

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 1879

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 23 September, 1879.

Formal Motions.—Bills of Exchange Bill—third reading.—Ways and Means.—Appropriation Bill No. 2.—*Hansard*.—Police Magistrate, Thornborough.—Orders Discharged.—Orphanages Bill—Council's amendments.—Petition of N. Bartley.—Export Duty on Timber.—Crown Lands in East and West Moreton.—Plans and Sections, Central Railway.—Steamer Passes to Members—committee.—Claim of Dr. Purcell.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to—

By the PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith)—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as will admit of Resolutions of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means being reported on the same day as they shall have passed in the said Committees, and of the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day.

By Mr. HAMILTON—

That there be laid on the table of the House a statement showing—

1. Amounts paid annually to each district surveyor, first and second class surveyors—for Salary, Allowance, and Wages, during the years 1875, 1876, 1877, and 1878.

2. Value of work executed each year by each district surveyor, first and second class surveyors—during the years 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, including work for the Government or otherwise. Value to be estimated by scale of fees paid to licensed surveyors.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by Message in the usual form.

WAYS AND MEANS.

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

The PREMIER moved that the following sums be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue of the colony:—A sum of £950,287 19s. for the service of the year 1879-80; a sum of £807 3s. 3d. for the service of the year 1877-8; and a supplementary sum of £90,005 7s. 3d. for the service of the year 1878-79.

Mr. DICKSON said that as this was the last opportunity he would have of speaking on the subject, he must express his surprise that the Premier had not carried out his intention of bringing in the alterations in the tariff which the House had been informed in the Financial Statement formed a portion of the policy of the Government. He had hoped the Treasurer would have

adhered to the opinion he then expressed in regard to the tariff, and that he would have been prepared to submit resolutions to the House showing whereby the revenue might be encouraged. As nothing of this kind had been done, and as he would not have any other opportunity, he desired to place on record that the Colonial Treasurer had not acted up to the promises he made at an earlier part of the session, and which he (Mr. Dickson) was convinced ought to have been carried out in view of the present financial condition of the country. Nothing he could say would alter the motion before the Committee, because the motion was really a formal one; but the Treasurer ought, in his opinion, before the session closed, to have followed up his statement.

The PREMIER said he was glad to see the hon. gentleman admit that the tariff should be altered, but it must be remembered that a similar promise had been made by previous Governments and not carried out. The reason in this case was not that Government had altered their views in regard to the tariff or disliked amending it, but simply that they could not get more business done this session. The session had gone on long enough, and it would be a serious thing for the Government to undertake an amendment of the tariff at this stage. It was a subject, however, only deferred to a future opportunity; and, if the hon. gentleman would accept another promise, he (Mr. McIlwraith) could say that it would occupy a much more prominent position next year than it had this.

Question put and passed.

The resolutions were reported to the House and adopted, and leave was given to bring in a Bill founded upon them.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 2.

This Bill, introduced by the PREMIER, was read a first and second time, and the House went into Committee to consider it in detail.

On the motion that the preamble be postponed,

Mr. DICKSON said he regretted that the Bill itself could not also be postponed until the Government had given effect to the hopes they had encouraged amongst hon. members and the country in general regarding the construction of branch railways. The present session was closing very much as it commenced. The hopes of a very large section of the community had been centred in the construction of branch lines of railway, and yet the session was about to close without those hopes, which had been encouraged by the Government, resulting in anything more substantial. It was grievously disappointing to find that, notwithstanding the representations of the Government in this matter, no attempt had been made to give effect to the votes of the

House on the Loan Estimates. He would take advantage of this opportunity—the last he would have during the present session—to express his regret, and have it placed on record, that, while the Government had had a compact majority to carry out such measures as they conceived to be for the benefit of the country, they had not used that majority to carry out a measure in which the populous districts of the country were more particularly interested—namely, the construction of branch lines of railway. Had the Government chosen, they might have prolonged the session other four or five weeks, which would have afforded them sufficient time to prove the sincerity of their professions by laying on the table plans and sections of some, at least, of the branch railways sanctioned. The public had always considered the Government, in this part of their policy, to be insincere, and he regretted that they had not cleared away all grounds for that accusation by satisfying the public requirements on this question. But no attempt to move in this direction had been made; and although the Government had shown almost undue haste to push on the construction of the trunk lines of railway, they had made no attempt whatever even to commence the construction of those branch lines of railway on which the people had more particularly set their hearts. He was well aware that this expostulation would have no effect upon the Government; at the same time he could not as a member of the House allow the session to close without telling them that their remissness in this matter laid them open to the charge of insincerity—an accusation which had been made against them throughout the session from the Opposition side of the House.

The PREMIER said the effect of the hon. member's expostulation upon him was one of surprise that it should have been made. The hon. member asked why the Government had not used their majority to obtain an approval of the branch lines; but the hon. member ought to know that a majority, however great and compact, could not make surveys, and until the Government were satisfied on that point it would be contrary to common-sense to ask the House for its approval of unsurveyed lines. They did not ask for such approval because the plans and sections of the branch railways were not ready, and because he did not see the wisdom of accepting the advice of the hon. member and protracting the session for that purpose. Supposing the House sat one, two, or three months longer, it would not forward the construction of the branch lines, for until he got the money he should not spend it on branch or other lines.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that, in spite of what had fallen from the Premier, there was something in what had fallen from the hon. member (Mr. Dickson). The people

in the settled districts were looking out anxiously for these branch railways, and, although he would not harp on that string very much, he knew that hundreds of people were disappointed, and a vast deal more disappointment would be felt unless some of those branch lines were commenced early. Were they to understand from the Premier that no public works were to go on in the colony until the House met again? If so, the colony would drift into a still more dreadful state than it was in at present. If the House would begin the construction of one or more of those branch lines as soon as they were able, even if the House was not in session, the House would be willing to approve of their action.

The PREMIER said the Government had no intention of stopping the public works of the colony, which, on the contrary, would be proceeded with more regularly than before. As to the branch lines of railway, the Government could not proceed with them until the sanction of the House had been obtained. He could assure the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) that there would be abundance of work—as much, in fact, as the resources of the colony would allow. At the same time, they could not be pushed to extremes, so as to run the finances of the colony into danger.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the statement of the Premier would be a great consolation to himself and many others. At the same time, he could not see why some at least of the branch lines could not be gone on with.

Mr. DICKSON said he was not so easily satisfied as the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan). The Premier was correct in saying that he could not commence the construction of these lines until he obtained the sanction of the House; but there was no reason why such sanction should not have been obtained before the prorogation of Parliament. At the present time, owing to the comparative cheapness of labour, the works could be proceeded with economically, and the population of the colony would be largely increased. It was the duty of the Government to see that these lines of railway, and other public works on which the hearts of the majority of the people had been set, were started with as little delay as possible; and that delay might have been avoided by the House sanctioning such lines and surveys as were most forward, followed by instructions being given by the Colonial Treasurer for an early sale of an instalment of his loan, and proceeding with the construction of such sections as were sanctioned and ready immediately thereafter. He was glad to have elicited from the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) a certain expression of approval of the action he had taken, for that hon. member, in common with others

representing popular constituencies, must be interested in seeing public expectation on this point largely satisfied—which would be effected if it could be inferred from the action of the Government that there was a certainty of the branch lines being proceeded with as soon as the Colonial Treasurer had funds at his disposal.

Mr. HENDREN said he was disappointed, with regard to the Fassifern line, that all the surveys of that line—of which there were three or four—had not been laid on the table at the same time, so that hon. members might have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the one which would be most advantageous to the people. He was also disappointed because the approval of that and one or two other plans and sections had not been moved for. That seemed to show that there was no intention on the part of the Government to make those branch lines for which money had been voted on the Loan Estimates. It was said early in the session that the Government did not intend during this session to construct branch lines in the coast districts, but only on the Darling Downs. But that was just before the election for Darling Downs, and he trusted that all the circumstances connected with that affair were forgotten. It was only fair that the settled districts should have a proportion of the expenditure of the money voted for railways, as well as the interior of the colony, even if only to prevent the people leaving the colony, as they had been doing in such large numbers for some time past. Labour was now plentiful, while the roads were in such a state that the farmers in the outlying districts could not get to market with their produce. He trusted steps would be taken to construct branch lines simultaneously with trunk lines, and that an early start would be made with the Fassifern Railway, or any other that might be in a forward state.

Mr. McLEAN said the Government had nearly a million of money available for public works, and if they had any intention of pushing them on with vigour, now was the time to do it, without waiting for the floating of the loan. Had that been done some months ago—and it was within the power of the Government to do it—a good deal of the depression from which the colony had suffered might have been avoided. He would ask the Minister for Works what his intentions were with reference to the repairs of the main roads of the colony, pending the Divisional Boards Bill coming into operation. If the main roads were put into a fit state now, or as soon as the fine weather came, there would be less difficulty in keeping them so. To call for tenders for such repairs at the present time seemed to be trifling with the people in the country districts. At present, the main roads were

in a deplorable state, but there was every reason to hope that the wet weather would soon take up. He trusted that one portion of the vigorous public works policy of the Government would be to put the main roads into repair as quickly as the present unpropitious season would allow.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said that since tenders had been called the Government had been continuing to keep both branch and main roads in repair, as far as their means would allow. Those tenders found to be unsuitable would be set aside; but he was happy to be able to inform the Committee that several tenders had been as favourable as could be expected under the circumstances, and would be accepted. If the Government were to wait until all the roads were macadamised before abolishing the present system, they would wait for ever. The change must be made, and the present was considered a suitable time. The hon. member (Mr. McLean) had blamed the Government for not carrying on the public works with sufficient vigour; but he might inform the Committee that since the present Government had taken office they had entered into contracts for the construction of nearly a hundred miles of railways. It was simply impossible to go on with other railways, because there were no plans ready. The hon. member for Enoggera must know very well why plans had not been brought forward. He knew that there was only one plan of the Sandgate line ready, and that he would rather wait for further information with respect to other routes before any plans were adopted. The plan of the Fassifern Railway had been laid on the table of the House, and he (Mr. Macrossan) had intended to move its adoption. Last Saturday, however, he went from Ipswich to Harrisville, and examined the route, in company with the Engineer and the Commissioner for Railways; and he was convinced that it would be a blunder to carry the line through so much private property while there was a good level road, one and a-half chain wide, for three parts of the distance along which it could be carried. He should not be guilty of such a blunder. If it would be necessary to buy nearly every inch of the land for a distance of thirty miles, the Government would not be justified in asking the House to adopt such a plan; and he would not ask the House to sanction plans until that question was settled. He would have been very glad to have carried the Railway and Tramway Bill through the House, but he doubted the ability of the Government to do so in the face of the opposition of the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said as that Bill was a very short one and of immense necessity for the making of cheap branch lines, per-

haps the leader of the Opposition would assist in carrying it. If the Opposition went into the work heartily, the Bill could be passed through that evening.

