

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 1880

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 14 September, 1880.

Petitions.—Land Act Amendment Bill.—Correction.—
Motion for Adjournment.—Supply.—Adjournment.

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

PETITIONS.

Mr. LOW presented a petition from Selectors in the district of St. George, praying for relief under the Land Act of 1876.

Petition read and received.

Mr. MESTON presented a petition from Selectors in the Rosewood Electorate, with reference to the proposed alteration of the Tariff.

Petition received.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Mr. MESTON, it was resolved that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876 in certain particulars.

The Bill was introduced, read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday fortnight.

CORRECTION.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Beor) said that as a matter of privilege he wished to correct a slight misprint which appeared in *Hansard* of that day. It was not a very great mistake, still he was loth to leave it uncontradicted. He was reported to have accused the hon. member for Maryborough of gross indecency. Of course he did nothing of the kind. He accused him of gross inaccuracy.

The Hon. J. DOUGLAS said he was much obliged to the hon. gentleman for the correction. He had not noticed the mistake, the fact being that words were sometimes bandied about so freely that he did not observe what was reported. He would also take the opportunity of correcting a rather important misprint, in reference to the name of the original organiser of the native police force. The name should have been Walker, but it was printed Waters in *Hansard*. Although *Hansard* gave the name as Waters, those who knew the man would easily recognise whom he meant.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Mr. Perkins, who was most indistinctly heard in the gallery) was understood to complain of an inaccuracy in *Hansard*. In *Hansard* of Friday, in the report of the debate upon the motion of the member for Darling Downs for the production of returns regarding the closing of roads, he was reported to have said—he could not indicate to the reporters the particular line—but what he did say was that the hon. member for Darling Downs had sixteen miles of frontage to the Condamine River without a road or bridge, and that having closed the roads and caused them to be sold to himself, he next proceeded to have the reserves and camping places sold to himself. There was nothing about that

in *Hansard*. Then, again, it would appear that he thought little of the certificate of character brought by the hon. member. He did not intend in any way to cast a slight upon the person who wrote the certificate for the hon. member. What he meant to say was—

The SPEAKER said the hon. member should confine himself to a correction of the inaccuracies. He should point them out, and state what he did say.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS was understood to say that he would confine himself to a correction of the inaccuracy. In another place he did say that he was perfectly acquainted with the mode in which the letter was got, but that was not reported. From his knowledge it was not worth the paper it was written on. With regard to the passage in which he stated that the hon. member went on a voyage of discovery to Blackall, where he was interviewed by a number of the inhabitants and professed to have made the discovery that the people had been cheated, what he (Mr. Perkins) said was, "I suppose that was another of your truths? When you find it was wrong you have neither the honesty nor the manliness to come forward and correct it." That was not reported. It was not worth while to move the adjournment of the House, and it was not his practice to obstruct business; but he felt it was necessary that he should call the attention of the Speaker and of the House to those inaccuracies. While admitting the ability of the *Hansard* staff—and he had been very unwilling heretofore to challenge their reports—he must express his opinion that the reports this session were not at all equal to those of previous sessions, and—

The SPEAKER said the hon. gentleman was now proceeding to discuss the merits of the *Hansard* staff.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was sorry to have to move the adjournment of the House, but he would not detain hon. members more than a few moments. The hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Dickson), last evening, asked the Colonial Secretary, without notice, a question with reference to the unfortunate accident which happened on Saturday last in the Bay, and which was the subject of a paragraph in the *Daily Telegraph*. That paragraph contained a statement that an application had been made for a better boat, and was calculated to cast discredit upon the Harbour Department. He (Mr. Beattie) had therefore taken the trouble to go down and examine the boat, and had come to the conclusion that there could not have been any foundation for the statement made in the paragraph. A finer boat he had never seen, and he should not be afraid to go to any part of Moreton Bay in her. The accident appeared to have occurred through the anxiety of the poor fellow to get some letters. Between Amity Point and the point where he lived was a spit of sand, and what with the flood tide and the easterly wind he got among the breakers. He put the boat about and tried to get back, but the rollers got on board and capsized her. The anchor which was on board at the time fell out and held the boat fast, while the man and the boy floated away and were drowned. The Acting Harbourmaster felt sore about the statement which had been made, and in justice to him it should be stated that there was no necessity for any application for a new boat. The boat was an excellent one, adapted for every purpose for which it was required. He moved the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith) said he was obliged to the hon. member for giving the explanation. The question referred to was asked

by the hon. member (Mr. Dickson) somewhat abruptly yesterday, and the Government were not then in full possession of the facts of the case.

Question put and negatived.

SUPPLY.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House went into Committee of Supply.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Palmer) moved that £15,614 be granted for gaols and St. Helena. In last year's Estimates he said £12,227 was voted for gaols and £2,125 for St. Helena, making together £14,352. All the hard-labour prisoners had now been removed from Brisbane to St. Helena. The increase of £1,262 in the total vote had been rendered necessary by the increased number of criminals upon the establishments. There was nothing else on the estimate that appeared to require explanation, but he should be very happy to give any information that might be required.

Mr. DOUGLAS asked whether the Colonial Secretary had come to any decision with regard to the site of the new gaol which was to take the place of the old one. He understood that the Colonial Secretary had decided that the old gaol was to be pulled down, the matter having been discussed in a preliminary sort of way last session. He presumed the hon. gentleman could now give some information as to the site, what the building would cost, and what was likely to be received for the old gaol when pulled down.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he made a statement last year of the proceeds likely to result from the sale of the building material according to a professional valuation, but he could not lay his hand on the papers at the moment. The sum of £10,000 had been voted out of loan account for the new gaol, and plans were in preparation. The site was on part of the outside bridge lands in South Brisbane, pretty well outside the town.

Mr. McLEAN asked whether it was true that the German interpreters had been dispensed with?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he should be happy to answer the question when the vote for miscellaneous services, out of which interpreters were paid, came on for discussion.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he had not had an opportunity of visiting Toowoomba gaol lately, but he should be glad to know whether arrangements had been made to increase the accommodation. The accommodation for female prisoners was, he believed, very defective. He understood that the old court-house was to be thrown into the gaol, and included in the buildings.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the improvements were being carried out, and he hoped they would be completed in a very short time.

Mr. DOUGLAS asked whether the gaol at Townsville was now in occupation, and what accommodation it provided? It was stated last session that the gaol, although opened, was not considered fit for occupation, and that in some respects the building was very defective.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the gaol had already been occupied some time when he was in Townsville in February last. He confessed he did not like the style of the building—too much had been sacrificed to economy. It was the counterpart of the one at Rockhampton, and, in his opinion, they were both decidedly bad.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I am afraid they are.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the building was far advanced when he took office, and he had no means of making any considerable alteration. He immediately ordered that the ward in the upstairs chamber, which was all in one room, should be lighted from the top by a lamp, and that a hole should be broken through the wall, and provision made to enable the warders to inspect the prisoners without any danger of being rushed by them. He disliked the plan exceedingly—hardly anything could be worse; but he was helpless to remedy it further. Some additions in the way of working-shops had also been made. The Rockhampton gaol, although a long time in progress, was not yet occupied, the warders' quarters not being completed.

Mr. McLEAN said he saw by the newspaper reports that the unfortunate Chinese leper who was liberated had been re-apprehended and taken back to his quarters. There seemed to be a diversity of opinion as to whether the man was suffering from leprosy at all; and it was strange that there should be no means of sending him back to his own country.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had endeavoured to get ships trading to China to take the man back, but no ship would take him, and he was not sure whether the law would allow a ship to do so. He had some doubts whether the disease was infectious, but did not consider himself justified in setting the man at liberty, as he had been arrested in due course of law and committed by a bench of magistrates. The man was very expensive to keep, and he regretted he could not send him back. He should be delighted to get rid of him, and also of the Chinese lunatics; but, though he had tried hard to send them back to the country where they wanted their bones to be, no ship would take them.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he believed there was some clause in the treaty by which those men could be sent back; but he supposed it would be a too roundabout course to enter into communications on the subject with the Chinese authorities. An application was made some time ago to know whether there would be any objection to the presence of a Chinese consul here. If there was a Chinese consul in Sydney, or in any of the other colonies, the Government might ascertain from him whether the repatriation of these men might be effected. With regard to the leper, he to some extent agreed with the Colonial Secretary that there was a good deal of superstition on the subject. He remembered seeing a very bad case of leprosy in the Melbourne General Hospital, and the doctor there did not take any special precaution. The patient was treated in a separate room, but close to other patients, and the surgeon-superintendent in charge stated that he had no qualms of conscience about the matter, as he did not anticipate any danger from contagion. That was a case of decidedly aggravated leprosy, but the medical men treated it in the general hospital without any compunction.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he had been over one of the largest leprosy establishments in the world—the one at Madras—and the chief medical officer there told him he was convinced that there was nothing contagious about the disease.

Mr. DOUGLAS asked whether the gaol at Rockhampton would not be made use of?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not yet.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he understood that the gaol was not made use of in consequence of the building being unsuitable.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; it is in consequence of the warders' quarters not being completed.

Mr. DOUGLAS thought it desirable to provide gaols suited to the climate, and it would perhaps be as well if they applied to the Indian authorities for designs of buildings adapted to hot climates. It seemed an inhuman thing to confine prisoners in gaols situated in a hot climate like that of Rockhampton and Townsville, and in which there was little or no ventilation. If both gaols were so unsuitable they might provide a central establishment where gaol business could be carried out with something like scientific detail. He believed it was at one time proposed that long-sentenced prisoners should be sent to Thursday Island and made use of there. There was another proposition that the Australian colonies should combine in the formation of a penal settlement on the northern coast, and dispose of the criminals by starting a new colony. He did not know that the thing could be worked out, but it seemed to him that there would be some advantage in having such an establishment at a place like the Fitzroy River, recently explored by Mr. Forrest, as it might be the means of forming a new settlement on the north-west coast of Australia. Of course, it was necessary to have lockups, but he doubted whether it was desirable to have a considerable number of small gaols throughout the colony. Large gaols would be preferable, because in them there would be better discipline and better organisation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not object to the gaol in Rockhampton because of the want of ventilation; he thought there was plenty of it. What he objected to was the associated ward upstairs, which was so arranged that the prisoners could not be under surveillance at night. He had had that defect remedied as far as possible.

Mr. McLEAN said the foundations of the Rockhampton gaol were put in two years ago, and the building ought to be available before this. The accommodation for women in the present gaol was very limited, the result being that it was sometimes very much overcrowded.

Mr. FREEZ said the opinion which he had arrived at, after hearing the opinions of competent men, was that the Rockhampton gaol—as an architectural structure—was the most complete failure in the colony. It was not only a failure from an architectural point of view, but it was not adapted to the climate. The present gaol was by far a better building than the new one. In erecting buildings for hospitals, gaols, or lunatic asylums, the first consideration ought to be to construct them so as to suit the climate, and premiums ought to be offered for plans. He had been through the new gaol at Rockhampton on hot days, and he believed it would be found totally unfit for the confinement of prisoners, and the internal arrangements were so defective that the warders would not be able to perform their duties as they ought to be performed. The money spent on the building had been wasted, but who was to blame he did not know. Experience in regard to that building ought to be a warning to Ministers not to leave matters entirely to one architect. An architect might be able to prepare faultless plans of one style of building, and completely fail when called upon to design buildings in another style.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL thought there would be no difficulty in getting complete plans of hospitals from Singapore, where there were four or five large hospitals built on the latest models so as to provide against the effects of the hot climate. He did not think they would be

able to get equally valuable information in regard to gaols, because in Singapore and India the custom was to put from 100 to 200 prisoners in one ward.

Mr. ARCHER said he was of opinion that anyone who visited St. Helena must come to the conclusion that they were making a mistake in constructing buildings of bricks and mortar; he had no doubt that hardwood structures would be much better. Taking St. Helena as a model, they might construct good airy gaols, well adapted for the purpose, at one-half of the cost of the new brick building at Rockhampton. He agreed with the hon. member for Leichhardt that there was no greater architectural failure in the colony than that.

Mr. DOUGLAS said it was rather a melancholy satisfaction to hear that the old gaol at Rockhampton was better than the new one. If that was the case it would be better to abolish the gaol altogether. His attention had been drawn to the great expense incurred in bringing short-sentenced prisoners from Blackall, Tambo, and Aramac to Rockhampton. That expense might be saved by building lockups in some of the inland towns, where the prisoners might be confined. He should like to know whether the Colonial Secretary contemplated any improvement of the kind?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said arrangements were in progress for the construction of a lockup at Blackall, which would obviate the necessity of bringing prisoners to Rockhampton. The charges connected with the removal of prisoners were enormous, and the saving which would be effected would pay the interest on the cost of the lockup, and go a long way towards paying the principal.

