

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**MONDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 1880**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Monday, 27 September, 1880.*

Question.—Motion for Adjournment.—Distillation Bill.  
—Railway Companies Preliminary Bill.—Marsupials  
Destruction Bill.—Supply.

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

### QUESTION.

Mr. BAILEY asked the Colonial Secretary—

1. What was the request made to the Government  
with respect to the by-law of the Walloon Board which  
appears to authorise a Wheel Tax?

2. What was the reply of the Government?

3. Has the Attorney-General given an opinion that  
such a Tax is legal?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Palmer)  
replied—

No request was made to the Government, but the  
by-law imposing a wheel tax was included amongst  
others passed by the Board and approved by the late  
Attorney-General.

When this particular by-law was brought under the  
notice of the Colonial Secretary, the Board were re-  
quested by letter, dated the 10th of May last, to rescind  
it, and substitute another of a less objectionable  
character. This request not having been complied  
with, the by-law was repealed by Order in Council,  
notification whereof appeared in the *Gazette* of Saturday,  
the 18th instant.

### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he rose to a ques-  
tion of privilege, and would conclude with a  
motion. He wished to call attention to a letter  
which appeared in the *Telegraph* of last Friday  
evening, under the heading of "An Unqualified  
Denial." The letter was as follows:—

#### "AN UNQUALIFIED DENIAL.

"To the Editor.—Sir,—I see in the *Hansard* of  
Tuesday last, that Mr. Hill, the member for Gregory,  
when the Estimates for the Crown Solicitor's depart-  
ment were under consideration, after complaining of  
some hindrance to the transaction of business he had  
received through the Crown Solicitor, is reported to  
have said that he asked his solicitor why it was done,  
and he said, 'Oh, it is done to get business for them-  
selves' (meaning, I presume, the firm of Little and  
Browne, of which Mr. Little was a member). As I was  
Mr. Hill's attorney at the time, and remember the  
circumstance causing the alleged hindrance, I distinctly  
deny having ever said anything of the kind to Mr. Hill,  
or anything which could receive such an interpretation.

"In justice to Mr. Little, and in the interests of truth,  
I send you this communication.

"Yours, &c.

"DANIEL F. ROBERTS.

"24th Sept., 1880."

If the "Daniel F. Roberts" by whom that letter  
was signed was the individual who occupied the  
position of Presiding Chairman of the Legislative  
Council, he had taken a most indecent and unfair  
advantage of his position in that Chamber. His

reply to that letter, which appeared in the *Telegraph* of the next day, was as follows:—

"MR. HILL'S REPLY.

"To the Editor.—Sir,—It is with some hesitation that I accept the somewhat, perhaps, indecent challenge thrown out to me in your columns on a question of personal veracity by the Acting-President of the Legislative Council. I can only say that I fear his memory has been impaired by age or other causes, otherwise he would not have stated (in the interests of truth, as he says) that which is distinctly contrary to the facts which I stated in the Assembly on Monday night, and which I intend to maintain. It is within the jurisdiction of another tribunal to give me the opportunity which I shall eagerly seek of proving and bringing home those facts.

"Perhaps, as the Hon. Daniel F. Roberts so distinctly remembers the circumstance causing the alleged hindrance, he can account in some other way for the undisputed fact of my transferring my business promptly upon that occasion from himself to the firm of Little and Browne. I should be glad to hear it.

"Yours, &c.,

"C. LUMLEY HILL.

"September 25."

His (Mr. Hill's) position as an almost unknown individual, and as a very junior member of the House, did not, of course, carry so much weight with the people of Brisbane as that of Mr. Daniel F. Roberts, who had been a long resident of the city and had made a direct charge against him. The question was open to considerable exception. It might be said that he had no right to mention here what was said to him in confidence by his solicitor, although he felt inclined to argue that point. Mr. Roberts was certainly the solicitor in question, although he (Mr. Hill) mentioned no names at the time; at the same time, he offered to do so if he were challenged. He did not consider that communications between a lawyer and his client were confidential as far as the client was concerned. The client paid for the information he received, and was at liberty to make what use of it he pleased. If he (Mr. Hill) chose to use his information in the interests of the public service, he considered it was quite open to him to do so, especially in cases of this kind where an official was concerned. It was very hard to find persons bringing forward a direct charge, although they might have ample knowledge of them. It was with extreme reluctance that he had introduced any matters before the House relating to his private business, and it was only because he could get no distinct and definite charge substantiated by any known name that he took the step he did. He should never bring forward any dishonest or imaginary charge. If he had any charges to make he would not make imputations, or say he had been informed, or had learned that so-and-so was the case; but if there was any public grievance which he could redress, if it was known to him, or people gave him day and date, chapter and verse, for it, he would expose in the House any malversation in the public offices which came to his knowledge, without the slightest hesitation. If it could be proved, as the letter of Mr. Daniel F. Roberts implied, that he was a malicious slanderer, he could not in decency, nor had he any right to, retain his seat in the Chamber. He had his constituents to answer for—fortunately for Mr. Roberts, he had none—and a charge of that kind levelled against a junior member of the House, and a man only temporarily residing in the city, came with double force from a man in the position of Mr. Roberts, so well known as he was in Brisbane. To those who had an equal knowledge of both their characters he would appeal with the utmost confidence as to which of their words should be taken on a question of that kind. There was another curious fact in relation to the matter to which he would call attention. His (Mr. Hill's) statement was made in the House last Monday afternoon, and no denial was made until it ap-

peared in the *Telegraph* of Friday evening and the *Courier* of Saturday morning. On Saturday morning the Crown Solicitor, who could have borne important testimony on the point, left the colony. He (Mr. Hill) intended to go as far as he could in the matter. He must either be purged of the charge laid against him in the letter, or he must establish the charge that he himself had made. He moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that very serious charges had been levelled inside the House—and to his own knowledge outside the House also—against the working of the Crown Solicitor's office; and they could only be investigated, with satisfaction to the public and to the Crown Solicitor himself, by an inquiry before a select committee. He understood that an hon. member who was not now present intended to move for that committee, but if that hon. member refused to do so he (Mr. Morehead) would, and he would then state to the House his reasons for doing so. Some of those charges struck at the honour and reputation of the Crown Solicitor and of the firm with which he was connected, and in the interests of that gentleman those charges should not be allowed to go by unchallenged and uninquied into. Unpleasant and ungracious as the duty might be, it was better for all concerned that a searching inquiry should be made. If the charges were untrue, those who made them should be held up to public scorn. If, on the other hand, they were true, the sooner there was some change made in the present management of the Crown law business the better. To-morrow evening, if his hon. friend who, he believed, intended to move for the committee, did not do so, he would; and he felt perfectly certain the House would grant it, and let the matter be sifted to the bottom.

The PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith) said he scarcely understood how a question of privilege could arise in the matter. The fact of a member of the Upper House having penned a letter to the public press, in which he gave a denial of certain statements made by a member of this House, did not constitute a question of privilege. Previous questions of that kind had been raised where an hon. member spoke the words in the House. He could not help thinking that the hon. member (Mr. Hill) made a great deal too much of the letter written by Mr. Roberts, and that he quite undervalued his position in the estimation of the public as compared with that of Mr. Roberts. He did not think the positions of the hon. members were so very far apart as to give Mr. Roberts any advantage over the hon. member in a newspaper correspondence. It would be much better, as all hon. members would see, that if there were any charges for which there was the slightest ground, they should be investigated by the House, and he, for one, would be very glad to see the committee appointed to which the hon. member (Mr. Morehead) had referred. It was much better that a matter of this sort was settled by public investigation than to dismiss it while the facts were not really before them.

Mr. WALSH said he would take advantage of the motion to draw attention to some misrepresentations which had been made in his own district with reference to the McIvor lands. Some people at Cooktown had been agitating in a most extraordinary way, and making all sorts of statements—which were entirely untrue—in reference to the action he took in the matter, and had asserted that he was instrumental in the Government increasing the price of those lands from 5s. to 10s. per acre. The facts were simply these: Owing to a proclamation issued some years ago certain lands were reserved for sugar-growing,

and they were open to selection at 10s. an acre. Cooktown happened to be outside the area named, and consequently the lands were only 5s. an acre. It was represented to the Minister for Lands that the McIvor lands were very rich, and he told the Minister personally that they were reported by Mr. St. George and others who had visited them to be very good, and that Mr. MacDonald, who was a Government officer, had taken up some 2,120 acres. As these lands were supposed to be rich agricultural lands, and there was only an area altogether of about 5,000 or 6,000 acres, he deemed it injurious to the town and district that Mr. MacDonald or anybody else should be permitted to take up so large a quantity, especially as the quantity was limited and there were many applicants for it. He believed the Government would do well, if people were willing to reside on and cultivate the land, to let them have it for half-a-crown an acre, or even for nothing. It was not advisable to ask for too high a price where *bond fide* settlement was intended. His only object on the present occasion was to set himself right before his constituents, and to disprove the charges that had been made against him. In reply to a request he made, he had received the following letter from the Lands Office:—

“Department of Public Lands,  
Brisbane, 22nd September, 1880.

“Sir,—I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of letter received from you with reference to the lands on the McIvor River.—I have, &c.,

“E. DESHON,  
Pro Under Secretary.

“John Walsh, Esq., M.L.A.”

The letter referred to, from himself to the Minister for Lands, was as follows:—

“Cooktown, 20th July, 1879.

“Dear Perkins,—The McIvor River lands are reported by all as splendid river lands, so I hope, for the benefit ultimately of the district, they will not be disposed of for pastoral purposes. The lands are grand agricultural lands, and will, I trust, be reserved for that purpose.

“Yours sincerely,  
“JOHN WALSH.”

These were the facts which he wished to lay before the House.

The HON. S. W. GRIFFITH said he wished to call attention to the very extraordinary notion the hon. member for Gregory appeared to have as to what was a charge made against a man. The hon. member had accused Mr. Roberts of making a very grave charge against him, but he seemed to forget the meaning of the term. The fact was, it was the hon. member himself who said that Mr. Roberts had made a very grave charge against Mr. Little, and because Mr. Roberts had denied it he attacked Mr. Roberts for having made a charge against him. Surely when a man was accused of having made such a charge he was entitled to deny it. Did the hon. member think that members might say anything they liked in the House without being contradicted? All that the hon. member had to complain of was that Mr. Roberts had contradicted him, and that was as little as he could expect. All the charges hitherto made against the Crown Solicitor were two. One was brought by the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Davenport), who said that in the case of the “Queen *versus* Davenport,” begun in 1874, the Crown Solicitor had made use of information that had come to him as the solicitor for that gentleman. He (Mr. Griffith) was the Attorney-General at the time, and the only gentleman to whom that information could have been given; and he said then, as he repeated now, that no information of the kind was ever given to him; nor was he aware, until

the hon. member mentioned it, that Mr. Little had ever been his solicitor. He had great reason to believe that Mr. Little never was the hon. gentleman's solicitor in any matter connected with that trial. The other charge was made by the hon. member for Gregory, and that was a charge which he said Mr. Roberts had made against Mr. Little some years ago, and Mr. Roberts said he had never made any charge of the kind. He (Mr. Griffith) should like to know what that great business was which the hon. member took away from Mr. Roberts and gave to Mr. Little. What was it worth? Was it sufficient to induce Mr. Little to prostitute the duties of his office? Was it worth the while of an honourable man to go out of his way to acquire the business? Was it worth £1 a-year? He should really like to know what the inducement was which caused Mr. Little so to misconduct himself. He (Mr. Griffith) taking some interest in the matter, had been at the trouble to make some inquiries about it, and he had now no hesitation in saying that the hon. member must have misunderstood what was said. Such a thing as was reported to have been said by Mr. Roberts could not have been said by that gentleman in connection with such business at all. The facts were simply these: The hon. member held a power-of-attorney for somebody abroad under which he wished to transfer a run, and when it was taken to the Crown Solicitor's office it was found by the Crown Solicitor that the hon. member had no power to convey runs under it at all. The hon. member had then to get a fresh power-of-attorney, and he employed Messrs. Little and Browne to draw it for him. The whole thing was paltry and trivial, and it was perfectly absurd to think that an honourable man would go out of his way to do a dishonourable action without any object whatever.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it would have been better if the hon. member for Brisbane, hearing that there was likely to be a committee appointed to inquire into the matter, had reserved his criticism of it until the committee was moved for. The Premier had pointed out that course very clearly, and he thought it would be very unwise to argue on the matter before the facts of the case were before them. It would be far better to let the committee be moved for and get all the evidence they could, and then the House could discuss and decide upon it afterwards.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he must say a few words in regard to the grave imaginary charge which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Griffith) had said he had made against Mr. Daniel F. Roberts. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would not consider it a grave charge to be made against him, that he was a malicious perverter of the truth; but he (Mr. Hill) did. He objected to it most emphatically, and he was not going to allow himself to be called a malicious perverter of the truth and a malicious slanderer, and be held up in that light before the colony, without taking some steps to rectify it. As to the charges against the Crown Solicitor, there were more than either the one he had made or that made by the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Davenport). He agreed with the Premier and the Colonial Secretary, that it would be time enough to go into the matter when the committee was moved for. He should therefore decline further discussion upon it now. With regard to what his business might have been worth to Mr. Roberts at the time, he thought it had nothing to do with the matter; although it might have had some influence, perhaps, with some unworthy members of the profession. The charge made by Mr. Roberts was a general imputation as to the line which the Crown Solicitor's firm took up,

for combining their own private practice with that of the Crown Solicitor's office.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he agreed entirely with the Colonial Secretary, that it would be better to defer discussion upon the matter until the select committee was moved for. Last Monday evening was spent entirely in the abuse of Mr. Little. He had been reading the debate to-day, and there were some things said on that occasion that he (Mr. O'Sullivan) would not have been inclined to put up with if he had been in the House; but he was unfortunately away at the time. He would ask the Colonial Secretary if the evidence to be taken before the proposed committee would be taken during Mr. Little's absence from town?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that Mr. Little would be back in a week.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that was his chief reason for rising. The hon. member (Mr. Hill) was certainly attacking some of their best men, and it was to him a matter of wonder that Mr. Roberts and Mr. Little had escaped censure and abuse for more than thirty years and that it should only be brought against them now. He was sure Mr. Little would be very glad if such a committee was appointed; and if it was intended to move for such a committee, he would say no more about the matter at the present time. He was glad to have the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that Mr. Little would be back in a week.