Mr. HENDREN said the Minister for Works now stated that the adoption of the plan of the Fassifern line was dependent on the passing of another Bill; but for what purpose were the plans laid on the table if they were not to be adopted? This was not the only branch line—there was that to Mount Esk; but anyone who travelled over the road would know the project was impracticable. He was afraid the excuse of the Minister for Works was a very lame one, but he agreed with the hon. member for Stanley in hoping the Bill referred to would be passed. Any objections with regard to the rights of property could be easily amended in committee; and good service might be done for the country, especially the settled districts.

Mr. RUTLEDGE was rather surprised at the reason assigned by the Minister for Works for not going on with the Bill, but cordially appreciated the motives of the hon. gentleman. They presented a marked contrast to the general policy of the Government during the present session. He had heard the Government assert that they would carry their measures in spite of all opposition; and it seemed rather singular to find that a Bill was to be shelved because it was unpalatable to the leader of the Opposition. He wanted a better reason. The Minister for Works was an exception, to a great extent, to his colleagues in regard to their despotic manner of dealing with objections; but no doubt, if his colleagues desired to go on, he would sink his individual preferences, and, the leader of the Opposition notwithstanding, the Bill would be carried through in one day. Both sides of the House could bring their united intelligence to bear upon the Bill, and make better provision in one or two particulars where private property was likely to be interfered with.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH said the last excuse with respect to branch lines was the worst of all. From the beginning of the session he had maintained that the Government were not sincere, and that their branch-line policy was an afterthought, the carrying out of which they had effectually put out of their power by dismissing the surveyors engaged in surveys. Now, when the hon. member for Stanley—who easily believed what he was told—complained of not being treated exactly fairly, the Premier said it was no use asking the House to sanction plans because there would be no money for the construction of the lines until the loan was floated. But exactly the same argument would apply to the trunk lines, and it was evident that that was a mere pretext. The Minister for

Works made another excuse that he was precluded from asking the sanction of Parliament to the plans of the Fassifern line in consequence of the objection that had been taken to that little Bill of his.

The PREMIER: He said nothing of the sort.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to know what he did say.

The PREMIER: He said he would not.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the fair inference was that if the Bill had been passed the sanction of Parliament would have been asked. On looking at the plan of the Fassifern Railway, however, he found that it had not been surveyed along the road at all, but through private property all the way. If he intended to make the line along the road, why did he did not think of it before last week? If the Bill became law, there were no such plans ready to lay upon the table. The real fact was, disguise it as they might, the Government had never intended to make the line until a few weeks ago. They had discontinued all the necessary steps, stopped all surveys until near the end of session, when they came forward with a rush, to satisfy their friends who were not content with the policy the Government had announced. Finding that would not do they brought forward a little Bill, and said that was the difficulty. If the Government had been sincere in their endeavours to make lines along the roads, they would have brought forward their Bill at a period of the session when it would have received fair consideration, and they would have caused surveys to be made along the roads, so that if the present Bill passed they could have been made use of. The whole affair showed that the Government did not intend to make branch lines, and all the pretexts and all the speeches in the world would not alter that fact.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman assumed, though he had no right to assume, that the Government had not carried out their intentions. They had done all they intended to do, in spite of the repeated charges of the hon. gentleman that the Government had no intention of going on with branch lines because they had knocked off surveyors. The work of those surveyors would not forward the approval of plans and sections a bit, because they were all engaged on works which had been already sanctioned. The hon. member for North Brisbane had put a wrong construction on the action of the Minister for Works, who had acted as a practical Minister. He could not know that there was a possibility or probability of a first-rate line being made along the road until he had seen the ground. Until last week he had not had an opportunity, but as soon as he saw the ground he made up his mind to submit a plan of a survey along the road.

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He (Mr. McIlwraith) believed the Government had the power to make a line of railway along the road now, just as much as they would have under the proposed Bill—with the amendment proposed by the hon. member for North Brisbane, at all events.

Mr. REA said the transcendental engineering capacity of the Minister for Works appeared to be such that he ought to have been sent to investigate the whole of the lines all over the colony, as professional men did not seem to know their duties. There was a gentleman whose business, he believed, was to go over country to point out where roads were to be made; and he would recommend the appointment of a non-professional gentleman to show where railways were to be made. If the opponents of the Government had made the statement that all surveys had been made in the dark by men who knew nothing about their functions, the House might find some means of getting a clearer insight into the wants of the country. Had any attention been paid by the Minister for Works to the roads in the Central district?

Mr. HENDREN said the statement of the Premier that the Minister for Works could not judge the road before he had seen it went for very little, because the Minister had been over the road many times and had frequent opportunities of seeing the nature of that part of the country. It was rather late in the day now to say that a line should be surveyed along the road, and there was evidently no intention of expediting the construction of the branch lines.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he always referred to the Mount Esk line at the same time as the Fassifern, and the hon. member (Mr. Hendren) might have paid him a similar compliment. He should not be satisfied if one line were carried out without the other. The hon. member for North Brisbane had most illogically arrived at the conclusion that he (Mr. O'Sullivan) was thoroughly satisfied with the explanation of Ministers, and that Ministers were perfectly insincere and had no intention of making branch lines until a few weeks ago. But it was a fact that the Ministry would not have received the support they had had if it not been known that branch railways would be introduced. He could assure the hon. member for Bundamba that his (Mr. Hendren's) advocacy in the House had not a shadow of weight in causing the Fassifern line to be carried out. Hon. members on this (Ministerial) side of the House had been the means of getting the Fassifern and the Mount Esk lines voted, and if those lines had not been promised they would not have been on this side of the House.

Mr. HENDREN said the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan), as a legislator since

Separation, might perhaps be allowed to adopt a patronising air. The hon. member told the House that it was through his influence and to gain his vote that all the branch lines were introduced. He (Mr. Hendren) knew he was comparatively a cypher, but he hoped and believed that when he had had as many years' experience as the hon. member he should possess as much influence upon either side as the hon. member did, and, may be, a little more.

Mr. McLEAN said the present Administration might be called a Government of afterthoughts. When the Divisional Boards Bill was before the House the Premier had an afterthought, and submitted on the Loan Estimates an item of £100,000 to bring it into operation. Notwithstanding the profession of the hon. member for Stanley, it was perfectly well known that the question of branch lines was an afterthought of the present Government. Of course, it was also known that the Fassifern line was not gained through the advocacy of the hon. member for Bundamba, but to secure the support of the hon. member for Fassifern. It was customary when plans were laid upon the table of the House for notice of motion for their adoption to be given, and he could not see why that course had not been followed in the case of the Fassifern line. The plans were on the table several days before the fortunate, or unfortunate, visit of the Minister for Works. He questioned the wisdom of making railways along the roads, and considered that, at all events, it should be tried first on a small scale. Had the Government been sincere in connection with their branch-line system they might have tabled a resolution to adopt the first seventeen miles of the Fassifern line, and as soon as the loan was floated construction might have been commenced.

Mr. MACFARLANE (Ipswich) said there was a good deal of truth in what the hon. member for Stanley said. It was on account of that hon. member and his colleague, and perhaps the hon. member for Fassifern, that those branch lines appeared on the paper. He had been twitted several times with the fact that those lines had been put on for the purpose of satisfying the demands of the people, but with no intention of making them; but he had always placed some faith in the statement of the Government. Now it appeared that the people were right and he was wrong. If the hon. member for Stanley was true to himself and his constituents he would press the matter. He hoped the matter would not rest where it stood, but that it would be pressed on the Ministry. There were a great many people idle in the West Moreton district. In the other colonies efforts were being made to give work to people who were out

of employment; but here, instead of such efforts being made, the people were allowed to leave the colony. The House ought to do its best to get the railway passed this session.

Question put and passed.

The Bill having been passed without amendment,

The PREMIER moved that the Chairman leave the Chair and report the Bill without amendment.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that before the last part of the financial business of the session was disposed of, he would ask what the Premier proposed to do during the recess with regard to the floating of the loan? Was he going home to assist in the floating of the loan?

The PREMIER said he had contemplated making a statement of his intentions before the close of the session, but might intimate now that he intended going home during the recess, and would make arrangements while there for the floating of the loan. Other objects of interest to the colony would exercise his attention, especially matters connected with immigration.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether any other matters of public importance would engage the hon. gentleman's attention? He would like to know whether the hon. gentleman's trip had anything to do with the re-establishment of immigration?

The PREMIER said that an examination into the subject of immigration was one of the objects of his visit.

Question put and passed, and the third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

HANSARD.

The SPEAKER read a message from the Legislative Council with reference to the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the issue of *Hansard*.

The PREMIER moved that the message be taken into consideration at a later hour of the day.

