable. Honourable members might rest assured that Mr. Senior was exerting himself to the utmost to give satisfaction; and as soon as he could command a staff of competent reporters he felt perfectly sure the House would have no

cause of complaint. Honourable members must also bear in mind that the printing office had ordered out at great cost a new machine from England, and it had not yet arrived, and difficulty was consequently experienced in the printing department. He was perfectly sure that if the House would exercise a little indulgence every endeavour would be made to carry out their wishes in this matter as carefully as possible. With reference to speeches not being reported after 9 o'clock, the House must bear this in mind—that it was originally proposed that *Hansard* should not extend over fourteen columns; though the Printing Committee allowed Mr. Senior a little discretion in the case of a very important debate, as in that of the Railway Reserves Bill. If the wish of the House was that all speeches should be fully reported in *Hansard* up to the hour of adjournment, whether 9 or 12 o'clock, in place of six reporters there must be twelve in the gallery, each to take his turn. He would state for the information of honourable members who might have no especial knowledge of this work, that it took the reporter two hours to write out his notes of twenty minutes, and there were only four reporters at present. If everything was to appear in print which took place in the House, in place of fourteen columns they must have twenty-eight or thirty-two columns. All these things must be taken into consideration, and it was only fair that they should be especially mentioned. He would conclude by again asking the House to extend some little indulgence towards Mr. Senior. However, before he sat down he wished to correct one statement he had made in the early part of the discussion. He had then stated that there were four reporters upon the staff; but he had since ascertained there were only three, which of course increased the difficulties of Mr. Senior's position. Under these circumstances the House ought to extend their indulgence to the principal shorthand writer, who, he felt sure, was exercising himself to the utmost to faithfully discharge his duties by giving a fair synopsis of the debate.

Mr. BUZACOTT said he intended to say nothing about *Hansard*, but would take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the motion for adjournment to call attention to the state of things at Rockhampton, which required prompt attention. There had been several sensational debates respecting sickness on the Dalby and Roma railway, and the Colonial Secretary himself went up and visited the line and gave whatever relief he could to the sick. All this was very proper, and very gratifying; but he wished to call attention to the fact that they had a railway in course of construction in another part of the colony, which was not so convenient of access to

the Colonial Secretary as the Dalby line. This Northern railway had been carried out under very disadvantageous circumstances. There had been great sickness amongst the workmen employed upon it during previous seasons, and during the present season there had been fever and other kinds of sickness, which had created an extraordinary demand upon the benevolent institutions of Rockhampton. The hospital had been so full that the surgeon had not known what to do with the patients, and had been compelled to discharge numbers of them before they were quite restored to health; and, having no means of support, many of those persons had to go into the Benevolent Asylum. The Government grant to the Benevolent Society was £400 per annum, and, under ordinary circumstances, with the subscriptions from the inhabitants of Rockhampton, the institution could be carried on; but during the last month or two there had been so much sickness that it had thrown a great deal of extra work upon the institution, and the result of this, as he learnt by telegram, was, that unless immediate relief was given to the institution it would be compelled to close its doors at the end of this month—that was to-day. The Colonial Secretary, when he laid the matter before him, said he thought it was a case requiring the attention of the Government, and he (the Colonial Secretary) promised to recommend his colleagues to appropriate £100 towards the immediate relief of those unfortunate people who were depending upon the Benevolent Society. He (Mr. Buzacott) had since been informed that the matter was submitted by the Colonial Secretary to his colleagues, who pooh-poohed it, because, until another financial year commenced, they had no vote available. In order that he (Mr. Buzacott) might be armed with correct information, he telegraphed this morning to a member of committee of the Benevolent Society, to ascertain the number of persons seeking relief, and to secure other particulars that might be useful to the House. The reply was, that the number of persons receiving relief from the society was sixty adults and seventy-two children, making a total of one hundred and thirty-two. He thought honourable members would agree that £400 a-year would go a very little way, even with the public subscriptions added, towards providing for the necessities of so large a number of destitute people. The telegram further stated, that much distress would result if the operations of the society were suspended, particularly as the "Indus" had just arrived with immigrants. He was quite willing to leave the matter in the hands of the House; and he would add, that if, by the Benevolent Society's closing its doors, the distressed people had to be forwarded to Brisbane, even if their fares

to this city were defrayed, they would have to be maintained at the public expense. In this instance it would be just as well to comply with the very reasonable requests of the society—which, he might add, was as well conducted a society as any in the colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the honourable member was quite right in saying that the matter had been brought under the notice of the Government. He (the Colonial Secretary) at once made inquiry as to whether there were any funds from which he could give the required assistance, and he found there was none. He thought it necessary then to bring forward a minute recommending that £100 should be given to the Benevolent Society. The matter was discussed, and it being near the end of the financial year, it was considered better to communicate with Rockhampton, and ascertain whether they could go on until the beginning of another financial year. The object was simply to gain information whether it was absolutely necessary to send the money at once. He was now perfectly satisfied with the statement made by the honourable member for Rockhampton, who had called upon him and proved to him that the money was absolutely necessary. Well, they should have it; although he would remind the honourable member that he (the Colonial Secretary) had previously promised that if the money were subscribed in Rockhampton it should be recouped. Neither he nor the Government of which he was a member had any desire to neglect people in distress; and they thought Rockhampton was as well entitled to receive assistance as the sufferers on the Western railway. The House might rest assured that where it was necessary to give assistance he would always be ready and willing to give it.

Mr. MORGAN said he hoped the member for Rockhampton would be successful in his application, as he had no doubt he would. There was a Benevolent Society in Warwick. It was nearly insolvent, and its promoters were canvassing the town for subscriptions. The society had been doing a great deal of good, and without its assistance the hospital would not be able to accommodate one-half of those who were deserving of some description of relief. He hoped, therefore, the honourable member would be successful—because, in that case, he meant to make an application on behalf of the Benevolent Society of Warwick, and he should do so in the hope that what the Government awarded to a persistent opponent of their policy, they would not refuse to a member who was their consistent supporter.

Mr. PALMER said he could not for the life of him see of what consequence it was whether a man was a consistent supporter or a persistent opponent of the Government.

If the money was wanted to relieve a benevolent institution, the question was not, who asked for the money, but who wanted it. And the member for Warwick had shown no reason why the Benevolent Society of that town should have assistance. He had not shown that there was any special destitution, any extra sickness, or why the society should be insolvent. He could not but believe, from the statement that had been made, that there was a great deal of destitution at Rockhampton; and if there were 132 people assisted by the Benevolent Society, to give them only £100 would be like the case in which when bread was asked a stone was given. The Colonial Secretary had better promise that whatever was wanted for the Rockhampton district in its necessities should be furnished. By all means let the same liberality be shown as was shown on the Western railway. He hoped that not only the Colonial Secretary but the Premier would say, that wherever they found existing destitution money should be spent. And if they did this, they need not be afraid but that the House would endorse their action. He had never in his long experience found the House unwilling to vote money in a case like this. The question of *Hansard*, on which the adjournment of the debate had been moved, had been very fairly put by the member for Drayton and Toowoomba. If the honourable member for Brisbane expected that all the little speeches of honourable members were to be reported *verbatim* in *Hansard*, it would cost nearly as much as the Government of the whole colony, and they would have a *Hansard* larger than the largest Family Bible. On a motion for the adjournment of the House, like that which took place last night, did the member for Brisbane expect that his small speech would be reported, when the remarks of members who made much better speeches than he did were not reported at all? But those honourable members were not so unreasonable as to expect to be reported. He (Mr. Palmer) took it that *Hansard* was intended to report speeches during actual debate upon important questions, and not the trivial little remarks that were made upon a question of adjournment. He thought he made a very pretty little speech himself on the Fisheries Bill; but it was not reported, and he never expected that it would be. The value of *Hansard* would be utterly destroyed if those little speeches occupied its columns. He hoped the Printing Committee would see that if the principal shorthand writer was influenced by a desire to please everybody, they would take care that he was not allowed to fulfil the fable of the Old Man and his Ass. He hoped the speeches would be cut down. He had no wish to be reported *verbatim*, even if the honourable member for Brisbane