Mr. THORN asked whether it was true that the chief warder at St. Helena had been removed to another place because he was not fit for his post?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the chief warders at St. Helena and at Woogaroo had been changed, not because they were not fitted for their places, but because he considered the change would be desirable.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked what was the nature of the objection to the gaols at Rockhampton and Townsville. He understood that the buildings were constructed according to the latest designs.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he had twice stated the objection to the buildings. They were too small to begin with, and the passages were so narrow that the prisoners could converse from one cell to another. The great objection to the buildings was the associated ward in the upper storeys, which was built so that prisoners could not be seen unless the turnkey opened the door. Alterations had been made whereby the prisoners would be under better surveillance and warders would be guarded against attacks by prisoners. The whole construction of the buildings was bad. He did not know what Minister it was who approved of the designs. When he entered office the buildings were too far advanced to admit of many desirable alterations being made.

Mr. GRIFFITH said there was surely some easy way of discovering who was responsible. He understood that the buildings were designed on the result of experience in other parts of the world. He was sure that the Colonial Architect did not evolve the design out of his own imagination; he must have had advice.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Minister in charge of the department must have approved of the plans, but of late years Colonial

Secretaries had changed like the scenes of a kaleidoscope, and it was not easy to find out who was to blame.

Mr. FEEZ said the designs were approved of by the late Government. When the plans were first exhibited in Rockhampton strong objections were urged against them. Neither the gaoler nor the sheriff was consulted in regard to the plans. At first it was intended to erect the gaol on a hill, but it was found that the expense for foundations would be fearful, and then application was made to the Corporation for a piece of ground which was considered to be better suited. As the wards were arranged at first the prisoners would have had no difficulty in attacking the warders as they entered the cells. Another objection to the design was that the gaoler's quarters were outside the gaol walls.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he had no recollection of the designs having come before him. But supposing he had seen them, he did not know that he should have offered any decided opposition to them, or rather that he should have exercised any control over the designer, who might be presumed to be an expert. Experience had shown, however, that there was a necessity for the exercise of strict supervision over all such matters.

Mr. THORN questioned whether the people of Rockhampton would be satisfied even if the Government erected a third gaol there. With regard to the gaol under discussion, he remembered placing a sum upon the Estimates, but he was not aware that the designs came before him. He did not think he was responsible for them.

Mr. ARCHER said that, having regard for the mistakes which were sometimes made, it became a question whether it would not be desirable to employ private skill in the drawing of designs. He had no personal quarrel with the Colonial Architect; on the contrary, he wished him all the good which could possibly befall him, but he felt bound to say that a great many of their public buildings had been very badly designed. He had recently visited the Museum for the first time, and he was never in his life more disgusted with a building. To reach the upper storey he had to mount a very awkward staircase, resembling a half screw. He knew of many people in Brisbane who would be unable to mount the staircase. It would be necessary, if exhibits were to be shown on the upper storey, to break through the floor and lift them up with the aid of machinery. Something of the same kind happened in connection with the gaol at Rockhampton. In reply to the suggestion of the hon. member for the Northern Downs, he might say that the people of Rockhampton did not require a third gaol. The best plan to adopt in the future would be to ask for designs, and to leave it to the Colonial Architect to criticise them and to select the best. So far, he (Mr. Archer) had designed nothing but woolsheds and slab houses, but he was prepared to design a much better museum than that which had recently been built in Brisbane. In designing a gaol, too, he would not require the experience of an architect; he would require merely the knowledge which every man in the bush must possess to build his own house. It was time they looked into this matter with a view of seeing whether they could not shift the blame for such absurdly-constructed buildings as the Museum upon persons not connected with the Government staff. They would require the judgment of the Colonial Architect in the selection of one out of many designs; but it would be unwise to continue asking him to prepare designs, when they could point to so many failures among the designs he had already prepared. The gaol at Rockhampton topped the climax, as it were. He believed the building was at

first designed in such a way that prisoners could apparently escape with ease; but that defect had been remedied. Before the alteration was made it certainly looked as though skillions had been so placed as to assist prisoners to escape. He believed that quite as strong a gaol could be made of good hardwood and hoop-iron. The chief danger of wooden buildings lay in fire; but the prisoners did not use matches, and, being locked in, they would be very unlikely to set fire to the building. Wooden buildings would not only be roomier but considerably cheaper.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY thought the Colonial Architect had already sufficient enemies. But he ought not to be blamed for the Museum, because in its present form it was only part of a plan, and until it was complete it would be unfair to criticise it.

Mr. ARCHER: I did not know that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY admitted that the staircase was absurdly constructed. He found fault with it immediately he saw the building, but he was told that it would come out in a wing when the building was complete.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he could quite believe it possible that the hon. member for Blackall would be able to design much better buildings than the Rockhampton gaol or the Museum; but the question was whether he would be able to do so at the same cost as the Colonial Architect.

Mr. ARCHER: Much cheaper.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that when the Colonial Architect drew plans he had always to find the largest accommodation and the most handsome building possible at the very smallest cost. He must generally be cramped by the small amount at his disposal for the building for which he had to draw plans.

Mr. McLEAN thought this discussion upon the Rockhampton gaol might be the means of directing the attention of the Government to the propriety of offering premiums for designs for other public buildings. He had no fault whatever to find with the Colonial Architect. No doubt he was a good man in his present position; but they must all agree that two or three heads were better than one. If premiums were offered for designs and some half-a-dozen or dozen were sent in, it might be left to the Colonial Architect to select that which he considered the best. There could be very little doubt that by some such arrangements as that they would secure better designs and cheaper buildings than they had at the present time. He hoped the Government would consider this matter.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had not seen the Rockhampton gaol since it had been inhabited; but he did not think the same amount of material would make a larger gaol or provide more accommodation. The imperfect ventilation of the gaol arose from its situation. They could not expect buildings with high walls situated on a flat, like the gaols at Townsville and Rockhampton, to have plenty of air. The only way to get good ventilation in a gaol was to put it on the top of a hill. It was absurd to compare the present Rockhampton gaol to the old one, which was a disgrace to the colony. It contained cells 6 feet or 8 feet square, in which two or three women were sometimes confined together for a long time in the summer months. The new gaol might have minor defects. The architect was not very happy in designing communication between upper and lower storeys by means of staircases; but the gaol taken as a whole compared very favourably with others in the colony—it was, in fact, far superior to them—excepting, of course, the Brisbane gaol.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £1,195 be granted for the Water Police.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £1,200 be granted for the Reformatory. He might state that the new stockade and buildings were nearly erected. A great deal of the work had been very well done by the boys.

Mr. McLEAN: Is it the intention of the Government to transfer the boys from the hulk to the stockade, when completed?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was. The hulk would be broken up.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £3,155 be granted for medical officers. Several additions in connection with the extension of settlement had been made to this service. There were now medical officers at Blackall, Georgetown, Goondiwindi, and Port Douglas. The Government found it cheaper to provide medical officers than to pay medical bills.

Mr. THORN desired to know whether there was a duly qualified medical officer at Cooktown?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was. He forgot the gentleman's name; he had been only recently appointed.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £600 be granted for the Central Board of Health.

Mr. GRIFFITH desired to know whether the Government intended to introduce an Amending Health Bill?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Government had so many Bills upon the paper, and had so many more ready to introduce, that he did not think there was the slightest chance of their being able to introduce a Health Bill.

Mr. THORN thought the introduction of a Health Bill of great importance. It was very desirable that boards should be established at Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Ipswich, and Maryborough. Why did the Government ignore those places? They were quite as much entitled as the metropolis to have a sum set apart for the service of a board of health. He thought the boards should not be constituted entirely of medical men.

Mr. ARCHER said that in Rockhampton the medical profession were so patriotic as to render their services without salary.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the necessity for action on the part of the Government was evidenced by the fact that upon several occasions when an attempt was made to enforce the Act it was found that it was not in operation. The Act should without loss of time be made permanent. He believed the Board of Health were doing good service.

Mr. BEATTIE said that one objectionable feature in the regulations issued by the Central Board of Health was that they were subject to constant alterations. It frequently happened that these alterations were made after property holders had gone to considerable expense in compliance with the original regulations. These experiments were very objectionable. It was necessary to take some action in this matter with as little delay as possible. There were at the present time round about Brisbane nuisances which no one seemed to have the power to suppress.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £21,345 be granted for Colonial Stores.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that when the late Government was in office arrangements were made by which blankets of a particular brand and material were supplied to the aborigines. They were manufactured expressly for the Government, so that they could at any time be recognised. Was the same system continued now? He had heard that it was not.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the late Government entered into an arrangement without calling for tenders, with Messrs. Stewart and Hemmant, to supply blankets of a particular pattern at a certain price. When that tender expired it was again secured by Stewart and Hemmant, in their own names, without tenders having been called for. It was done without even Ministerial authority and only on that of the Under Colonial Secretary. As soon as he (Mr. Palmer) discovered that, he ordered tenders to be called for, and the contract was secured by Messrs. D. L. Brown and Company. The blankets to be issued would be as nearly like the former as possible.

Mr. THORN wished to call attention to the fact that this year not half the blacks in the interior, especially on the Darling Downs and in the Balonne district, had received their blankets. Blacks came into the towns for their blankets and could not get them. Whose fault was that? Every black was surely entitled to the miserable gift, which cost only 4s. or 5s. In New South Wales and South Australia the blacks received clothes as well as a blanket annually, and he should like to see that practice adopted in Queensland. He would suggest that there ought to be reserves for the blacks in various parts of the colony, and a cow or two given them for their use. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would see that the blacks had their miserable pittance regularly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that about 50 per cent. more blankets had been sent out this year than was ever the case before. If all the blacks were not supplied with blankets it was not the fault of the Colonial Secretary's Department, for blankets were sent on requisition to the police magistrates. Instances had no doubt occurred where some blacks had had to go without blankets, and in other instances they had got more than one; but that was the fault of the police magistrates. As to making the blankets of a peculiar pattern, that did not prevent the blacks from selling them. They would sell them no matter of what pattern they were made.

In reply to Mr. McLEAN,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that reports had been sent in from the places where the supply of blankets had been too short.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he regretted to hear that the blacks continued to sell their blankets. To prevent that was the object of their being made of a special pattern. It was anticipated that the Colonial Secretary would be able to prosecute anyone found in possession of them, as they were Government property. The blacks had no right to sell them, and they could at any time be reclaimed as Government property. They were only lent to the blacks for their use, and not given to them to sell.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he could not see how such a regulation was to be enforced. The blacks cared very little for their blankets, and would sell them for flour or almost anything. He failed to see how that could be prevented.

Mr. LOW said the blacks were great gamblers, and would gamble away everything they had.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the blankets were made of such a pattern so that no one holding them

could claim a title to them, and would be subject to have them taken away by any officer of the Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he should be very glad if the hon. gentleman would point out the Act under which blackfellows' blankets could be reclaimed. He was not aware of one.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the blankets were the property of the Government.

Mr. ARCHER said he was not aware of any law to prevent the blacks selling their blankets. Did the hon. gentleman mean to say that if he (Mr. Archer) was found in possession of one of those blankets he could be seized by a policeman and dragged before a magistrate? That could not be done unless a special Act was passed for the purpose. It was, of course, undesirable that the blacks should sell their blankets, but he did not see how it could be prevented. There were always plenty of men willing to give a black a glass of brandy for his blanket, and the black would take it.

Mr. THORN said that blankets were not so much required on the coast as in the interior. An excessive supply had been sent to the coast, which possessed an equable climate, and hardly any to the Darling Downs, where the night temperature for the last two months had been less than 27 degrees, and where many deaths had happened in consequence. Blacks did not sell their blankets in the western part of the Darling Downs, because they were a necessity. The Government, after allowing the blacks to be shot indiscriminately, were now depriving them of their blankets. The Colonial Secretary ought to see that the police magistrates did their duty in that respect. Talking about blacks, he had seen more in a day than the hon. member for Fassifern (Mr. Persse), who talked so much about them last night, had seen all his life. They were pretty well exterminated before that hon. member came to the colony. He (Mr. Thorn) had seen as many as 1,000 together.

Mr. PERSSE said the hon. member was talking about things of which he was quite ignorant. The hon. member had never been beyond the Darling Downs, which, he seemed to think, was the far west of Queensland. He (Mr. Persse) had lived among blacks and seen a good deal of their habits. He had seen over 1,500 blacks together.

Mr. THORN said the blacks were not nearly so numerous in the interior as on the coast. There was no food for them and the tribes were very small and far apart, especially in the Warrego and the Barcoo. He wished the Government would supply them with blankets twice a year.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he wished to say a few words about the blankets which had been referred to. Of course the intention was, when a special brand of blanket was adopted, that notice should be given that any person found in possession of them other than the blacks themselves would be required to give them up; but, unfortunately, when that notice was given a large number of these blankets had already got into the hands of other persons. He believed, however, that the Colonial Secretary could still recover them if he took the proper steps.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would afford the hon. gentleman a fine opportunity of recovering any quantity of them. If the hon. gentleman would go to Stewart and Hemmant's he would find 1,200 pairs of those blankets.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that those blankets had not been issued, and that his remarks had referred to those which had been distributed. The

blankets referred to by the hon. gentleman were, as a matter of fact, still in the possession of the contractors; but he did not think it reflected much credit on the Government that blankets issued by them and bearing a special brand should be found in other hands than those of the blacks.