Mr. GROOM said he apprehended that another opportunity would not be afforded to hon. members to speak upon this matter. He had seen the report, and had read it through carefully, and would now take the opportunity as one interested in the matter to repudiate some portion of the evidence which was recorded in it, and which had been evidently extracted under a species of pressure such as he had never seen before allowed by any select committee. It was represented that newspaper proprietors who received *Hansard* were subsidised by the Government. These were the words put into the witness's mouth, and they were objected to by the Postmaster-General as unfair to use. However low hon. members might consider the price—3s. 3d. per 100

copies—at which *Hansard* was supplied to newspapers. Hon. members must remember that it had to be regularly paid by the newspaper proprietors, no matter whether the contents of *Hansard* were important or what the size was. If there was any obligation at all it was due to the newspapers, who took a great amount of trouble to circulate *Hansard*. They paid 3s. 3d. per 100, and the amount they charged to their subscribers scarcely more than paid for the delivery-boys; and, so far from newspaper proprietors being liable to the charge of being subsidised, it was something else. As a member of the House who had seen *Hansard* from the beginning, he would take the opportunity, also, of saying that he regarded it as one of the most valuable publications in the colony, and that he should be sorry to see any steps taken elsewhere that would have the effect of retarding its efficiency. All members of the House would bear testimony to the energy, care, and attention which had been bestowed by Mr. Senior in connection with the general get-up of *Hansard*; and the staff of reporters which he was bringing around him, together with his cadets, were deserving of all credit, and it would be exceedingly injudicious if they were to disturb the present arrangements for some new-fangled notions started in another place. He also regretted exceedingly that a document was allowed to come in as evidence which cast disparaging reflections upon Mr. Senior and the Government Printer. Inuendoes were thrown out which were entirely undeserved. *Hansard* was brought out in the most creditable way, and great credit was due to Mr. Senior and the Government Printer for the admirable manner in which the entire arrangements had been carried out from the very first. It was only fair that this should be said, because he presumed that no action would be taken in regard to the documents sent down from the other House. There was one matter in regard to which the Premier might inform the House whether action would be taken. Supposing the report came from another place, and no action was taken upon it, it was anticipated that other action would be taken entirely outside the Assembly. He found this paragraph in the report:—

“That the President be authorised to confer with the Honourable The Speaker and the Premier, or some other member of the Government, with the object of making the most suitable arrangements for duly carrying out the wishes of your Honourable House.”

There was a direct challenge thrown out here, and he would like to know whether it was to be accepted or not? If the Assembly declined to take action upon the report, and he presumed none would be taken;—then, was other action to be taken entirely outside this Chamber? He had

made these remarks as it might be the last opportunity that hon. members might have of speaking upon the document. He was sorry that hon. members generally had not seen it, because he was convinced many members would be inclined to apply stronger terms than he had done of the character of some of the evidence given, and of the unjust remarks made upon Mr. Senior and the Government Printer, which were wholly unwarrantable and unjustifiable, and came with exceedingly bad taste from the gentleman who made them. What that gentleman's intentions were he did not know; but he would take the opportunity of again bearing testimony to the efficient way in which *Hansard* had been conducted, and of renewing a hope that no alteration of the existing arrangements would be made during the recess. *Hansard* was doing a considerable amount of good, and was supplying the public with information which could not be supplied in any other way. It was well remarked by the member for Mitchell recently that it would be unfortunate if they were dependent upon the Brisbane daily papers for their reports of the proceedings of Parliament. In what position would the country journals be? Unless they sent down their own reporters it would be absolutely impossible to get a clear knowledge of the proceedings; but, by having *Hansard*, the public were placed in possession of the most reliable information that could not be doubted. Under any circumstances, it would be right of this House to speak in good terms of *Hansard*, and to deprecate any interference with the existing arrangements.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he also should take the opportunity of saying a few words upon the report, and of adding a few more when the report was adopted, if any member should have the hardihood to make such a proposition. He would point out, in the first place, that a schoolmaster should be sent to the Upper House, for the first paragraph indicated that a new system of grammatical expression had been adopted there.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked the Speaker whether it was competent to discuss a matter before the time appointed by the House for its discussion?

The SPEAKER said the member for Too-woomba had based his claim for speaking on the probability that this would be the only opportunity he would have for speaking upon the subject, and, the House appearing to assent, he (the Speaker) did not interfere.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he also would take the same view. No one could tell what was going to happen, and, as he might not have another opportunity of discussing the report, he would take advantage of the present, and if he was spared he would take another opportunity of dealing with

it. He would take the first paragraph of the report, and commend its grammar to the attention of hon. members. It stated:—

“Your committee have to report, as the evidence they submit shows, that they have availed themselves of the best information at their disposal, given to the duty entrusted to them much consideration, and now beg to offer the following observations and recommendations to your Honourable House”—

That was the first sentence, and having read it he need not go further. He wished, however, to point out some statements which were made by Mr. Byrne, the reporter of the Upper House. He complained that he had not the opportunity of giving his evidence *in propria voce* because there was no reporter present, a statement which was afterwards clearly proved to be not true by the esteemed head of their *Hansard* staff. The fourth paragraph of Mr. Byrne's memorandum said—

“It is a well-grounded objection that the Upper House have been made to play a subordinate part in so far as regards their appearance through the newspaper Press.”

Whether it was an unmixed evil to play a subordinate part in the newspaper Press was a matter of opinion. He (Mr. Morehead) had certainly not played a subordinate part so far; he had been, on the contrary, somewhat of a leading actor. He did not regret this. It was possibly better to occupy a leading than a subordinate part by being a member of the Upper House; but whether it was the duty of Mr. Laurence J. Byrne to tell this to the members of the Upper House was for themselves to consider. Paragraph eleven of the “Memorandum” read thus:—

“The Council reports must be supervised with attention”—

That was true—

“which is not quite practicable by anyone who cannot be present in the House during the whole proceedings. As a rule, if I were absent from the gallery, to write out a ‘turn,’ or for any other business that would withdraw my attention from the course of the debates, I could not answer nor be held responsible for the absolutely faithful work of other reporters. The Principal Shorthand Writer of the Legislative Assembly could not discharge the function here desiderated for the Council, consistently with his present duties to the other House, ‘because,’ to use his own words, ‘of the obvious difficulty of being in two places at once,’ and the implied necessity for him to have the appointment of a deputy.”

This also was true, though it was on record that an Irishman—Sir Boyle Roche—had once got over the difficulty of being in two places at once. To the wind-up of the paragraph he wished particularly to direct the attention of the House—

“The Council do not choose to accept things on trust or at second-hand.”

This was of immense importance;—the Council—that was to say, Laurence J. Byrne—would not accept things on trust or at second-hand! Mr. Byrne by a side-stroke also attempted to cast an imputation upon one of their best reporters—or he would rather say upon one who was equal to their best reporters, for they were all good. Paragraph 21 showed that the writer was evidently well able to blow his own trumpet. He said—

“I have faith in a method which has proved eminently successful in England, and in two colonies in which I have lived. It is a further recommendation that the system of shorthand which I write is the most approved extant, having a literature of its own,”

The Upper House also appeared to have a literature of its own,

“including many current publications; and it is the same as Mr. Senior uses and teaches his cadet class, and as the best members of his staff use. It is needless to go into further details in connection with my present suggestion.”

The insinuation in this paragraph was evident, for, as a matter of fact, one member of the staff—Mr. Jones—whom he took to be as good a reporter as any—did not use that particular mode of shorthand. Why should Mr. Byrne, knowing this, by this side-stroke insinuate that Mr. Jones, because he used a different mode of shorthand, was therefore not so good a reporter as himself? For his own part he had had experience of both of them, and he believed that Mr. Jones was the far better reporter of the two. At any rate, any hon. members who read the memorandum of Mr. Laurence J. Byrne, and the replies written by Mr. Senior and Mr. Beal, would see that the statements made by the former, in many instances, were simply not borne out by facts; and yet they were asked by the Upper House to utterly disorganise their excellent reporting staff in order to do, what?—in order to give Mr. Byrne employment. It was patent to every member of the House how the thing had come about. The hon. member who lately represented the Warrego in that House, and who now occupied a dignified position of ease—he was not sure, either, that it was a position of ease—in the other Chamber, took very good care, when he occupied the Speaker's chair, to get rid of Mr. Byrne by sending him to the other House; but when the hon. gentleman got there himself he in the same way wanted to shift Mr. Byrne back again. Mr. Byrne was as restless as the hon. member himself, and, the hon. member not liking it, he wanted to send him back to the Assembly. But the Assembly did not believe in these second-hand articles. They had very good material of their own, and this report should certainly not be adopted as it stood. They did not want Mr. Laurence J. Byrne there to undo all the good work that had been done by Mr.

Senior. Mr. Senior, as he put it in his statement, had a loyal and efficient staff; and they did not want Mr. Byrne to come down from that—he believed the *Courier* once called it “limbo” (he presumed he was right in quoting from the *Courier*)—at any rate, that place from which no one ever returned except Mr. Laurence J. Byrne. But the Assembly would not let him;—let him be kept where he was. They did not want any gentleman to superintend select committees and interfere with the present efficient staff. They did not want such an *imperium in imperio*. They did very well as they were, both in respect to the reporting in the House and select committees; and he was sure every member who had attended select committees would bear him out in that. Why should they not let well alone? Why should they have this good system of things broken into by the intrusion of a man who was obnoxious, not only to many members of the House, but he believed to the reporting staff themselves? He held, therefore, that the House should not fall in with the views expressed in this report. He held, further, that if those gentlemen wanted to make a Pandemonium for themselves, let them do it. If they wanted attention called to them, and leading articles in leading papers devoted to them, let them have a daily *Hansard* of their own. It would be interesting to see whether life could be put into that almost inert mass which they saw in another place; it would be interesting to see whether the fact of a slight inoculation of *Hansard* would vivify it. He was sure they would all look upon the experiment with interest; but the staff of the Assembly should not be interfered with. Because the Upper House wished to be galvanised into life was no reason why the Assembly staff should be interfered with. They would have to trouble Mr. Senior again to break in another staff; and why should the present staff be broken up? He hoped the House would not consent to it.