Mr. SIMPSON said the discussion which had taken place on this subject plainly showed one thing, and that was that the Crown Solicitor ought not to be allowed private practice. He did not intend to go into the matter at present, but he believed that the evidence to be brought before the select committee would disclose facts that the outside public knew very little about. Although the proposed inquiry might not be prejudicial to Mr. Little, it would show very clearly that the two offices did not work well together.

Question of adjournment put and negatived.

#### DISTILLATION BILL.

The House went into Committee, and, upon the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved—

That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend and consolidate the laws relating to the Distillation of Spirits, the Brewing of Beer, and the Sale of Fermented and Spirituous Liquors in certain cases.

Resolution reported and adopted; Bill presented and read a first time; and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### RAILWAY COMPANIES PRELIMINARY BILL.

The House went into Committee, and, upon the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved—

That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to provide for and encourage the Construction of Railways by private enterprise, as recommended by message of His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, of date the 22nd instant.

Resolution reported and adopted; Bill presented and read a first time; and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### MARSUPIALS DESTRUCTION BILL.

The House went into Committee, and, upon the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, it was resolved—

That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to encourage the Destruction of Marsupials and other noxious animals, as recommended by message of His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, of date the 22nd instant.

Resolution reported and adopted; Bill presented and read a first time; and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday week.

#### SUPPLY.

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

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION (Mr. Palmer) moved that £4,000 be granted for State Schools. The increase of £250 upon travelling expenses and occasional inspection, under the head of "Contingencies," was proved to be necessary by last year's expenditure.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he noticed with regret, upon the previous Tuesday evening, that the Colonial Secretary seemed inclined to stifle discussion upon the principles of the Education Act. It was only by going into the principles of the Act that they could arrive at its details. He had no opportunity when the Act was passed of expressing an opinion upon its merits; and he had noticed recently how, in a very forcible way, the House could alter its opinion from session to session. Now, he was opposed to the Act in its entirety; and being opposed to it, he intended to vote steadfastly against every item of increase in the expenditure. From his position as the representative of an outside constituency, which contributed largely to the revenue from which that expenditure was defrayed without receiving back one shilling in the shape of expenditure—a district where the children, such as there were of them, were utterly neglected—he was bound to protest against additional burdens being put upon his constituents to educate children in other parts of the colony. But he took this step, also, upon broader views, which he hoped he would always hold—views founded upon the policy of the greatest justice to the many and the least injustice to the few. He objected altogether to the extensive course of education prescribed in the beginning of the Act. The subjects in which all children were alike to be instructed were ten in number—namely, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, geography, history, elementary mechanics, object lessons, drawing, gymnastics, and vocal music; and, in the case of girls, sewing and needlework. He considered that that was much more than was wanted in the form of education supplied by the State. He had some opportunity, when in New Zealand, of seeing how the Education Act worked there, and of comparing it with their own. Sir Hercules Robinson, the late Governor of New Zealand, in opening the Normal School there, offered some very valuable criticisms upon the educational system, and he proposed to read a few quotations from those criticisms. It would be found that the New Zealand scheme, in the character and variety of the subjects taught, was almost identical with their own. Sir Hercules Robinson said—

"If I understand your scheme correctly it is this: It is proposed in New Zealand to provide the whole juvenile population of the colony with instruction free of charge, in the following subjects:—Reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar and composition, geography, history, elementary science, drawing, object lessons, vocal music, drill; and, in the case of girls, needlework and the principles of domestic economy."

He agreed with John Bright in his estimate of the obligations of the State in the matter of education. That celebrated statesman said—

"What I would wish to see in this country is that every child should be able to read and to comprehend what he reads; that he should be able to write, and to write so well that what he writes can be read; and that at the same time he should know something of the simple rules of arithmetic, which might enable him to keep a little account of the many transactions which may happen to him in the course of his life."

If the State gave that it was all that could be demanded of it. It was upon that principle that the South Australian Act was based, which compared most favourably in its working and economical principle with the Act in force here. He maintained that they were sacrificing the substance for the shadow, not only with regard to the early age to which the system applied—namely, from six to twelve years—but by offering such an extensive list of subjects to be acquired by children of tender age. They ran the risk of giving the children a smattering of a number of subjects, rather than a good substantial groundwork upon the three R's, which were the real necessities of educational life. He would here again quote from Sir Hercules Robinson. His Excellency doubted

"whether cramming the children with instruction in such a variety of subjects would not tend to lower the standard of efficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic—objects of primary importance; and thus substitute a smattering of many subjects for thoroughness in a few; and whether, too, the attempt to provide the machinery for supplying the whole of the youthful population of the colony with free education of the advanced and varied character embraced in the six standards will not entail upon the country an expense more heavy than can be borne."

In introducing this expensive system of education among their growing youth, he wished to call attention to the anomalous position they had taken up as the bitter opponents of cheap labour in any shape or form. They were, nevertheless, qualifying the youth of the colony rather for the position of employers of labour than that of subsisting by manual employment. However repugnant it might be to own, a large majority of the children must in their future life be, comparatively speaking, hewers of wood and drawers of water. Yet, in the face of that fact, they were providing a system of education for the young which certainly could not tend to render them content with their future lot. He might say that, even as far as that colony was concerned, the proportion of people who sought work with their brains and pen was already excessive. Of clerks, Civil servants, teachers, and even shopkeepers, there was already an over abundant supply, and it was a class, moreover, which in times of depression suffered the greatest straits of any class in the State. A man who lived by the sweat of his brow and the labour of his hands could, if he was willing and able, always get remunerative work in this colony. But clerical work was always in superabundant supply. He would call attention to the fact that this Act was entirely in favour of the towns, and also of the rich. From the last report he gathered that the expenditure in Brisbane for primary schools was £17,229 18s. 6d.; for non-vested schools, £1,726 10s.; for the grammar schools, with an additional aid of £500 given, £1,750; for exhibitions and scholarships—but of that he was not sure, as he had to make a rough sort of guess at it—£1,300, making a total of £22,066. He did not wish the House to suppose he begrudged the expenditure for Brisbane—in fact, he was rather astonished at their moderation in not spending more, but he would call attention to the disparity between this amount and that expended in the outside districts. In the district which he represented, not a shilling had been spent for education purposes. In the Mitchell district, where he had resided for the last sixteen or seventeen years, and which was one of the most important districts in the colony, being a large contributor to the Consolidated Revenue, with very large productive powers which were being rapidly developed, with a large electoral roll, and a very fair amount of population springing up. In several good-sized bush towns the total expenditure had been confined to three schools—Tambo, Blackall, and Aramac—and the

amount was £585 for last year. It was ridiculous to compare that with the expenditure incurred in Brisbane of £22,000. All he had to say with regard to the working of the Act in those districts was that there was a provision in the Act in clause 20 which applied to a scattered population, and provided that travelling schoolmasters might be employed in places where the population was scattered, and it was impossible to assemble in one place a sufficient number of children to justify the establishment of a State school. It had never been, as far as he knew, attempted to put this clause into operation, and there were other clauses which the framers and administrators of the Act had not thought fit to put in force. Since this clause 20, however, did exist, it was worthy of some consideration at their hands.

Mr. McLEAN: It has been put in force.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it had not been put in force up his way. There was another point to which he wished to call attention—namely, that such an expenditure in Brisbane stifled all private enterprise; it even went so far as to snuff out the private schools, which now scarcely existed, with the exception of Mr. Boyd's, at Milton, and that was pretty nearly affiliated to the Grammar School. There were also one or two private ladies' schools. He would not dwell upon the injustice accruing to the men who had established schools here, but would point out that those who desired to be independent of the State and bear the burden of the education of their own children were compelled to use the State schools, because the private schools had been shut up by the competition; and the feeling of dependence upon the State was in this way inculcated upon the children at an early stage. The State then began taking them in hand—spoon-feeding them as it were. In course of time they all wanted to become Civil servants or pupil-teachers; and if a lot of pupil-teachers were educated, it became necessary to find work for them whether they were wanted or not. In his opinion the action of the State should be restricted to educating those children whose parents could not afford to pay the cost themselves. This was such a great and glorious colony that with a very moderate amount of education individuals were able to get along very well in it, and those who possessed intelligence, perseverance, and industry were sure to come to the front. There were plenty of instances in public life which showed that the man who was best educated and who had the best start did not always succeed best. He had been twitted the other night by the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) who said that there were plenty of bullock-drivers who had more intelligence than he (Mr. Hill) had. He did not deny that that might be the case; bullock-drivers were often very good men, and the very fact that the hon. member had occupied a seat in the House for twenty years was a striking proof that even bullock-drivers could come to the front. The present system was very well described when the hon. member for Mitchell said that it appeared to be a craze of the Colonial Secretary and the leader of the Opposition combined. That was about the only question upon which they had agreed in their lives, and the conclusion which had resulted from their agreement was a very curious one. He took the liberty to differ from them entirely. He considered that they had raised a Frankenstein that would turn upon them and upon the country, stifling and strangling it in its very cradle; and that if the present system were continued much longer, the country would be at its wit's-end to know how to deal with it. From the last education report it appeared that the expenditure

per head was increasing, while the attendance of children, proportionately to the population, was decreasing. As such an expensive system was in force, and as it was considered necessary that the education should be compulsory, it was a great pity—and more than that, it was a blot and stain upon the administration of that Act—that the administrators had never dared to put those clauses into force. Personally he did not believe in those clauses, but it being perfectly evident that a majority in this House believed in the Act as it stood, why they had never attempted to put those clauses into force passed his comprehension. Similar results to those experienced here had been attained in New Zealand from a precisely similar system. There, also, compulsory clauses were included in the Education Act, and upon that subject Sir Hercules Robinson said—

“After making all reasonable deductions for such cases there must remain a large number of children who were not receiving instruction of any kind; and it is difficult to see how parents who habitually disregard such a primary duty can be influenced except by penal legislation. I hope, however, that the compulsory clauses will be administered with discrimination and forbearance, and with a view rather to induce attendance than to recover penalties.”

He could not leave this subject without referring to the injustice perpetrated by this Act upon a very large portion of the population—he alluded to the Roman Catholics, who numbered about one-third of the population. He was not a Roman Catholic himself, but he considered that they were extremely unjustly treated. Whilst contributing equally with the members of any other denomination to the revenue, they were forced to swallow principles of education which were repugnant to them, or else to educate their own children at their own expense in addition to contributing to the expense of educating Protestant children. It was all very well to look upon the subject as a party question, and to argue that at an election the Protestant vote would swamp the Catholic vote—that was where the tyranny of the majority was shown. He would rather be without a seat in the House than enter it pledged by his constituents to do what he considered to be a manifest injustice to a very large and important section of the community. This was, he knew, a very delicate question, and almost interminable discussions might arise upon it, so many other sects were interested in the matter; but still there was that one large sect, and its present position with regard to education was a very forcible example of how a great injustice could be perpetrated. He was fully persuaded that to disestablish a system which had been built up at such enormous expense, and which had attained in many ways a position approaching perfection, would bring distress upon many persons, and would be a dangerous thing to attempt to accomplish. The State should contribute a certain amount towards the education of the young in order that it might acquire a right to healthy supervision. He did not believe in free-schooling, and if any measure were introduced to compel those who were able—and he believed nearly all were willing—to contribute some portion, at all events, of the cost of educating their children, it would have his most hearty support; and when parents did contribute in that way he believed that both they and their children would more highly value the advantages conferred upon the children by means of education. He believed, also, that the attendance would then be more regular and larger, and that the necessity for compulsory clauses would in a measure cease to exist. People were apt to value lightly what they got for nothing; they began to value a thing more highly when they paid for

it. Even a small sum paid weekly would be a considerable assistance towards defraying the cost of State education—6d. a-week, or 25s. a-year, each child, would be about 25 per cent. of the cost, and would be better than nothing, though he should be inclined to fix the amount rather higher. In conclusion, he had only to say that for the reasons he had given, and because he considered that the present system of education entailed a larger expenditure than could well be defrayed out of general revenue without assistance from local sources, it was his deliberate intention to oppose every item of additional expenditure set down in this estimate. He should have liked to quote more extensively from the speech of Sir Hercules Robinson, but knowing how wearisome quotations were he would only give one more, as followed:—

“But if a return to the system of school fees is impracticable, the next best thing to my mind would be that the public schools should be, in part at all events, supported by local rates. I think that it will always be expedient to continue to pay some considerable portion of the ordinary expenditure out of the general revenue, in order to ensure effective supervision. But if fees are not levied, some part of the ordinary expenditure, and the whole cost of the buildings, should be provided locally—the ratepayers being allowed to elect the Education Boards. School rates, doubtless, would not be as good as fees as far as the teachers are concerned, but they would have the same effect in bringing home to parents a sense of their obligations, and the system would provide a remedy for the constitutional anomaly involved in the existing arrangement, under which the whole of the vast sum required for primary education is raised by one body, and administered by another.”