Mr. THORN said he was surprised to hear from the Colonial Secretary that there were 1,200 pairs of blankets now in the hands of Stewart and Hemmant whilst the blacks in various parts of the colony had been allowed to die from cold, because the Government said that there were no more blankets to be got. It turned out that there were bales of these very blankets, but because a member of the firm of Stewart and Hemmant had rendered himself obnoxious to the Government they refused to buy any more blankets from that firm; and though he had been told that there were no blankets for distribution among the blacks, it was found that Brisbane was full of them. He thought there should be some expression of opinion on the part of the Committee in reference to the action of the Government with regard to these blankets, and that some explanation should be given by the Government why, whilst having 1,200 pairs of blankets at their disposal, they allowed the blacks to perish from cold.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member talked downright twaddle. All the blankets that were wanted last year were bought from Stewart and Hemmant, and, as he had already stated, the patent adopted by the Government had been continued by that firm for their own purpose.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he could not understand how a patent belonging to the Government could be used by a private firm for other purposes. He could not understand how a Government patent or trade-mark could now be used by Messrs. Stewart and Hemmant. Surely, there must be some confusion in the matter.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no confusion whatever.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to know when this contract with Stewart and Hemmant expired? If Messrs. Stewart and Hemmant had imported a large number of blankets of a certain brand for no other purpose than for supplying the Government, and were suddenly told by the Government that their contract had expired, then, surely, the firm were entitled to recover. He should have supposed that when the Government found that they did not want any more blankets from the firm they would, at any rate, have given due notice to that effect. He should like to know, first of all, when the Government discovered that the contract with Stewart and Hemmant had expired?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that if the hon. gentleman wished to know the time, it was when it was discovered that the firm of Stewart and Hemmant were supplying immigrants' kits without any contract. It was discovered at the same time that that firm had been supplying blankets to the Queensland Government without any contract, and that a trade-mark had been taken out in their own name.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that what he wished to ascertain was, whether the expiration of the contract with Messrs. Stewart and Hemmant was discovered before the commencement of the present session or after?

Mr. KINGSFORD asked whether a tender for the supply of blankets was called for every year?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that there was no tender whatever in this case; there was merely an agreement made with Stewart and Hemmant.

Mr. DOUGLAS explained that when the arrangement was entered into with Stewart and Hemmant it was understood that blankets should be supplied of a pattern which was not to be obtained elsewhere, they being manufactured by one firm only in England. A sample of the blanket was shown to the Government Store-keeper, who pronounced it as being of excellent quality—in fact, better than any he had seen. The particular brand of blanket referred to possessed this advantage, that it could not be disposed of by the blacks in the same way that others had been; and that was the great reason why it was selected by the Government.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he must again ask whether this particular contract terminated before the commencement of the present session?

The PREMIER stated that his hon. colleague the Colonial Secretary found in the administration of his office that blankets were not being supplied under any contract. He could not find any special authority, other than that of the Under Colonial Secretary, for the arrangement then existing, and he then did what any business man would do, he called for tenders for the supply of blankets for two or three years—he (the Premier) did not remember which—and Stewart and Hemmant were not the successful tenderers. What had hon. members opposite to say to that? Was there anything extraordinary about the matter? The hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. Douglas) said that the blankets were of a particular brand, and were manufactured specially for the firm of Stewart and Hemmant; but was it likely that there would be anything in this particular brand to prevent its being used elsewhere? What was called a special brand amounted to this—that the Government caused blankets of a particular pattern to be given to the blacks in order to prevent them from disposing of them; but that did not amount to a patent.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he would put his question again. Had the contract with Stewart and Hemmant terminated before or after the commencement of the present session?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the agreement was terminated shortly after he found that Stewart and Hemmant were supplying blankets without any contract. It was about the middle of July.

Mr. GRIFFITH said it was just as he thought—just after the meeting of Parliament. It was strange that what might otherwise have passed unnoticed should have caused such virtuous indignation as soon as it was known that a member of the firm of Stewart and Hemmant had presented a petition to the House reflecting on the conduct of the Government. As to there being no contract with Stewart and Hemmant, all he could say was that he remembered the matter being discussed in the Cabinet; but whether there was a contract or not he could not say. One thing was, however, certain, that the firm had imported goods of a certain description on the faith of an arrangement entered into with the late Government, and that that arrangement had since been broken by the present Government. It was a breach of faith of which any private firm would be ashamed, and it reflected more discredit on the Government when taken in connection with circumstances which occurred before it was committed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that in all probability the arrangement would not have been discovered now had not Mr. Hemmant put himself so prominently forward of late in connection with contracts at home. In consequence of something he heard he (Mr. Palmer) telegraphed to the Agent-General, and found that

the firm of Stewart and Hemmant had been supplying ships' kits for immigrants to the amount of some £3,000 without any contract whatever, and only by some arrangement with Mr. Hamilton. That opened his eyes, and he found that that firm had been supplying goods to the Government in a sort of hole-and-corner way without any tender being called. As to there having been any agreement with that firm by the late Government, he could not find any, but if there had been any made the late Government were evidently ashamed to sign it. No such tender or contract could be found.

The PREMIER said that if there was any contract with Stewart and Hemmant the hon. leader of the Opposition should prove it. If the hon. gentleman knew that there was any record of the late Ministry countenancing, or being actually responsible for, any agreement with Messrs. Stewart and Hemmant, he should move for the production of the papers—that was all the Government wanted. Was the leader of the Opposition making a complaint on behalf of Stewart and Hemmant? The hon. gentleman had endeavoured to make out that this was an instance of cause and effect, but what was the real state of the case? The Colonial Secretary telegraphed to the Agent-General, and found that certain firms had been supplying goods without any contracts being made, among others the firm of Stewart and Hemmant; and on inquiry, his hon. colleague discovering that the same thing had been done in Brisbane by the firm just mentioned, reverted to the principle on which all Government business was done and called for tenders. A tender had been since accepted, but it was not that of Stewart and Hemmant.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he was exceedingly surprised to hear it stated that there was no contract. He had a distinct recollection of the matter being brought before him and his colleagues when in office; and if there was no ministerial authority, as stated, and no correspondence, and no contract—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no contract.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he distinctly recollected some correspondence on the subject.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Two letters.

Mr. DOUGLAS said very likely the contract consisted in that correspondence; a contract might be made by correspondence. The admission of the Colonial Secretary bore out what he (Mr. Douglas) had stated—that there was a special arrangement made that blankets of a certain pattern, manufactured by a certain manufacturer who registered the trade pattern, should be regularly supplied for a specific purpose.

The PREMIER: For ever?

Mr. DOUGLAS said he could not state what the arrangement was with regard to time, but he presumed it would be carried out until notice was given.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Exactly; notice was given.

Mr. DOUGLAS presumed the hon. gentleman had acted upon his rights in the matter, and he (Mr. Douglas) did not object to his doing so; but it was singularly suspicious that this should have been done about the time that Mr. Hemmant's petition came before the House.

Mr. THORN was sorry the Colonial Secretary had lost his temper; but he found that he (Mr. Thorn) was quite correct in his statement that because of a prejudice the Government had against Mr. Hemmant the blacks had to go minus their blankets. He found that was perfectly true.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not true.

Mr. THORN said it was true, because Stewart and Hemmant had blankets in their possession ready, and the reason given why they were not distributed to the blacks in his (Mr. Thorn's) district was that there were none in the colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It's not true.

Mr. THORN said there were over 100 blacks in the district of Northern Downs who did not get blankets last winter; in fact, they had to suffer because Mr. Hemmant had presented a petition to the House. With regard to the contract, he was a member of the Government at the time, and he had a distinct recollection of the matter being brought before the Cabinet, and he believed there was Executive authority for it: if there was not there ought to be. He believed the contract was for something like five or seven years. Stewart and Hemmant got the contract because tenders were called for, and they were the lowest tenderers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There were no tenders called for.

Mr. THORN said the reason why the time of the contract was extended was because Stewart and Hemmant undertook to go to some expense to get blankets made with a certain brand upon them, so that if the blacks sold or disposed of them they could be traced. He was astonished at the action of the Government in this matter, and that they should be so inhumane as to allow blacks to die simply because Mr. Hemmant had presented a petition to the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said facts contradicted the statement of the hon. member. The blankets were issued to the blacks in May last, and Stewart and Hemmant's contract was not quashed until July. What inference could be drawn from that? He might state further that to prevent any possible loss to that firm he offered Mr. Stewart to take all the blankets he had at contract price, but he did not want to sell them; he refused to take the contract price for them.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was under the impression that about every two years tenders were called for the supply of articles required in the colonial stores such as drapery. He knew there was a schedule of the things required when tenders were called for, but he did not know whether blankets were included in "drapery." No doubt very often firms were misled as to the quantities of certain articles they were informed the Government would require. He knew that one firm who supplied a certain article were told that so many thousands of that article would be required, and the consequence was that they laid in a stock, and at the end of their term of the contract they had something like 600 left on hand which were totally useless. They were misled by the colonial storekeeper, and possibly Stewart and Hemmant were misled in a similar way. In such cases if the successful tenderers were not the previous contractors they would probably have to buy the articles from the party who had the contract previously, perhaps, at an increased price, or it might be at a large reduction. He did not think any of the tenderers who supplied the Government with drapery thought it was such a very great thing to get the Government supply.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They need not tender.

Mr. BEATTIE said he would like to know if Stewart and Hemmant were the successful tenderers for the supply of drapery for 1880, and if so whether blankets were included in the schedule? If not, the Government were perfectly justified in

calling for tenders for blankets separately, and going into the open market to get a supply.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. the Colonial Treasurer asked what was his (Mr. Griffith's) complaint, and whether he complained on behalf of Stewart and Hemmant that their contract had been broken? He had no complaint to make on behalf of that firm; he had had no communication with any member of that firm either directly or indirectly in regard to this matter, which came to his ears a few days ago, and he thought it required explanation. The complaint he had to make was that the Government allowed matters of spite and dislike to influence them in carrying out their administrative duties; that when a difficulty arose that caused animosity in respect to a member of a firm who had commercial relations with the Government those relations were interrupted.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman assumed that this had been done from spite, and his (the Premier's) answer was that, from the action the hon. member himself took, it became apparent to the Government that certain parties were, without contract or tenders having been called for, supplying goods to the Government, and the Colonial Secretary took steps to have them supplied, after due competition, to the advantage of the colony, because they were being supplied at a lower price than previously. There was no spite in the matter.

Mr. THORN said he did not discover until July that all the blacks had not got blankets, and he then made application through the proper channel to get them supplied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To whom?

Mr. THORN said he applied to the police magistrate at Dalby, and he believed that officer sent to Brisbane for a supply, and was informed that there were no more.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He was never so informed.

Mr. THORN said at any rate he never got the blankets; they never reached there, and the blacks had to go without them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not believe a word of it.

Mr. MESTON thought there must be some mistake about tenders not being called for for supplying blankets. He remembered that about three years ago Finney, Isles, and Company were the successful tenderers, and there was considerable discussion about the quality of the blankets they supplied. He thought it would have been a much more wise and graceful act on the part of the Government if, instead of calling for tenders for imported inferior blankets, they had given an order to the Ipswich Woollen Company, who would have supplied a very much superior article at a less cost than the imported article of the same quality.

Mr. THORN said the Ipswich Woollen Company made excellent blankets.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not intend to reply to the remarks of the hon. member for Northern Downs (Mr. Thorn), which were not worth noticing; but, in reply to the hon. member for Rosewood (Mr. Meston), he had to state that the Premier happened to be a shareholder in the Ipswich Woollen Factory, and, no doubt, if the Government gave a contract to that company they would find some common informer coming down upon him for a penalty.

Mr. KINGSFORD said from what had been stated it appeared that business in the colonial stores was carried on in a very loose way. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley had stated that one firm who had tendered to supply a certain number of articles were told by the colonial

storekeeper that the Government would require so many thousands of them, and they had 500 or 600 left over. He could only say that if the tender was accepted on that basis it served the tenderer right, and the sooner there was an improvement in that loose manner of doing business the better. He did not suppose Stewart and Hemmant were to blame; they no doubt did the best for themselves like everyone else. He did not know whether the article they supplied would be of extra value; but he maintained that no Government had a right to secure to any individual or any firm a vested interest in supplying necessities for the Government use. He said any such practice was to be deprecated, and if it was done, no matter by whom it was done, it should be denounced—that the whole community should be placed at a disadvantage to benefit one favoured firm. That appeared to be the gist of the whole matter. He could not conceive that the Government had been actuated by any secondary or unworthy motives. Such could only arise in the mind of anyone capable of doing such things himself. He (Mr. Kingsford) did not charge him with it, but it was the natural outcome of events that had occurred. He hoped that those who had the management of affairs in future would pay a little more attention to business rules in conducting this department.