did; and if the chief of the staff could get up a staff of reporters who would give the general drift and meaning—who would give the main points of the speeches made in the House—he would do all they could possibly expect him to do, and would do all that he (Mr. Palmer) hoped he would attempt to do.

Mr. WALSH said that if they listened to all the little dismal stories of doleful distress that were told in the colony they must come to the conclusion that it was the most unhealthy and poverty-stricken colony in the world. There could not be twenty or thirty people ill in a particular place but the newspapers were full of it, and members begged Parliament to come to the rescue, as if there were no persons of means in the neighbourhood, or even moderately well-to-do people, who were willing or able to come forward to the assistance of their distressed neighbours. He could not help saying that there was such a state of absolute dependence upon the Press, Parliament, and the Government that it appeared to him they would very shortly become absolute dependants upon the Crown. It was quite sickening. No doubt this matter had been pressed upon the honourable member for Rockhampton by his constituents; but when he (Mr. Walsh) heard that a flourishing town like Rockhampton was only in need of £100, and because of a few extra sick men was bound to appeal to Parliament, he began to think they were ceasing to be Englishmen in either feeling or action. When the honourable member for Brisbane rose to make his attack upon *Hansard*—and a most unjust attack it was—he began to think he had been employed by the Government to divert attention from the humiliating defeat they had suffered; and when he had heard the honourable member casting insinuations against the conductors of *Hansard*, and saying that they were not going to report honourable members on that side—

Mr. STEWART said he never made any insinuations; and nothing he had said could justify the honourable member in saying so.

Mr. WALSH said he was under the impression that the honourable member certainly did so. He (Mr. Walsh) cordially endorsed the opinions expressed by the honourable member for Toowoomba and the honourable member for Port Curtis, and was glad to hear the cheers which came from the House and the Government benches when these uncalled-for attacks were made. He knew that the gentlemen employed upon *Hansard* had a most difficult task to perform, and that honourable members who had not inquired into the difficulties or newness of their duties could little understand it. He wished honourable members were a little more considerate to gentlemen who, as he knew, were trying

to do their duty faithfully towards the House. If honourable members had a little regard to these gentlemen, and were a little less jealous of their own appearance in *Hansard*, it would be more creditable to them. He did hope this was the last attack of this kind they would hear during this session upon this branch of the service, unless *Hansard* utterly broke down.

Mr. GRIMES said he should be sorry to be thought to entertain any feeling that the sum of money to be placed at the disposal of the Colonial Secretary, for the relief of cases of distress, should be scanty; but he thought there was another side of the question which it was necessary they should look at, and that was, that these constant applications to the Colonial Secretary for sums of money for the relief of certain districts was fast taking away the feeling of sympathy between those who were well to do and those who were not so fortunate, so far as this world's goods were concerned. And more than that, he knew, from personal knowledge, that the feelings of working men with regard to the charitable institutions of the colony were, that they had a right to participate in the benefits of those institutions from the fact that they had been brought to the colony by the Government, and, therefore, the Government should support them when, by their improvidence, they were unable to provide for themselves. He thought they should bear this in mind in connection with all matters which related to the dispensation of relief to those who were supposed to be so much in need of it; because great injury might be done in the way of destroying self-reliance by the distribution of Government grants or assistance when really not needed. With reference to the matter of *Hansard*, as a new member of the House he should like to have heard some reason why *Hansard* was first decided to be published in its present form. He understood now that it was not to exceed fourteen columns, and in that case the speeches of honourable members must necessarily be cut down to come within that. As he took it, *Hansard* was intended to be an educator of the people, and a means of disseminating the characteristics of the various measures that were brought before the House, and of the legislation which was adopted; and keeping that in view, he thought it should be an understood axiom on the part of the chief reporter, that those speeches should be most cut down which bore least upon the question which might be under the consideration of the House, and which had least a tendency to place before the people a proper view of those questions. Since he had been in the House he had observed that a great proportion of the debates that were carried on were merely citations from old speeches,

with the view of proving that honourable members were more inconsistent this session than they were the session before. He did not think the country desired to know anything about the inconsistencies of honourable members. Circumstances might change and members might change their opinions, as many wise men had done; but he did not think that charges of inconsistency and quotations from speeches made in times past could have any educational influence upon the people. Looking at it in that light, he thought it would be just as well if those portions of the debates which were of that character were entirely omitted, and only those reported which referred to the Bills or other similar questions under discussion. He felt that by adopting this course the public would be benefited, and *Hansard* would be reduced to something like reasonable proportions.

Mr. GRAHAM said he was afraid the suggestion of the honourable member who had just sat down was impracticable. He did not know who should be the person to decide what portion of the speeches should be left out and what portion inserted; and he was satisfied that it would lead to considerably more debating in the House than ever they had before. With regard to quotations from other speeches, they were the least trouble to the reporters, because any member wishing them to be reported could send them to the reporters—and, in fact, they were requested to do so. With regard to relieving those persons on the railway line, he quite agreed with the honourable member for Warrego and other honourable members, as to how much better it would be if those cases had been taken up and provided for by private charity; but at the same time he did not think members of the House should be censured, when private charity had failed in that respect, for taking them up when actual destitution existed. In fact, he thought it was the duty of the House, under such circumstances, to take action at once. In Dalby the matter had been taken up by private charity; but it was necessary that something should be done before that; and he maintained that the action taken by the Government and by honourable members in regard to those cases was perfectly correct.

Mr. STEWART said he did not think honourable members could accuse him of taking up time unnecessarily by moving the adjournment of the House, seeing that this was only the second occasion on which he had done so since he had been a member of it. With reference to the remarks of the honourable member for Warrego, that he (Mr. Stewart) had made an unjust attack—he did nothing of the sort. He had simply brought the matter before the House, and no member who had spoken had referred to the real question to which he directed attention, and that was, whe-

ther, after 9 o'clock, the reports of speeches were to be such as he had referred to, or the same as those made previous to that hour? He was quite aware that before the *Daily Hansard* was issued the reports were condensed to some extent; and he did not object to that. The honourable member for Port Curtis had said that the general drift and meaning of speeches was what was wanted, and he (Mr. Stewart) did not want anything else; but what he wished to refer to was the statement, that after 9 o'clock speeches would not be reported. That was distinctly stated by the honourable member for Mitchell, who also said that he would obstruct and see that no progress was made with the debate if it continued. He certainly thought that such a statement as that should be recorded, and he called attention to it last night; but there was no report of either one or the other. He did not accuse the shorthand writers in any way. He knew, after the explanation of the honourable member for Toowoomba, that it must be at immense sacrifice that they turned out the sheet they did at present. What he particularly wished to know was, whether, after 9 o'clock, there was to be any difference in the reports, so that the Government and honourable members would understand their position, and make their arrangements accordingly. With the permission of the House, he would withdraw the motion.