Question put and passed.

POLICE MAGISTRATE, THORNBOROUGH.

Mr. ARCHER brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Police Magistrate, Thornborough, which was ordered to be printed.

ORDERS DISCHARGED.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the following Orders of the Day were discharged from the paper:—

Railway and Tramways Bill, to be considered in Committee; Criminals Expulsion Bill, to be considered in Committee; Mines Regulation Bill, to be considered in Committee; Sale of Food and Drugs Bill, second reading; Stamp

Duties Act of 1866 Amendment Bill, second reading; Financial Districts Bill, second reading; Supply, Resumption of Committee.

Mr. McLEAN said he was sorry the Government had not found time to go on with the Sale of Food and Drugs Bill, which he considered a very important measure; and he would take that opportunity of asking the Premier if it was his intention to proceed with the Bill next session?

The PREMIER said he, too, considered the Bill an important one, and want of time alone had prevented it being proceeded with. It would be gone on with next session.

ORPHANAGES BILL—COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

The House having resolved itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the amendments of the Legislative Council in this Bill,

The amendments in clause 5 were agreed to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Council's amendment in clause 6 be disagreed to. He said that the effect of the amendment was that any sum voted by Parliament must be immediately turned over to the managers of an orphanage. That was not the system which had been in use or which he wished to see. If the clause were allowed to pass as amended, the Ministry would have no power in the matter; all they could say was, that when the money was voted it would be turned over to the manager or managers of the orphanage.

Amendment disagreed to.

On new clause 7—Destitute children may be admitted to orphanages—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that it be disagreed to, because the original clause detailed much better what an orphan was. Whoever inserted it in the other House did not know much about the intention of the Bill. He also had particular objection to new sub-clause for providing for any child born of an aboriginal or half-caste mother, as by that sub-clause children would come within the Bill which were never intended. As there was no good purpose to be gained by the amendments—and which would, in fact, stultify the object of the Bill—he moved they be disagreed to.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that he did not agree with the amendment made by the other House, although the clause required amendment. Had the original clause been proposed by anyone else than the Colonial Secretary, it would have been, to use a favourite expression of his own, described as an Algerine clause. He denied the right of the State to intervene except in cases of cruelty or desertion which could be proved. It seemed very hard to empower the State

to say to a parent that as he could not support his child it must be taken away from him. A greater injustice could not be done to the parent, and possibly to the child.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that as a matter of practice the State never interfered between parent and child, but if children were found starving it would be the duty of the State to take them away under certain circumstances. He would point out that they could not amend the original clause: they must either agree or disagree with Council's amendments in it.

Mr. KINGSFORD thought that some portions of the Council's amendments might be retained with advantage. In the original clause no distinction was made between orphans. There were fatherless orphans and motherless orphans; but, according to the clause, a child must have lost both parents before it came under the definition of "orphan."

Mr. GROOM said he agreed with the Colonial Secretary that the original clause was the better of the two. He would give an illustration in point: To-day, as he and the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Macfarlane) came down by train, they dropped across an unfortunate man coming to the city with three little children, the eldest not more than six years of age, trying to get them into the Orphanage; the man said their mother had deserted them fifteen months ago, and he was engaged on the Stanthorpe Railway. Under the clause as amended by the Council those children could not be admitted into the Orphanage. Another similar case occurred a few days ago at Toowoomba, where the two children of a woman who had been sent to prison as a drunk and disorderly person were sent down to the Orphanage. That could not have been done under the clause as amended, and the children would have had to go to prison with their mother—nothing being known of the father. Under circumstances of that kind a great deal must be left to the discretion of the Minister in charge of the department.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that what he had taken exception to was, the power of the State to take away children when both parents were living because they were not in a position to support them.

Mr. MACFARLANE (Ipswich) said it would be very hard indeed if the State had power to do anything of the kind. Parents might be very poor and yet quite willing to support their children. He thought the first two or three of the sub-sections in the clause as amended by the Council might be agreed to with advantage.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the difficulty with the Government was, not to see how many children they could get into the orphanages, but to resist applications for admis-

sion. The orphans defined in the Council's amended clause were the victims of crime, and might fairly come under the Reformatory Schools Act. Those orphans whom the original clause provided for were the victims of misfortune, and it would be as well, perhaps, if they were kept separate.

Question put and passed.

The Council's amendment in clause 8 was disagreed to, the original wording being considered better and simpler.

On clause 12—If weekly sums not paid parent may be apprehended—

Mr. GRIFFITH suggested that the word "step-parent" should be inserted, and the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. GROOM said that clauses of this kind should be made as stringent as possible.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said a parent might have moved only a short distance, and he thought a few words should be inserted to make the clause less oppressive.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the clause wanted amending, as any man who changed his residence would be at the mercy of the Colonial Secretary or whoever else might be superintending the Bill.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that parents who left their children to the care of the State should be called upon to say where they could be found.

Mr. MOREHEAD said people of the character contemplated by the clause did not generally have fixed abodes, and the clause was better as it stood originally.

Mr. ARCHER said the clause referred to people who were able to contribute towards the support of their children, and not to totally destitute people. He considered the amendment was an improvement.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he disapproved of the amendment, and he considered the Bill was not wanted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said if the hon. member had been acquainted with the working of the old Act he would know that there was no Bill more badly wanted. It had been almost impossible to get parents to contribute towards the support of their children; but he hoped with the new Act, and an inspector to devote the whole of his time to the subject, they would be more successful in future.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Mr. Perkins) said that, according to his experience, when an order was made against a man it was necessary to look very sharply after him. He saw no oppression about the clause. When a man was once brought under the heel of authority he made every effort to evade the consequences.

Mr. PATERSON said he should support the clause as amended in the Upper House. In some cases parents having large deposits in the Savings Bank had removed in order to avoid paying. He saw no hardship in the provision.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

A new clause, making an undertaking to pay equivalent to an order by justices, was agreed to with verbal amendments moved by Mr. GRIFFITH.

Amendments in clauses 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, agreed to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the amendments to clause 22—Inmates may be allowed to lodge out of the orphanages—be disagreed to. They cast a great slur upon a respectable class of the community, for they provided that orphans should not be allowed to lodge with holders of publicans' licenses or keepers of boarding-houses. Among the holders of publicans' licenses there were as many respectable people as among any other class. It must be left to the discretion of the Minister to see that the children were not allowed to go to people of bad character.

Mr. GROOM quite agreed with the views of the Colonial Secretary. A most invidious distinction had been made by the amendment. In the only case of cruelty to orphans which had come into their courts of justice the offender was not a publican or a boarding-house keeper, but the occupant of a private house. A dead set appeared to have been made against publicans in the legislation of this session; and they were almost a century behind the other colonies in the invidious distinctions that they were making.

Mr. MACFARLANE (Ipswich) agreed with what had been said in reference to the distinctions made with regard to publicans. It was too bad that publicans should be debarred from having the care of orphans. If the amendment had applied to the public-house itself, it would have been good, but many publicans lived out of their public-houses, and were entitled to have the care of orphan children if they thought fit. At the same time, he thought the intention of the Council was very good. Boarding-houses, he took it, were excepted under the idea that there would be so much work to do that the orphans would not be properly trained.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that in clause 23—Inmates may be placed out to board—another fearful and wonderful amendment had been made by the Council. He could not understand why the person named in the license should be struck out. An invidious distinction was again made here, and he would move that the amendment be disagreed to.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House resumed, and the Chairman reported that the Committee had disagreed to some of the Legislative Council's amendments, and agreed to others. The report having been adopted, the Bill was returned to the Council by message in the usual form.

PETITION OF N. BARTLEY.

Mr. DICKSON, as chairman, brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the allegations contained in the petition of Nehemiah Bartley, which was ordered to be printed.

EXPORT DUTY ON TIMBER.

Mr. HENDREN, in moving—

That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when an Export Duty should be imposed on all Timbers leaving the shores of Queensland; and that the Executive have the concurrence of this House to take immediate steps to give effect to this resolution—

said that some days since he directed attention of the House to the wholesale exportation of the valuable timbers of this colony, and he then pointedly asked was it the intention of the Government to impose an export duty upon such timbers. To that question he had received no reply whatever, and consequently he placed this motion on the paper. When it was called on this evening he was rather surprised to hear the Minister for Lands cry out, "Not formal;" and with what object he did so he (Mr. Hendren) could not tell. They were continually hearing that the Treasury was empty—that they wanted more revenue; and this was a laudable and suitable means of increasing the revenue. He was of opinion that some steps should be taken to prevent the valuable timbers of the colony being exported to other countries without any benefit being derived by the colony from such exportation. As he had previously remarked, the cost of police protection to timber-getters in the Northern districts was not covered by the license fees they paid; and as this was a suitable means of enriching the revenue to a certain extent, he considered he had done his duty in bringing it forward, and he should leave the onus upon those hon. members who might think proper to oppose it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he doubted whether the motion could be put, as it was an interference by a private member with the prerogative of the Executive. If a message came down from the Governor it would be different; but, as the motion was worded, he did not think it could be introduced by a private member.