Mr. BEATTIE believed the hon. member did not know what he was talking about. He was sure that if that hon. member was a tenderer he would see what articles were put down in the schedule, and ascertain from the colonial storekeeper how many of each particular line would be required during the term of the contract. If he did not do so he would be very foolish, and if he were misled as to the number of articles to be supplied it would not be his fault. He (Mr. Beattie) was not making any complaint about the matter, but simply said it was possible that Stewart and Hemmant were misled in the way he had pointed out.

Mr. THORN said if he recollected aright tenders were called for the supply of blankets; the matter came before the Cabinet, and Stewart and Hemmant being the lowest tenderers, got the contract for, he thought, five years. Everything was done aboveboard, and there ought to be an Executive minute in existence confirming what he stated.

The PREMIER said the audacity of the hon. member was something extraordinary. Even in the face of what had just been stated—that there was no record whatever of tenders having been called for, or of any action on the part of the Ministry in accepting a tender—that the only record was two letters between the Under Secretary and Stewart and Hemmant—the hon. member stood up and said, from memory, that he distinctly remembered tenders being called for, and that Stewart and Hemmant's was accepted;—he (Mr. Thorn) not only remembered that, but that it was for two or five years—in the face of the statement that there was no record whatever in the office of any such transaction. Surely the hon. member was not so unjust to the Civil servants as to suggest that the records had been destroyed;—and even that was not possible without discovery, because the blank would be at once seen in the office.

Mr. THORN said the documents might have been abstracted from the office. He recollected, when Postmaster-General, receiving an offer from the P. and O. Company to run a steamer here once a-month for £13,000 a-year; the Under Secretary of the Post Office also recollected seeing the document; but it could not be found, and where had it gone? If that was

abstracted from the Post Office, might not these papers have been abstracted from the Colonial Secretary's Office in the same way?

The PREMIER said the hon. member talked a good deal about documents being abstracted from the office, and he himself once said in the House that he had received an offer from the A.S.N. Company to perform a certain service. The hon. member had been constantly challenged to produce that document; and had never been able to do so. If the abstraction of that document took place at all it was during the hon. gentleman's own term of office. But, as a matter of fact, it was proved conclusively that the document had never existed.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £19,984 be granted for Government Printing, &c. The reduction in the item "Clerk" was owing to the officer who held the position leaving the service, and the promotion of the second clerk to the vacancy at an increase in his salary, but at a reduced rate as compared with that given to the clerk leaving. The item "Foreman Ruler" appeared as a separate item for the first time, although it should have appeared in last year's Estimates. The small increase in the "wages" vote—£300—was the annual increase to apprentices, machine and folding boys, &c. The "*Hansard*" increase—£700—was to provide for the additional composition, paper, machinery, &c., rendered necessary by the alterations effected in *Hansard* this session and its greatly-increased circulation, &c. Up to last Friday the total number printed amounted to 97,380 for the Council, and 221,185 for the Assembly, or a total of 318,565. The receipts from newspaper proprietors, subscribers, &c., would during the year be not less than £1,000. The item "*Hansard* Type"—£300—was required for defraying the cost of the new type now used in that publication.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he should like to ask if it was anticipated that the estimated amount would cover the expenditure of the year. It had been usual sometimes to ask for a supplementary vote.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that it was anticipated that the estimated amount would be sufficient. As far as human insight could estimate it, the amount was correct.

Mr. THORN asked whether the money received for sales of *Hansard* went to the printing establishment, or to the Treasury?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: All receipts go to the Treasury.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £25,150 be granted for Charitable Allowances. There was a reduction on the amount of last year, in consequence of the amounts then voted not having been claimed by the different hospitals. The amounts of the present vote had been carefully calculated on what had been required by the various hospitals last year. The relief boards were the same as last year. In the hospitals there was a reduction of £5,000 odd, which was as near as they could go to the sum which it was supposed would be necessary for the present year. If it was exceeded, as sometimes happened, and any particular hospital got a large amount of subscriptions, they would of course have to grant double the amount. But, on the whole, he was inclined to believe that it would come out very fairly.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he should like to know whether the same practice was served out to Brisbane as the country hospitals. He saw that there was a foot-note saying—"or such

smaller sums as shall not exceed double the amount raised by private subscriptions." He should like to know whether £1,500 was subscribed for the Brisbane hospital by the people of Brisbane. He believed that amount had never been subscribed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was happy to say that the Brisbane hospital was recovering its character. The sum of £1,528 17s. 6d. had been subscribed, and the amount granted was £1,928. The hospital would be entitled, if the money were required, to over £3,000; but the understanding was that they would draw for what was wanted, and not for more. He was glad to see that the subscription list came to such a creditable amount.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he also was glad to hear of this satisfactory state of things, and he considered that it was through his action, and that of other members of the Committee, that the result had come about; they had apparently at last succeeded in rousing the inhabitants to a sense of their duties.

Mr. McLEAN said that the money was not raised in Brisbane alone, but in the vicinity. The satisfactory condition of things referred to, he believed, was due to the energy of the collector, who had visited the Albert and Logan and other different places collecting subscriptions. The amount was not entirely raised by Brisbane, but people outside who used the hospital contributed to the success of the collection.

Mr. KING asked what was the reason of the reduction in the amount put down for Maryborough hospital? There was a reduction of £500.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was because the money had not been applied for. It was not wanted, sufficient funds not having been subscribed.

Mr. DICKSON said that the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, who had intended to be present, had asked him to mention the Toowoomba hospital. Last year it was £1,000; this year it was £500, and he was informed that the amount was utterly inadequate to the requirements of the institution, so that the hospital would have to be given up unless the amount were increased to the original sum.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the explanation was simple. The last subscription list only came in during the last few days. The total amount now was £431 4s. 2d. As long as they raised subscriptions they would get double the amount of them.

Mr. DICKSON said if the Colonial Secretary carried out the course he had suggested, the foot-note formally appended to the Estimates would not this year be correct. The foot-note said—"Or such smaller amounts as shall not exceed double the amount raised by private subscription"; and the Colonial Secretary had stated that if a larger than double the amount voted were subscribed the Government subsidy would be upon the enlarged scale. It was desirable that the hospitals should be made aware of the amounts they were entitled to receive. If the Estimates were passed with the foot-note in its present form a great injustice would be done in the case of the Toowoomba, Maryborough, and other hospitals. It was to be hoped that efforts would be made in those districts to raise an amount at least sufficient to enable the committee to claim a subsidy equal to that appropriated to them in the year 1879-80; and, in order that they might obtain the increased amount, an alteration of the foot-note would be necessary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no objection to the alteration being made.

Mr. ARCHER said he noticed that the amounts for the hospitals at Rockhampton and Springsure had been reduced, and the member for Leichhardt had requested him to ask whether the amount voted would be increased if the subscriptions made an increase necessary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Yes.

Mr. THORN asked how many cases were now under treatment in the Cooktown hospital?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was impossible to give an answer to such a question. The number was continually varying.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he observed that the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. King) had referred to the small amount on the Estimates for the Maryborough hospital. He found by the Auditor-General's report that the amount available last year was £1,563, and that £1,562 15s. 6d. was spent. If the amount that would be required this year were to be estimated on the expenditure of the previous year, it was probable that the amount on the Estimates would be considerably below what would be required.

Mr. THORN said he did not know who represented Ravenswood, but he noticed that there was no sum on the Estimates for that district.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The hospital has been done away with.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether he had understood correctly that it was proposed to alter the foot-note, so that a larger amount than that voted could be appropriated? The effect of omitting the word "smaller" would be to vote an unlimited sum, and he hoped the Chairman would not allow any such alteration to be made. The recommendation of the Governor could not be treated in that way—such a proceeding was not in accordance with the Constitution Act—and if the Chairman allowed such an alteration he should take the ruling of the Speaker on the subject.

Mr. DICKSON said he had suggested the alteration not with a view to lead the Government to violate the Governor's recommendation, but simply to enable the Colonial Secretary to do as he had promised.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already stated that if the subscriptions were increased the Government contribution would be increased likewise. The amount would be placed on the Supplementary Estimates.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £4,430 be granted for Benevolent Asylum, Dunwich. He said that the asylum had assumed very large proportions, and judging from the number of applications which were coming in he did not think the amount asked would be too much to cover the expenditure for the year.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £16,562 be granted for Asylum for the Insane, Woogaroo. He said that the principal increase in the Estimates was £1,000, under the heading "provisions and incidentals." The asylum was assuming very large proportions.

Mr. DICKSON asked whether it was intended to transfer the patients at Sandy Gallop Asylum to Woogaroo?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : No ; look at the next item.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to hear some explanation with respect to the singular vacillation of the Government in deciding that the asylum at Sandy Gallop should be vacated, and, after an interview with the members of the district, countermanding the order?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not see anything very extraordinary about the matter. It was represented to him by the surgeon of the Woogaroo Asylum that all the patients at Sandy Gallop could be accommodated at Woogaroo without entailing any additional expense. On inquiring into the matter he found that that could not be done without the erection of an additional ward. It was represented to him that the Ipswich asylum was doing very well ; that the patients were well and required very little restraint ; that the situation was a healthy one ; and that there were a great many other things in favour of the asylum. On visiting the asylum he found that those statements were true. According to calculation, he found that they might look for a natural annual increase of patients to the extent of forty or fifty for whom accommodation would have to be provided. According to the latest statistics, published by the *Lancet*, the medical authorities had come to the conclusion that no asylum should contain more than 500 persons, and, as that number was nearly reached at Woogaroo, it would be absolutely necessary to provide for the increase of the next three or four years. He found that by the expenditure of £2,000 they could provide for that increase at the Sandy Gallop asylum, and he recommended to his colleagues that that amount be expended in adding two wings to that asylum. By doing so they would obviate a much larger outlay, and would provide sufficient accommodation to meet requirements for the next three or four years. There was an amount of £7,200 provided for an asylum at Toowoomba, but, as that amount would not cover half the cost of a building into which patients could be received, it was considered that it would be absolute folly to commence the work.

Mr. DOUGLAS said it would doubtless be an advantage if Dr. Smith had the patients of Sandy Gallop removed to Woogaroo, where they could be under his direct superintendence ; but he thought that there was scarcely sufficient accommodation for all the inmates who would have to be accommodated if the change was made. He was quite aware that Sandy Gallop was a healthy situation, but he doubted very much the policy of extending the existing buildings. He thought the Government ought to have acted on the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and have proceeded with the erection of an asylum at Toowoomba. £10,000 had been passed by the House for that purpose, and, according to the Colonial Secretary, £7,200 was now available. He did not see why the asylum should not be commenced. It was never contemplated that £10,000 would be sufficient for the building—it would probably cost between £30,000 and £40,000. His idea was that they might make a commencement with the Toowoomba building on a small scale, so as to be able to provide for the accommodation of patients, should the number at Woogaroo extend beyond 600. After that was done the building at Sandy Gallop might be devoted to the Protestant Orphanage. The Diamantina Orphanage must be removed, as the building was an unsuitable one. Sandy Gallop would be an excellent site for such an institution, and the building was well adapted for the purpose. He should like to know how the Government proposed to raise the money for the additions to the Sandy Gallop asylum?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : It will be asked for in the supplementary loan vote.

Mr. DOUGLAS still hoped that the Government would undertake to carry out the recommendation of the Royal Commission with regard to the Toowoomba asylum. It was advisable to

make a commencement with the building, and, in preference to extending the Sandy Gallop asylum, he thought it would be better to extend the Woogaroo Asylum. There was ample room at Woogaroo for further buildings, and it would be a decided advantage to have the whole of the patients under the superintendence of one medical officer.

Mr. DICKSON said he hardly understood whether it was the intention of the Government to proceed with the asylum at Toowoomba or to defer doing so until a larger amount was voted?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already pointed out that it would be useless to spend £7,200 at Toowoomba. A sum of at least £15,000 would be required for out-offices and to prepare one ward for the reception of patients. The Government had decided not to go on with the building immediately. The climate of Toowoomba was suited for a lunatic asylum, but it would be worse than useless to commence by spending £7,200 on a building and then to allow it to remain at a stand-still.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he did not think the whole of the buildings at Sandy Gallop cost half the amount that had already been voted for an asylum at Toowoomba. If the out-offices were to cost £15,000 the whole structure would cost at least £100,000. He could not think that there was any necessity for fixing the standard so high. He thought, too, that if it were decided to eventually build a large asylum at Toowoomba, the ground to be appropriated for that purpose might be fenced and planted with trees in preparation for the building. He presumed from the statement of the Colonial Secretary as to the estimated cost that the designs had already been prepared?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They have not.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he could hardly think, then, that the Colonial Secretary had rightly estimated the expenditure. The Sandy Gallop buildings had cost, up to the present time, only between £3,000 and £4,000. That amount, with the sum of £2,000 since authorised, would make the total cost not more than £6,000. The buildings would be very suitable as wings to a larger building; and he saw no reason why similar buildings should not be erected at Toowoomba, by way of a commencement.