Motion—That this House do now adjourn—withdrawn accordingly.

BANK HOLIDAYS BILL.

On the motion of Mr. MURPHY, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to make provision for Bank holidays and respecting obligations to make payments and do other acts on such holidays.

The CHAIRMAN having reported that the committee had come to a resolution, the resolution was adopted; and the Bill having been introduced and read a first time, the second reading was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, June 7.

KENNEDY AND COOK ELECTORATES DIVISION BILL.

Mr. MACROSSAN, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that since he had obtained the leave of the House for a second reading of this Bill the honourable member for Toowoomba had given notice of a contingent motion, which was to this effect:—

That all the words after the word "That" be omitted, with the view of inserting in their place the following words:

1. This House considers that, owing to the increase of population in certain electoral dis-

tricts since the passing of "*The Redistribution Bill*," a readjustment of several of the electorates is imperatively necessary.

2. That in the opinion of this House, a Bill should be passed this session readjusting the boundaries of the electorates in which such increase of population has taken place, and increasing the number of members of the same.

3. That the foregoing resolutions be forwarded by Address to His Excellency the Governor.

Now he supposed that honourable member—though he did not say so in this contingent motion—meant that such a Bill should be brought in by the Government—(Mr. GROOM: Hear, hear),—and he (Mr. Macrossan) was quite willing to admit the great responsibility which any private member undertook in attempting in any way to interfere with the representation of the different electorates, even though that electorate were his own. But the Government had failed in this particular case in doing their duty. In 1875 Mr. Macalister was asked in the House, if he intended, or when he intended, to give an additional representative to the electorate of Kennedy? His answer was, that he could not promise to give any additional representation until the census was taken in May, 1876; and he then gave him (Mr. Macrossan) a promise, privately, that when the census was taken he would introduce a Bill for that purpose. When, however, the House met last session, he asked the then existing Ministry, who were the successors of the Macalister Ministry, if they intended to introduce a Bill adding to the representation of the Kennedy; and the answer he got was, "No." And it was only upon the denial of the Ministry to fulfil the promise made by Mr. Macalister that he last session introduced a Bill to divide that electorate; so that honourable members would acquit him of interfering unnecessarily with what he deemed to be the responsible duty of the Government, and the Government alone. Since he had moved for an additional member for the Kennedy, in consultation with several of the old Northern members, and at the solicitation of some of the people on the Hodgkinson Goldfield, he had been induced to add the electorate of Cook, and to introduce a Bill for the purpose of dividing these two electorates into two electoral divisions, each to return one member. He did not intend to occupy the House long in proving the necessity of these two divisions, more especially as most of his remarks would consist of dry details and statistics which honourable members had had placed before them during this session. It would be admitted, he had no doubt, that the more remote districts of the colony were the portions which should be better represented if any difference existed; that the districts

round about or within easy distance of the capital should not be better represented than the districts more remote—for instance, nearly 1,000 miles off. They knew that even if the districts about the capital had fewer members they would still be better represented than more distant districts, owing to the easiness with which those residing in or near the capital could bring public opinion to bear upon the Ministry, and the influence which they brought to bear upon members of the House who were living amongst them and heard their opinions daily. The city of London, he thought, was the best case in point which he could quote, showing the existence of such a principle. That city he supposed contained more wealth and population than was contained within the same compass upon any spot in the world. It contained about one-tenth of the population of Great Britain; and yet it had hardly one-thirtieth of the representation accorded to it. Now, if they looked at how matters stood here, they would find that although the capital itself was not over-represented, yet, if they took the districts in the immediate neighbourhood into account, they would find that they were very much over-rated. If honourable members had read the paper which had been moved for by the honourable member for Mitchell and furnished by the Registrar-General that day, they would see that there was a great difference in the representation of the several electorates—that the more distant electorates were worst represented, and those within twenty or thirty miles of Brisbane were the best represented. When the honourable member for Port Curtis introduced the last Redistribution Bill—the one under which that House now sat—he believed the basis upon which the representatives was apportioned was the adult male population, and fair play was, as nearly as possible, done to the different districts of the colony. In these two electorates which he wished to divide, the male population was 5,396, exclusive of Chinese, Kanakas, lunatics, and prisoners—every man of them being entitled to a vote. Now if he took the three highest electorates outside these two, which were Fortitude Valley, Enoggera, and South Brisbane, they found these three did not amount to the number which existed in the electorates of Kennedy and Cook, being less than that number by 588; so that actually these two Northern electorates had a larger adult male population than the three largest electorates in Brisbane, and one electorate in the Ipswich district as well. Therefore he and the honourable member for Cook represented more people than the gentlemen who represented these four electorates, who had yet double the voice in apportioning the expenditure and taxation of the country,—a thing which he

believed every member would admit to be unfair, because Government was more or less a partnership concern; and all the members of that partnership should be equally benefited, and all the people should take an equal share in the government of the country; and injustice was done in proportion to the inequality of representation. He did not base his demands for additional representation simply on these grounds, but he did so more upon the system adopted by the honourable member for Port Curtis, when he introduced his Redistribution Bill in 1872, which was, to group the different electorates of the colony together, which were more or less connected either by contiguity or similarity in the interests which they represented; and if they adopted the same system now, and examined it by the tables in the return to which he had referred, they would find that the difference between the different groups was very great indeed—so great as to be a very unfair system of representation. Of course, this had arisen from accident—simply in consequence of population having increased in one portion of the colony while it had not increased, or had decreased, in another portion. The Registrar-General gave the average power of representation, which meant the average number of male adults in one electorate, at 1,076, and all electorates that fell below that were over-represented, and all that went beyond it were under-represented. Taking the Brisbane and East Moreton group, they found that the average number was 1,200. Some of the electorates in that group were considerably under 1,200, but there were a few that were so much over that as to make up the difference and give 100 besides. Then, taking the West Moreton or Ipswich group, which consisted of six electorates, they found the average number of adult males in each electorate was about 750, which was more than 300 below the average of the total of the colony. The other groups were nearly all in the same proportion—some being a little below, and some above; but in the Northern group, consisting of Bowen, Kennedy, Ravenswood, Burke, and Cook, they found that the average was over 1,550. So that, in reality, one electorate in the North, on the average, had more voting power than any two electorates in the West Moreton group. He was not for one moment saying this with any intention of depreciating the value of the electorates of Ipswich, or wishing in any way to disenfranchise them, although he was told by a prominent Liberal leader last session, when he asked that gentleman to support his Bill on the justice of it—he (that gentleman) shrugged his shoulders and said he did not understand the justice. He (Mr. Macrossan) then pointed out that the Ipswich electorates had two votes for one held by