With regard to the cost of buildings, he had been informed that when anything was wanted in the Brisbane Normal School the whole cost was paid; whereas in the Mitchell district the inhabitants had to contribute at least one-fifth of the necessary expenditure. That was not a severe tax—perhaps it was too little—but he did not see why the same principle should not apply in the two cases.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he wished to reply to what had appeared in the Press respecting some remarks he had made with reference to a certain section of the community. He did not make any remarks for the purpose of raising religious strife. The reason why he had made those remarks was that it appeared to him that a moral terrorism existed, that a gross tyranny had grown up under the Act, and Roman Catholics were absolutely afraid of their lives to express their honest opinions on the subject. If they ventured to express their convictions all sorts of names were poured on their devoted heads by the secularists: whereas he (Mr. Morehead), being a Protestant, might perhaps be safer in speaking his mind and attempting to check the spread of a great evil which had commenced to exist, and which threatened to be a great danger to the State in the future. It had been said that it was a pity to raise religious differences, but the Act itself did that. It was making a gap between a large section of the community and the rest of it; it was throwing on the whole Roman Catholic body a burden for that which they could not, and would not, for conscientious reasons, accept. Instead of attempting to raise religious dissension he was doing exactly the opposite—he was endeavouring to point out a dangerous state of affairs which had sprung into existence, and which was increasing in force, and he and those who thought with him were simply asking that steps might be taken by Parliament to bridge over the gulf which was likely to become wider as time went on. There was no more appropriate time than the present for raising the question. He raised it advisedly, because assistance to the non-vested schools would cease at the end of the

year, and, unless they made a protest now, the time to do so would have gone by. Everyone knew that he had no sympathy, religiously, with either a white-choker or a Roman Catholic—he thought that, probably, the middle course was right. He respected any man who held an opinion of his own on such a subject; such a man was not called upon to give an explanation to anyone there as to why he held any particular opinion with respect to the question. He thought that the class who represented one-third of the community had a right to have their views respected. They were an order-loving section of the community, and no one could say that in themselves they were of any danger to the State. If they committed no crime; if their system of education resulted in the production of a class of people whose presence would be of benefit to the State, why should they be excluded from a national system of education which they were taxed to support? It was monstrous, and had been monstrous from the very first. If it could be proved that Roman Catholics held opinions which would be a source of danger to the State, let them by all means do all they could to prevent the spread of such obnoxious and injurious elements; but it had never been alleged that Roman Catholics were not as good colonists and as loyal subjects as men belonging to any other persuasion. Nothing had been said to show why that particular denomination should be treated as they were under the Education Act. At the end of the year about a hundred teachers in non-vested schools would be turned out, and he should like to know whether the Government had considered what steps should be taken to relieve those unfortunate men who would be deprived of their occupation under the Act. He should like to have an answer from the Colonial Secretary on that subject. He should like to know from the leaders of the two parties in the House what crime it was to be a Roman Catholic—because that was practically the question—and he should further like to know why Roman Catholics should be heavily taxed for the support of a system which they did not conscientiously believe in and could not use. Theoretically he agreed with the secularists. He did not suppose that, theoretically, anyone held broader views than he did with regard to education—that was to say broad in the sense in which it was provided for in the Act—but whilst holding those views he still objected, and would protest as long as he had a seat in the House, against an injustice being done to such a large section of the community, unless it could be proved that a Roman Catholic was a bad citizen, and that it was not right that he should be fostered, but that they should crush him. As things stood they were simply persecuting that particular sect—they were doing nothing else, and he believed that such a state of affairs would not be tolerated in most countries. In New South Wales they had in the old Act as good and as perfect a system of education as could be devised; but Sir Henry Parkes, in the fulness of his power—having an enormous majority at his back—thought fit, because of certain actions of the head of the Roman Catholic Church, to alter the whole system; and now there was in force a system which would strangle New South Wales, financially, before many years were over. In Queensland they were treading very much in the same step. From a pounds-shillings-and-pence point of view they could not stand it; they could not submit to be taxed as they were now being, and as they would in the future be taxed if the present most extravagant and expensive method of education went on. Let hon. members compare what they paid for education as compared with their revenue, and look at the Estimates to see how the vote was creeping up.

If it continued to leap up as it had done they would soon be plunged into serious pecuniary trouble. That would be the result of carrying out a system of education which, so far as it had gone and as far as it was likely to go, had been and would be of no earthly practical use to the colony. They would soon have no servants except those who came out as immigrants. Talk about Jack being as good as his master, why, in this colony, he would soon be a great deal better than his master! The people would soon absolutely refuse to do anything menial, and they would further burden an already over-burdened Civil service. They would have a moral claim on the Government, who made them what they were by forcing education on them. They would be educated up to such a point that they would be unfitted to do work which was essential in a young country—work which required hands as well as head. Those useless learned men and women would scorn menial employment; they would be thrown on the State, and as the already too much swollen Civil service would not contain them the Government would have to form Dunwiches for them.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said it was not his intention to refer to the question which had been raised in reference to what was to his mind an unjust provision—that which would compel the Catholics at the end of the year 1880-81 to contribute towards the maintenance of State schools to which they could not send their children, whereby they were forced to establish schools of their own. It was not for fear of anything that might be said outside nor for fear of defending the principles which he held—he was too proud of the religion to which he belonged to care about what people outside said with reference to it—that he refrained from dealing with that question. His reason for so refraining was this: In consequence of a misapprehension regarding the time when the State aid to non-vested schools would cease, he at his election unfortunately pledged himself to stand by the provisions of the present Act, and he felt himself compelled to do so. He felt that he was placed in an exceedingly false position, but having acted carelessly, and taken it for granted that the information he had received as to the satisfactory working of the Act was correct, he felt that he was still bound to put up with the consequences and pass over in silence what he considered a great injustice to his co-religionists. He rose not merely for the purpose of making that explanation, but to introduce another subject—that was, what their education was leading them to. He quite agreed with the hon. members for Gregory and Mitchell in what they had said with reference to the class of people they were bringing up. They were really teaching people that manual labour and artisan labour—any labour requiring the use of the hands—was almost despicable; they were teaching them so that their only ambition was to become clerks and lawyers. One of the most important and effectual steps to be taken by the State for the correction of the evil would be the introduction of a system of technical education. Technical schools might be established without any great expense. Much of that which was taught at present might be left out; if instead of having masters to give the children a smattering of Latin and preparing them for a high standard of proficiency, they established schools in which all kinds of technical instruction would be imparted, the country would be enormously benefited. He would, for instance, take the position of agriculture in the colony. A farmer sent his boys to school at Brisbane, or in one of the other centres of population, and they were instructed in Latin, mathematics, and other things, but not a particle of



instruction was imparted to them on the subject which would affect their future lives. They were not instructed as to the constituents of soils and the means to utilise them so as to derive the greatest benefit from them. A knowledge of the old saws and proverbs and instruction for farming in the old country would in no way prepare the boys for farmers in this country. If instead of much that was taught them those boys were instructed in the elements of the chemistry of agriculture, so that they would know the different classes of soil and what plants would most readily develop in those soils, more benefit would be conferred on the country than there would be by all the Latin and Greek in Christendom. There was scarcely a single class of labour which could not be spoken of in the same way—take carpenters and engineers, for example. Who were the people that made England what it was now? Not the learned men—not those who had a certain amount of education which enabled them to become great merchants, and bankers—but the mechanics who had extended their knowledge so as to produce machinery which had directed to England all classes of production from every part of the world. In this country they should not allow any system of education to exist which would have the effect of causing people to look down on mechanics and engineering or of in any way checking manual labour. He said they should encourage it in every possible way; and if they could only expend a certain portion of the enormous sum of £123,000 upon the Estimates this year in technical education, it would produce immense benefit and place the colony foremost amongst the Australian colonies in the matter of education. What he had pointed out was not merely confined to the boys' education in the colony; precisely the same thing might be said of the young girls. The daughters of labourers and others of that class who were themselves not well educated, were taught to do fancy work of all kinds, music, to play the piano, and all kinds of things that could in no way fit them for the class of life they would probably have to lead—namely, as the majority of the women of the country must be, domestic servants or wives of the working people. By teaching them such things as fancy-work, and music, and composition, and to write essays and all the rest of it, they put into the heads of these young girls a desire to put themselves in a position for which they were not before fitted—perhaps to be seamstresses, for which in many places they received very small pay, and which led often to all kinds of harm to the girls themselves. A great deal might also be done by a certain amount of technical education being given to girls. Take, for instance, cookery; what could possibly do more good to the girls of this country than instruction in cookery? Many people looked upon cookery as a mere matter either of luxury or as a thing that, whether it was done well or badly, made very little difference. But he looked upon cookery as a most important thing in a country like this. To refer to a foreign country, look at the enormous benefit France derived from her economy in cooking, and her vastly superior knowledge of cookery over any other country. He did not refer to delicate cookery, which was a mere luxury of the rich, but to the knowledge that enabled a person to make the most of a small quantity of material; to make it palatable and nourishing. He therefore said that if they had in the great centres of population, where large numbers of girls could be brought together, means provided for giving them instruction in cookery, they would not only be placed in a position of being exceedingly useful to their own families and their own class, but

also to obtain very high salaries. He supposed that at that moment there was no class of employment throughout the colony for which women received so much for their labour as by good cookery. The field for it was very wide indeed. He had introduced the subject, and hoped it would lead to discussion, because he believed that the free discussion of it would do a great deal of good, and perhaps be the first step towards the expenditure of money for technical education.

Mr. GRIFFITH said they had several speeches on the education question this afternoon from various points of view, but they were mostly like that of the hon. member who had just sat down, purely theoretical and utopian. The best answer he could give to that hon. member was to call attention to the actual facts connected with the system; but before he did that he wished to refer to the statement of the hon. member for Mitchell, that since the passing of the Act of 1875 there had been introduced a system of religious terrorism. Well, it was a well-known fact that a large proportion of the teachers were Roman Catholics, and a large number of the children attending the schools were also Roman Catholics, and he had never heard of any disturbing element. If it existed it must have come in very recently, and he did not believe anything of the kind existed; nor did he think it necessary to discuss the question of the discontinuance of aid to non-vested schools on the present occasion. Their system of education was continually being attacked on account of its extravagant cost, and because it went a great deal further than State education ought to go—a great deal further, at any rate, than free education ought to go. He wondered, when he heard these statements from hon. members, whether they had taken the trouble to find out how far it did go, because it would be a very low standard of education indeed if it provided for anything less than was fixed by the present standard. It was quite true that at one time they did teach Latin and mathematics and music and numbers of other things, but that was all abolished nearly five years ago. He was now speaking of free education; grammar schools, of course, stood on entirely different ground. The hon. member had said that by the system of education now in force they were spoiling children for practical work by teaching girls to be above their station, so that they should have no domestic servants, and boys to be ashamed of the handicrafts of their fathers or to turn their hands to anything useful; and in reply he (Mr. Griffith) would call the attention of the Committee to the subjects that were taught. This was set down as the standard for admission to the fifth class, and was the work actually done in the fourth class; and he might say that a very small proportion of the children ever got into that class and very few indeed ever got beyond it. This was what, according to some hon. members, would teach children to be above their station and unfit them for useful work in the colony:—

“Reading:—To read the fourth reading book; to spell the words both orally and in writing; to know and understand the meanings of the words and the matter of lessons; to repeat from memory six pieces of poetry.

“Writing:—To write on paper from a copy, and from dictation, with the proper use of stops.

“Arithmetic:—To work sums in proportion, practice, vulgar fractions, and simple interest, including miscellaneous problems; to perform mentally simple operations of these rules.

“Object Lessons:—To have an elementary knowledge of the science of common things. Laws of health, domestic economy (for girls).

“Drill and Gymnastics:—To know drill as far as page 40 of the drill-book, and to perform orderly class movements.

"Vocal music:—To know about modulation in music; to sol-fa passages in the more common keys; to sing suitable songs and rounds in two or three parts."

—the most elementary knowledge of music. Then there came "needlework for girls," and he would have to read the standard for the whole of the classes so as to be understood—

"Upper second class: To exhibit running, hemming, and run-and-fell seams on samplers and small garments. To be able to fold a hem and begin the work. Third class: The same as for the preceding class, but on finer material, and also showing an increase of skill. Also stitching, top-sewing, top-sew-and-fell seam, and running tucks. To show handiness and readiness in setting and beginning work. Fourth class: The same as in preceding class, and, in addition, stroking and stocking in gathers, button-holes, patching, darning, and plain marking in cross stitch. Fifth class: The same as for the preceding class, adding veining, herring-bone, and feather stitch; each pupil to exhibit a shirt or other garment cut out and made by herself."

He supposed that every woman would require to know at least these things. Then:—

"Geography: To know the geography of the continents generally, the British dominions more particularly; climate, winds, tides, currents, and the elements of mathematical geography; to draw from memory on slates sketch-maps of the continents and the British Islands.

"Grammar: To know and apply the rules of syntax; to parse and analyse compound and complex sentences; to know the prefixes, the affixes, and the more common Latin roots. To write from memory the poetry learned; to write in original language on a familiar subject; to write a letter.

"History: To know the outlines of the history of Australian discovery, exploration, and settlement; the leading events of English history; the order of succession and dates of accession of English sovereigns.

"Mechanics (for boys): To have an elementary knowledge of the mechanical powers."

These were the subjects; and he found, on reference to the report on Public Instruction, that the total number of children in the whole colony in the fifth class was 320; and in the fourth there were 1,048 boys and 953 girls. He maintained that that standard, instead of being extravagant, was as low as they could go. There was nothing more than was required to make a youth a good handicraftsman, or a girl a good domestic servant or the good wife of a mechanic. The story had been repeated over and over again about extravagance and giving children ideas above their station, but it was all nonsense. They were asked why they did not teach boys agricultural chemistry, and why girls were not taught such knowledge of cookery as was possessed by the peasants of France. He wished everybody in the British dominions had such a knowledge of cookery as the French people possessed, but hon. members who asked these questions forgot to consider where the teachers and appliances were to be got. Would the hon. member for Clermont tell him where the teachers were to come from who could teach agricultural chemistry, and how it was to be taught to the children attending the primary schools? He agreed that it was desirable agricultural chemistry should be known, but it could not be taught to the little boys in primary schools; they would not understand what the teacher was talking about even if he had the means and appliances for imparting instruction, for it must be remembered that the education received by the great majority of the boys was far below the standard to which he had referred. Again, where were the lessons in cookery to be given to girls, and where was the material to come from? He found that in his last report to the Under Secretary for Public Instruction, Mr. District Inspector Caine made the following valuable suggestion on the subject of technical education:—

"A few well-meaning people are of opinion that 'technical instruction' should be added to the present

elementary course provided by the State, and some appear to think that it should in part even supersede it. The subjects included in the course of instruction given in the State schools of this colony are also taught, to a greater or less extent, in the elementary schools of every community of British origin in the world. Everyone who has some practical knowledge of a national system of education and who has given the matter sufficient thought, has probably come to the conclusion long ago that, even if the proposal to establish workshops in connection with every State school in the colony did not necessitate an immense expenditure, it is as unreasonable to expect the State to train the boys in our primary schools to be mechanics as it would be to expect it to give the Grammar School pupils technical instruction in law, medicine, and surgery. The instruction afforded in the primary schools is elementary and practical, and it forms an educational equipment, which, as far as it goes, is as suitable and necessary for the intelligent mechanic as for the bank clerk or the lawyer, and which very properly stops where secondary education and technical instruction begin."