Mr. FRASER said he would call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the low salary received by the assistant-surgeon of the Woogaroo Asylum in comparison with the salary received by the surgeon-superintendent. He did not know the assistant-surgeon, but he was informed that he was a most efficient officer, possessing, he believed, but a very small private practice. He was not an advocate of raising salaries generally at the present time, but it should be borne in mind that the work in connection with this asylum was increasing year by year, and it was only reasonable, therefore, that a slight increase should be made in the item to which he referred. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would give the suggestion his favourable consideration.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the salary was small, but it was not so small as it at first sight appeared, because the assistant-surgeon had a good house. When he was in opposition he endeavoured to obtain an increase in the salary of the former assistant-surgeon; but the gentleman who now held the position had accepted it with his eyes open. As he considered it worth while to accept the appointment as it was, he (the Colonial Secretary) did not feel called upon to propose an increase in the salary.

Question put and passed.

The sum of £1,305 was voted for the Asylum for the Insane at Ipswich, and £1,660 for Lunatic Reception-houses.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £8,705 be granted for Volunteers.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was sorry to have to deal with so important a subject in such a small Committee; and he thought the Colonial Secretary would do well to postpone the vote. He did not believe in this expenditure; it was totally unnecessary—an extravagance indulged in to satisfy the warlike proclivities of the Colonial Secretary. He believed the hon. gentleman took some pride in styling himself "Secretary for War." But in all probability the vote would be of no service whatever, even if we were visited with war. At any rate, if the service were not abolished there was room for considerable cutting down. They had an inspecting officer at £235, a colonel-commandant at £500, a major of brigade and staff officer at £400, an adjutant and musketry inspector at £300, a gunnery instructor at £180, and so forth. The thing was absurd! There was not a member of the Committee who did not know that in passing this vote they were inflicting a grievous wrong upon the colonists generally. Volunteers were not wanted. If they wanted an efficient force let them have a paid force. The force in its present position was a perfect farce. It seemed to consist for the most part of officers, although, a few evenings ago, the rank-and-file arrangements were described by the hon. member for Leichhardt—and he regretted that that hon. member was not then present to defend the vote. In all earnestness, he asked the Committee to consider what earthly good they were doing in voting this sum to keep up the force? What good did they do by it? They gave a few ornamental appointments to gentlemen with some military knowledge; but it seemed to him that the State paid too dearly for that knowledge, having regard for the small benefit they derived from it. He had no doubt that the inspecting officer was an excessively good man in his way, but they could do without him, and, in so doing, save £235 a-year. The colonel-commandant might also be a very good man; and the same remark would apply to other officers upon the list. But if they were to have a force at all, let it be an efficient force. Volunteers did as they liked—were not compelled to turn out subject to pains and penalties. The volunteer system as worked in the colony was worse than useless. Let them have either a paid force, or adopt some such system as that in use in New South Wales. But they were asked to vote £8,705 without any equivalent. If members of the Committee only spoke their minds, he felt sure they would agree with him. He had no doubt that some hon. members representing electorates round about Brisbane felt that their tongues were tied, because it was possible that the volunteer vote might be imported into their electioneering experiences. No one knew better than he did that it was a popular move to support the existing state of things. But he did hope that there were a number of hon. members who, if they could not give effect to their views, would at all events enter an indignant protest against the great waste of the public funds. What else but waste could it be considered to pay a lot of ornamental men to ride flash horses about Brisbane and to generally enjoy themselves? He believed they were very good fellows: but they could pay too much for good fellows. At the present time, of all others, they should be guarded in passing votes of this kind. They were paying for a luxury—for what in another colony were called "toy soldiers." He had no doubt that if the enemy actu-

ally appeared the force would justify that appellation. He was not acting inconsistently upon the present occasion, because he had always protested against this vote. If he stood alone he would still protest against such an extravagant waste of funds at a time when they should be careful as to every shilling they spent.

Mr. THORN said he was not opposed to the volunteer force, and he could not help noticing the remarkable inconsistency of the hon. member for Mitchell. Upon a former occasion when he proposed a reduction in this vote the hon. member for Mitchell voted against him. He had found the hon. member's name in the division list.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What was the question?

Mr. THORN said the question was a vote of £10,000 for defences, and he took it that volunteers formed part of their defences. He had altered his own opinion with regard to the volunteers. Although he did not think they should be bolstered up, he could not help saying that he thought them a most useful force. At the same time, he was afraid they received rather too much from the country. It was notorious out of doors that one particular part of the force was favoured. He was informed that the artillery could do as they chose with the Government of the day, as far as money was concerned—they could obtain their capitation grants and their uniforms as they pleased; whereas the rifles were not favoured in the least degree. He was informed that some companies of volunteers had been without capitation grants and uniforms for years. Even-handed justice should be dealt out to all volunteers, whether artillerymen or riflemen. He thought the Government would be doing a great deal of good if they offered more prizes for marksmen; money would be well spent in making the volunteers good marksmen. He hoped the Committee would vote the sum, which was not a large one. He had seen a good deal of the volunteers, and thought they were a useful body. He had been a volunteer himself once, and the other day was offered a commission, but refused it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could not allow the misstatement of the hon. member to pass uncontradicted. He (Mr. Morehead) certainly voted for the sum of £10,000, but the hon. gentleman forgot to tell the Committee that it was not for volunteers, but a vote out of loan for the defences of the colony. The hon. member for Normanby, who was a strong opponent of the present volunteer system, also voted with him on that occasion. He would vote £20,000 or even £50,000 for the defences of the colony if it was required, but he would oppose the system of the volunteer force as long as he had a tongue to speak in the House. The thing was rotten to the core, and was simply the means of employing a number of nice young men, very good at tea-parties and balls, who were highly and improperly paid by the State. Evidently he was the only man in the Committee who entertained that view, and, although he had no intention to impede the progress of business, he would take the opportunity of entering his protest against the colony being taxed nearly £10,000 a-year to maintain an utterly useless force.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL asked what was the use of voting £10,000 for the defences of the colony, if they had no men to stand behind the batteries? People who did not understand the matter might be misled by the statements of the hon. member. Volunteers were not useless; on the contrary, whenever they had been tried they had proved themselves thoroughly good soldiers.

Against the Maories, who were very brave enemies, the drilled military showed themselves exceedingly inefficient, and, he was ashamed to say, were on many occasions most disgracefully beaten; but the volunteers covered themselves with glory. The English army was manned on the voluntary system although it had the Mutiny Act, which, he supposed, would be passed here if there was any probability of war. Volunteers had as much courage, and possessed all the other good qualities, of the regular army; and in case of an attack they would show themselves equally as efficient. The sum on the Estimates was a very small one, but it was sufficient to insure the invested and realised wealth of the colony from danger from an invader. The only enemies ever likely to come to Queensland would be privateers or corvettes seeking plunder, whom a force of 1,000 men backed up by artillery could give a very good account of. If they were to reject the vote for volunteers the colony would appear in a most contemptible position before the world, and would be at the mercy of any invader who chose to make a descent upon its coast.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member (Mr. Weld-Blundell) seemed to think that the eyes of Europe were upon the colony, and that unless they voted the £8,000 for volunteers it would be held up to ridicule by the Great Powers. He (Mr. Morehead) did not think that even the astute Prince Bismarck would trouble himself very much whether the colony had defences and volunteers or not. The volunteers were possessed of courage, the same as any other body of Englishmen, but the system under which they were managed made them utterly useless. No doubt, as the hon. member had said, the Mutiny Act would be passed in the event of war, but in the meantime the volunteers might leave, and it would be an awkward position to be placed in to have a Mutiny Act and nobody to work it upon. If he was wrong in his estimate of volunteers, he had the celebrated saying of William Pitt to fall back upon. A number of officers of volunteer corps waited on him, and asked him whether they would be expected to leave England in the event of war. Pitt replied, "Only in case of an invasion."

Mr. BEATTIE said that, while he agreed that the volunteers would give satisfaction if required, his complaint against the force was that it was over-officered. A body of 1,000 volunteers required an expenditure of £2,555 to officer them. The estimate might be greatly reduced. There was a major of brigade at £400. What did he do? And there were three instructors of artillery, £180, some of whom might clearly be dispensed with. It was, of course, desirable to have men to man the batteries in case a hostile vessel came up the river, but where was the battery finally to be? Hon. members would remember that on the recommendation of the Inspecting Officer the battery was to be built at the top of Doughboy Creek, and on his return from the South he recommended it to be done away with. If such was the advice under which they were to act, it was making a farce of volunteering. If the staff officers were reduced, and the money devoted to making the men efficient, it would be far better spent. If a reduction was made in those items he should be happy to support it.

Mr. BAILEY said he thought the vote ought to be removed from the Estimates altogether. He had mixed a good deal amongst volunteers, and one and all, both officers and men, told the same story, that the whole thing was a fraud on the country—and an expensive fraud. If they needed a force for the defence of the colony, the best force would be one raised in the

bush, and composed of members of rifle clubs—men who were used to the rifle, and were accustomed to rough work; instead of having corps in the towns composed of men who merely served a few months' drill until they were able to handle a rifle, and who would break down with the first hard work they had to perform. If they took men from the country who were hardy and able to go through hardships, then there would be some reason for voting money. He believed in having a company of men trained in the use of big guns, but beyond that he thought there was no occasion for a volunteer force such as it was at present.

Mr. McLEAN said that when the new commandant of volunteers was appointed a special request was made to the volunteers to be present at an inspection, but only a very small number turned out. Of course, as the volunteers were not paid they could not be expected to turn out on all occasions; but he thought that when the Commandant asked them to meet him, even if they were not paid, they should have shown their respect for their commanding officer by turning out. It was not creditable, after such a large sum of money was voted by the House for volunteers, that so small a number of men should have answered to the request made by the Commandant on the occasion referred to. He agreed with the remarks of the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. King), and the hon. member for Wide Bay (Mr. Bailey), that in the event of war the best volunteers would be men from the bush who were accustomed to the use of the rifle and to roughing it.

Mr. THOMPSON said he had always supported the volunteer vote, and he did not now intend to repeat his arguments for doing so. Somehow or other this was a question on which members took different sides and expressed opinions to which they had always adhered, and for his part he should not go from the opinion he had always expressed—that he considered that the volunteer movement was a very useful one. He would now even go further than he had done, and suggest that every person entering the Civil service should be a member of some volunteer corps. If there were anything like the number of efficient volunteers that were provided for in the vote, he must say that it was a most satisfactory state of things. He was happy to say that he had never seen any warfare, and the probability was that this colony would not see any for a great many years; but what it had to be prepared against was, as had been stated by the hon. member for Clermont, attacks from small vessels carrying letters of marque. Man must be a fighting animal, and therefore it was expedient to be always prepared to meet an enemy. He should support the volunteer vote were it only to keep up a military spirit amongst the people.

Mr. LOW said he should like to know how the hon. member for Wide Bay would get the hardy men in the bush he referred to if there was an enemy's ship in the Bay: did he suppose that they would neglect their business and come down to town at a few hours' notice?

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said the hon. member for Wide Bay (Mr. Bailey) seemed to think that any enemy intending to come to this colony would write a letter saying, "We shall be here a fortnight hence." No doubt there might be many good kangaroo killers who could, on receiving notice, come down and pick off an enemy at long range, but there would be a difficulty in getting those men when they were wanted. The hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Thompson) had referred to all Civil servants being drilled, but that might be found rather impracticable. He (Mr. Weld-Blundell) thought, however, that the

police should be regularly drilled to act in company, as such a force as that—say 200 men—might be found to be a most valuable addition to the volunteer force.

Mr. PRICE explained that he intended to support the Government, of whose policy he approved.