other electoralates. "Well," this gentleman said, "I am quite willing, if you can take a member from that group, to give it to you; but I am not willing to give an additional member to increase the voting power of the North, and consequently decrease the voting power of the South." He (Mr. Macrossan) said, in reply, that his mission in bringing forward the Bill was not to disenfranchise any district, but to increase the representation of his own. He thought it would be an invidious thing for any private member to attempt to interfere with the redistribution of the electoralates. That was a responsibility which ought to rest upon the Government. But if an additional member were given to this group, it would raise the number up to seven, and even then they would still be above the average voting power given in the list to which he had referred. If he based his demands for increased representation simply on the basis of the adult males, he would be entitled to ask for three additional representatives; but he based it entirely on the demands of the group, as it was impossible so to apportion the electoralates as to give each of them the exact number of adult males. It was hardly necessary for him to go into statistics to show the importance of these electoralates, for the amount of the produce imported and exported was familiar to all honourable members, and it was also well known that the Customs duties derived from the different ports of these electoralates were far in excess of the amount derived from those of any other electoralate in the colony, or any other equal portion of population in the colony. He anticipated being met by the Government with the reply that they intended to introduce a Bill next session for the redistribution of the electoralates; but he maintained that redistribution in the North was urgently wanted at the present time. The inequality existing between these electoralates and those near the capital was too great to allow another session to pass over without a change being made. If the matter was put off there might be a change of Ministry in the meantime, and then the division might be postponed for two or three sessions more. If the Ministry would introduce a Bill this session, he would take his chance along with the rest of the colony and withdraw the Bill; but if it was intended to put off the general measure until next session, he would be hardly justified in accepting such terms. He hoped that honourable members on both sides of the House would not regard this question in a party light. It was a question which concerned both sides alike, and was also of importance to the colony, because every individual in the country should be properly represented. He hoped the Government would meet him in the same friendly spirit with which he had introduced the

Bill; the second reading of which he would now move.

Mr. Groom then moved the amendment of which he had given notice, and which had been read over by the honourable member for Kennedy. He said that the member for Kennedy had anticipated some portions of the remarks which he had intended to address to the House. In moving the amendment, he desired to throw the responsibility of introducing measures of this sort upon the Government. At the same time he considered that the honourable member for Kennedy had done no more than his duty in drawing attention to the inadequate representation of the districts of Kennedy and Cook. There could be no doubt, from the returns referred to by the previous speaker, that those districts were inadequately represented. But many other questions incidentally arose in connection with this subject. When the honourable member for Port Curtis brought in his Redistribution Bill, there was a small majority in favour of the general principle, that the representation of the country should be based upon the adult males as shown in the census returns; but there was a large minority, of which he was one, who believed that representation should be based upon population. He had since seen no reason to alter his opinion, and he believed the country was almost unanimously in favour of it. The object of the honourable member for Port Curtis was no doubt to give a fair representation to the whole of the colony; and the elections which followed the passing of the Bill showed that he was not far wrong in the course he had adopted. But since that time there had been an alteration in some of the electoralates. The Northern districts had largely increased in population, while in some of the Southern portions of the colony it had decreased in an equal ratio. In the Southern and Central districts there was a large adult population bound to the soil by ties of proprietorship; but in the Northern districts, particularly those referred to by the honourable member, the population was, to a large extent, migratory. He contended that it was a matter for serious consideration, whether the representation should be disturbed for sake of benefiting a migratory population; for, owing to the uncertainty of mining operations, a large number of people now in those districts might to-morrow be scattered all over the colony. This Parliament would cease to exist next session, but there was ample time this session for the Government to take measures to secure redistribution of the electoralates; or if there was a great pressure of public business the House might compel the matter to be taken up next session, and make it one of the principal Government measures. There were other districts equally entitled to represen-

tation, and with even better claims than those which had been advanced by the honourable member for Kennedy. In the Wide Bay district, for instance, the adult male population was 2,264; yet it was only represented in this House by one member. He might also mention his own district and those of Aubigny and Warwick. The boundaries of the electorates of Aubigny and Warwick were certainly open to great improvement. The Darling Downs boundary was still more remarkable than those which he had mentioned. It commenced near the southern boundary of the colony, and went down to the top of the Main Range near the Crow's Nest. A readjustment there might be effected, with a view to giving a member to a purely agricultural electorate. Upon broad and general grounds he thought that whatever redistribution of the electorates was contemplated, the measure for that purpose should be brought in by the Government and should not devolve upon any private member. In the New South Wales Parliament this question was absorbing great attention; and it had been brought about by the same means as were being used here—namely, the introduction of private Bills like that brought in by the honourable member for Kennedy. The Assembly there, to show its feeling on the subject, passed a Bill through all its stages for the division of the electorate of the Hastings, and sent it to the Upper House; and the outcome was a comprehensive scheme, which had been introduced by Mr. Parkes, the present Premier. It was quite possible that the returns on the table had not been sufficiently long in the possession of the Government to enable them at once to prepare a Bill of the nature required; but there was ample time before the close of the session for Government to bring in a Bill to secure such additional representation as they might think necessary. He favoured the broad principle that representation should go upon the basis of population. When the honourable member spoke of taxation, he should have remembered the well-known axiom, that wherever the largest amount of population is concentrated there the largest amount of taxation must necessarily be collected. If taxation and representation were to go side by side, population must form the basis of representation. The honourable member had referred to the city of London, and stated that if it were to receive representation in proportion to its population it would have many more members than it at present possessed. No doubt that was correct. On the other hand, it must be remembered that many persons representing distant electorates were residents of a capital, and a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons resided in the city of London. On that account the interests of

London would always secure adequate representation. A similar argument might be applied to the city of Brisbane, where several representatives of distant electorates resided. With regard to the Northern districts, it must be recollected that the honourable member for Burke did not represent a very large population, judging from the number of votes registered at the last election, so that one electorate balanced the other. He trusted that if the Government intended to introduce a measure for this purpose they would include in it the system of self-adjusting representation, which was attempted to be introduced on the last occasion by the honourable member for Fortitude Valley. The principle of that was, that whenever the census returns showed that an electoral district had a population exceeding 4,000, the Speaker should be authorized to issue a writ for the return of an additional member; and when the number reached 10,000, a writ should be issued for a third member. He believed the principle to be a sound one. It had worked well in municipalities, and he believed it would work equally well in the electorates. He trusted that that would be made one of the essential principles of the measure, and if it was it should have his hearty support.