Mr. GROOM said he could hardly believe the hon. gentleman was sincere in his objection, as all the motion asked for was an expression of opinion from the House. No hon. member could initiate taxation; it must be done by message from the Crown; but this was merely an expression of opinion, although it might not be worded in the exact phraseology in which motions of the kind were usually worded. There was no doubt that the question of the denudation of our forests was one deserving the serious con-

sideration of the House. It was one which had not only attracted attention here, but had also been seriously considered in the various Australian colonies. Hon. members had had an opportunity of reading a few days ago, and he dared say with some gratification, a report of a vessel leaving the port of Cairns with 300,000 feet of cedar for England, and if our timber could be utilised in that way the colony should certainly derive some revenue from it. They should not allow timber-getters, who only paid about £4 a-year, to send away thousands of pounds' worth of splendid timber every year without the colony receiving some return. It was too near the end of the session to deal with such an important subject; but there was no doubt that some time or other the House would have to consider it, and perhaps the Treasurer might look upon it as one of the means by which a moderate revenue might be raised. The hon. member for Bundamba had hinted that it was a question which must sooner or later engage the attention of the House; and, so far from its being blocked in the way suggested by the Colonial Secretary, he (Mr. Groom) considered the House might now express an opinion on it. If the Speaker ruled against the motion hon. members would be debarred from raising any questions which might refer to the tariff. It was, as he had said, too large a question to be thoroughly considered at the tail end of a session; but it was, no doubt, one that must sooner or later engage the attention of Parliament.

The SPEAKER said that, with regard to the point of order raised, he considered the hon. member in charge of the motion had merely brought forward what was an abstract question for the consideration of the House.

The PREMIER said that the point of order was, that the latter part of the motion asked that the Government should take immediate steps to give effect to the resolution, which they could not do, as it was only the Governor in Council who could take any action of that kind, and then only by message. The real meaning of the latter part of the motion was that the House should sanction the Executive to impose an export duty—that was the meaning, if there was any meaning at all. He was perfectly prepared to hear a discussion on the abstract question of putting a duty on timber, but that was a different thing altogether to asking the Executive to take action, which they could not do. It was absurd to bring forward such a question when the session was nearly at a close, as, if the hon. member could move his motion in its present form, then any member might raise the question of imposing an export duty on gold.

Mr. REA said the Government could not say that their attention had not been drawn to the question before, as some months ago

a speech had been delivered by the hon. member for Wide Bay (Mr. Price), the whole burden of which was the export of cedar without receiving any revenue from it.

Mr. GROOM said that, speaking on the point of order, there was some force in the objection taken by the Premier, as the latter part of the resolution asked the Government to take immediate action, which they had no power to do. That difficulty, however, might be got over by the hon. member for Bundamba omitting the second portion of the motion.

Mr. McLEAN thought the hon. member in charge of the resolution might state to the House what his intention was—whether, if the resolution were passed, the Government were to impose a tax at once, or whether, if passed, the Government were to bring in a Bill to give effect to the resolution.

The SPEAKER said that the House could not decide upon the question without knowing what the meaning of the mover of the motion was. The resolution was no doubt loosely worded. It appeared to him to be an abstract question, and the interpretation he put upon it was, that the House should pledge itself to support the Ministry if they introduced a measure dealing with the matter.

Mr. MESTON took it that the meaning of the mover of the resolution was, that if it was passed the Government should impose an export duty on all timbers, whether in the log or otherwise, leaving the colony. He (Mr. Meston) considered it was a most important question, and one that had been too long overlooked. He had referred to it first, when moving the Address in Reply last session, as there was no doubt that there had been a wholesale destruction of the most valuable timbers of the colony going on for years past, especially of cedar and other woods valuable for cabinet-work, and which were most difficult to restore. It was not so long since the Tweed River and Richmond districts were full of cedar, where now there was hardly any to be found; and when he was last in that district he noticed that on the banks of the Brunswick there were millions of feet of cedar in squared logs lying rotting, owing to the timber-getters not having had favourable opportunities of removing it. It was a question of a few years only before all the cedar would be destroyed, not only in those districts he referred to, but also on the Daintree and Mossman rivers in the north. The destruction of their forests should also be considered from an hygienic point of view, as he knew places where the climate had been entirely changed from that cause. The principle of a prophet having no honour in his own country might be applied to their timbers, as, whilst they were doing their best to get rid of their cucalypti, in

America they were doing all they could to propagate those trees. On all timber there should be an export duty, but more especially on cedar and those timbers which were so valuable to the cabinet-maker, and which, at the present rate of destruction, were likely to last for so short a time.

The PREMIER said he quite agreed with the hon. member for Toowoomba that this was a very important subject, and it had always been admitted to be so by every Parliament since 1874. In 1875 the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. Douglas) moved for a select committee to inquire into the question of forest conservancy, and obtained a great deal of information on the subject, both as regarded the evils which existed and the remedies that should be adopted; but he (the Premier) was not aware whether the report of that committee was adopted. He did not agree that all the motion could be put, but if it was he should consider that he was justified in putting any duty he pleased on the export of timber. Though there might be reasons why they should put an export duty on timber, it did not follow they should put it on all timbers; and, in fact, though there were evils arising from their having no export duties on timber, they would not be remedied by an indiscriminate taxation. This would be especially apparent in the case of sawn timber—there should be no export duty on that. In 1875 the committee which investigated the subject of forest conservancy stated in the 5th clause of their report that there had been a shameful waste of valuable timber, that that waste was still going on, and that, if not checked, it would cause serious inconvenience and a short supply, both for home consumption and foreign export. There was not the slightest doubt that clause was prompted by the evidence taken. The next clause stated that the supply of cedar, especially, was falling short; in southern Queensland the forests were nearly exhausted, and there was no system of reproduction going on, although there was no doubt cedar might be cultivated successfully. In northern Queensland it was believed there was a large supply, and the Southern colonies of Australia would satisfy their market from that source. The colony might be said to monopolise this valuable timber, the bulk of it being exported in log to Sydney or Melbourne where it was admitted free, while a duty was imposed on the manufactured material. The committee, therefore, considering the hostility to our trade shown by the tariffs of the above colonies, recommended legislation with a view to preventing the export of log timber except on conditions much more favourable to the colony. Nothing could be plainer than that. The committee recommended an export duty on cedar. It had been simply from the accumulation

of business that the subject had not been gone into a long time ago, for it was a shameful thing that the trade was carried on as it was. The Melbourne tariff was hostile to Queensland, for while they admitted log timber free they placed a duty on sawn timber. The Melbourne people could come up here and get timber simply by paying for a license to cut it. This was not what the country intended, but, as a fact, our legislation encouraged the export of the raw material instead of the export of manufactured timber. There were plenty of timbers it would not do to legislate against exporting. There was no doubt they could not now prevent the export of cedar in the log, but as the motion was worded it did not aim even at that. It required amendment, and if the hon. gentleman would withdraw it he would be advancing business, for it was full of inconsistencies. It ought to apply only to certain timbers. When the first revision of the tariff occurred this matter would be a very important point to consider, and, while they all agreed that the revenue of the colony must be encouraged, there was no reason why they should encourage the export of timber in bulk.

Mr. ARCHER said they knew that none of the timbers would be exported unless they could be sold at a large profit, and the only one which offered that profit was cedar; but it was only in the rough logs that there ought to be any duty. In that case the duty ought not to be of such a nature as to stop the trade, because they ought to increase their revenue from that source as well as in every other direction.

Mr. REA said that legislation ought to be directed so as to avoid the waste to the country now going on in the export of these valuable timbers.

Mr. GROOM was glad to hear the expression of opinion which the Premier had given, but he concurred with him that the motion required amendment. He therefore moved that all the words after the word "that" be omitted, with a view to inserting the following—"In the opinion of the House the time has arrived when an export duty should be imposed on certain timber in log leaving the shores of Queensland."

Amendment agreed to.

CROWN LANDS IN EAST AND WEST MORETON.

Mr. HENDREN moved—

That the whole of the Crown Lands in East and West Moreton unalienated, including those lands surveyed for sale by auction and not sold (exclusive of the pastoral lands under five years' leases at the present time), should without delay be thrown open to Selection by Conditional Purchase and as Homestead Areas, the latter to be in blocks not exceeding 240 acres in extent.

He said that some time ago he had moved for a return with maps, but as that motion was considered objectionable in its form he withdrew it, and now put it before the House in what he believed to be an unobjectionable way. He moved the motion in the interests of the selectors, to whom the greatest facility should be afforded to settle in the best of the unalienated lands in the settled districts. No opportunity should be given for a monopoly of the best of the agricultural lands in Queensland. That would undoubtedly be the result of putting them up to auction as now surveyed in large areas (400, 500, and 600 acres), because the genuine agriculturist and selector of moderate capital could not compete at auction with the pastoral tenant with the capital of banks at his back. In reality, these lands, if sold by auction, would become so much locked up as to preclude settlement of the people. It was the duty of any Government to settle the people on the best lands, to raise revenue and to strengthen the country. It might be argued that the Government required money. Granted they did—but surely they could obtain funds in some other way less objectionable without depriving the people of the best lands. It might also be objected that there was plenty of land now open for selection; but settlers of experience would not sit down on arid, waterless country, where they could not eke out a subsistence for themselves and families. Besides, as the branch lines of railway were likely to be soon constructed in the settled districts, settlement on the lands should be encouraged. It was a notorious fact that these lands were so situated and surveyed in such a way on the stations as to fall an easy premium to the pastoral tenant and absentee capitalists, whereas the genuine agriculturist and selector would be debarred from purchasing at auction from want of cash to lay down at once, with any prospect of being able to commence with operations to fence, clear, build, and cultivate. It was because of the great unpopularity of this obnoxious system of sale by auction that the late Government did not place these lands in the market. There was a general outcry against it, as there would be now if persisted in; and, however much the Treasury might need money, some other means should be found to supply it, without depriving the people of the best lands. Recently £100,000 was voted for emigration, and amongst those who might arrive here under that vote they might reasonably expect many farmers from the old country with small capital; and provision should be made to settle such men—and those already here, and arriving from other colonies—on the best agricultural lands in the inside districts, to bear a proportion of the heavy