That, he thought, expressed the objections and difficulties which stood in the way of technical instruction being given in the State schools. The children had not arrived at the age at which they could receive it. It was also pointed out that many masters wasted time over the teaching of big words and new words, and did not give their pupils sufficient practical instruction—did not teach them the habit of looking at things for themselves and finding out for themselves. He was sure that the giving of technical instruction was not practicable in the primary schools, and that the objection that the system went too far was also unfounded. No doubt the teachers had permission to give further instruction, and to charge extra for it. The limits of free education should be not much beyond such instruction as was comprised in what was called the three R's, and he did not think that our primary instruction went much further. He thought it was a pity that unfounded attacks should be made on a system which was working well.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he had no intention of entering into a defence of the present system of public instruction, and he almost regretted that the present discussion had sprung up. Although it had been initiated in what he might call very clever speeches, he could not see that any practical result would be obtained unless it was backed by a proposal to repeal the present Act. He was not there to defend the general principles of the Act; no attack, none that was likely to lead to any practical effect, had been made upon it, and unless speeches such as they had heard were followed by a substantive proposition, it would be a waste of time to deal with them. As to the fear some hon. members had expressed that the children were in danger of being over-educated, he could assure them that the demand for labour was so great, that as soon as children became useful to their parents, or were able to earn money, they left school, and a necessary consequence was that an infinitesimal proportion ever reached the fifth class, and comparatively few the fourth class. No member of the Committee need therefore be alarmed that there was any danger of over-education. The member for Clermont made a mistake when he said that boys were taught Latin and Greek in the primary schools. He had not even heard that they were taught the elementary principles of Latin, and if they were it must be after school hours and by special agreement with the masters. He would repeat that he was not there to defend the present system of education. It was the law of the land, and his business at present was to get the Estimates through, and to that he meant to confine himself. He should be happy to give any information as to the working of the system, but he would not be drawn into a discussion on the principles.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he had not had the opportunity of visiting any of the State schools of this colony when the amount of proficiency and the exact quantity of education which were attained were demonstrated, but if it was true that the proficiency of the pupils was so small as had been represented—that girls learnt only elementary sewing, and boys only a very small amount of reading and writing and a little more of arithmetic—all he could say was, that the standard must be vastly lower than in the other colonies. In Western Australia and Tasmania—colonies not so rich as Queensland—a vast number of children went much further than the standard, although it was not higher than in this colony, and at public examinations he had seen elegant work produced by the girls, and had heard the boys doing mental arithmetical calculations which would have taken an educated man two or three minutes to work out. As to the question of technical education, the leader of the Opposition had stated that the difficulties were so enormous that agricultural chemistry could not be taught in the State schools. What were the object lessons but little more than the elements of technical education? They taught the practical things of life, and if they were much more extended and special instruction were given on such subjects they alone would do a vast amount of good. He did not pretend that in the public schools such instruction upon agricultural chemistry could be imparted as was given at the great public school at Cirencester; but the elementary teaching of the science of agriculture did not necessitate high-class or special teachers. He supposed there were few high-class professors who had confined themselves to one particular subject who had not read sufficient to give a vast amount of technical instruction upon these subjects; but so long as the subjects were not introduced in the curriculum they would not be taught. Under the present system a farmer's son, on going through the course of instruction provided by the State, knew no more about his father's particular line of business than he did when he entered school. A vast amount of instruction upon these subjects could, however, be given by any man of high education, such as he presumed many of the teachers in the public schools were. No doubt there were great difficulties in the way of imparting technical instruction; so there were in all changes, still they were not so great that they could not be surmounted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS was understood to say that he shared the feelings of the Minister for Instruction in his desire to get the Estimates through. He did not wish to provoke a discussion upon the education question; he, in common with many others, kept silent over the matter, and the opinions he entertained would perhaps be best kept to themselves; but after the able, honourable, and disinterested speeches made that evening by members, speaking from another standpoint, he would hardly be justified in remaining silent. He was not going to occupy the time of the Committee for any length, and he would preface his remarks with the statement that he had no desire to quarrel with anyone. For him, people could go to heaven their own way, and he hoped to meet them there; but he himself would not be disturbed over the education question, and he was not particular himself as to how a man was educated so long as he was educated. He saw, however, a state of things going on in this country, and also in Victoria, to which attention should be drawn, and it would be just as well if they profited by the experience of other places without paying for it. There was no occasion for them to be punished as the people of Victoria had been; they should profit by the lesson which had been learnt there.

It—Education Act had been the cause of all the trouble and the financial difficulty into which Victoria had been plunged. Leading politicians there had been trying to outbid each other in popularity hunting. They had used the education question as a weapon to cause strife and contention in the community, and in their endeavours to overreach each other they had committed the colony to a vast expenditure every year, and what was the result? He happened to know that in Richmond enormous schools had been established alongside other schools where the children of people, who had established industries at Richmond in quite an inoffensive manner, were being well educated. The State schools were built alongside these schools to come into competition with them, and several cases had occurred where through not being able to get any attendance for the State schools and in order to popularise them, the authorities had abandoned the buildings erected at great expense and had rented premises in a more suitable situation. However, the question had assumed another aspect here, which was, the results gained to the community by the present system of education; whether, in fact, the State got value for the money expended or not; and what the children turned out of State schools were fitted for. There might be some who showed an extraordinary amount of intelligence, and those attracted the attention of the inspectors; but as a fact, the majority that were brought up at State schools were not fit for any office afterwards. Hon. members had that evening been told by the leader of the Opposition that only a few pupils got as high as the fifth class, and therefore it was only reasonable to suppose that there must be something defective in the system. The arguments of the hon. members for the Mitchell and the Gregory were so much in accord with those he (Mr. Perkins) entertained that he might be doing himself a wrong if he attempted to add anything to what those hon. members had said. As regarded the statement that an overdose of Greek and Latin entirely unfitted many children from pursuing their ordinary walks in life, he must say that he entirely agreed with it, as it unfitted them either to dig or to cook, or to do many other things that were useful. He believed that that result had been already experienced by those persons who lived in the colonies, unless they lived in an atmosphere of their own; as they found it difficult to get anyone to do anything for them in a proper way. Although every day there were cries being raised of want of employment, the very people raising those cries were not fit to do anything, or would not do any work, and in the town of Toowoomba, in which he lived, it was a most difficult thing to get any person either to cook, look after a cow, or even to wash. He believed that those boys and girls who were educated in the public schools, and who had risen to a certain pitch, were induced to believe that they were destined to live in a certain atmosphere, and when they found that they were wrong, and had to return back to their proper stations, they had to experience what had been pointed out by the hon. members for the Mitchell and the Gregory. It was perhaps right that those boys attending schools, who might afterwards have to live by the cultivation of the land, should be made acquainted with the nature of different soils, but he had found from his official position that, as a rule, people did not look so much to the quality of the land as to the quantity they could take up. He was very glad indeed to find that there were in that House men who had the courage to stand up and speak out their minds. It was not his business to agitate in the matter, or to condemn anybody for the views they entertained,

and consequently he must keep silent; but he must say that he was proud that there were hon. members in that Committee who contrasted highly with members of other colonies—who had the courage of avowing their opinions—more courage, in fact, than was shown in any other House.

Mr. FEEZ said he would not have trespassed on the time of the Committee at all had it not been for the remarks of the hon. members for the Mitchell and the Gregory, that a large and influential body of the community, in their opinion, lived under a system of terrorism through which they were deprived of the benefit of State education whilst they were taxed for the support of it. It was his opinion that it was entirely voluntary with that class to deprive themselves of that benefit; as they did not do so because a religion they objected to was taught in the schools, but because no religion was taught in them. He thought that to remedy the evil, if there was any, they must fall back on a system under which he was educated forty years ago in one of the most Roman Catholic parts of Germany—namely, Bavaria. The system there under the direction of the State was national and compulsory, children of all religions and sects being together in the same school; but the State arranged that teachers or clergy belonging to the various denominations should meet the pupils in separate rooms at 12 o'clock three times a week, on which days and hours they were taught religion. All left at 1 o'clock for the dinner hour, and on the children re-assembling at 2 o'clock they forgot everything, and no sectarian feelings ever showed themselves—in fact, it was a system which propagated tolerance on its broadest basis, and he should be much pleased if some of the leaders in the State here would take the system into their earnest consideration. If they did so he believed that their advocacy of it would meet with considerable support.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he should be sorry if the hon. Minister for Instruction, or any member of the Ministry, thought that in the opinions he had expressed that evening he had any design of delaying the business of the Committee. He and other hon. members felt that they had adopted the only course open to them of placing their opinions on record with regard to the proposed increase for the purposes of education. It was all very well to say that the education question had been settled, but at the time the Act was passed the number of members in the House was much smaller than it now was. According to the statement of the hon. leader of the Opposition, it appeared that very few boys got into the fourth class, and still fewer into the fifth class, and therefore it was reasonable to suppose that there was an extravagant waste of money somewhere. With reference to the statement of the hon. Minister for Instruction, that the debate would come to nothing unless there was a motion made for repealing the present Act, all he (Mr. Hill) would say was this, that he would support any hon. member who would move its repeal. He, as a junior member, would not take such a responsibility on himself, but in the meantime it was his intention to oppose every item in the Education Estimates in which there was an increase set down.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that after the remarks of the hon. member for the Leichhardt, he would ask the Minister for Instruction how many instances there had been during the past year of ministers asking to be allowed to give religious education in public schools?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION: No applications have been made to me.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Has any religious instruction been given?

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The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION: None. I may remark that on one occasion an application was made to me by a lady to give religious instruction out of school hours, and it was granted at once.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he observed that the usual detailed report of the inspectors of schools was omitted in the papers laid on the table: would the hon. gentleman state why that was done?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said it was omitted on the recommendation of the Department; no good was gained by publishing it.

Mr. FRASER said no doubt the estimate for education was spreading to enormous proportions, but so long as they had free education he did not see how it could be arrested. While there was free education they had a right to expect that the most should be made of it. Last year the Minister for Instruction expressed a disinclination to put the compulsory clauses into force, and he (Mr. Fraser) rose this evening to bring the matter again under his notice. He spoke from his own knowledge and observation when he said that there was in Brisbane, and especially in the suburbs, springing up a class of children who went to no school, and who appeared to be under the control of neither parents nor any other authority; and who, in fact, were likely to grow up into confirmed larrikins. He was sure the Minister for Instruction, if he chose to exercise his authority and put the compulsory clause into force, would lay the community—he was speaking more especially of the Brisbane community—under a great obligation, while at the same time he would confer a lasting benefit upon those children themselves. In looking over the reports he was much struck by the number of children reported by the inspectors and teachers to be within a certain distance of their schools and yet not attending any school whatever. That was a very serious matter, and sufficiently important to engage the consideration of the administrator of the Education Department.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN wanted to know the meaning of the hon. member for North Brisbane in asking a question with regard to applications to give religious instruction. He could not catch the meaning of the hon. gentleman, but noticed that in his speech he made it actually the real point at issue. The hon. member did not seem to understand how the Catholics stood in the matter at all. They believed that education—properly so-called—included religious instruction; and, in this respect, they denied the right of anyone but Catholics to teach Catholic children. This part of the question had nothing at all to do with free education, because religion need not be taught in school hours, and the State had not to pay for teaching religion. If only 350 of the children of the colony reached the fifth class in the State Schools, and only 10,000 the second class, what became of the £124,000 a-year expended on education? He wished to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that there was a certain class of the community excluded from teaching in State schools. He had a letter from the Under Secretary of the Department the other day, stating that middle-aged teachers could not get any appointments in the service except in provisional schools. It appeared that no matter how well educated a middle-aged man was, and no matter how many years he had been a teacher, he had no prospect of getting any employment in the Department except in provisional schools, because there were already too many children being educated becoming teachers. How did that correspond with the statement made by the hon. member for North Brisbane—that only 350

children reached the fifth class? There were 300 or 400 pupils at present in the Normal Schools who received in the education which would qualify them as teachers an amount of instruction sufficient to fit them for any walk in life. If State education should be done away with—which he hoped it would never be—some system ought to be introduced by which persons other than pupil-teachers should become teachers under the Department. At present, if middle-aged persons came to the colony and happened to be good teachers they could not be employed in State schools.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION :  
The hon. member is quite mistaken.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said a Minister must hold himself responsible for the action of his secretaries. But when these people came to the colony there was nothing for them to do, and they had to go somewhere else, unless they liked to go to these provisional schools at £40 or £50 a-year. In the meantime they must keep the thickly-buttered bread for the Normal School boys. With regard to larrikins, there were certainly any amount of them throughout the colony; but if they were compelled to go to school they would be worse than at present, because an educated child without religion was worse than one not educated at all.

Mr. LOW said that some provision should be made for the education of the young in the outlying districts where there were hundreds, and he might say thousands, who never had an opportunity of being educated at all, and where in many cases parents had given up good situations so as to remove to towns where they could scarcely make a living, in order that their children might be educated. Surely, with such a large increase in the Estimates some money ought to be devoted to the education of youngsters in such places as Goondiwindi, Surat, and St. George. The whole of the money seemed to be spent in centres of population where a high class of education was given. Those who were able to pay for the education of their sons and daughters ought to do so, and leave the money voted by Parliament to be devoted to the education of the poor. The people in the outlying districts were labouring under a gross injustice, and something ought to be done to remedy it. It was a matter worth the consideration of the Minister for Instruction.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he could not allow the observations of the hon. member for Balonne to pass without a remark. The hon. member generally spoke very much to the point, but this time he had made an unhappy selection, for there were schools at Goondiwindi, Surat, and St. George; in fact, wherever twelve children could be got together the Act provided that a provisional school should be formed. If the parents would subscribe to build a house of any sort that children could harbour under, a provisional schoolmaster would be appointed.

Mr. LOW said that when he made the statement he was not aware of any such provision in the Act, and felt that if it were generally known a great many bush children at present uneducated would be sent to school.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. member for Stanley wanted to know what he had referred to when asking the question about religious instruction being given in the State schools. He (Mr. Griffith) referred to a provision in the regulations under which any religious instructor might ask for permission to give religious instruction in State schools out of school hours—in fact, the system was exactly the same as that which the hon. member for Leichhardt referred to as prevailing in Germany, the only difference

being that here persons who wished to give religious instruction had to apply for permission to do so; but in Germany, he understood from the the hon. member for Leichhardt, it was the regular system—not only the system on paper, but the system in fact. Here the system was recognised, and every facility was given by the State for carrying it out, but no one applied for leave to do it. He did not miss the real question as suggested by the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan), but he thought it was not desirable to discuss that question at the present time.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN moved the reduction of the item by £250. His object was to make an attempt to keep down this increase for the year.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said these estimates were carefully prepared, and they could not afford to cut them down. The actual amount expended for the last year was £3,945.

Question—That the item objected to be reduced by £250—put.

The Committee divided :—

AYES, 7.

Messrs. O'Sullivan, Weld-Blundell, Kellett, Amhurst, Morehead, Lumley Hill, and Low.

NOES, 16.

Messrs. Palmer, Griffith, Dickson, McIlwraith, Fraser, Perkins, Rutledge, Macrossan, Swanwick, Macfarlane, Douglas, Garrick, Beattie, H. Palmer, Hamilton, and Archer.