The PREMIER said the honourable member for Kennedy had done nothing more than his duty in drawing the attention of the House to the remarkable anomaly which existed in the electorates to which he had specially referred. The honourable member had also referred to a promise made to him by a former Premier. Although he (the Premier) could hardly speak of that with any knowledge of what took place on that occasion, he had no doubt that the promise was made, that additional representation should be given. To some extent that promise had been redeemed by the Bill which gave an additional member to the Northern districts. No doubt the honourable member anticipated that that would be followed up by another measure, and he had taken the earliest opportunity of drawing the attention of the House to what he (the Premier) deemed a good case. He did not consider that a measure of this kind should be based on the number of adult males, although that was the system on which the present representation was based. He preferred—and he might take upon himself to express the opinion of the Government—that a Bill for the readjustment of the representation should be based on some other principle. He did not mean to say that the adult male basis must not be taken into consideration amongst other elements; but they must take the broader basis as represented in the paper he had caused to be laid on the table to-day. That paper was prepared some

time ago, at his request, by the Registrar-General; and anticipating that the subject would be brought under the notice of the House, he thought it desirable that honourable members should have the fullest information that could be obtained up to date as to the position of the population. The figures were given up to the end of March last, according to the estimate formed by the Registrar-General from the registration of births, marriages, and deaths. It must be remembered that there were some anomalies in connection with the question now before the House. If the Kennedy and Cook were under-represented, there were other districts which were over-represented. He need only refer to the electorate of Burke, where the total European population, including women and children, was 767. But it was hardly necessary to go to a district like that, because elsewhere there were glaring instances of both under and over representation. And he would for a moment call the attention of the House to the representation of districts by groups. The conclusion the honourable gentleman arrived at was not that which he (the Premier) arrived at. Take, for example, the neighbourhood of Brisbane, and all the suburbs of East Moreton. The total population of that group of electoral districts was 50,736; and in this group the population, after all, fell below the average of others. These districts were represented by nine members, each member representing 5,637 of the population. Going on to the Ipswich group, including Ipswich, Bremer, Bandanba, West Moreton, Stanley, and Fassifern, the population was 21,596, represented by six members, each representing 3,599. Next come the Darling Downs group, consisting of Toowoomba, Aubigny, Warwick, Dalby, Darling Downs, Northern Downs, and Carnarvon,—the total population of which was 30,737, represented by seven members; giving an average to each member of 4,391. There was a glaring discrepancy between the districts of West Moreton and Darling Downs, very much in favour of Darling Downs; and he was willing to redress this discrepancy in that respect. Going to the westward, they come to the squatting districts including Maranoa, Balonne, and Warrego, with a population of 6,610, represented by three members, with an average of 2,203 each. Next came the Maryborough group, viz.:—Maryborough, Wide Bay, Gympie, Burnett, and Mulgrave; population, 24,357, and to each of the five members an average of 4,871. Proceeding to the Central district, there were Rockhampton, Blackall, Port Curtis, Normanby, Leichhardt, Springsure, Clermont, and Mitchell, with eight members, a population of 25,000, and an average of 3,125 to each—falling, he might remark, very much below the Wide Bay

and Burnett group. Going on again to the North, he found the highest average. Bowen, Kennedy, Ravenswood, Burke, and Cook had a population of 29,900, giving an average of 5,980 for each of the five members; but in this instance it must be remembered that a large number of the population were aliens, Chinese, and Polynesians—and he did not think they were likely to be placed on an equality with our own fully naturalized subjects. They might to some extent represent wealth, but they did not and ought not to represent political power until they were fitted to exercise it. In that respect, therefore, they must not estimate the total population of the alien race as a basis of representation. Even here, however, they were able to form a calculation exclusive of Chinese and Polynesians. Taking these groups, exclusive of Polynesians and Chinese, he found that the population of the Brisbane and East Moreton districts was 44,463, giving an average of 4,940 souls. The total population of the Ipswich group, on the same estimate, was 19,658, or an average of 3,276—manifestly far below that of the Brisbane group. Darling Downs, on the same estimate, showed a population of 27,324, or an average of 3,903. The Western districts showed a total of 5,659, or an average of 1,886—not half of the Brisbane district, and barely that of the Darling Downs district. Going on to the Wide Bay group, he found the population, exclusive of Chinese and Polynesians, to be 20,380, or an average of 4,076. In the Rockhampton group the total European population was 21,345, or an average of 2,668. In the Kennedy group the total European population was somewhat less than in some of the other groups,—it being 17,051, or an average of 3,410, that average being below the Wide Bay, Darling Downs, and Brisbane groups. However good a case, therefore, the honourable gentleman might make for his particular district, he would find a difficulty in making a good case as applied to the whole of the colony, if he were to consider the matter of redistribution altogether. He (Mr. Douglas) unhesitatingly affirmed that they ought to consider that question, and he thought the matter had ripened to that extent, that they were bound to bring in a Bill dealing with the entire question of redistribution. The measures they had to deal with must be considered first; and he must confess they had not all the material they ought to have to go into redistribution, because it was not only a question of population, but a question of how the different districts were to be regrouped and divided. It was manifest that if they were to go on a population basis, they must start with something like unison of action between the census and electoral areas. In asking

the Registrar-General to draw up these figures two months ago he especially drew his attention to this point, with the view of bringing the population areas into harmony with the electoral areas. He found that, taking population as a basis of representation, these groups must be brought into harmony as much as possible with the electoral groups. He thought that the basis of general population would be the best principle for that purpose, being a self-adjusting one. Districts should be defined down to which that system must be applied. In following up these instructions, the Registrar-General had supplied the figures on page 8 of the return, basing them on the last census. He merely referred to this as a matter of information, in order to ascertain how far the census returns agreed with the present electoral divisions. The return contained maps of the electoral districts. These were all important matters, requiring attention before introducing a Redistribution Bill. There was one fact in connection with this argument which justified bringing in a Bill as soon as possible: that was, that the present Parliament could not last more than one year; this completes its term of four years, and then it must expire by effluxion of time next year. It was most desirable that a Redistribution Bill should be provided before the expiration of this Parliament. If this was done this session it must be done at once, though he knew not if the House was prepared for that. He did not think that the prospects of the Government in connection with bringing in a Redistribution Bill were entirely satisfactory. Such a Bill was not likely to give satisfaction to everybody. He was quite sure they could not even please all their own friends; but nevertheless, he admitted the attempt ought to be made, though it was a difficult question to deal with. The subject had been under the consideration of the Government for some time, but they were not yet prepared to bring in a Bill. He knew not if honourable members wished this to be a long session; but it would certainly be so if an attempt was made to consider the question this session. If the honourable member who introduced this motion pressed on the Government the necessity of bringing in a measure this session, he would know what consequences to expect. He felt justified in saying, on behalf of the Government, that they would deal with it as soon as possible—this session if possible, though it was a most important question, and ought not to be rashly dealt with. He did not know if this answer would be considered sufficiently satisfactory by the honourable member who introduced the question. He frankly admitted that the question must be treated on its merits. The facts as at present in their possession were

not such as to justify passing the present Bill. There was evidence that other honourable members thought that they had equal right to increased representation. They were bound to redress the wrongs of all districts that were under-represented. Under these circumstances, the Government would be in fault if they allowed this question to be treated by a private member. A matter of such grave importance ought to be treated by the Government. He could not say that there was a very pleasing prospect before the Government if the question was looked at from a selfish point of view—they were not likely to make many friends. He was quite sure that the Government would deal carefully with the question, and endeavour to meet it as they best could, whether their measure pleased the House or not. He thought they were bound to admit the principle that readjustment must be based on general population. No doubt the figures that he had quoted proved conclusively that the House, as it exists at present, does not thoroughly represent the population at present located in the colony. The Government must use their best endeavours to remedy this state of things. Though the analogy of London might be taken as an illustration that the city of Brisbane was not under-represented, as the metropolis always possessed certain advantages, yet it could not be admitted that there was any reason why the districts adjacent to the city should not be fully represented. He differed from the honourable member on that point—that because East Moreton and the Logan were within thirty miles of Brisbane that was any reason why they should not have their due share of representation. Women and children ought to be considered as elements of wealth, and therefore providing a good basis for representation. He could safely say that no Bill brought forward by the Government would fail to contain that principle, and apply it to the whole European population. In the Northern districts of the colony there were a great number of Chinese and Polynesians that represented wealth to some extent, though not an electoral population. The fact of there being 15,000 Chinese and Polynesians at the Palmer might possibly be taken into consideration. He was not quite sure whether the House would admit that, but he was quite sure that any measure introduced by the Government would be based on the number of European population, including women and children as well as adult males.