burden of taxation under which the colony was labouring, instead of driving them out of the country. If these lands fall into the hands of pastoral tenants there would be no more improvements, no more settlement, no more revenue derived therefrom than there was at the present day. According to the Pastoral Leases Act of 1876, there was some doubt whether or not these lands were open to selection at the present time. At all events, it was the intention and determination of the framers of that Act that, as soon as the pastoral leases expired, these lands should be thrown open to selection; but the present Government proclaimed five years' leases of the runs for sale by auction at a nominal upset price; and for the very few which were sold no advance was obtained, with two exceptions. His motion, however, did not interfere with the five years' leases, although they might be resumed after six months' notice, by proclamation; but such action would not be necessary if this motion were passed. The public lands of the colony—more particularly in the settled districts—should be retained as the inheritance and homes of the people for all future time, and no monopoly in large blocks at auction sale should be allowed in the inside districts at this early period of this country's history. He hoped hon. members on both sides of the House would support him in carrying this motion. It would not interfere with the vested interests of any man, and the lands comprised under it were required for settlement. He was in no way actuated by self-interested motives in bringing this motion before the House, as he required none of the lands;—his desire was to benefit the agriculturists and selectors, and to do so without injury to any other class of persons.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS said that after having read the resolution and heard the speech, he was still unable to understand what the hon. member was driving at. The resolution seemed contradictory in itself. Did the hon. member mean that there was a great demand for land in the settled districts, and that the Government had not responded to it? If so, he denied it. As to the fact of the land being surveyed in large blocks, the praise or blame for that did not lie with the present Government. They found things as they are, and did not attempt to alter them. Since the Government came into office, no lands, except town lands, had been surveyed for auction. He supposed the hon. member's remarks had particular reference to the Colinton and Eskdale stations. On the former, although there were 30,000 acres of land open for selection, only 1,100 acres had been selected, 800 of which by the station proprietors. A similar remark applied to the latter. If the hon. member could show that there was

a demand for land there, he would be happy to attend to it. Figures showed that there was no present necessity for the passing of the resolution. There were 701,000 acres of land in East Moreton, and 1,060,000 acres of land in West Moreton, open for homestead and conditional selection. It could not, therefore, be said that there was any difficulty in obtaining land there. There were men with an eye to certain pockets of land, who got up agitations and petitioned the Lands Office, saying there was a great demand for land in particular localities; but the object of the authors was well known—namely, to get hold of a particular piece of land for themselves. He gave way to nobody in his desire to settle people on the land; at the same time, he was not going to vexatiously interfere with the pastoral tenants until he knew their land was demanded for settlement. He would advise the hon. member to withdraw his motion.

Mr. HENDREN said he would withdraw the motion on condition that the Minister for Lands should not press for auction sales of the lands surveyed for that purpose on the runs. Hon. members did not seem inclined to speak on the subject, but he considered he had done his duty in bringing the motion forward, and would leave the result to the House.

Question put and negatived.

PLANS AND SECTIONS, CENTRAL RAILWAY.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from the Legislative Council, returning certain railway plans and sections for the correction of a clerical error.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR WORKS, the message was taken into consideration, and the word "Central" substituted for the word "Northern" in the plans and sections.

The plans and sections as amended were ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council with the usual message.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he should move the adjournment of the House to point out what appeared to be a gross blunder committed by the Minister in charge of those plans. This House had absolutely to submit to ridicule from the Upper Chamber. He had listened, he might almost say with pain, to the strictures which had been passed upon a Ministry which would allow such a blunder to pass. It was clearly the duty of hon. members on both sides of the House to correct such errors, but he should not have spoken had not the Minister for Works moved the correction without stating any reason. No doubt, after all, there was some use in the other Chamber, because they did occasionally, when they had time on their hands, correct some blunders that this branch of the Legisla-

ture had fallen into. It was very satisfactory to know that the blunder had been detected by a member of that House who had lately been a member of this Chamber, and who was now a distinguished ornament in another place. He still hoped the Minister for Works would deign to give some explanation, and not leave this House to be a by-word and a scoff to the hon. members who congregated and vegetated in another place. An hon. member suggested the word "fossilized," but he (Mr. Morehead) trusted the Speaker would not allow any such expression to be made use of with reference to the superior branch of the Legislature. He would again express a hope that the Minister for Works would give some explanation of the blunder, which must have been a very vivid one to be detected in the other Chamber. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the explanation would be obvious to everyone. The railway now called "Central" was at one time called "Northern," and the error occurred in the surveys of the first portions, which were surveyed before the alteration was made in the title.

Question put and negatived.

STEAMER PASSES TO MEMBERS— COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. O'SULLIVAN, the House went into Committee to consider an Address to the Governor, praying that provision might be made for granting free steamer passes to hon. members under certain circumstances.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN moved—

That in the opinion of the House, members should receive a free pass by steamers from Brisbane to and from the Northern ports twice in each year.

That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will cause provision for the carrying out the above resolution to be made on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the resolution had not been moved in proper form. The first part, relative to free passes, was carried last night, and what they had to consider now was an Address to the Governor praying that provision be made for carrying out the resolution.

Mr. GROOM said they ought to have something more in relation to the matter. If free passes were to be issued to members to travel to the north, why should not free passes be given them to get to the Sydney International Exhibition this year, and the Melbourne one next year? Hon. members had been invited most generously by the Premier of New South Wales, and had been informed that they could have season tickets to the Sydney Exhibition. He was one of those who took high ground in relation to the matter.

Supposing it were granted that every member should have a free pass to get to the Sydney and Melbourne Exhibitions, which was very improbable, the money would be well spent. The information which members would gain with regard to general matters would be very valuable, and would be found beneficial in their legislation. He desired to move an amendment to this resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: The motion is not before the Committee. If the hon. member will wait a moment it will be put more clearly.

After a pause,

The CHAIRMAN said he should put the motion to this effect—

That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will cause provision to be made in the Supplementary Estimates for carrying out the following resolution agreed on by the Committee:—

1. That, in the opinion of this House, members should receive a free pass by steamers from Brisbane to and from the Northern ports twice in each year."

Mr. MOREHEAD said with all due deference to the Chairman, that was not the motion moved by the member for Stanley, and he questioned whether it was within the province of the Chairman to amend any motion. If he could do so he could do anything. He had not stated that the resolution as proposed was out of order. He had not only altered the motion, but had imported fresh matter into it by altering the phraseology. He (Mr. Morehead) objected to a motion being altered, without leave, from the form that it appeared in their "Votes and Proceedings," and had no doubt that the Chairman had no power to make the alteration which he sought to make.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that what was printed in the notice paper was not the Order of the Day made yesterday; the mistake was in the notice paper.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had nothing to do with a mistake of the clerical staff of the House. He doubted very much whether it was a mistake, because they were very correct as a rule. He had to do with the resolution as moved by the member for Stanley; if there was any mistake, that hon. member should have detected it himself.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said this was the first time that he had heard that a member could make no amendments in his resolution in committee. There was really no difference in the resolution as put by himself and the Chairman respectively; it was simply a transposition of clauses. His own opinion was that the resolution as originally moved would do very well; but with the permission of the Committee he would alter it to the form read by the Chairman.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, if the hon. member chose to ask leave to alter the motion, he should have no objection; but he would point out again that the Chairman had no right to alter it without permission having been given.

Mr. GROOM said the member for Stanley was not introducing fresh matter, or departing from the subject-matter of the resolution. He simply transposed it, putting the address to the Governor in the first place, and the affirmation afterwards. There was no departure from the resolution carried yesterday. Surely, they ought to accept the alteration proposed?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was perfectly willing to consent to the hon. member amending his motion.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, by permission, amended the motion by transposing the resolutions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think the Committee quite understood what this resolution meant. As he read it, it provided that every member of the House should have a pass twice a-year to and from the Northern ports. Now, the Northern ports were Noosa, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, St. Lawrence, Bowen, Mackay, Townsville, Cooktown, and Thursday Island. As the resolutions were worded, each member should have a free pass twice a-year to each of these ports. Why, a member might spend his life in travelling between these ports! He remembered a member of that House who always objected to a question on the ground that it either went too far or did not go far enough, and that was his objection to this motion. Why should they not also provide members with free passes on coaches, and pay horse or buggy hire for them when they went beyond where coaches run, so that they might go to the extreme end of the colony and see the whole of the districts? If they carried the thing out at all why not carry it out properly? He did not know what the hon. member for Maryborough said, but he believed the first thing that hon. member would do would be to compound with the company to take him to Hongkong. He would go down to Bright Brothers, and say, "Look here, old boy, I have got two passages here to each of these ports; you had better compound with me, and give me one good trip to Hongkong, and I'll let you off the rest." That was what it would come to. The idea of the proposition was absurd; and it would be better to have payment of members at once, although that he should vote against as long as he lived;—he had voted for it once or twice sorely against his conscience, and purely on the ground of expediency. There was no parallel case between members getting free passes of this kind and free passes on railways. It cost the country nothing to give a pass by rail, be-

cause the trains were running, and whether members went in them or not did not make the slightest difference; but this would make a serious inroad on the revenue. He hoped the hon. member would withdraw it, as he must see that it would lead to very bad results.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN thought the Colonial Secretary would have been the last member of the House to make such paltry objections worthy of a miserable back-lane attorney. The idea of members spending their lives travelling from one port to another was absurd; and as the hon. gentleman went so far as to describe all the ports on the coast, he might as well have included Bribe Island and other islands, and have gone round to the Gulf. But he (Mr. O'Sullivan) would point out that immense sums of money were spent every year in the Northern ports and districts on works that a large number of members of the House had never seen and did not know anything about. He did not believe that by members visiting those portions of the colony and seeing what was going on the country would be anything out of pocket, and he should not withdraw the motion but press it to a division. He had heard no objection that would induce him to withdraw it. These things were done in all the other colonies, and he maintained that after the hard work of a session like this members had a perfect right to this privilege.