Question, therefore, resolved in the negative.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he wished to say a few words on the general question, and, while congratulating the Minister for Instruction upon what he believed to be the efficient state of the department, and believing as he did that it did its work thoroughly well, he could not in the least sympathise with those who thought that the expenditure upon that service should be reduced, or that in any way its efficiency should be diminished. He looked upon the dissemination of knowledge in this form as really the highest duty they could undertake, and that the future of the colony depended more upon the effectual way in which the educational system was managed than any other function of the Government which the House could authorise. He therefore would rather cut down any service than this, and it would be necessary for them as a State, assuming the responsibility of undertaking the education of the young, to be prepared to carry it out to its fullest extent whenever it was necessary to add to the efficiency of the system. By doing so they really added to their strength, for the measure of their strength in the future would be, it seemed to him, the extent to which they secured the dissemination of knowledge and thorough education for the rising generation. Apart altogether from the system now in force, it must be conceded on all sides that knowledge was power, and that this was the only way they now had of training the youth of the community, our future citizens, in order that they might benefit this country. Satisfactory as the work of the office was, there was no doubt that it was the duty of those who took the deepest interest in the working of that system to point out its defects wherever they might be. He was now free to admit that, where the expenditure was increasing as it inevitably must from the large number of schools they had every year, they hardly got a proportionate amount of results from those increases. For instance, he found that according to the report of this year it was stated that at the end of the years 1878 and 1879 the numbers of schools were 292 and 314 respectively, showing an increase of 22. Then there was a very considerable increase in the number of masters, the increase being 66

over the previous year of 1878, 19 of the 66 being pupil-teachers. The number of scholars enrolled in proportion to this increase of teachers hardly corresponded. The annual enrolment was 41,380, showing an increase of 719 over the year 1878. The average daily attendance was 21,418, giving an increase of 424. This was not an equivalent increase for the increased expenditure and the enlarged number of schools. He observed, also, that the number of neglected children was not decreasing. The teachers of 93 schools had reported 636 children living within two miles of those schools whose education had been totally neglected. They constituted 1.5 per cent. of the school population. Of these 93 schools 59 were in the southern district, 14 in the Wide Bay and Burnett district, and 10 in the northern district. This information was contained in paragraph No. 43, and he did not think it was quite satisfactory. He believed that they must take more stringent steps than they at present did, not only to secure the annual attendance of these neglected children, but the more regular attendance of those now enrolled. He dared say many hon. members were not aware of the contents of many of those reports, but they contained much very interesting reading. Almost all the inspectors agreed in testifying that the average attendance was not what it ought to be, even in the metropolitan districts and in Brisbane itself. That was shown clearly by Mr. Platt, the district inspector. Then, going into the Moreton district, they found the same thing stated by Mr. Kilham, who commented in very strong terms indeed on the state of some of the schools in that district. For instance, after stating the number of pupils enrolled and examined, Mr. Kilham said—

"The above numbers represent the children in the district actually attending school at the time of inspection, but in the quarter prior to the date of my visit 5,867 pupils were enrolled, while 359 were reported as attending no school; and, doubtless, a still greater number of neglected children might be reported, if due care were taken to ascertain the exact number of children in the district who are of school age. Great irregularity prevails throughout the district—not a third of those enrolled attend four-fifths of their time."

Four-fifths was an arbitrary amount adopted by the Department—he could not tell why, but it appeared to be accepted as a sort of standard. In that district the following schools fell even below 20 per cent.:—Alfred, Brookfield, Burnside, Glamorgan Vale, Harrisborough, Laidley, Moggill, Mount Brisbane, Mount Walker, Peak Mountain, Postman's Ridge, Walloon, Warrill Creek, and Fernvale Road. Further on, Mr. Kilham referred to the fact that a good deal of that was to be attributed to the parents. He said—

"It will thus be seen that the average attendance is 61 per cent., or not quite two-thirds of the aggregate, while only 32 per cent. of these are present four days out of five, so that sixty-eight out of every hundred children lose a fifth of their school time. This serious state of things might be greatly improved if school committees could be induced to perform their work faithfully, but hitherto they have not, as a rule, made themselves acquainted with their duties, and rarely use their influence to induce parents to send their children to school. Having once established a school, they relapse into a state of apathetic indifference about increasing its efficiency; often allowing the attendance to dwindle down to the minimum number required for the maintenance of a State school, instead of exerting themselves to fill its benches, and thus secure the services of a more competent teacher."

Mr. Caine, in the Darling Downs district, referred to the equally defective attendance there. He need not refer in detail to the reports of the several inspectors, but they all agreed that attendance was a very weak point indeed, and one which ought to be remedied. Some thought it might be remedied by a small pressure being

brought to bear on parents, while others thought there was nothing for it but to put in force the compulsory powers of the Act. Compulsion was not a resort which was of itself desirable if the end could be attained by other means. He admitted that on the whole the attendance in Queensland compared favourably with that in the neighbouring colonies. In the latest report of the Victorian Department of Education—that for 1878, he believed—figures were given showing that Queensland stood the highest; then came Victoria, South Australia, and, last of all, New South Wales. The average attendance in this colony was 51 and a decimal fraction. But, although Queensland stood at the top of the tree in that respect, the attendance was not one-half what it might be worked up to be, and what had been done by many of the school boards in England. Last session the Minister for Instruction told the Committee that compulsion was quite impossible, and the hon. member for Mitchell expressed a wish to see the compulsory powers put in force.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I do not think so.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I am speaking from recollection of last session.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. gentleman's recollection is not in accordance with facts.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he was sorry to misrepresent the hon. gentleman, but he understood him to be so strongly opposed to the system of education that he hoped some Minister would put the compulsory powers in force, for it would raise such a storm that the Minister and the Department would be blown away together. Not only was it possible to put those powers in force, but it would be necessary if they wished to have the value they were entitled to receive for their money. The principle of compulsion was growing everywhere, and it was clear that without compulsion they could not get hold of the very children whom it was their duty to prevent growing up in ignorance. At the present time he would undertake to collect in this city at least 100 waifs and strays who attended no schools whatever. Some of them hung about the wharves, and others in the purlieus of the city—they were street arabs, growing up into larrikins, and finally, probably, into criminals. It would not do, perhaps, to compel those boys and girls to attend the present schools; it might be necessary to establish some schools specially for the purpose: still, that ought to be done. They were not taken up by any charitable institution, and there were no ragged schools, such as had lately been established in Sydney. If those children were taken into the existing schools it would very greatly disorganise them. That was the opinion of masters of schools in Brisbane, but they were also of opinion that those children ought to be got hold of and made to attend schools of some kind by the powers which the Minister possessed. If it was supposed that compulsion was antagonistic to the feelings of Englishmen, he would refer to what had been done by the London School Board, and to the report of the Council of Education for last year. He quoted from a small pamphlet published at Washington, which gave a summary of the proceedings of the London School Board, and was in the form of a report to the Secretary of the Interior. After referring to the subject of compulsion, and to a speech made by Sir Charles Reed, the writer went on to say:—

"The first duty of the board was now to provide suitable school accommodation for the vast number of children outside of school. How successfully this has been done will be seen in the statement of Sir Charles Reed, herewith presented. The internal organization of the board schools has improved steadily and systematically from year to year. The board has availed itself

of the power given it in section 74 of the Education Act, which says that any school board may require 'the parents of children of such age, not less than five years nor more than thirteen years, as may be fixed by the by-laws, to cause such children (unless there is some reasonable excuse) to attend school,' and may 'impose penalties for the breach of any by-laws.' The text of the by-laws relating to compulsory attendance in London board schools is as follows:—

"§2. The parent of every child of not less than five years nor more than thirteen years of age is required to cause such child to attend school, unless there be some reasonable excuse for non-attendance.

"§3. Except as hereinafter provided, the time such child is required to attend school is the whole time for which the school selected shall be opened for the instruction of children, not being less than twenty-five hours a week. \* \* \*

"§7. Every parent who shall not observe or shall neglect or violate these by-laws shall upon conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5s., including costs, for such offence."

He might here remark that it had recently been proposed to make the offence penal, and that the proposition had been received with some favour by the Government. The writer continued—

"According to the reports, the above provisions in regard to compulsion are rigorously enforced. Sir Charles Reed says: 'Without this agency (compulsion) we should lose all trace of thousands of the very children it is our duty to gather into school.'

He would now quote the statement of Sir Charles Reed, showing how the average attendance had risen under its operation. Sir Charles Reed said—

"The attendance shows an improvement on previous years. The average number on the roll for the half year ending at midsummer was 192,425, and the average daily attendance 153,819, or 79·9 per cent."

The attendance in Queensland was about 50 per cent. The speaker went on to say—

"Taking the first quarter of the year, which is generally the best, we find in the board schools a steady advance. Thus in 1874 the daily average attendance was 70·1; in 1875, 72·7; in 1876, 78·3; in 1877, 80·1; and in 1878, 81·1. At the same time, we are far from regarding the present rate of attendance as a goal at which we can rest satisfied; for, while numbers of our children are models of regularity, there are many who cannot be got to school more than two or three times a week. One of our own inspectors says: 'I believe one of the hardest problems the board has before it is to get each child to attend regularly in the same school, for at present I fear that very many of the arabs of the street become only arabs of the schools.'

He had no wish to be tedious, and would not, therefore, quote further from the pamphlet, which tended to show that without compulsion the attendance would not have been so regular, and that it had increased during the ten years the system had been in operation in a most remarkable degree. In confirmation of that he would like to refer to the report of the Committee of Council on Education of England and Wales—the last report he had been able to obtain. From that report it would appear that the operation of the compulsory system in England had been very much widened of late years, and would shortly embrace the whole of the country. At first it applied only to the boards, but now it had been made applicable to something like 70 per cent. of the whole population. The report of the Council for the year 1878 contained the following statement:—

"The Elementary Education Act of 1876, which came into operation on the 1st January, 1877, provides for the appointment of a school attendance committee for every borough and parish for which a school board has not been elected. We find that school attendance committees have been appointed in all the municipal boroughs which are under the jurisdiction of school boards, and in all those unions of which any portion was not under the jurisdiction of a school board."

The President of the Council—the Duke of Richmond, he believed—summarised the results, somewhat to the following effect:—

"By comparing these figures with those quoted above and on page 22, it appears that compulsory attendance at school, under by-laws, is now the law for nearly 70

per cent. of the whole population of England and Wales and for about 95 per cent. of the whole borough population."

The report of the By-laws Committee, dated 27th March, 1879, for the half-year ending Christmas, 1878, contained the following statement in reference to the London School Board:—

"It will be seen that the average number on the roll during this period was 444,322, and the average attendance 350,507. In the year 1871, before the school board established their first school, the number on the roll of all efficient schools was 222,518, and the attendance 174,301. It appears, therefore, that in something less than eight years the roll has, as nearly as possible, doubled, and the average attendance more than doubled. In other words, the roll has increased 27,000 a year, and the average attendance at the rate of 22,000 a year."

It also appeared that at Leeds the number of children on the school roll in 1871 was 19,062, and in 1879, 51,969; and that the number in average attendance was in 1871, 13,599 as against 37,920 in 1879. The number on the roll in 1878 slightly exceeded the one-sixth limit. The number on the roll at Liverpool in 1871 was 44,014, and the average attendance 31,348; but the returns for the year ending 31st March, 1879, showed the average number on the roll throughout the year to be 71,930 and the average attendance 51,329. A list was also given of some of the large towns in England, where, compulsion being in force, the attendance during the past ten years had largely increased. From this list it appeared that the percentage of increase in average attendance since the operation of the Act was:—In London, 102·0; in Birmingham, 167·4; in Bolton, 108·3; in Bradford, 135·0; in Huddersfield, 135·6; in Hull, 283·3; in Leeds, 170·9; Leicester, in 197·1; in Newcastle-on-Tyne, 136·8; and in Sheffield, 151·9. These and other facts which he could enumerate indicated that without compulsory power that large attendance could not have been secured. It was only through the exercise of compulsory power that the English system of education was being made effective. As indicating the earnestness with which this system of education was being adopted in the highest civilised countries in the world, he might mention the fact that the expenditure upon schools alone in England during the past ten years had, in loans only, reached something like ten millions. When he was told that their educational expenditure was increasing at an alarming rate, all he could say was, that although the actual cost per head of their children was probably larger than in any European country—certainly larger than in England or France—they must look forward to an increasingly large expenditure in this direction. They must make up their minds that nothing in that Department could be cut down. Their system of compulsion alone, if put into force, would entail some additional expenditure. He hoped the Minister would not shrink from necessary expenditure, because his object being the thorough and complete education of the people, he could not fail to be supported. They had reached a very high standard, but much yet remained to be done. Both in the town and country districts it was necessary to bring to bear a force of either moral or actual physical compulsion to render their system as effective as it might be. He was quite willing to admit that the Department, as a whole, was a very admirable one, and that the officers were conscious of their duty, and attempted to reach a higher standard; but the object they had in view would not be attained unless public attention were directed to the points in which the system was defective. He believed the present Minister was heartily in earnest in connection with this work of education. Compulsion need not at first be applied extensively. It might be tried in connection



with large towns or proclaimed districts, but the principle ought, in some form, to be recognised and acted upon, because it was only by that means that parents would be made alive to their duty.

Mr. MOREHEAD desired to know whether he correctly understood the hon. member, or whether he had made a mistake?—was he attempting to advise the Colonial Secretary to compel the Roman Catholics to send their children to the State schools? Certainly that would be carrying out the views which the hon. member had often expressed; but would he advise the Government to do what he would not dare to do if he were in power himself? He would do all that he could to prevent any such monstrous attempt to use the compulsory clauses. Did the hon. member mean to say that those who were to exercise compulsion were to go round and ascertain the religious belief of the parents of our waifs and strays, or did he mean them to say, "You shall all be secularists; you shall all be swept into the State schools?" He could not believe that the hon. member, with all his hardihood, would go so far as to say that the State should dare to interfere with any individual in the community holding certain opinions as to the way in which his children should be taught. He would strenuously resist—and it would be the duty of every free man to resist—any attempt to take his child and put it into the State school, if he believed that the child should not be sent there. The hon. member was madder than usual when he dared to tell a large section of the community that he advised the Minister for Instruction to take such steps. No doubt the hon. member had some covert reason for so advising the Minister to act. The hon. member did not tender the advice from an honest belief that what he recommended was for the good of the State. The hon. member wanted to put the Minister in a difficult and dangerous position, and he knew perfectly well that his talking was all wind, and would be considered such by a large portion of the public. Children would not learn much good unless they learnt what was generally spoken of as religion, although it might be said that they should teach religion in some place other than the State school. But he maintained that as much harm could be done by over-educating children—as they were doing—as by under-educating them. Those who were with him upon this matter were agreed that the State should go no further than a primary education, and that even that system should not be objected to by any considerable portion of the community. That House should consider the objections of even a small section; but they had not chosen to do so. Still they had, even now, an opportunity of continuing assistance to non-vested schools. It would be seen from reports that the children of the non-vested schools compared very favourably with the children of the State schools—watched as they had been by the different superintendents. He did not say that the reports had been positively coloured; but it looked as though the inspectors had received unwritten, if not written, instructions to bring up reports unfavourable to the non-vested schools.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION: Certainly not.