Mr. BAILEY confessed that he had listened with some degree of pleasure to the remarks of the Premier, when he acknowledged that the Government would shortly take action in bringing in a Bill for the redistribution of electorates. Had it not been for this contingent notice of motion, he should have felt bound in duty to his

constituents to bring in a similar Bill for the division of the electorate which he represented, though he might not be able to make so strong a case as the honourable member for Kennedy. He was grouped with Maryborough, Wide Bay, and Gympie. Mulgrave had still a population of 4,588, though, through the neglect of the previous Government, Mulgrave had been almost stripped of its population. If that district had received fair play three or four years ago, it would now have a population of 12,000 or 15,000. By referring to the Registrar-General's report, he found that Maryborough had 6,639, Wide Bay 5,214, and Gympie 4,070; thus the total population, exclusive of Polynesians, of these three electorates was 15,923. This was equal to the total of the following eight electorates:—Burke, 839; Ravenswood, 1,465; Clermont, 2,402; Springsure, 1,799; North Downs, 1,604; Balonne, 1,764; Warrago, 1,688; and Brisbane 4,377. Thus, if he had no other ground than that of population to go on, it would justify him in asking for a division of his electoral district. The district of Wide Bay was a very wide one, and he found it utterly impossible to represent the interests of all his constituents. In any readjustment he would like the element of householders to be especially taken into consideration, as he believed there were many who were entitled to more representation than they had at present. He was very glad to hear that the Government had taken up this question, and he hoped they would prepare a Bill this session before the expiry of the present Parliament.

Mr. PALMER said that though he had no personal reason to be proud of the Electoral Bill under which the present Parliament had been constituted, yet it must be admitted that the principle on which it was founded—that of representing the adult male population—was the correct one. If the Premier thoroughly carried out his principle of basing representation on general population, he ought to extend the suffrage to women and children. He said that the male adult bread-winners, many of whom were in the North, was the proper basis of representation. He meant to adhere to those principles, whatever the result might be. It was evident from the Premier's speech and his treatment of the present Bill that the Government had no intention at all to bring in a Redistribution Bill; they would not come to that conclusion until pushed into it, and the present Parliament expired by effluxion of time. The Premier had characterized the population in the North as migratory, and entirely shirked the question whether they were entitled to further representation. Five years ago he had admitted—on the occasion of bringing in a Bill—that he was at a loss how to adjust representation to

population in the North on that account. The population then supposed to be migratory had not decreased in any way, but largely increased. Sufficient proof was afforded that it was not migratory by the fact that many had made homes for themselves, and, to his certain knowledge, had no intention of leaving them. To refuse adequate representation on such ground, was to shirk the whole question. They were entitled to the representation asked for on every ground of honour and justice. He believed that the system of basing representation on the total population was not meant for any other purpose than to maintain the supremacy of the Southern districts of the colony over the North. That was the real intention of the Government. They did not intend to carry any Bill through the House that would give anything like fair representation to the North. They might put it in any shape they liked, but honourable members would find that the present Ministry would give no measure of electoral reform which would tend to equalize the representation of the South with that of other parts of the colony. He could not go quite so far as the Premier when he said, that the presence of 15,000 Chinese and Polynesians was an element that should be taken into consideration. He (Mr. Palmer) said it ought not to be taken into consideration at all,—he would never consent to that; the right principle to go on was simply the admission of the whole adult males. He would go so far as to say, as he had said before on several occasions, that if Brisbane did not possess one solitary member in that House, still, as the metropolis of the country it would be well represented. It was patent that whenever a Brisbane question cropped up it was not the Brisbane members alone who endeavoured to carry out anything that was really required for it. Members came there purely for political purposes. He had been a resident of Brisbane for the last ten years, for purely political reasons. He had made it his home because he was returned to that House, and had continued to reside here ever since solely on that account. He took as much interest in Brisbane, and looked after it as carefully, as any Brisbane member, and he considered it his duty to do so. Although the representative of Port Curtis, he was also a representative of the whole colony—and so were all honourable members. He hoped the honourable member would press the question to a division, and let the people of the North see who were the men who were inclined to do them justice and who were inclined to refuse it. He believed they would get no justice from the present Government; and if the honourable member for Toowoomba thought his contingent motion would press the Government to bring in an Electoral

Bill, which would most likely have the effect—as was generally the case—of unseating those that introduced it, he was very much mistaken, unless the Government were absolutely forced into doing so, they would not introduce any such measure.

Mr. MURPHY said he was glad this matter had been introduced to the notice of Parliament, and so far as the electorate he represented was concerned, whatever the result of this motion might be, he should press the Bill which he had introduced for the division of that electorate upon the attention of the House. The honourable member for Kennedy had said that, before including the electorate of Cook in this measure, he had consulted some of the old Northern members; but he had not spoken to him (Mr. Murphy) on the subject, as he (Mr. Murphy) should have done to him under similar circumstances. The honourable member might have accorded to him the courtesy usually shown on occasions of the kind. He believed that he should be able to make out a good case for the division of the electorate of Cook. The figures which were before the House showed clearly that on the basis of adult male population that electorate was, in justice, entitled to return another member to that House. The honourable member for Port Curtis seemed to anticipate that some calamity might follow if the representation of the colony were increased; but he (Mr. Murphy) did not dread anything of the kind; and even if the Government were to extend the franchise to women he would not object. He did not see any reason why they should not do so. He was certain that the interests of the country would in no way be injuriously affected if ladies had a voice in the representation, and he was not afraid to stand there and say that he for one should vote for it. It was for the House to say whether a sufficiently good case had been made out to justify the second reading of the Bill; but whatever might be the fate of it, he should certainly take an early opportunity of pressing his motion for the division of the Cook district into two separate electorates.