Mr. Low said he voted for the motion last night, but after the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary he felt rather doubtful as to whether they would be justified in voting so much money to enable members to gallivant all over the country.

Mr. GROOM said the motion did not ask for anything extraordinary. It was nothing unusual for Members of Parliament to travel free by steamers. In New Zealand, where there was the North and South Island, and which occupied a somewhat analogous position to Queensland, considering that the capital was situated in the extreme southern portion of it, the rule was that members travelled free at any time to all places, whether Parliament was in session or out of session, by all steamers and coaches carrying Her Majesty's mails, and all their letters connected with parliamentary business were franked throughout the colony. It was also the practice to vote them an honorarium and here, all the hon. member asked was that members passing to and fro to the Northern ports should travel free twice a-year. He had always been of opinion that the Northern members were at a disadvantage in comparison with Southern members, who had free passes on the railway to travel wherever they wished, while Northern members had to pay high rates by steamer to and from Brisbane. He therefore

thought Northern members were very fairly entitled to this small privilege. In comparison with the privileges enjoyed by members of Parliament in New Zealand and in Canada, the privileges which members possessed in Queensland were infinitesimal, and he considered that the least that could be done was to give the Northern members what was asked in the resolution. He was sorry to hear that the hon. member for the Balonne was going to depart from the good opinion he expressed on the previous evening.

Mr. REA said that the analogy drawn by the hon. member did not go far enough, as in New Zealand they had shifted the capital to the centre of the colony, whilst here the capital was at the extreme southern end of the colony. In the interest of owners of property in Brisbane, if it was intended to keep this great territory together, every facility must be given to legislators to see the whole of the colony for which they had to legislate; and the expenditure of the money proposed by the motion would be a mere flea-bite in comparison with the advantage of hon. members seeing that vast extent of country compared with which the southern portion was a mere fraction.

After a few remarks from the MINISTER FOR LANDS, which were inaudible,

The question was put.

The Committee divided:—

AYES, 11.

Messrs. Swanwick, O'Sullivan, McLean, Rea, Stevens, Hendren, Cooper, Douglas, Macfarlane (Ipswich), Kingsford, and Groom.

NOES, 12.

Messrs. Palmer, McIlwraith, Macrossan, Griffith, Hill, Baynes, Dickson, Norton, Low, Stevenson, Morehead, and Archer.

Question resolved in the negative.

The House resumed.

CLAIM OF DR. PURCELL.

The House went into Committee.

Mr. RUTLEDGE moved that it is desirable that a sum not exceeding £115 10s. be placed on the Supplementary Estimates in satisfaction of the claim of Dr. Herbert Churchill Purcell, for services rendered to the Government in the capacity of medical officer to quarantine station, Fitzroy Island. He had stated the case very fully at a previous sitting, and took it that there would be no serious opposition to the motion being taken into committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he had stated last night that he could not support the motion. The whole affair was a muddle, and it was the duty of Government to vote against it. There was no claim on the country for the money. The services were performed, no doubt, but they ought to have been paid for by the ships in quarantine.

Mr. KING directed the attention of the Committee to the fact that a system of abuse might spring up by motions of this kind. They were asked to grant money without any evidence of the facts of the case. As regarded the services rendered, they were not rendered to the Government, and yet they were asked to pay a claim against the Government though they had not been able to ascertain how Dr. Purcell acquired it. He had seen motions of the same kind before, and had always thought that if the House were to entertain these claims they ought to insist on clear and formal proof. The person who desired redress ought first to apply to the Minister for an investigation by the House. No Government were justified in granting money until such an investigation had taken place. The first step of the petitioner should be to apply for a select committee to inquire into the merits of the case. He was almost inclined to think there should be a Standing Order to regulate the practice of the House. At all events, in order to test the question, he would move that the Chairman leave the chair.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that while the theory of the hon. Speaker was one they could all approve, they must come to the conclusion that after what took place last night it was not good in practice. He (Mr. Rutledge) then brought forward a motion, the subject-matter of which had been referred to a select committee, who investigated the case and brought up a report. What followed was this: he (Mr. Rutledge) moved that the House adopt the report; the Colonial Secretary objected to it, but the House adopted it, and the first opportunity he had had of bringing forward a motion founded on it was last night, when the Colonial Secretary threw it out altogether in a thin House. What were the investigations of a committee worth, then, if they were treated in this way? There was not the least guarantee that any subject investigated by a select committee might not be dealt with in the same way. Now, in the case of Dr. Purcell, if he had no claim, nothing would be easier than to produce the letter of authority received by Reid, or else produce his affidavit to say he never received such a letter. It was no case of smuggling a claim through the House, as the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. King) seemed to think. This was a case in which a gentleman had rendered services at considerable personal risk, and, because someone had blundered, Dr. Purcell was to pay for it. This case might be one of many, and probably was, where a person would have to be victimised by official blundering; but it should not be encouraged. They ought to look to the interest of persons outside the House. That was what they were there

for; and, in bringing a matter of this sort before hon. members, where professional services had been rendered at considerable personal risk, it was ungracious, to say the least of it, to endeavour to throw the claim overboard.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) would have shown possession of more common-sense if he had avoided making any allusion to the Clarkson case. If any hon. member ever made a muddle, a fatal blunder in any motion, that hon. member made it last night in that very case. Had ever such a confession been heard before in the House? The admission the hon. member made said very little for his honesty of purpose in bringing forward the matter at all. The hon. member confessed that if the House voted the money to Clarkson he would only get one-half of it. The hon. member must have known from the first that he was not bringing forward Clarkson's case, but some attorney's case; and in a very weak moment he told the House that if they voted the money Clarkson would not get it, but would only get half of it. Such an admission, he ventured to say, was never before made in the House, and he (the Colonial Secretary) should be very cautious indeed in giving his adhesion to any motion brought in by an hon. member who could bring a motion forward knowing that, if the money was voted, half the money would go to an attorney.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: The Committee voted the whole of the money for attorney's costs.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Committee had no power to vote any money, and the hon. member in saying so was only displaying his ignorance of the powers of Parliament; and no amount of bluster would cover ignorance. It was open to the House to adopt or reject the report of any select committee. In regard to the question before the Committee, he quite agreed with the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. King). The motion was made at the end of the session, and they were asked to vote this money to Dr. Purcell. It was a disputed claim—disputed by the Government who had every means of knowing what the facts of the case were. The most that Dr. Purcell could have asked for would be an inquiry into those facts. It was insinuated last night that some authority had been given to Dr. Purcell before he left Brisbane, to the effect that if he went up north he would get this appointment. He (Mr. Palmer) had made inquiries this morning of the Under Secretary, who had assured him that no such promise was ever made. Dr. Purcell was promised the position of health officer at Cairns or Port Douglas—he forgot which—at £50 a-year, under certain conditions. Dr. Purcell declined to go in consequence of the

ill-health of some of his family, and all negotiations on that point came to an end. It was said that Dr. Purcell went up "on spec."—that he led people up north to imagine that he was appointed, and had got the appointment from Brisbane—that that report reached Mr. St. George, who, acting on the rumour and believing in it, in some way or other made some request through Mr. Reid that he would go on board the vessels. He (Mr. Palmer) had read the papers in connection with the case and made inquiries into it, and knew more about the facts than he did last night; and he was able to say that the rumour of Dr. Purcell's appointment from Brisbane arose solely from the doctor's own representations.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: There is no evidence for it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was no evidence for a great deal in connection with the matter; and if Dr. Purcell himself spread the report, and if that report misled the police magistrate into signing the vouchers, the case was a very hollow one indeed, and Dr. Purcell had no claim whatever against the Government.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that, in order to clear himself from the imputations of the Colonial Secretary, that he lost his motion last night through having blundered grievously, he would briefly refer to the facts of the case. He brought Clarkson's case forward in the most fair and straightforward way, and there was nothing in connection with it that he was ashamed of. To show that nothing had been done in an underhand manner, and that in stating that Clarkson would only get half the money if the sum was voted he was only stating a fact on which the select committee had grounded their recommendation, he need only cite the 12th and 13th paragraphs of the committee's report, which were as follows:—

"Your Committee are of opinion—(1) That primarily, through an error in the Real Property Office, the petitioner has been deprived of his property; (2) That the letter of the 29th November, 1878, signed by the Under Colonial Secretary, and endorsed by the letter of April 5th (*vide question 121*), contains a promise that petitioner's expenses in testing the question as to whether he was entitled to the possession of the certificates of title would be reimbursed to him; (3) That the decision of the judge was that the petitioner was entitled to the certificates; and, therefore, he has a claim for the fulfilment of that promise.

"The expense the petitioner has been put to is about £300 (*vide questions 92 and 139*), and in order to recoup him that amount, we recommend that a sum of £300 be paid to the petitioner from the Real Property Assurance Fund."

On referring to question 139, he found Mr. W. H. Wilson, the solicitor, stating that Mr. Clarkson's costs had amounted to

£150, exclusive of an additional £150 which he had already paid, or was liable for. So that out of the £300 recommended for Clarkson, it was notorious that one-half of it would go towards paying legal expenses necessarily incurred, and which were still owing by him, and the other half to recoup himself for legal expenses which he had already paid out of his own pocket. There was nothing to conceal in a matter of that kind. The whole sum was recommended for the payment of Clarkson's law costs. With regard to this claim of Dr. Purcell's, there was documentary evidence in his favour, and the mere statements of Government subordinates did not sufficiently contradict the sworn assertion that Dr. Purcell received his instructions from Mr. Reid, on behalf of Mr. St. George. If Mr. St. George made the appointment, was not the Government liable for Mr. St. George's action?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he differed from the hon. gentleman. Mr. St. George was a representative of the Government in matters of this kind, and if in this instance he had exceeded his duty the Government were responsible for it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I say they are not.