Mr. MOREHEAD accepted the hon. gentleman's disclaimer; but it was evident, at the same time, that therereports were coloured with the feelings of a majority of that House. There was no fear of the inspectors bringing up reports directly in favour of the non-vested schools. It seemed to him, by the way, that some of these inspectors mistook their office. What right had they to deliver hon. members lectures upon education? Their duty was to bring up full and fair

reports of the working of the schools they were called upon to inspect. But they found these gentlemen giving their individual opinion as to how the education system ought to be worked. They were not content with doing their duty; but they offered suggestions as to how—

Mr. DOUGLAS: They are invited to do so.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that in that case the reports were coloured. The hon. member's interjection exactly proved his (Mr. Morehead's) case. More impertinent and insolent documents were never laid upon the table of the House. The inspectors actually dictated to the representatives of the people in what manner they were to legislate. It would be amusing—if the subject were not such a serious one—to examine the papers for the classes of teachers and to contrast them with the capabilities of the men who ruled over that colony. He guaranteed that the leader of the Opposition, with all his knowledge, could not pass most of the examination papers—the hon. gentleman would be floored. He would not make remarks about the Minister for Instruction; but if they who were supposed to legislate for the country had to pass one of the most inferior of these examination papers in order to get into the House they would not be there. And yet they discussed the education question upon the assumption that they were educating the people. He would instance an examination paper for a pupil-teacher of the third class:—

"Draw a sketch map of that part of Europe north of the Elbe, naming the gulfs and bays, the principal islands, rivers, and seaports, and give a brief account of the exports from the towns situated on the coasts."

Probably with the exception of the hon. member for the Leichhardt, who was well up in the geography of that part of the world, there was not a single member of the House who could answer that question. There were other questions that would puzzle even that hon. member; for example—

"Name the principal branches of the Aryan or Indo-European race, and the countries which they respectively occupy. What people are of Mongolian origin; give some idea of their numbers, and the stages of civilisation to which they have attained."

This was a question asked of a candidate for a pupil-teachership of the third class, and he would ask hon. members whether any of them, even including the astute leader of the Opposition, who was a very good scholar, could answer those questions? Could he, for example, draw a sketch map of South America? He (Mr. Morehead) was bringing the question of these examination papers forward to show that the State was now going in for a far higher class of teacher than was required for the colony. Speaking for his own constituents, he could say that they did not want men who could answer some of those questions—they would be altogether too much above them. He believed he might say that his constituents did not want a man who could—

"Describe briefly the phenomena of the atmospheric and oceanic currents in the Atlantic Ocean, and tell how these were caused and what variations they undergo."

He believed that his constituents did not want a man who could explain the terms—antipodes, antœci, periœci, zenith, nadir, and isothermal and isochemical lines. Hon. members might laugh and this might be a matter of indifference to many, but it was not a matter of indifference to the man who had to be taxed for a system of education which he believed to be utterly useless. His constituency, and no doubt many others, would much prefer a man who could teach them how to do a little carpentering or mechanical work, and to read and write and do arithmetic fairly well. That was all they asked, but their examination papers clearly proved that they were going in for a higher system of education and a



more useless sort of man than the State required. He might continue the illustration from this section of the report headed "General examination of teachers and others, 1879." Some of them were really ridiculous. There was one, for instance, that asked what was the income of a gentleman, and it was put in this way—

"A gentleman has an income of £1,200 a-year, and he spends on an average £1 17s. 5½d. every day: how much does he save in a year, a week, a day?"

Here the papers at once began with what was really a falsehood. He knew several gentlemen whose income was much less than £1,200, and whose expenditure was unfortunately much more than £1 17s. 5½d. Was there any member prepared to assert that this fact, as put in the questions in the examination papers, was the truth? Putting joking aside, he could not help thinking this was another of the questions that had much better be left out. Some of the questions were of course tolerably appropriate; but on page 65, there were some words which he found it impossible to pronounce, and he should not attempt it—words of four syllables that probably would puzzle any hon. member but the hon. member for Enoggera. Here was another question—

"Compare the flora and fauna of Australia with those of the valley of the Amazon, and assign some reason for the difference."

That was a question that would puzzle some of the greatest naturalists in the world, and amongst any number of scientific men no two could probably be found to agree upon the answer; yet this unfortunate candidate for a teachership of the second class was supposed to be able to settle the question, over which even a Darwin and a Humboldt would quarrel. He (Mr. Morehead) did not believe there was a man in the whole department capable of answering this question satisfactorily. It was very evident that they must chance a good deal in this matter, and if a candidate only used big enough words, and made, as the members of the Opposition were in the habit of doing, pretty broad general statements, they would get through, while a more conscientious candidate would be floored. There was a question on page 76 of the report to which he would draw the attention of the hon. member for Leichhardt:—

"A squad is marching to a flank by fours, when the path narrows, and it becomes necessary to continue the march two deep: give the necessary orders, and describe the execution of them. The road becomes wider again, and you resume the original formation: give the necessary orders and describe the formation of them."

Here, again, was another nice thing for a pupil-teacher of the fourth class to answer—"Describe briefly the features of the feudal system." He (Mr. Morehead) doubted whether there was any one in the House, or in the Education Department, who could do that. On page 64 a candidate for admission to the third class was asked these questions:—

"Where are the following places: Utrecht, Zutphen, Cracow, Verona, Prague, Jena, Salamanca, Trieste, and Thorn? Give a short account of each, and note any historical incident which you know connected with it."

Probably a correct answer would only be given with reference to one of these names, and that answer would be—

"Once Premier for the colony, once Minister for Works, once member for Ipswich, and now member for Darling Downs."

Then coming to the pupil teacher of the second class he found such questions as these:—

"A vessel sails from Hull to Belfast. Name the counties and promontories by which she would pass, and the places where, in case of a storm, she might find safe anchorage."

The answer to that question, of course, would depend a great deal upon the wind at the time,

and a captious critic, possessing some nautical knowledge, would object to the course no doubt steered by the unfortunate candidate, and might be able to prove to a demonstration that the proper way to get from Hull to Belfast was by way of Hong Kong. Once more he (Mr. Morehead) would assert that these examination papers were utterly absurd, and contained an amount of absolutely useless subjects, while the whole examination made it impossible to bring out the kind of stuff there was in the candidate. Men who could pass an examination from these papers must be men who were adepts at cramming, and who were probably, therefore, very useless men themselves. He never saw a useful man who could answer such questions as these, and he did not believe anybody else had. The arithmetical questions were all too high-class for the sort of men wanted for such schools, as any member of the Committee might see by looking at page 68, where the very sight of the operations therein indicated were enough to frighten anyone—it was something awful even to contemplate. He had, he believed, given illustrations sufficient to show his meaning, and was sure hon. members would bear him out in this, that there were, probably, no three men in the Education Department who could answer some questions which these candidates had put put before them. He himself would like to have a quiet afternoon with the chief inspector and secretary of the Board, and examine them with these same papers. He, in truth, believed the whole thing was a mockery, and that those examination papers were not acted upon at all. If he thought they were he would move for a return to show the kind of replies that were given. He did not believe nine-tenths of the teachers at present employed in the department had answered these questions, and he was very glad to think that they had not done so. If this state of things went on they would be having a lot of miserable, worn out book-worms who would be utterly unfit to give any useful information to the rising generation; and they would be having numbers of the unfortunate teachers becoming inmates of Woogaroo long before they went up to their examination.

Mr. SIMPSON said he desired to say a few words before a division was taken. His opinion on the subject—which he had expressed before now—was that in the matter of both expense and class of education the Government were over-educating and going too fast altogether. The duty of the State was to teach children the elements of education only; and education of a higher class ought to be left to private enterprise. The effect of the present system had been, as had been already stated, to entirely drive out of the field private enterprise in teaching, a result which was greatly to be regretted. In the next place, a great deal too much money had been spent. In one part of the report it was stated that the cost per head of the children educated had been £2 15s. per annum and in another £3 12s., but according to his calculation every child who had been taught last year had cost the State nearly £6. With regard to days of attendance, it was stated in the report that the ordinary number of school days in the year was 226, but that the average had been only 218. Allowing for the Saturday and Sunday out of each week, that would leave fifty-five days or eleven weeks of holidays; and there was also another eight days on which the children were not at work, so that for nearly three months in the year the children were not being taught. Something must be wrong in the working of the Act or such a state of things could not continue; it would be objected to in any matter of business, and the Act ought to be carried out on something like business principles. In another portion of the report it was stated that although the number of children on the rolls was 40,000, there were

only about 20,000 in constant attendance. That showed some want of management. Considering the great cost of the system, the children whose names were on the rolls ought to be made to attend more regularly. He could not agree with the hon. member (Mr. Douglas) that the expenditure ought to be very largely increased. Any disinterested person who was prepared to look at things as they were, and not as he would wish them to be, would agree with him that the present results were very poor indeed, and not such as might be expected in return for an expenditure of nearly £6 per head. A great many children, also, were not taught at all, owing to some decidedly defective management in the working of the Act. He intended to record his vote against any increases, and he was prepared to go further and vote against all grammar schools, musical instructors, and such like. He should be prepared to vote for the expenditure of the whole £123,000 in giving elementary education to the children, but he was strongly opposed to giving high-class education to a few children whose parents were well able to pay for it themselves. To give high-class education to the poorer children who must work with their hands, did no good; there was no other hope for them but to work with their hands, and if they could not do that they must starve. He was prepared, therefore, to vote against everything beyond simple elementary education, and that would probably to some extent meet the views of a section of the community who had been referred to several times to-night—the Roman Catholics. Referring to them in this case was not introducing religious controversy. They were a third of the population, and the difficulty must be faced—it was no use to stave it off by ignoring it, as the ostrich hid its head in the sand to escape observation—they were here and they would make themselves heard. There would be far less complaint from them, and they would have far less cause to complain if the education taught in the public schools was purely elementary. A great many of them might then send their children and provide the religious instruction at some other time; but now they had to pay their share toward the £6 a-head spent in teaching children things which were perfectly useless. He objected entirely to buildings such as those at Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and such places being built at the cost of the State. He regarded that expenditure as charity bestowed upon those who did not need it; and considered it a crying evil that the confessedly wealthy classes of a town like Brisbane should be obliged to send their children to a school supported by the State because the State had driven every other school out of the community. The sooner the present system ceased and institutions such as the Grammar School were allowed to depend upon their own resources the better it would be for the country. It would be invidious to mention names, but he dared to say there was a great many members of the House who sent their sons to this school. The present representative of Her Majesty did so, though perhaps there was no one less willing than he to accept aid from the State in that way. He thought the sooner such a Grammar School was done away with the better, and, so far from agreeing with the hon. member for Maryborough that an increase of expenditure was desirable, he considered that the present expenditure ought to be greatly reduced.

Mr. DOUGLAS rose to correct the hon. member for the Mitchell in some remarks the hon. member made with reference to the inspectors. The hon. member's remarks appeared to be pitched in much the same key as his criticism of the examination papers, and were perhaps not intended to have much weight. The hon. member said the reports were highly improper; that it was imperi-

nent on the part of the inspectors to give advice, and that the House were the judges, and the duty of the inspectors was simply to carry out the orders of their superiors. He would point out, however, that the whole working of the system depended upon the inspectors, and that without them the system would go by the board. They were men of large experience in educational matters, and they were encouraged to speak their minds, and to point out wherein the system was deficient and wherein it excelled, and to give, from their practical experience and immediate connection with the schools under their supervision, the reasons which led them to those conclusions. Those gentlemen should be, he thought, encouraged in every way. It appeared that the detailed reports usually published had been suspended this year, and in place of them the inspectors had been asked to write a general report with regard to the schools in each district. The report showed not only that the gentlemen had a thorough and intimate knowledge of the circumstances of the schools in their district, but also that they were qualified to express an opinion. He did not know how hon. members would be able to arrive at a knowledge of the working of the system except by means of such a report. The inspectors were indifferently paid for the work they did. They were educated men having arduous duties to perform, and the advice they gave was based upon the information obtained by them in their connection with these schools. He hoped that before the debate closed the Colonial Secretary would give some information as to what he proposed to do with regard to neglected children. It was no use mincing the matter. Those were the children he desired should be taught. He was not an advocate for excessive expenditure on the higher class education—he desired that the richer classes should be made to bear a very appreciable part of the cost of educating their children, but he insisted upon education in the primary branches being given to the great mass of the children. They at least should be educated in the fundamental elements of education—reading, writing and arithmetic. He was not an advocate for a great variety of subjects—he would much rather see efficiency in essentials than inefficiency in a great many subjects which were non-essential. He should like to hear what the Colonial Secretary intended to do in this respect. A few examples of the compulsory power the hon. gentleman possessed would probably have a most beneficial effect. Reference had been made to a particular creed in connection with this matter, and the hon. member for Mitchell had stated that if he (Mr. Douglas) was Minister for Instruction or responsible in any way he would not put in force the compulsory clauses. He should not have the slightest hesitation in doing so.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why didn't you do so, then?