Mr. WALSH thought the honourable member who had introduced this Bill had not done so very wisely. He should have adopted the policy of the Government last session, in connection with the Railway Bill, and have got at least six members to support his Bill, on the understanding that he should do the same for each of them. He would then have carried his measure, and the Government would not have dared to oppose it. He trusted that some honourable member on that (the Opposition) side of the House, would adopt that course on some occasion, so as to show the Government that what could be done on one side of the House could also be done on the

other. He was afraid that he would not be able to support his honourable friend in the passage of the Bill. He was aware that the North was most inadequately represented, and that it had been most unjustly kept down, in many respects by Brisbane influence; and he believed that, unless some catastrophe or political earthquake occurred, it would never be fairly represented or justly treated. He could not support the Bill, because he thought it was the duty of the Government, and only the Government, to attend to the representation of the colony. It was usurping the functions of the Government. If the honourable member for Kennedy succeeded in carrying this Bill, what was to prevent himself or other honourable members from doing the same, and then the political functions of the Government would cease, and legislation would degenerate even more and more into a system of log-rolling. He, therefore, could not support the Bill; but if the honourable member for Kennedy, or any other honourable member would bring in some measure to compel the Government to deal with the whole question, either this session or next, he would support him, so that it might be done on the responsibility of the Government of the colony.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he did not see one-half the difficulty in dealing with this measure that appeared to be seen by the Premier. In 1860, when a somewhat similar debate took place, he suggested that the small townships of the colony should be made into boroughs, and that in anticipation of increased population the representation should be self-adjusting, so that when the numbers in an electorate increased to a certain extent it should be entitled to an additional representative. With regard to this Bill, he maintained it had been proved that the honourable member for Kennedy had not brought it in until the Government refused to do so, and also that that honourable member had made out a clear case in support of the measure. He was under the impression that the number of members in the House at present was too small, and had advised the Premier to increase it to fifty; and what he suggested was, that small towns with large populations should be proclaimed as boroughs, each to return a member. For instance, he would give a member to Cooktown, Townsville, Roma, and Stanthorpe, and Aubigny might perhaps have another. He was sorry that the honourable member for Toowoomba had thrown his hat into the ring with this contingent motion. The field should have been left clear for the honourable member for Kennedy to make out his own case. The member for Toowoomba had attempted to show that the district of Burke, for which he (Mr. O'Sullivan) sat, was over-

represented—having reference to population. The population was put down at 839. He was told by a gentleman who knew the district well, to have no hesitation in asserting that the figures given in the return were wrong, and that no collector of those figures had ever gone through Burke. That district was about 600 miles in length from east to west, and 500 miles in breadth from north to south. He found that the Flinders for 500 miles was taken up, that the Saxby for 300 miles was occupied, and that nearly the whole of the Cloncurry was occupied—to say nothing of townships and diggings. As to the voting at elections: he thought a man would hardly be justified in riding 400 miles each way, as many would have to do, for the purpose of registering his vote at an election. He fully believed that there were 3,000 people in the district of Burke, and that the figures in the census were given from guess. He hoped the motion would be pushed to a division, for the honourable member who introduced it had given every chance to the Ministry, even offering to withdraw his Bill at the eleventh hour if the Ministry would bring in a Bill this session to amend the representation. He should support the motion.

Mr. STEWART said he was sorry to perceive that honourable members on the other (Opposition) side of the House persisted in bringing forward the question of North and South. It was done repeatedly last session, the object being simply to set one part of the colony against the other. He deprecated the idea that honourable members on this side of the House were making the matter a Southern question as against Northern interests, and to say that they did was an entire misrepresentation. The object of the present Bill would be better if its basis had been more correct. He did not believe in the principle of apportioning representation on the scale of the number of adult males, especially in a colony like this, where there was a large floating population. Despite the presence of machinery, there was no doubt that gold miners were a floating population, and a new discovery in New Zealand to-morrow would induce a very large number of them to find their way out of the colony. If the system were to be adopted, they might some day find a mining district, whose population had dwindled down to very small proportions, represented by two or three members of Parliament. Looking at the preliminary census laid on the table last session, he found that there were two districts in the North where the population had materially decreased. In one it had decreased as much as one-half since 1871, notwithstanding that the district was healthy and that there was machinery fixed. A population composed almost entirely of male adults should not

represent the same number of male adults in the Settled Districts, when they had with them their wives and families. It had been said that if they took into account the adult male population they ought to give manhood suffrage. He for one would have no objection to such a course. It was not the consumer of tobacco and grog who was the best colonist, for the man who had a wife and family to feed and clothe contributed much more largely to the revenue. If representation was to be based on adult males only, a great injustice would be done to the settled parts of the colony. The honourable member for Burke had said there ought to be five or seven new members, but if they were to carry out the principles that had been laid down they would find that twenty-two members would feel themselves aggrieved. There were twenty-two electorates represented below the average, and nineteen of the adult male population only was taken into consideration. All these honourable members would think it their duty to bring forward Bills of the same description as that brought in by the honourable member for Kennedy. The honourable member for Burke had stated that the figures in the return had been given by guess, and were false. Before making a reflection of that sort on an officer employed by the Government some reasonable grounds should be given for such an assertion. A simple statement was not sufficient to back up an accusation of that sort when the officers of Government were concerned. He was quite sure the Registrar-General had taken every care and made every effort to have the census taken as accurately as possible. Some reference had been made by the honourable member who introduced the Bill as to the value of the district he represents. If that question was to be taken into consideration it would be found that the wealth of that district consisted almost entirely of gold. It was known how much duty was paid on the gold that was exported. In bringing in their tariff two sessions ago the Government had as much as possible remitted the duty on almost every article of import, except, he believed, quicksilver and candles. He confessed he was very much in favour of a self-adjusting system of electorates. He was quite sure it would take the Government a considerable time to prepare an adequate measure this session, considering the large amount of important business that was constantly coming before them and preventing them giving due attention to the subject. There was only one difficulty connected with the self-adjusting system, which could be got over with a little care. It was necessary to depart from the single electorate system. He should think that when once settled there ought to be no disturbance made in it

oftener than once in five years. At the end of five years let the Government come in with a new division of electoral districts which were entitled to more representation. It would take considerable time to prepare a suitable Bill. The Government would do well if they succeeded in introducing such a Bill next session. He thought the House ought to admit that, and the motions at present before it ought to be withdrawn.

Mr. FRASER said he was sorry to oppose the second reading of this Bill; at the same time he was free to admit that the honourable member for Kennedy had made out a very strong case, and laid the House and country under some obligations by clearly pointing out that the time has arrived when the present electoral arrangements should be revised and readjusted. He was sorry that the honourable member for Port Curtis should introduce any allusions to antagonism between the South and North. It just amounted to this, that no honourable member on the Ministerial side of the House could differ in opinion from a member of the Opposition benches and receive the slightest credit for one honest motive. He thought such imputations were unfair, ungenerous, and unjust. The principle of representation on the basis of male adults was a feature that had never been advocated in any other Legislative Assembly but this. It could easily be shown that the population of this kind in the North was a migratory and shifting population. In the Kennedy district it was 1,074 in 1871, and only 490 in 1876. That of Gympie was now only 6,000, whereas it was from 12,000 to 15,000 some time ago. Illustrations taken from London and other places in the old country were inapplicable here, for numerous discrepancies occurred there in electoral representation. For instance, Liverpool, with 500,000 inhabitants, only returned two members, equally with Lincoln which had only 16,000. If the pressure of business prevented the Government introducing a Bill this session, he hoped they would come next session prepared with such a measure as would be acceptable to the country. He must point out a very great mistake and evil in our system of single electorates; it resulted in vicious practices, and led to honourable members pushing their local interest rather than the public good. The sooner the evil was got rid of the better for the country.