Mr. RUTLEDGE submitted that the claim was satisfactorily made out. The work had been done, and it had not been disproved that Dr. Purcell was appointed in the ordinary way. Placed in opposition to the documentary evidence in favour of the claim, the disclaimers put in had no weight whatever.

Mr. KING said that long before the present motion came on he had determined to take the opportunity of calling the attention of the Committee to a procedure which offered an opening for the grossest abuses, by the introduction, by private members, of motions for money to persons outside the House, and the granting of such claims without any inquiry whatever. He would not speak on the merits of the case beyond saying that the evidence adduced by the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) was entirely *ex parte*, and that he could not get a verdict for 5s. upon it in any court in the colony. The position he (Mr. King) had taken up was one worthy of some attention, for if the Committee paid away money without investigation a great many claims would soon be made which would not bear investigation, and there was no saying where the thing would end. It would be advisable, even, to have a Standing Order made to the effect that the House would entertain no application to grant money on private claims, unless those claims had been previously investigated. The report of a select committee did not bind the House, but the evidence taken gave hon. members

an opportunity of forming an opinion upon the question at issue. He should always be guided in his vote by the recommendation of a select committee; but he would point out that those recommendations could not bind the House.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, according to the statement of the hon. member, persons having grievances would be prevented from coming to the House for redress. He had known one instance in which a petition had been objected to. It would, certainly, be no use appointing select committees if their recommendations were to have no effect.

Mr. KING said the hon. member had misinterpreted his words. He said that he should be guided by the recommendation of a select committee, but that those recommendations could not bind the House. Hon. members seemed to consider, as was no doubt the case in many instances, that to refer a claim to investigation was equivalent to rejecting it.

Mr. GROOM said the case of Clarkson was one of the hardest ever brought before the House, and he regretted the decision that had been come to. Hon. members could form no idea of the misery, perhaps ruin, that would be entailed upon a whole family simply through neglect in a department of Government, whose officer had admitted that he gave deeds he had no right to give and had written for them to be returned. A committee had considered Mr. Clarkson's claims, and the House had adopted their report and decided that compensation should be given. Under those circumstances, it was very unkind of the Colonial Secretary to take advantage of a thin House to throw the motion out. With regard to the motion now before the House, he had heard the late Colonial Secretary (Mr. Miles) say that Dr. Purcell had no claim whatever upon the House; but, as he had not had an opportunity of hearing the arguments advanced last night, he should decline to vote either way.

Question—That the Chairman leave the chair—put.

The Committee divided :—

AYES, 7.

Messrs. King, Palmer, McIlwraith, Norton, Macrossan, Griffith, and Hill.

NOES, 13.

Messrs. Swanwick, Cooper, Stevens, Low, Amburst, Stevenson, Rutledge, O'Sullivan, Douglas, Hamilton, Morehead, Hendren, and Macfarlane (Ipswich).

Question, therefore, resolved in the negative; and the original motion put by the Chairman.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he protested against the claim, as he was satisfied that there was no ground for it whatever. Dr. Purcell was on his way at the time to Cairns

where he then intended to settle, and he appeared to have expressed a desire to be appointed to the Quarantine Station. The story got about that he had been appointed to that position, whereas, in fact, he had only appointed himself. The letter written by Mr. St. George to Mr. Reid, who was interested in the "Galley of Lorne," stated that he had heard Dr. Purcell had been appointed medical officer. No doubt he heard it, because the gentleman had himself circulated the report. The letter written by Mr. St. George, under those circumstances, was all the claim Dr. Purcell had in the world. If Parliament would vote sums of money on no better grounds it was about time that it was prorogued. The matter was investigated very fully by the then Colonial Secretary (Mr. Miles), and he was sorry the hon. gentleman was not now present to give his opinion upon it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said a great deal of the argument made use of by the leader of the Opposition was based upon assumption. Conceding that Dr. Purcell did say all that was alleged, what were the facts? That he went with his life in his hands on Fitzroy Island, where there was small-pox.

Mr. GRIFFITH: There was nothing the matter.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was told there was disease raging among the Chinese. At any rate, Dr. Purcell went there on the assumption that there was disease, remained there for many weeks, and did his work well; and, if he had no legal, he had a moral and equitable claim. As to the reference to the opinion of the late Colonial Secretary (Mr. Miles), they knew perfectly well what a "bull-dog" way he had of driving people away who preferred claims against the Government; and the fact that the hon. gentleman did not approve of this claim was no proof to his (Mr. Morehead's) mind that it was unjust. Dr. Purcell was entitled to every shilling, and his only regret was that the doctor did not claim a great deal more, for he was fairly entitled to it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the leader of the Opposition had not denied that Dr. Purcell did the work; if there was nothing the matter with the Chinese, and nothing to do, why were they quarantined? There was small-pox or yellow fever, he believed. Where was there any denial from Mr. St. George that any appointment was ever made by him? If there was no such appointment, why did he sign the voucher?

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had the correspondence before him now, and he found that it was begun by a telegram from Dr. Purcell to the Colonial Secretary, sent from Charters Towers on February 28, 1877, stating that he was going to practice at

Trinity Bay, and asking for the appointment of Health Officer. He was told on March 9 that he would be appointed at a salary of £50 per annum, and he replied that he would not take it. The next letter in order of time was one written on May 1, by Mr. St. George to the Sub-Collector of Customs, Cooktown, stating, in answer to an inquiry whether any expenses had been incurred at Cooktown or Cairns for the ship "Galley of Lorne," under clauses 24 and 25 of the Quarantine Act, that no expenses had been incurred at Cooktown or Cairns, to his knowledge or by his orders, under these clauses. Mr. St. George added that he was aware a medical man—Dr. Purcell—had been in charge of the quarantine ground, Fitzroy Island, but at what rate of pay or by whom appointed he did not know. On May 18, Dr. Purcell introduced himself to the Colonial Secretary, sending a telegram stating that he had been employed as medical officer in charge of Fitzroy Island Quarantine Station since April 22, and that he understood the Sub-Collector of Customs at Cooktown held a guarantee from the local agent for payment of all expenses incurred under the Quarantine Act on account of the "Galley of Lorne," "Bowen," and "Normanby" vessels. Next, there was a telegram from the police magistrate at Cooktown to the Under Colonial Secretary, stating that Dr. Purcell had sent in vouchers for £115 for medical services at Fitzroy Island; that the ships had given guarantees for quarantine expenses, and asking whether he should enforce payment. The reply of the Under Colonial Secretary was that no appointment was made from his office to Fitzroy Island, and that he could "not interfere between Purcell and Reid." Reid was the agent of the ship. Then, on May 22, Dr. Purcell was asked by the Under Colonial Secretary "Who employed you as medical officer at Fitzroy Island?" and his reply was—

"Received your telegram at Cairns. Shall arrive at Brisbane per 'Florence Irving.'"

He did not state who employed him; that had never been done. Next, in a telegram and letter to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. St. George said that Dr. Purcell induced him to sign vouchers upon his distinct assurance that he had been sent to take charge of the Quarantine Station by Mr. Rawlins, by the orders of the Colonial Secretary. He distinctly denied that he ever directly or indirectly, by letter or in any other way, employed Dr. Purcell as medical officer at Fitzroy Island, or gave any person authority to do so on his behalf. He appointed Mr. Reid to take charge of the Station. It had been asked what the letter was that was written to Reid on April 19 by Mr. St. George, and on that point the latter, writing to the Under Colo-

nial Secretary on July 9, said that to the best of his recollection what he wrote to Mr. Reid was—

"I hear a Dr. Purcell has been appointed medical officer at Fitzroy Island; if so, you will, of course, have to give up charge to him."

He also said that Mr. Reid's recollection agreed with his, and that he had heard from various sources that Dr. Purcell had gone to the island on "spec" and intended to "chance it" for payment, and that he was astonished when the doctor told him he had been appointed by Mr. Rawlins by the express desire of the Colonial Secretary. How could any Government in their senses pay the money in the face of this evidence? Dr. Purcell had no earthly claim upon the Government. Of course, Parliament could vote him the £115 if it chose; but do not let it be on the score of justice, but by way of a present. To vote the money as payment of a just claim against the Government for services rendered would be a farce.

Mr. RUTLEDGE thanked the hon. gentleman for taking up the time of the Committee—with evidence to which he might have referred on the previous evening—when he knew that members favourable to the motion would have to leave by a certain train; two or three of these members had left.

Mr. HAMILTON said the member for North Brisbane (Mr. Griffith) assumed that Mr. St. George's excuse for signing the vouchers—that Dr. Purcell had explained to him he had received his authority to take charge of the quarantine station at Fitzroy Island by order of the Under Colonial Secretary—was correct; but it was simply Mr. St. George's assertion, and against it there was the sworn testimony of known men that they heard Mr. Reid tell Dr. Purcell that he was appointed.

Mr. KING said he moved the Chairman out of the chair on the ground that there should be investigation, and after voting against that motion it came in with bad grace from the member for Gympie to take up the ground that he had. What they wished was to get evidence, and if it was investigated the rights of the case would be apparent.

Mr. HAMILTON said he simply objected to certain evidence brought forward by the leader of the Opposition, which he considered worthless. The hon. member had merely given Mr. St. George's simple assertion, while Dr. Purcell's statement was supported by sworn evidence.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the most extraordinary part of the affair was that the hon. member for Maryborough, who was a member of the Government that refused this remuneration to Dr. Purcell,

voted this evening against the Chairman leaving the chair and against any investigation.

Question put, and the Committee divided.

There not being a quorum present, the Chairman reported the fact to the Speaker.

Quorum formed, and the Committee resumed.

Mr. AMHURST called attention to the state of the Committee; and there not being a quorum present, the fact was reported to the Speaker.

The House was counted out at thirteen minutes past 11.