Mr. DOUGLAS said, in reference to the annual volunteer vote, his opinion was that no alterations should be made in the present system, if possible. He was not surprised that exception should be taken to the large amount of the vote, but at the same time it would be generally admitted that they must have a volunteer force of some kind, and it was desirable that it should be made as efficient as possible. That, of course, necessitated expenditure in the maintenance of a staff, because without that they could not expect to have discipline or really effective results. He therefore at once admitted that they must have a standing staff maintained for a series of years, and they must encourage the gentlemen whom they paid to do them good service, and make them feel that they were, as far as they possibly could be, permanent officers. The present staff struck him as being a very efficient one. In the first place, with regard to Colonel Scratchley, he believed that officer did good service in coming here two or three times a-year and advising in regard to the force. He also did good service by connecting the force here with the volunteer force throughout Australia. They had made a binding agreement with that gentleman extending over a series of years, in which they united with the neighbouring colonies to secure the services of a really good man as inspecting officer. Something had been said by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley with reference to the advice given by Colonel Scratchley as to the erection of a fortification at Doughboy Creek. It was quite true that Colonel Scratchley did give that advice. He (Mr. Douglas) was in office at the time, and, as there was a general belief that they were on the eve of war, it was felt that it was essential that some steps should be taken to erect a fortification which would be worked in connection with a line of torpedoes which it was then proposed to put down in the river. Colonel Scratchley, however, always stated that the battery at Doughboy Creek would not supersede the battery to be erected at Lytton. The battery at Lytton could not be excavated at that time, and it was thought advisable to erect the one at Doughboy Creek, upon which guns could be mounted if necessary. However, peace came, and everybody felt assured that there was no immediate chance of war, and therefore the necessity for this battery ceased. The Minister who succeeded him in office very properly directed his attention to the more permanent work at Lytton, and in that respect Colonel Scratchley must be relieved from all blame. In the Colonel-commandant he believed they had secured a very competent and useful officer. He was an active young officer, who had had actual experience and possessed all the knowledge they could expect from an officer in that position. He (Mr. Douglas) did not think they should offer this officer less than the sum specified on the Estimates, and his position should be as much assured as possible. He was sure that if they sent to England they would not have secured a better man for the purpose; perhaps they would have got a man of more experience but with less activity, and he believed that under Colonel Blaxland the Volunteer Force would become really efficient. He had very great confidence in Colonel Blaxland training the force effectively, and that officer would also be always likely to give judicious advice upon military matters if called upon to do so. He believed the other officers were likely to prove useful men in their

respective positions. The weak point in connection with the volunteers appeared to him to be this: that the ordinary men, especially in the rifle companies, were not found to muster at drill so well as they ought. It might be said that there was no inducement for them to do so—that they were not rewarded in the shape of pay, or after long service, by land orders, as they were at one time. No doubt land orders were a great inducement to regular attendance, and caused men to enter into the spirit of volunteering; but it had been decided to dispense with those rewards, and they rested now simply on the zeal of the men who chose to attend drill. He must say, however, that men should not be retained in a corps unless they attended regularly. If they did not attend to their duties they should not be allowed the privilege of being volunteers, for it should be considered a privilege. An efficient volunteer was a man who ought to be respected in every grade of society, but if men did not attend drill they should not be encouraged to remain in the force. In this respect he believed the artillery was more efficient, and it had been explained that this arose from the fact that they had received more attention, and that more money had been expended upon them than the other branches of the service. How far that might be true he did not mean to say, but the fact remained that the artillery was a very efficient force. There were men in it who were Civil servants, and who might be depended upon in any emergency. He found that there was less on the Estimates this year for rifle ranges than previously, and he thought this was to be regretted. He presumed the Colonial Secretary asked for only £300 because that was all that would be required; but he confessed he would rather see that item increased and some others diminished. It would be very desirable indeed to encourage the use of the rifle, so that volunteers might make themselves good marksmen, and he would even go so far as to offer substantial prizes for that purpose. He believed that a thousand or two might be saved out of the £6,150 for contingencies, and if that were the case he would like to see £200 or £300 added to the sum put down for rifle ranges. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would take that matter into consideration, and that the men enrolled should be made to feel that if they were privileged to continue in the force the least that could be expected from them was regular attendance, when called upon by their officers, on certain occasions. He did not say that these occasions should be too frequent—the men should not be harassed by too frequent drills, but they should attend when called upon. The item for camp instruction he looked upon as the most pleasing feature in the whole vote. If the men could meet and live together for a whole week, not only for the purposes of drill but also to make each other's acquaintance and be exercised in military manœuvres, an *esprit de corps* would be established which would be likely to lead to the very best results. He hoped, therefore, that the necessary provision would be made from year to year for this purpose, and that no alteration would be made unless very good reasons were given.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had so often spoken upon the volunteer question, and his opinions on that subject were so well known, that it would be simply tiring the Committee to repeat them to-night. He would simply say that the volunteers had not fallen in his estimation in any degree whatever. He believed they had been doing remarkably well, that they would be of material use to the country, and that if in course of time they should unfortunately run the risk of invasion, they would be found coming to the front and behaving as they ought to. Some remarks had been made as to non-attendance at

drill, and he admitted at once that it was a pity the men did not attend more regularly at the small drills; but at the same time he felt bound to say in their defence that, notwithstanding the prognostications made last year that when they were not paid for their attendance at camp as in the previous year there would be a very great diminution in their numbers, they came to the front in very creditable force and behaved themselves well. The total number on the roll, officers and men, was 1,156. Taking out of this the number for Rockhampton, 123; for Maryborough, 60; and for Bundaberg, 35; which gave a total of 218, an available force of 938 was left to assemble at the camp of instruction at Ipswich last year, at which the Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and Warwick forces were able to come to the front. Of that 938 the large number of 838 appeared on the camp ground. That spoke volumes for the good feeling of the volunteers on the subject of camp instruction. Only 100 of all ranks were absent from instruction at Ipswich on the Monday when the encampment was broken up. The attendance certainly was not so good on some of the other days. They began on the Wednesday with 400 men; on Thursday they worked up to 663; on Friday to 799; on Saturday the number was 790; on Sunday, 818; and on Monday, the closing day, it was 838. He thought those figures were very respectable indeed, and showed that the men had their hearts in their work. With respect to the objection taken by the hon. member for Maryborough to the small sum set down for rifle ranges in comparison with the amount voted last year, he must remind the hon. member that in many cases rifle ranges had been formed, and the same amount was not necessary in succeeding years for keeping them in order. It was of great importance that there should be rifle ranges, but he had been informed by the commandant that £300 was all that was wanted. With respect to the staff, he would say that without a competent staff the volunteer movement would fall through altogether. He had for a long time considered it absolutely necessary that there should be an efficient staff. Very many of the officers on the staff had been for some time in the service. The Colonel-Commandant, although new to the service in the colony, had been a volunteer for some time, and had proved himself to be very efficient indeed in the position in which he had been placed. He had long felt that without a commandant—a military man—at the head of the force they might as well give up the volunteer movement altogether. He had long been of that opinion, and there were many people in the colony who took a great interest in the volunteers, and who had consistently opposed the payment of a commandant, who had changed their opinions after seeing the results, and now believed that the appointment was of material assistance to the force. With respect to Colonel Scratchley's engagement, he considered the volunteers and the colony ought to be congratulated on having secured the services of that gentleman, both on account of his abilities as an engineer officer and because of the advice he gave on military subjects. That officer never visited Brisbane without materially improving the morale of the volunteer force, by speaking to the men and advising the officers. He believed, in fact he knew, that Colonel Scratchley had done a great deal of good; and he did not think a great deal of blame could be attached to him for that miserable attempt at a fort at Porter's Hill, Doughboy Creek. It was pointed out as a suitable place for a temporary battery, but he had not heard that Colonel Scratchley ordered the excavations himself. He believed that officer had never designed a fort there at all, and that whatever was done was without his know-

ledge; in fact, no one was more astonished than he was when he came back to the colony and found the scratching that had taken place with the design of forming a fort. He (the Colonial Secretary) did not know who designed it; but, if his information—which was second-hand—was correct, it was never designed by Colonel Scratchley, and he had heard at second-hand that Colonel Scratchley disclaimed the responsibility. As he had said before, it was useless giving his opinions on the subject of volunteers; but he believed the force was of very great use to the colony. He believed that in case of invasion they would form the nucleus round which volunteers for the occasion—volunteers in every sense of the word—might rally as a pretty well-drilled force. They were improving very rapidly in drill, to which, by the attention paid to them by their commanding officer and the staff, they would be induced to pay even more attention. Colonel Scratchley, on the occasion of his last visit, expressed himself as very well pleased with the improvement in the force. With respect to the assertion of the hon. member for Wide Bay, that he had been told by volunteer officers that the volunteers were a fraud and a very expensive fraud on the country, all he (Mr. Palmer) could say was that the officers that hon. member spoke to must have been a very bad sample. He did not believe in the proposition that they could do very well without volunteers by forming bodies of riflemen in the interior. Without discipline and without drill they would be nothing better in the face of the enemy than an armed mob, however good as marksmen they might be. It was very desirable they should have men who were good shots, but it was also very necessary that they should be drilled and know how to support each other. The suggestion made by the hon. member for Clermont, that the police should be used more as soldiers, was impracticable. There was but a small body of police, and they were spread over the length and breadth of the land. The police were all drilled before they were sent out from barracks; but it would be impossible to bring them together to act as soldiers in any way whatever. He hoped the estimate would be allowed to go through. It was a vote of great importance and had been cut down as low as possible. Looking at it in every way, he believed it was an exceedingly cheap force and an exceedingly useful one to the colony.

Mr. PERSSE regretted that there was such a small House present when a question of so much importance was being discussed. He, for one, maintained that when the Government thought of going in for reductions they should have gone in for reduction in the volunteer force. He also considered that the arguments of the Colonial Secretary were wrong in a great many respects. It was well known that volunteering was one of the hon. gentleman's hobbies. There was not a man in the House who thought more of the volunteer force than he (Mr. Persse) did, but he had believed from the very first that from the inspecting officer down to the privates they were working on a false basis. In his last few remarks the Colonial Secretary said that riflemen, or men trained to use the rifle in the country, would be only a disorganised rabble without drill. He did not agree with him. The best and the first thing to do would be to teach a man to use the rifle, and then everything else would be easy, for they could always make a good soldier of a man who could handle a rifle. Was it to be supposed that if the colony were invaded that the volunteers as at present constituted would be able to defend their shores? If they did it would only be by superior tactics, and by being good shots. If an enemy came to-morrow there would not be many they could

rely upon as troops, but riflemen would be more reliable. For himself, he would like to see £2,000 or £3,000 put down for artillerymen, and for this reason—it took years and years for a man to become a good artilleryman, and to learn to use the cannons as they ought to be used without accident to themselves. Witness the accident that occurred in Brisbane at one time in the Government Gardens, and the numerous accidents that occurred to men who had been years in the service from slight acts of negligence. A short time ago, the English papers gave an account of three artillerymen being blown to pieces by the careless use of a hammer in knocking off a fuse on a detonating shell. If they could teach men to use the rifle, with a little instruction they would become the most useful force for the colony. He considered that the sum of £1,500 for "camps of instruction, training, &c.," in the Brisbane and country districts was a downright waste of money. It was a jolly sort of thing, no doubt, for the men to meet together to discuss things in camp, but that was all. It was acting soldiers, and nothing else. If the Government were to set apart a sum of money to be given to the men who could shoot best—not about Brisbane or Rockhampton—but wherever a rifle club could be formed, and if they were to give good prizes, they would do more towards establishing a corps capable of defending the colony than the volunteers as at present constituted. Men who were good shots were full of confidence in themselves, and after a few weeks' training would be able to take their place wherever they were required. As to what the Colonial Secretary said with respect to the volunteers being the nucleus of a good force, he (Mr. Persse) disagreed with him; if they had a number of paid soldiers there would be a nucleus, and there need only be a limited number. He did not wish to detract from any man's character, but in Queensland it was every man aping to be a major or a captain. One of the last appointments that was made was of a man who really had not the heart of a volunteer. With regard to the battery at Lytton, they were not told how it was going to be kept up. In his opinion it would be a very costly thing, and would require a great deal of money. He regretted that there was not a larger House to discuss the thing fairly, and define the extent to which the colony ought to go to form a force that would be of some service. There were a number of officers in this town at the present time who were at the beck and call of whichever side might be in power. So long as the present Colonial Secretary was at the head of the department he would support them, but if the other party came into power they might not get the same support. He should like to see a larger number of paid drill-instructors, especially instructors of musketry, and more encouragement given to the artillery force. If a good artillery corps were kept up, and prizes given for good rifle shooting, that would be quite sufficient for the colony.