Mr. DOUGLAS said he knew the time must come—there was a time for everything. This was a matter that was only growing. He had directed attention to it last session, he did so again now, and he should continue to do so until a remedy was applied. It was perfectly ridiculous to suppose that this country would be content to remain behind in regard to what was generally acknowledged throughout the world to be essential in a system of primary education, in order that it might be effectually carried out. Those young arabs of the streets would have to be looked after, and the Colonial Secretary should take in hand something with regard to them. It was simply a matter of administration. They would in no way interfere with creed. They had purposely and advisedly pitched their key-note on that string that no person of any creed could complain of what they taught in those schools. It was no invasion of liberty that the

child of any parent should be made to go to a State school if he was growing to be a criminal, or was neglected, or if he was likely to become a larrikin, and eventually, probably, find a place in their gaols. It was a matter irrespective of all creed whatever to take that child and prevent him from growing to be a criminal. They were not to be prevented from doing that by any specious argument about the possible control the parent might have over the child. A parent who neglected his duty with regard to his children had no rights. It was on that ground that the State stepped in and undertook the duty of the parent. If a child was found to be neglected the State was authorised by law to step in and say that its education should no longer be neglected; and he hoped that that power would be used. They would be denying their trust if they did not use it, and if they did not do so they would be paid out eventually by the growth of a class who would be a burden on the State as State criminals.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not consider that he was in error in saying that the inspectors went out of the way in the preparation of their reports. Mr. Inspector McIntyre, at the commencement of his remarks, indicated that he considered it injudicious to say what he was about to write. Mr. McIntyre said—

"It is perhaps unnecessary to speak in an official paper on the liberty of the parent with respect to the education of his or her child, or on the duty which society expects parents to perform to their offspring; but most intelligent persons will acknowledge that parents are under some form of obligation to provide for their children an education that will at least enable them to perform their duties in that society of which they form a part. In this colony parents are required to make but little exertion to secure a good elementary education for their children, and, although it is provided gratis, it is practically left to their choice whether they will accept it or not. Those who do not willingly and thankfully accept it, or who keep their children at home when they could easily send them to school, show that they are indifferent to the educational welfare of their children, and to the just claims of the community in which they live."

Such remarks were improper in a report of the kind, and he objected to an inspector making such comments. It was not for the inspector, but for the House, to decide the question. The inspector indicated that he was in doubt, and the Colonial Secretary ought to have returned the report to him for amendment, with an intimation that he was to confine himself to matters relating to the working of the system in his district. The hon. member (Mr. Douglas) had cleverly fenced the question which he put to him. He wanted to know whether the hon. member would like the Minister for Instruction to make it compulsory that the Roman Catholics should send their children to the State schools? The hon. member had not answered the question directly.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he was not called upon to give an answer, but he was quite willing to do so. The Minister for Instruction did not know any child as a Roman Catholic; he dealt with it as a neglected child; he did not know whether the child was a Presbyterian or a heathen—probably it was a heathen; he found in the streets a wanderer ignorant of the elements of education, and he dealt with it on those grounds alone. With regard to the reports of the inspectors, he believed that the Minister for Instruction acted perfectly right. He understood that the Minister gave the inspectors ample latitude to express their opinions, but the Minister did not necessarily act on their advice. The whole time of the inspectors was employed in the schools, and it was of the utmost value that hon. members should know what they thought. He trusted that the inspectors would without fear or favour say exactly what they thought.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member had not yet answered the question he put to him. He wanted to know whether the hon. member wished the Minister for Instruction, when the Catholics abandoned the State schools for conscience sake, to sweep their children into those schools?

Mr. DOUGLAS said he did not hesitate to express his opinion on the subject, although hon. members sometimes shirked it. He did not hesitate to approach it as it deserved to be approached. He did not think that they were bound to treat the children of the country from a denominational point of view at all: they in no way recognised the children as belonging to any religion. They had applied their secular system to all religions, and had divested it of religious element—perhaps too much—in order that they might sweep the children of all sects into their schools, where they could enjoy liberty of conscience, where parents could be satisfied nothing would be taught in contravention of their opinions. If the hon. member asked him whether he thought the Roman Catholics objected to the schools he would frankly tell the hon. member that he did not think so. He believed that the large majority of Catholics were very glad indeed that they had such an excellent system of education secured for their children, and especially so in country districts where no other system could be applied with satisfaction. Really, he did not believe that the majority of Catholics objected to the system of education or to its practice. He was quite well aware that their rulers did, because he could see what was going on around. He could see such a man as Archbishop Vaughan fighting nobly for what he considered the cause of truth, and doing what he felt to be his duty. He did not object to the way in which the Archbishop was fighting his cause, but they must bear in mind that his views were entirely different to theirs. The Archbishop claimed the right to guard the education of his people; he inherited, as he told his people, a trust confided in him by the Apostles—by St. Peter himself, as it was said. He (Mr. Douglas) believed that their trust was not less than that which the Archbishop claimed. Their duties were just as high and just as responsible as his were; they were bound to see that they did their best for the education of the children of the State. It might be that the antagonism would go on for some time; but the State had distinctly announced in its legislation that it would take on itself the responsibility of educating its children. That was a high responsibility, and time only would prove whether it was sufficient for the purpose—whether the State was sufficient to carry out the educational requirements of the country. He was quite confident that the Roman Catholic Church would retain and maintain its position, and it would depend altogether on the earnestness with which it carried out its trust whether it would eventually make itself felt in the legislation of the country. He did not know whether it would or not; but he very much preferred to see the State carry out its functions independent altogether of the Church, and the Church acting entirely independently of the State. He did not believe in concordats; the Church had ample scope for its functions independently of the State. He had expressed his opinion unreservedly; there was no use in shirking the question. Let the Church and State work separately, but let not the State in the meantime shrink from its responsibilities because there was supposed to be a conflict between the two powers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said he had no intention to take part in the discussion, as he believed it would lead to

nothing. When the proper time came to have a discussion on the education question, he would be prepared to enter into it, and take his share of it. He rose for the purpose of correcting the hon. member (Mr. Douglas), who had asserted that the majority of Roman Catholics in this country believed in the State system of education, and would take advantage of it, were it not for the rulers of the Church. Such a statement was erroneous in fact, and the hon. gentleman knew it. He (Mr. Macrossan) knew no single Roman Catholic in the colony—no true Catholic—who believed in a system of education which did not combine religion. He would say in the presence of the hon. member (Mr. Douglas), so that the hon. member need not make any more mistakes, that the rulers of the Church were in accord with the people of the Church, and the people supplied their rulers with the money required to carry out their educational views, even to the utmost.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION moved that £300 be granted for "Special Instruction." This money was voted for instruction in drawing and music to pupil-teachers and young teachers who afterwards imparted the elements of the instruction they received to the children under them.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to know how the musical instruction was carried out. He believed that last year the system was altered by the abolition of travelling instructors.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that the amount spent last year was as follows:—Drawing instructors—Brisbane (Mr. Clark), £100; Ipswich (vacant), £30. Music instructors—Brisbane (Mr. Arthy), £50; Toowoomba (Mr. Jarrott), £30; Ipswich (Mr. Johns), £25; travelling expenses, £10.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would move that the whole vote be expunged. He objected to children being taught music and drawing at the expense of the State.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said a knowledge of drawing was absolutely necessary for pupil-teachers or teachers of any sort in the use of the blackboard. It was actually a useful part of the system. As to the other portion of the vote, children were taught to sing a little, and he did not think money could be devoted to a better object than the small instruction they received in music.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked how music was taught out of the two or three towns mentioned by the Minister?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said it was not taught at all except by teachers who were themselves taught previously.

Mr. MOREHEAD did not see why the country should be taxed to supply musical instruction to teachers in a few schools about Brisbane, and thought this was a very proper time to deal with the question. If people wanted their children taught music let them pay for it. He did not know where it would end if they were going to find luxuries of this kind for all the children of the colony. He thought the item might very well be struck out.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was all very well for the Minister for Instruction to say this was for pupil-teachers, but he (Mr. Lumley Hill) contended that they did not want to teach music or drawing at the expense of the State, and there was, therefore, no necessity to educate pupil-teachers to teach them. If parents wanted their children taught these things, let them pay for it.

Question put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Messrs. Palmer, McIlwraith, Macrossan, Perkins, Lalor, McLean, Feez, Douglas, Garrick, Rutledge, Fraser, Griffith, Bailey, Dickson, Thompson, Beattie, H. W. Palmer, Baynes, Swanwick, Hamilton, Macfarlane, and Archer.

NOES, 9.

Messrs. Norton, Weld-Blundell, Walsh, O'Sullivan, Morehead, Simpson, Low, Lumley Hill, and Amhurst.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION, in moving £77,850 for salaries to teachers and contingencies, said the increase in the vote arose from promotions in the classification of teachers and pupil-teachers and the opening of new schools during the year.

Mr. GRIFFITH thought this was the proper time to refer to a change that had been made in the regulations. A new regulation had been issued which gave power to the Minister in charge of the Department to inflict a fine of £10 in a summary way upon any teacher. That appeared to him to lower the status of teachers in the State schools. When the Act was passed they were placed on the same footing as other Civil servants, not on the footing of workmen in a large foundry or navvies employed on railway works who were fined if they were late in coming to work. He thought it degrading to a teacher that he should have to keep posted up in his school a regulation stating that if he did not do his duty he would be fined £10; and he protested against it. It was entirely inconsistent with the system they had adopted in dealing with State schools. He might also state that he had not observed any notification of appointments in the *Gazette* lately. There must have been some new appointments made and some alterations in the classification of teachers, and he wished to know if any change had been made in the practice of making all appointments by the Executive Council?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said, in regard to the last objection, he thought the hon. gentleman had not looked at the *Gazette*, for the appointments had been gazetted. With respect to lowering the status of teachers by imposing a fine under the regulations, he need hardly say that any such intention was never entertained; and when he found that the same rule had been in force in England for the last ten years, and was in force in New South Wales and in South Australia, he could not see that any lowering of status could arise from it. It was very necessary for the whole working of the system—and no one knew it better than the hon. member (Mr. Griffith) himself—that proper returns should be sent in, and sent in at the proper time. There were three or four ways of punishing teachers. The hon. member knew as well as he did that they began with a caution; if that had no effect the teacher was censured; if that had no effect his salary was stopped; if that did not answer his position was lowered—he was removed to a smaller school, reduced in staff, rank, or classification; and finally there was dismissal. This was intended to come in between—that was, that after a warning and severe reprimand came a fine, and he could not see where the disgrace came in at all. It had not been found necessary to carry out the regulation very much. In very few instances indeed had it been carried out; but the staff of the department were decidedly of opinion that it was a very useful regulation, and as it was adopted by the other colonies, and by the Council of Education at home, he saw no reason why it should not be carried out here.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he must have been in error with respect to the notices in the *Gazette*,

and he would accept the hon. gentleman's correction, and congratulate him on being able to get on so well with so few changes. The argument that because the regulation was adopted in England and South Australia it should be carried out here was not convincing to him, because in England and South Australia the Department of Instruction was placed on a different footing, and the teachers were not Civil servants.

Mr. DOUGLAS said in connection with the vote he would just allude to the large number of pupil-teachers who appeared in it. Of course, pupil-teachers were very useful in their way, and from them the colony's future schoolmasters were obtained; but the strength of the school system must be weakened if too great reliance was placed upon them. Experience showed that however valuable these teachers were, the system must be made almost independent of them if it was to be as effective as it should be. In Germany they were being done away with altogether, because it had been found that the teaching of grown-up men and women was more effective. He did not wish to depreciate the admirable character of the teaching in this colony. He had seen masters who had been trained here, who, for practical purposes, had been equal to the best masters brought out; but he hoped the Department would not place too much reliance upon pupil-teachers. It might be said that if they were not largely employed the expenses of the Department would be increased, but the main thing to be secured was efficiency. He doubted very much whether too great a proportion of pupil-teachers was not being employed. The staff would be strengthened by having as head-teachers highly trained men and women, who would penetrate the whole school by their intellectual abilities and their force of character. He even thought that, as heads of schools, they should have graduates of universities, and he hoped to see that the standard of our head-teachers.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he supposed the hon. gentleman was fully aware that if the pupil-teachers were done away with the expense would be about three times greater. Was the country prepared to stand that? As to graduates of universities being head-masters, ninety out of a hundred were not fit to be schoolmasters. Schoolmasters must be trained for the position.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that no doubt some university graduates were unfit to be schoolmasters, but it did not follow that schoolmasters were not fit to be graduates.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked whether trained schoolmasters were rejected to make way for pupil-teachers?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said the Department was anxious to get trained schoolmasters, but a great many men came here who said they were trained schoolmasters but who were really not. He knew of no instance where a trained schoolmaster of good character and good certificate had been refused employment. The Department was only too glad to get them; but when men from the neighbouring colonies who had been dismissed came here to find employment they often found that they were mistaken.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked whether the Department had ever rejected men with good characters?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION : Not that I am aware of.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said a few weeks ago a gentleman wrote to him about a certain gentleman who was now in a provisional school, and who had occupied a very fair position in New South Wales and was in possession of good testi-

monials. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) wrote to the Under Secretary about this gentleman, and he received a reply stating that as Mr. So-and-so was a middle-aged man he was unsuitable for the position of assistant in a large school, and being unmarried was ineligible for charge of a country State school. The letter also stated that it was not known how his services could be advantageously employed except in a provisional school; and that there was no present or prospective vacancy for which more eligible men were not available now. The gentleman on whose behalf he wrote was a highly-educated man, who had taken a high position as a teacher in New South Wales, as was evident from testimonials which he (Mr. O'Sullivan) had in his possession. What became of their middle-aged and highly-educated schoolmasters? Had they to make way for boys?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he could not argue with the hon. member about the proficiency of the gentleman alluded to, whoever he might be. He could only say that he could not be expected to make way for pupil-teachers, he never having been in the Department. There was one fault which unfitted him for being placed in charge of a State school—he was a bachelor.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN : That can easily be cured in a day.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that with respect to the other matter the Department should form its own opinion. If the gentleman held a high position in New South Wales he had better go back. Schoolmasters who had been in a good position elsewhere for eight years did not come here for employment, as a rule.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the man resigned, and had then come here and got employment, and had been stuck in the corner of a district.

Mr. GRIFFITH said this was the proper time to ask the Minister for Instruction, once more, what his views were on the subject of compulsory instruction. He believed that in Brisbane the subject was becoming an important one, a number of children running wild. His own impression was that it would not be necessary to put the compulsory clause into very active operation. He believed that if it was proclaimed in Brisbane, and was actually put in force in one or two instances, a salutary effect would be produced. He did not mean that it should be enforced indiscriminately, but the people should be reminded that there was such a provision. Let it become part of the sentiment of the people to carry out a particular system. It took time to educate the people, and it might be a generation or two before they became thoroughly imbued with the importance of giving their children education; but, in the meantime, the opportunity should not be lost of seeing that they did not forget the advantages of the system, which had been brought within their reach at great expense.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that the hon. member for North Brisbane had very properly said that it would take time to carry out this part of the system. The hon. gentleman was for some years a member of the Government, and head of the Education Department, and during that time he did not educate himself up to that point which he now wished him to arrive at. He had been in office only about eighteen months, and had not yet educated himself to that point, but he might tell the hon. gentleman that he had seen sufficient to enable him to say that he should not put in force the compulsory clauses.