Mr. BEOR said that since the Government had refused to give full justice to the North with regard to representation, they must be glad to get what they could, for the case brought forward was the most urgent one of all. He hoped that the honourable member who spoke last would not think that he was in any way reflecting on the South when he said that the Northern districts were so remote that it was impossible full justice could be done to their necessities

in the South, their interests were so totally different. He would like to have seen his own constituency included in this measure, for a member returned by Mackay did not represent the inhabitants of Bowen, nor could a member returned by Bowen represent the inhabitants of Mackay—that was one of the unfortunate consequences connected with that electorate. Bowen and Mackay represented different interests, and for that reason they were entitled to distinct representation. With regard to the general question, he should have liked to hear from the Premier why the position of Brisbane with regard to the colony was different from the position of London with regard to Great Britain. He contended that the cases were similar, for in each all the members represented the same interests. For that reason the outside electorates should have even a larger proportional representation than the capital. He was also at issue with the Premier and other honourable members on another important point. It had been laid down as an axiom that in this matter they should leave the Chinese and Polynesians altogether out of their calculations. But although he was fully aware that the Chinese were a misfortune, and Polynesians a drawback to the colony, still, so long as they remained there, they had a right to have an indirect voice in the government of the country. The fact that they were aliens disqualified them from direct representation, yet they had as much right as white men to be fairly and properly governed. That being so, the basis of representation should be framed, not upon adult males only, or population only, but both together. Believing that the North was not adequately represented, he was anxious that those districts should have justice meted out to them; and seeing no immediate prospect of a full measure being granted, he should vote for the second reading of the Bill, as giving, at any rate, some justice to that portion of the colony.

Mr. PERKINS said it was evident the debate had become a question of between North and South, and he should vote for the Bill before the House as a measure of justice to the North. He was prepared to do justice to all parts of the colony—to Brisbane or any other electorate equally with his own, and to deal with every portion of the country on broad general grounds. The honourable member for Brisbane had expressed a doubt as to the accuracy of the statement made by the honourable member for Burke, as to the census returns; but he (Mr. Perkins) could state, from personal experience, that those returns were most unreliable. During his electioneering campaign in the electorate of Aubigny, he ascertained from painful experience that there were 400 persons not on the roll who

should be on the roll; that persons who were on the roll for property and other qualifications in the previous year, had been knocked off without their knowing it. He attributed this to the seedy and incompetent persons who had been employed to collect the rolls. He knew two personally who had been engaged to collect the roll for Aubigny, and he was sure that no man would trust either of them to take a letter with a shilling in it to the post office. These were the men who were employed to collect the electoral rolls; and so long as that system continued in operation so long would that House continue to be not a fair reflex of the opinions of the people. He did not underrate the value of women and children being rooted to the soil, or what was called "fixed population." That was what they were endeavouring to encourage and promote; but still, when he heard it stated in the House that the population up North consisted only of male adults, who were migratory in their habits, in answer he said it was very fortunate that they were migratory,—because if they were not they would not be there. He knew something about gold-mining, and he said that the fact of men being found on the Northern gold-fields was a proof of their enterprise and industry and love of adventure; for if they were not prepared to bear many hardships, and to risk even life itself, they would not be there. From his experience he had found that the successful miner consumed more, distributed more, wasted more, and expended more than any other man in the colony. He looked upon a miner as equal to six men in the South, who went about looking for work and praying that they might not find it. For his own part, he was satisfied with the Premier's promise that the subject should receive the serious attention of the Government.

MR. GRIMES moved that the debate be adjourned.

Question put and negatived.

MR. STEWART rose to explain that there was a difference between the collection of the census and the collection of the electoral roll. The census papers were left at the houses to be filled in, while the collector himself called round with the electoral roll.

MR. MACROSSAN, in reply, said he would content himself with answering a few of the remarks which had been made by previous speakers. The Premier had said that the Government were not prepared to bring in a Bill this year for the redistribution of electorates, as the materials for such a Bill had only recently been put into their hands. He denied that, for most of the materials had been before the House and the country for the last nine months. Writers on political economy had been quoted to show that

representation should not be based on male adults. But no writer on that science had ever dealt with a country in the same position as this. As to the character of the population of those districts, he might say that Gympie, Charters Towers, and the Hodgkinson were more settled than some of the townships in the South; and they had increased in population three or four times as much as the Southern towns had done. In West Moreton, for instance, the population in five years had only increased 2,529, and yet it had four representatives for one they had in the North. The greatest increase had taken place in the North, and next to that came the Western district. Was it just or fair that men coming to this colony to engage in mining pursuits should be stigmatized as migratory, and be disparaged on that account by men who were not actually producers at all? The miners, agriculturists, stock tenders, and such like, who were producers of wealth, were exactly those who should be represented. And yet it was rather strange that the same party who depreciated these men were willing, when it served their purpose, to spend nearly £2,000,000 of money on them in making railways for their especial benefit. He agreed with the honourable member for Aubigny that it was a good thing for this colony that the people in the North were migratory. If they stuck to the same place like oysters, as people in the South did, the progress of the colony would be much slower than it is. Exception had been taken by the members for Burke and Aubigny to the census, and the member for Brisbane had attempted to reply to that objection; but he did not think the reply threw any light on the subject. He knew as a fact that the census had not been correctly taken in some portions of the North, and he might specially mention Charters Towers and Cooktown, where hundreds of men who were living there when the census was taken had not been enumerated. For instance, the adult male population of Cooktown was set down as 2,676, which was the exact number on the electoral roll. Could anybody believe that the number of adults and the number on the electoral roll in any district could correspond in that manner? He had introduced this Bill as a matter of public policy, and not for any purpose of his own. He did not think it was of any use to discuss the probable nature of the Bill that might be introduced by the Government at present. But he could assure the Premier that if such Bill sought to deprive some districts of electoral rights because there were no women or children there, it would have some difficulty in passing the House. Whatever support it might meet with in some parts of the country, it would be found that a majority of the electors

were opposed to such a principle, and any Bill founded on such a basis would be an unjust one.

The question was put—"That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the Bill."

A division was called for, with the following result:—

NOES, 22.

Messrs. G. Thorn, Dickson, Douglas, Griffith, McLean, Miles, Kingsford, Hockings, Foote, Grimes, Stewart, Fraser, Bailey, Garrick, Morgan, Low, Tyrel, Perkins, MacDonald, J. Thorn, Beattie, and Groom.

AYES, 10.

Messrs. Palmer, Haly, Buzacott, Macrossan, Kidgell, Fox, O'Sullivan, Beor, Murphy, and J. Scott.

On the question being put—"That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted"—

Mr. WALSH moved the adjournment of the debate.

A division was called for, with the following result:—

AYES, 24.

Messrs. G. Thorn, Dickson, Douglas, Griffith, McLean, Miles, Kingsford, Hockings, Foote, Grimes, Stewart, Fraser, Bailey, Garrick, Morgan, Low, Tyrel, Perkins, Beattie, Groom, Beor, Murphy, Kidgell, and Walsh.

NOES, 9.

Messrs. Palmer, Haly, Buzacott, Macrossan, Fox, O'Sullivan, J. Scott, J. Thorn, and MacDonald.

Mr. WALSH moved that the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for Wednesday next, and take precedence of all other business.

Question put and negatived.

On the motion of Mr. GROOM, the resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 11 o'clock, until the usual hour on Tuesday next.