Mr. STUBBLEY said if the vote went to a division he should vote against it. He regarded the volunteers as a very expensive and useless ornament to the country. After the way in which the hon. members for Mitchell and Fassifern had dealt with the subject, it was not necessary for him to say more.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said the hon. member for Fassifern had suggested a system which was totally discredited over the rest of the world when he said that a few good shots were likely to be more useful than a body of regularly drilled men. In England and other European countries it was generally considered that discipline was of more value than good shooting. The hon. mem-

ber had also spoken in depreciation of camp instruction; but he (Mr. Weld-Blundell) supposed there was nothing likely to be more useful in making the volunteers efficient than camp exercises. All other drills in the year could be better dispensed with. At those camps the men were put through the rough and practical work which they were called upon to do in actual service, and in every country of the world camp instruction was considered of the greatest importance. It was admitted that what had made the Germans so efficient was the enormous sums spent in their camp instruction. They thought nothing of bringing seventy or eighty thousand men together, and it was only the great expense of doing so in a closely cultivated country that prevented the same thing from being done in England. What was good for regulars was good also for volunteers. If there was a single vote that could not be dispensed with it was that for camps of instruction, and if it were not passed great harm would result to the volunteer force.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that the hon. member for Clermont, in his quiet way, had misrepresented what the hon. member for Fassifern said. The hon. member did not say that a lot of bush-trained riflemen would be better than a trained force; but he pointed out that the present volunteers were neither disciplined nor drilled, and also, as every hon. member knew, that these camps of instruction were a perfect farce and were not camps of instruction at all. The hon. member (Mr. Weld-Blundell) referred to the German camps, but surely the hon. member must know that there was a great difference between those camps and the one which he (Mr. Morehead) had seen on one occasion in Queensland. If the Germans were drilled in the same way that the volunteers were at that camp, he wondered that they were such good soldiers as they were. The camping was looked upon as a holiday and a very good old pic-nic. The men were drilled as they chose; they had a good time, and enjoyed themselves considerably. He did not blame the individual men, but the system which allowed such things to exist. He maintained that the volunteer system was very bad indeed, and that they were an inefficient force, as would be found should any occasion for their employment arise. The defect was not in the material itself, but in the way in which the material had been used. So long as the present system lasted those defects would exist. No doubt there were men in the force here capable of doing anything that Englishmen could do if they were properly trained and kept under proper discipline, but it would be just as well to throw the money into the river if it was to be devoted to the same purpose as it had been in the past. Every member who had seen the volunteer camps knew that what he said was absolutely true. He knew that he had very few sympathisers in the House, and that if the vote went to a division, probably only three or four members of the Committee would support him. In his own opinion the best plan would be to sweep the vote off the Estimates, and then some measure might be introduced which would induce a proper system of volunteering such as existed in New South Wales, where inducements were offered to the men to go to drill by means of payments, which they forfeited if they did not attend. That was the only way of inducing volunteers to attend to drill. But he would go farther, and compel them under strict regulations to adhere to certain conditions which they should assent to before joining. If they chose to join they should do so for a fixed period. He would combine the volunteer with the militia system, and if a man joined he should be compelled to stop or suffer certain penalties. The country would then pay

for the work done, but they would get the work. At present a volunteer was supplied with a uniform with which he decorated himself, and he placed himself under the orders of a number of officers; but no matter how efficient an officer might be, under the existing law he had no hold over the men. Every one of the officers from the commandant down to the junior lieutenant could be insulted or abused by any private in the regiment, and he had no remedy except to have the man turned out, which would probably be no punishment to the offender. The whole system as it stood was an absurdity, and the colony was wasting, in playing at soldiers, money which at the present time was excessively valuable. If the members of the Committee voted according to their convictions he believed that hardly a member would vote for it.

Mr. THORN said he should like to point out to the hon. member for Leichhardt that the volunteer movement was receiving some very hard knocks from members sitting near that hon. member, and that there was every chance of the vote being lost if something was not said in its defence. He knew the hon. member as a gallant defender of the volunteers, and he was sure the whole Committee would like to hear his experience as a volunteer and also as a man having a knowledge of the affairs of the military nations of the world.

Mr. ARCHER said he had not the slightest doubt that the hon. member for Leichhardt would favour the Committee with his opinions by-and-bye. The hon. member for Mitchell seemed to feel that he would be personally injured if only two or three members of the Committee voted with him; but he should remember that probably those members who voted for this item were as likely to be actuated by conscientious convictions that the volunteers were a benefit to the colony as the hon. member was likely to be actuated by a different opinion. He did not believe that the volunteers, as at present constituted, were very far advanced in their drill; but because they had not yet attained perfection, there was nothing to show that they might not be of great value when they had received further instruction and had more practice. His own opinion was that paid soldiers were a great curse to a country. He did not deny that they had great opportunities of performing heroic actions. Many of them were showing by their present actions in Afghanistan that they were made of heroic stuff, and were men whom Englishmen could honour; but he considered the whole system of paid armies, as kept up in Europe—which the hon. member for Mitchell thought should be introduced—were a great mistake.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I do not wish to introduce armies from Europe here; I would sooner keep them away.

Mr. ARCHER said that if the volunteers were abolished here, paid men would have to be introduced, and a number of paid soldiers he should call an army. What he said was, "like the European armies." If there were only a hundred men paid, drilled, and kept under discipline, he should consider them a paid army. He did not wish to see any paid men in the colony while men could be got to do the work for nothing. At present there were no men in the colony skilled to train troops, except such as had been obtained from home. They had brought out their skill in the same way that a lawyer brought out his skill; one man employed his talents by attending courts of law, and the other by drilling men. Perhaps, by-and-bye, our volunteer force would be so well drilled that there would be no necessity for keeping up expensive staffs, though he believed that an army without an efficient staff was one of the most miserable products in

the world. No proper army could be kept up without an efficient staff. If the material was good, the staff could make an army. He noticed that the hon. members for Fassifern and Mitchell depended upon two things—one wanted good shots, and the other (the hon. member for Fassifern) sneered at the Colonial Secretary for supposing that these men would be what the hon. member called an armed mob, or, to change the word, a rabble.

Mr. PERSSE said he objected to the word “sneered.” He hoped he had better taste and manners than to sneer at anything which the Colonial Secretary said.

Mr. ARCHER said he insisted that the Colonial Secretary was quite right. If an army of a thousand men, good shots, but not trained at all, were opposed to a thousand men who were partially trained, the best marksmen would get the worst of it. Discipline caused each man to depend upon his neighbour; men who were untrained had no confidence in the men beside them. They did not know when the right-hand or the left-hand men were going to desert them, nor, when the bugle-call sounded, whether anyone knew what it meant. It was only by means of a lengthened drill that men were enabled to act together and in concert. Believing, therefore, that volunteering as it was begun would result in its being the only and real defence of the colony, he should most cordially support the vote. He hoped to see the defence required performed by their own citizens, and then he was sure it would be well performed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not wish to detain the Committee, but this appeared to him to be the most important vote on the Estimates, and he did not want it to pass without expressing his opinion with regard to some expressions which had fallen from the hon. member for Fassifern. He did not agree on the whole with that hon. member—very far from it; but when the hon. member pointed out that it would be a good thing for them to encourage good marksmen, he said what was not very far from the truth. He disagreed with the hon. member for Clermont, when he said that all Europe was against the opinion of the hon. member for Fassifern on that point. He did not think the opinion of Europe was against that opinion; on the contrary, he believed that the opinion of the country from which they sprang was particularly in favour of that opinion. For some years before he came to the colony he was a member of the volunteers in England; he was a member of the “Devil’s Own.” In England a considerable sum was given to every member of the volunteer corps for becoming an efficient, and that efficiency consisted not only in his being a good man at drill—he had to attend a certain number of drills to keep his line in the ranks—but in his having attained considerable skill as a marksman. That was considered a great point amongst the people at home: it was considered that the best means of defence, and the first means of defence was the exaction from the volunteer of the ability to fire a gun straight. He therefore believed that in a country where the object was defence, and not the invasion of other countries, it was of considerable importance and utility that the men should be good marksmen. He knew nothing with respect to the statement of the hon. member for Mitchell, that the drillings of the volunteers here were made pic-nics. If that was so it was a great misfortune. That was not a system which would be likely to result in making the volunteers good useful men—it was quite a different system to that which was adopted at home. As a volunteer at home he joined in one of the autumn manœuvres, and

they went through something very different to what had been described by the hon. member for Mitchell. They had to march from twenty-five to thirty miles during the day, carrying kits and rifles; and in addition to that they had a couple of hours’ sham fighting. They returned to their camp at about 9 o’clock, and were awakened by the bugle call at 5 in the morning. They then struck their tents and started marching. They marched nearly the whole of the day, until they met the pretended enemy, and then they had their fighting. He thought that was the system which ought to be adopted here. That system was adopted to make the men good drillists, the ordinary drills not being thought much of.

Mr. FEEZ said he must remind hon. members that Rome was not built in a day. It was unreasonable to expect perfection from a volunteer force which was but in its infancy, having been in existence for a few years only. Through the varying phases of life in this colony it was only natural to expect that many efficient men would be found dropping out of the ranks of the volunteer corps. Many men who had become efficiently trained had to leave the district in search of employment, and no doubt to that cause was attributable the alleged deficiency of the volunteer system. From what he had seen of the volunteers of Queensland, making allowance for the limited support which had been given them, he must say that they were a creditable body of men. The only Minister who had given any substantial support to the volunteers was the present Colonial Secretary, and since that hon. gentleman had shown an interest in the movement there had been a very material improvement in the force. Another cause which had acted prejudicially to the Volunteer Force was the introduction of rifle corps. Men who were not connected with the volunteers had received permission to go out rifle shooting actually before they had been told how to use the rifle. If he had anything to say in the matter, no man should be allowed to practise at rifle shooting until he had secured a certificate of efficiency as a volunteer. If there was no prospect of men receiving such a certificate there was no encouragement to them to learn drill and to go through the exercises necessary to become efficient men. Another cause which had acted against the good management of the volunteers was the fact that any small town outside of Brisbane, as soon as its name was mentioned in geography or history, claimed a volunteer corps. He did not wish to appear selfish, and therefore he voted for the establishment of a corps at Mackay; but he could see plainly that if they allowed corps to be started in all sorts of places the expenses of the staff would be increased to an enormous extent, because they would be useless without the supervision of competent officers, and the existing staff would find it impossible to attend to all of them properly. The present officers were only fairly paid—they got just enough to keep themselves respectable. He believed that an efficient artillery corps could be formed at Townsville; and Rockhampton, with its population, was capable of supporting a couple of companies of rifles and a small artillery corps. He believed they would be well supported, and that they would be managed properly. Hon. members would see that the capitation allowance was only 30s. Why, a pair of trousers would cost that; the men, therefore, had to support their corps principally out of their own pockets. The men connected with his corps at Rockhampton had contributed a shilling a month towards the expenses of the corps. If a sufficient staff of officers were employed to admit of the different corps being inspected once every two or three months, he believed that in a short time the

volunteer corps would become a capital force. They spent £100,000 a-year on education, but there were many people who came here who were too old to learn. If they could not increase the brain power of those people they could improve their bodily powers and make them able men. He knew many men who after being in a volunteer corps for a few months became totally different men to what they were previously. The drill and the exercises which they were put through strengthened them, and they could go through a great deal of hardship which they would not be able to face successfully were it not for that training. His idea was that no place having a population of less than 6,000 people should have a volunteer corps. He hoped hon. members would vote the amount asked.

Mr. PERSSE said he should not like the idea to go abroad that he was opposed to volunteers *in toto*, because that was not the fact. What he advocated was that prizes should be offered to marksmen, as he thought it would be a good thing for the colony if they could induce the men to practise so as to become efficient riflemen. The hon. member for Clermont pooh-poohed the idea, but it was supported by the Attorney-General.

Mr. FRASER said he had no desire to disparage the volunteers generally, but he could not allow the vote to pass without expressing his decided opinion, notwithstanding all that had been said as to the advantages they were likely to derive from the force, that in the present circumstances of the colony the amount now asked for was unwarrantable. They had heard a great deal said as to what might be expected of their volunteers; but let them consider what was likely to occur. If an invasion were made at all it would be made by a formidable force equipped with all the appliances of modern warfare. Supposing they had 1,200 well organised and disciplined volunteers, how long would they be able to resist such an invading force as they might expect? Judging from what he had read of recent warfare, he had no doubt that after a very few rounds the 1,200 would disappear, not necessarily because they were cowards, but because they would be literally swept off the face of the earth. He thought a great deal too much had been made out of the advantages they expected to derive from their volunteer force, although he did not deny that it might be of some service. The Attorney-General had told them that in England volunteers were prized not so much for efficiency in drill as for their capabilities as marksmen. It must not be forgotten, however, that the circumstances of Queensland and England differed very widely in this matter. There was not a point in England likely to be invaded to which access would not be readily gained by railway. Then, again, the whole coast could be defended by a squadron of the navy. But these appliances were not to be commanded in Queensland, and if they were invaded at all it would be at their most vulnerable point. If hon. members looked at the vote they would see that a fourth was distributed among sixteen individuals. Having regard, then, for the facts that they were endeavouring to enforce economy in every department, and that people in their private affairs were compelled to exercise the most rigid economy, it was not fair that they should, at such a time, be called upon to pass so large a vote for this service. He was not opposed to volunteering, but he could not allow the vote to pass without a decided protest. He would be sorry to utter a single sentence reflecting upon the volunteers as a body. He believed that the great bulk of them were in earnest in what they had undertaken, and attended drill as often as possible.

Mr. DICKSON said he was of opinion that the gentlemen who opposed that vote looked for results somewhat too early, considering that the volunteers were only at a comparatively recent date placed upon a satisfactory footing. If there were not a large and competent staff at the present time the force would degenerate into a mere rabble, and that would be a most undesirable result. He held that it was their duty to take the best steps possible to protect themselves against a predatory force. They were to a certain extent more open to attack than their sister colonies, which could more cheaply and easily defend their limited number of ports. It was exceedingly desirable that they should encourage as much as possible the disposition on the part of the young men of the colony to form themselves into a disciplined force for purposes of defence. It did not come well from them to be continually decrying this spirit; and he believed that if the emergency arose their young men would be found to possess the pluck and spirit of their ancestors. While they attended to the social and industrial development of the colony, they must not forget to take effective measures to prevent themselves from being despoiled of the wealth they were endeavouring to accumulate. If they had not the spirit to protect themselves against aggression, it might reasonably be said that they were unworthy to enjoy the great privileges they possessed. He thought, therefore, that the vote in its present form should not be objected to. If they were going to form a semi-military or yeomanry body, it was only due to the members of that body that they should be provided with efficient instruction. While, therefore, the staff in itself might appear rather large at the present time, it should not, in view of its educational character, be objected to. He would like to hear something from the Colonial Secretary as to the last line in the estimate—provision for torpedo experiments. Were any experiments made last year? If not, perhaps the Colonial Secretary would indicate at what period of the present year it was proposed to make them? He would also ask—as it was a new line on the Estimates—for further information concerning the capitation allowance to 200 cadets.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said no torpedo experiments were made last year; but it was thought desirable to make further provision for the present year. The cadets were an experiment. The commandant was very anxious to form a corps of cadets, and he did not ask a very large sum. If the corps were not formed, of course the money would not be spent.

Mr. BEATTIE would repeat that he did not object to the volunteers generally; but he did object to the large amount of money expended upon officers. He would like to see a body of men organised and competent to man heavy guns for the defence of our northern ports. It was absurd to talk of a privateer attacking Brisbane from Moreton Bay; but there was nothing to prevent a smart vessel from shelling Townsville. Why should they not follow the example of two of the sister colonies in the south, and establish a naval brigade? There were a sufficient number of men in the Customs and pilot services in their northern ports to form the nucleus of a naval brigade without any very great expense. Even if they gave them—as in New South Wales—£1 per month, their services could always be relied upon. He had no hesitation in saying that by a judicious expenditure of £2,000 or £3,000 they would be able to man two or three guns in those seaport towns in the north which were likely to be attacked. He was not aware until recently that the Government intended to construct a fort at Lytton. It would be of about as much use as the fort at Doughboy Creek. He could

not understand how such a proposal could have emanated from a practical man like the Colonial Secretary. The torpedoes would be of far greater service in the locality in question; and the Reformatory on the top of the hill would stand a very bad chance if a privateer entered the Brisbane Roads. It would be necessary to have an army to protect the Reformatory.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £3,000 be granted in aid of Schools of Art and Mining Schools, the subsidy not to exceed 10s. for every £1 subscribed, nor any grant to exceed £100.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £3,315 be granted for Thursday Island Harbour of Refuge. Owing to a miscalculation last year, the allowance for rations to the crew of the "Pearl" had been increased slightly, and there was an increase of £200 for stores and incidentals.

Mr. DICKSON asked on what service the "Pearl" was at present engaged?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the reports from Mr. Chester and Captain Pennefather, which had been placed on the table, would show exactly how the "Pearl" had been engaged. She was very seldom at anchor; all her time was occupied in cruising about among the islands. She had done much good in keeping order among the natives, and also in keeping the missionaries in order—by missionaries, he meant the native missionaries. Captain Pennefather's last report was dated "Thursday Island, 2nd June," in which an account was given of his last cruise, including his visit to the Batavia River, which had been discovered, but not explored, before. He was now exploring the harbour which was said to exist at Point Parker, of which he (Mr. Palmer) expected soon to receive a full report. Although the vessel cost a lot of money, she was well worth it.

Mr. BEATTIE, referring to the allowance in lieu of rations, said that while the amount allowed to the captain, £150, was fair, that allowed to the men, 2s. a day, was much too small, where food was so expensive as at Thursday Island. The same amount was allowed to the crew of the "Kate," at Brisbane, where food was cheap.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not believe rations were dear at Thursday Island; at all events, he had had no complaints. The captain of the "Pearl" and the police magistrate of the island had to entertain passing visitors, as a matter of courtesy, and that entertainment was shown not long ago to the Governor of another colony.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked, with regard to Point Parker, whether it was known that the harbour was accessible from the land side; whether any steps had been taken to investigate what sort of roads there would be from the pastoral country in the interior?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no report which he could say was strictly accurate. There were two reports from police officers who had been in the district. One assured him that there was a capital road taking the crown of a ridge nearly the whole way, while the other said it was a mass of jungle. As to the harbour, some said it contained splendid anchorage, and others that it was open to both the north-east and south-west monsoons, was not worth a penny, and vessels could not lie there. He had ordered the "Pearl" to settle that ques-

tion as far as possible. Captain Pennefather's account would throw a good deal more light on the subject.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether any instructions had been given with regard to exploring the road into the interior?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had given no instructions for any land party to proceed. After seeing whether there was a harbour it would be easy enough to explore the road.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £8,050 be granted for Miscellaneous Services. By mistake the item of £550 for German and Chinese interpreters had been omitted. Some of the interpreters on the list were utterly useless; their services were never required. At Beenleigh, the German interpreter resigned, and numbers of applications were sent in for the billet, which was worth £80 a-year. Before filling up the appointment he inquired what the interpreter had done during the last two years, and found that he had been in court twice one year and not at all the next. Wherever interpreters were needed they would be retained; but at places like Beenleigh, where they were of no use whatever, appointments would not be made, but an allowance would be made to cover the expenses of interpreters when they were wanted.

Mr. DICKSON said he noticed a much more serious omission, namely, the Admiralty survey of the coast. That was a grievous omission in the interests of the colony. In 1878-9 that survey cost £5,339. That large increase on the previous year was owing to the fact that a steamer was employed, whilst the work which a cutter formerly did in three years was accomplished in one.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman was discussing a vote which had never appeared on his Estimates. The proper time for any discussion on the subject would be when the Colonial Treasurer's Estimates came on.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that according to the Auditor-General's report for last year it was on the Colonial Secretary's Estimates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Auditor-General was incorrect. It had never been on the Colonial Secretary's Estimates.

Mr. BEATTIE called attention to the omission of the vote for the Acclimatisation Society. He hoped the Government would see their way to replace it on the Estimates, as the society was deserving of every consideration. He felt personally interested in the subject, because the Gardens of the society were the principal recreation ground of Fortitude Valley. It would give great satisfaction to many people to see the vote restored.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was a mistake. The money for the Acclimatisation Society was not on the Estimates-in-Chief last year, but was put on the Supplementary Estimates, and he presumed that it had got out of the Estimates this year in that way.

Mr. McLEAN said he had no desire whatever that the Government should reinstate the German interpreter at Beenleigh; but he had been informed that the services of a German interpreter were very much required at Brisbane, as last year there were fifty or sixty cases where an interpreter was necessary. It was more in the interests of Brisbane, Ipswich, and Toowoomba, where German interpreters were very often required, that he had referred to the matter.

Mr. DICKSON said the Colonial Secretary was labouring under a mistake when he said the Auditor-General was wrong in speaking of the vote for an Admiralty survey as being under the Colonial Secretary, as he found that in the details of expenditure by the Auditor-General for 1878-79 this expenditure was very properly put under the head of the Colonial Secretary's Department. However, as the Government had last year altered the form of the Estimates and placed the vote for the Admiralty survey under the Colonial Treasurer's Estimates, he (Mr. Dickson) would reserve any discussion on the subject until the Committee came to the Treasurer's Department. He would direct the hon. Colonial Secretary's attention to an item of £1,200 odd in the Auditor-General's Report for quarantining a French ship, and would ask the hon. gentleman how much the Government had recovered of that sum?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that not a rap had been recovered, although he had fought very hard to get something. He could assure the Committee that it would be a very long time before he placed another French ship in quarantine in a Queensland port; he would let the next go to New Caledonia at her own expense.

Mr. GRIFFITH wished for some information with regard to the interpreters, as he had heard before the Estimates were laid on the table that the German interpreters had been dismissed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that that was very likely the case, as the Under Secretary had misunderstood his instructions, and had sent notices of dismissal to the interpreters; but as soon as the matter came to his knowledge the order was countermanded. An application had since been made by the Ipswich bench to have the services of an interpreter, and it was granted.

Mr. BEATTIE said that he had been on the bench many times in Brisbane when the services of the German interpreter had been found most convenient. That gentleman had filled the office of interpreter for many years, and he (Mr. Beattie) did not know whether he had been dismissed. He understood from the Colonial Secretary that notices of dismissals had gone from his office by mistake, and therefore he presumed that the interpreter he referred to had received an official letter informing him that the notice of dismissal had been withdrawn, and that the hon. Colonial Secretary was under that impression also.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he noticed that there was a sum of £400 put down for the erection of pounds, but on reading the report of the Inspector of Brands he saw that that gentleman stated that pounds were very little used since the Brands Act had been passed—that was one of the results of the Act. He would also mention in connection with this matter that the Inspector of Brands recommended the publication of returns of stock in the colony used for meat preserving, and he (Mr. Douglas) should like to know whether that was to be carried out. At any rate, it appeared that pounds were falling into disrepute in consequence of the working of the Brands Act.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not recollect the remarks of the Inspector for Brands, but if he said that the necessity for pounds was decreasing he was wrong, as he (Mr. Palmer) had lately received a great many applications for pounds—in fact, four within the last few weeks.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether it was intended to retain the services of the German interpreter at Brisbane or not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said if it was shown to be necessary—certainly.

Mr. GRIFFITH said there had been one for some years, and his services were found necessary.

Mr. BEATTIE said that the officer in question had been a great many times both to the police and district court in Brisbane, and it would be judicious on the part of the Government to retain his services.

Mr. FRASER said that during the last fortnight he had been on the bench when the services of a German interpreter were required.

Mr. DOUGLAS noticed that no provision was made for expenditure at exhibitions. He presumed that they might expect a great outlay in connection with the Melbourne Exhibition—perhaps some thousands of pounds—and that the amount would appear on a supplementary estimate?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. DOUGLAS said there was another item which used to appear under the head of "Miscellaneous Services"—namely, "advertising." After the report of the committee on the subject, of which Mr. Ivory was chairman, it was arranged that each department should pay for its own advertisements, but he did not see any sum for that purpose put down on the Colonial Secretary's Estimates. However, what he wanted to ask was, what the hon. Colonial Secretary expected the expenditure in connection with the Melbourne Exhibition would be?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that after his experience of the Sydney Exhibition he was not mad enough to mention any sum. He was sorry to say that the colony had a very bad court at Melbourne; he had done the best he could, but he had no idea what it would cost; the thing would, however, be done as cheaply as possible.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that £1,000 was put down for allowances to clerks of petty sessions under the Electoral Rolls Act of 1879, and he should like to know how that was to be divided; there were not more than twenty clerks altogether?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Act provided that the remuneration should be in the proportion of one-tenth.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the hon. gentleman made use of a curious expression—that he was not "mad" enough to form an estimate of the probable expenditure in connection with the Melbourne Exhibition. How was that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Simply because I am not mad enough to do so.

Mr. DOUGLAS thought the hon. gentleman meant by that that he could not control the expenditure of his officers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he wished he had controlled the expenditure of the late Exhibition a little more. He would try to control this, but still he was not prepared to say what it would cost.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the last Exhibition did not cost more than £10,000, and the colony carried off the blue ribbon of the Exhibition. Did the hon. gentleman anticipate spending more than that?

Mr. GRIFFITH was very glad to observe a return to the old practice of assisting agricultural and horticultural societies, but it was a very considerable change of front on the part of the Gov-

ernment; and he thought the Committee might have been favoured with an explanation why the Government had changed their minds so materially since last year, when they would not listen to any reason or argument on the subject.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was no sum put on the Estimates for that purpose last year; but, in consequence of a resolution of the House, the item was put on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the sum should appear on the list of appropriations for last year if it was voted, so as to enable members to compare it with the Estimates for this year. It was simply misleading.

The PREMIER said there was no misconception. There was nothing on the Estimates last year for this purpose; but a resolution was carried, on the motion of Mr. Groom, that so much be granted, and that would appear on the Supplementary Estimates when they came before the House.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Chairman left the chair, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

In answer to Mr. Griffith, the PREMIER stated that the Estimates would be proceeded with on Monday.

The House adjourned at five minutes past 10 o'clock until the usual hour on Monday next.