Mr. NORTON, referring to an item in the Estimates of £900, "in lieu of residence," said

that he remembered not so very long ago being asked by some of his constituents to make an application to the Government for a sum of money—he did not know how much—towards repairing a teacher's residence in his district. He made the application, and the reply he received was that before the Department could vote any money for repairs the persons making the application must contribute a certain portion of the expense. It was merely a question of £200 or £300, and if the principle laid down by the Department was to be carried out with regard to repairs only, he did not see why other persons should have residences provided for them without being compelled to pay their quota. He should like to have that matter explained.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he had heard with regret the statement of the Minister for Instruction, that he would not put in force the compulsory clauses of the Act; at any rate, there was now no doubt as to the intention of the hon. gentleman. He regretted to have heard it, as he himself believed it would be necessary if they wished to reclaim children who were going astray. One primary object of the present educational system was that it secured education to all, and that there should be compulsory education in those cases where parents would not send their children to school; in fact, it was recognised at the time of the passing of the Act that it was the bounden duty of the State to see that neglected children were educated. He regretted that the hon. gentleman had arrived at such a determination, as the time would soon come when the compulsory clauses must be enforced, the reports of the inspector of schools showing that every year that those clauses were not put into operation the attendance at the schools would be less. He considered that the declaration of the hon. gentleman—unguarded as it might have been—was calculated to do immense harm, as people knowing that the compulsory clauses would not be put into operation would continue to infringe the Act, knowing that blame would not be attached to them, and that they were not compelled to avail themselves of the advantage offered by the present system of State education. In the city of Brisbane there were what in every sense were criminal children who were growing up as criminals, and it was the duty of the hon. gentleman to get hold of those children by hook or by crook and see that they were educated. They were of the very class which the chairman of the London School Board termed the most difficult to deal with. Of course, it was more difficult to get hold of them in large cities than it was in our towns, but there was no doubt that the class existed here; and on that ground he regretted extremely to have heard the declaration of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SIMPSON said it appeared to him that the hon. gentleman who had just spoken was prepared to blame the Minister for Instruction for not doing what the hon. member himself was not bold enough to do. It was not so very long since that the hon. gentleman was in office, and how was it that he did not do something of the sort? He (Mr. Simpson) was quite prepared to go in for cutting down the Estimates, but he did not see why the present Government should be blamed for not doing what the late Government had not the courage to do when they had the chance. They might have the power at some future time, but he questioned whether even then they would be bold enough to do it.

Mr. FRASER said it was not a question whether the late Government had or had not the courage to enforce the compulsory clauses of the Act. What was staring them in the face was this, that there were a number of children growing up in the colony about whom no one seemed

to care. The present Act had provided a compulsory means of educating those children, and some hon. members were of opinion that it would be of benefit to the community to have those compulsory clauses enforced. If that matter had been neglected in the past it was no reason why it should be in the future, and he for one regretted exceedingly that the hon. Minister for Instruction could not see his way to have the clauses referred to put into operation.

Mr. MOREHEAD, in reply to the remarks of the hon. member for South Brisbane, who stated that the inspectors' reports bore out his advocacy of bringing in the compulsory clauses, maintained they did nothing of the sort.

Mr. FRASER said he stated that the reports of the inspectors showed that a large number of children within two miles of the respective schools did not attend those schools; thus showing from his—not the inspectors'—point of view the necessity of enforcing the compulsory clauses.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman (Mr. Morehead) had asked why the late Government had not enforced the compulsory clauses. Care had been taken to find out what children were neglected, but the numbers were only now becoming large enough to justify their enforcement. The matter had been under the serious consideration of the late Government, and he was prepared to submit a recommendation to his colleagues. If he were Minister he would put the clause in force. He very much regretted that the present Ministry declared they would not loyally administer the Act. A declaration like that, coming from the Minister for Instruction, might do more harm than putting the compulsory clauses into force for many years could remedy. The hon. gentleman, in short, encouraged parents to neglect the education of their children. The only justification for providing free education was that all the people should take advantage of it. The Minister for Instruction being charged with the administration of the law had no right to say he would not administer the Act loyally.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he had a perfect right to say what he intended to do. He was challenged by the hon. member for Maryborough, who said he must put the clause into force, and he (Mr. Palmer) said deliberately he would not. He pointed out last year that the whole thing was defective in every possible way: even if the Minister was willing he could not possibly do it. The whole thing was so badly drawn that he could not move in the matter unless he made himself a common informer, which he was not at all likely to do. The clause ran—

"No such prosecution shall be instituted without the express direction of the Minister, testified under his hand and the seal of the Corporation."

That was to say he had to testify under his hand and seal as to every little arab who did not go to school, and who had to be hunted in like a native dog. If the hon. member wanted compulsory clauses put in force, let him bring in a new Bill with some provision for properly putting them in force. As long as he was Minister for Instruction there should be no prosecution instituted under his hand to hunt up every poor little beggar in the country.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether the hon. member did not know that a provision of that kind was quite common with respect to such prosecutions as ought to be discretionary. Many penal Acts might be made very oppressive unless administered under the discretion of someone in authority. In the Larceny Act, many of the clauses could only be put in force with the express sanction of the Attorney-General. It was proposed in England, at the present time, to

provide that no criminal prosecutions for libel should take place without the express direction of the Attorney-General. Would that make the Attorney-General a common informer? The intention was that in all such cases the matter should be submitted first of all to the Minister that he might see whether it was a proper case to enforce the law. In many cases a man might break the letter of the law, when it would be highly improper to punish him.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the law provided school boards with the power of calling the attention of the Minister to failure of attendance. School boards should especially endeavour to induce parents to send their children regularly to school, and report to the Minister the names of parents who failed or refused to cause their children to attend or otherwise educate them, and the causes of such failure or refusal. It was quite possible to put those boards or committees into operation so as to inform the Minister of cases where it might be desirable to prosecute, and the Minister could employ his power to secure all the rights of the Act. Of course, every case would be sifted to the bottom, and he would be the final judge whether the prosecution should take place or not. The provisions might be somewhat cumbrous, but all they asked was that an example should be made to show that the power existed. If the Minister did not consider those powers sufficient to secure regular attendance—which was the great integer of value in the whole system—then the Act required amendment.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN wished to know why the hon. member himself did not put this clause in force when he was in power? Many of the parents might refuse from conscientious motives. Would he put the clause in force then?—if so, that would be persecution. Perhaps it would be the best thing that could happen to put those clauses into force, for then they might get rid of the whole system.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the provision was for those children whose education was neglected, but it did not necessarily follow that the child should be sent to a State school.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What if there is no other?

Mr. DOUGLAS said the schools had been rendered unsectarian as much as possible to meet the reasonable conscientious objections of everyone. There could be no reasonable objections on religious grounds to the education at present provided, because people's religious convictions were in no way interfered with. They had to a great extent emasculated the schools—divested them altogether of any religious complication, in order to scrupulously meet the objections referred to by the hon. member for Stanley. There were therefore, no grounds, it seemed to him, which parents could conscientiously assert against their children being sent to the State schools on the score of religious convictions being interfered with.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he admired the way in which the hon. gentleman had dragged himself out of a difficulty. Was the hon. gentleman to be the judge of people's conscientious objections—he seemed to constitute himself both judge and jury.

Mr. MOREHEAD said there was no question that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Douglas) had emasculated the schools. How was he going to work the compulsory clauses? Was some officer of the State to go into his house and ask whether his children could read and write? Was the State to get hold of a Catholic child, tell him he must be educated at a State school, and run him in? The thing would not stand more than one or two cases being tried at the

police court. At such an attempt to interfere with the liberty of the subject there would be a howl through the length and breadth of the land. This, thank God, was a free country, and their children would not be treated as criminals. He should like to see the hon. gentleman do what the present Minister for Instruction, who was certainly not more lacking in courage, had said was at present unworkable. The only object of the hon. gentleman was to bring himself before the public as a great, independent legislator.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was strange the hon. gentleman did not enforce the compulsory clauses when he had a voice in Ministerial matters. The necessity for it had surely not sprung up within the last eighteen months, and it was all nonsense to say that the emergency had just arisen.

Mr. FEEZ wished for an explanation why—although the number of teachers had barely increased—the amount of their remuneration had increased nearly £7,000?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he had explained several times that the increase was owing to promotions in the classification of the teachers.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION moved that £19,180 be granted for buildings and supervision. The only increase was that to the Superintendent of Buildings. That was a new department, which was formerly attached, as hon. members would recollect, to the Department of Works. The Superintendent of Buildings, who had been employed in the Works Department, came over at a small salary with the promise of an increase. The change had been of great material benefit. Although an immediate saving could not be shown in consequence of the enormous amount of repairs to buildings that had been put up very badly, yet eventually a very large saving indeed would be shown owing to the change. He might add that £16,900 had been actually spent last year.

Mr. SIMPSON asked whether a perfectly uniform system was carried out as to the money to be subscribed in the districts, or whether some districts were favoured while others had to pay?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION replied that since he had been in office no favour whatever had been shown. Every district was treated exactly alike, and must subscribe one-fifth for the school-house and schoolmaster's residence. Repairs were charged to the department.

Mr. SIMPSON said he had heard several complaints made. Was it not so in Brisbane?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said there had been no schools erected in Brisbane.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked how the supervision was carried on in the country?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION replied that the foreman of works went to many places, and in more distant places the Works Department allowed their foreman to report on buildings which were carried out under the management of the local committees. In almost every instance buildings were erected from the lithographed designs of the Superintendent of Buildings.

Mr. DOUGLAS thought the girls' division of the Normal School a most unsuitable building, and hoped steps would soon be taken with a view to its removal from its present site to higher ground upon Wickham Terrace.

Mr. SIMPSON said it was well known that £16,000 was spent upon a certain school in Bris-



hane when very little had been subscribed by the public. This enormous sum was squandered upon ornamentation in the city, while nothing was done towards repairing some schools in his own district which stood sadly in need of attention.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION moved that £6,000 be granted for provisional and non-vested schools.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked for some particulars relative to school requisites.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said the information the hon. member required would be found in the regulations.

Mr. GRIFFITH pointed out a large increase in the allowances to teachers.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that although £5,000 was voted last year, the sum of £5,850 was actually spent.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION moved that £2,580 be granted for Grammar Schools.

Mr. FEZ : I see that nothing is put down for the Grammar School at Rockhampton?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION : It is in the schedule. Provision must be made under the Act.

Mr. SIMPSON said it was of no use saying anything against this vote, but he felt bound to enter his protest before it was passed. He could not understand why grammar schools should be provided for to the extent of £7,000 or £8,000 in a schedule. In reality, the Committee was asked to vote that amount in addition to the sum before them. He did not agree with the grammar schools, nor did he see why the State should give university exhibitions, or anything of the kind. Those institutions should be self-supporting. He would move that the vote be reduced by £2,580.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : You cannot do so.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION moved that £10,104 be granted for Orphanages and the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institution. The vote for each orphanage was increased. The increases were absolutely necessary, and had been very nicely calculated. Last year £3,308 was spent upon Diamantina; £3,360 upon St. Vincent; and £365 upon the Infants' Home. The vote for deaf and dumb children appeared upon the Department of Public Instruction for the first time; it having hitherto been charged to contingencies in the Colonial Secretary's Department—why he did not know. He had now put the vote in its proper place.

Mr. GRIFFITH : Upon what principle is the money paid? At what ratio are the payments calculated?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said the money was paid proportionately to the number of children in the institutions. In some cases the parents were able to assist although they could not support their children.

Mr. GRIFFITH was understood to say that he would like to know how the boarding-out system had been carried out. The education report showed that there were forty children boarded out last year. How was it operating, and what arrangements were made for paying for the children?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that on the 22nd September eighty-four children were boarded out from the Diamantina Orphanage at 6s. a-week; the people who took them

were remarkably well reported of, and were obliged to clothe them. Some of the people lived in Brisbane and some in Ipswich and the neighbourhood. The Townsville and Rockhampton Orphanages were under committees of management who were doing very well. The Townsville building was small, but some money had been granted for finishing and enlarging it. In the Rockhampton Orphanage there were seventy-six children, and the accounts from all of the orphanages were very good. Dr. Challinor's report was to the following effect:—

"Of the 104 children hired out to service since 1875, 42 of them I visit monthly. I hope soon to be able to visit regularly most of the remaining children at longer intervals with the exception of those visited by the respective police magistrates of the districts in which they reside."

Mr. GRIFFITH : Do I understand the hon. gentleman to say that there are no children boarded out except from the Diamantina Orphanage?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION : With the exception of a few sickly babies from Nudgee.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he heard that information was refused to parents who went to the Orphanage as to where their children were gone. He knew that was it the law, and it was a very good law, that parents who let their children go into the Orphanage surrendered their parental rights to the State, which then took charge of them : at the same time, it was rather hard to refuse to tell a mother where her child was.

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said that he agreed with the hon. member from a sentimental point of view, but not at all from a practical one. If mothers were allowed to see their children, the children would become discontented, the foster-mothers would become discontented, and then the mothers themselves would receive no benefit. Altogether, they got every information, but were not told where the children were located.

Mr. SIMPSON said that if a mother let her child get into the orphanages the chances were she did not care much about it. He should be glad to see £10,000 or £15,000 of the money put down for the grammar schools expended on the orphanages.

Mr. DOUGLAS asked if the boarding-out system did not apply to the St. Vincent Orphanage?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said no application had been made. The children appeared to be remarkably well. The Nudgee Orphanage was differently situated to the Brisbane one, which was very nearly in the centre of town and was in a wretched state of decay. He warned the Colonial Treasurer that money to build a new hospital he must have. He was informed that it would take £1,000, at least, to put it into decent order, and that it would only last one or two years, and even then it would be only fit to set fire to. They were getting the children out as quickly as possible. At Nudgee, as everyone could see, the children were well and comfortably housed and taken good care of.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he should like to ask whether the Government could not see their way for providing boots for the inmates of the Diamantina Orphanage?

The MINISTER FOR INSTRUCTION said he believed the children did very well without them. When boots were absolutely wanted the ladies' committee supplied them.

Mr. ARCHER said that he knew several respectable people whose children were accustomed to go about without boots, and he believed they had better feet and a better carriage than people who used them.



Mr. FEEZ said he could not see that any additional assistance was to be given to any orphanage except the three Brisbane Institutions. Before boots and shoes were provided for the inmates of the orphanages in the southern division some increased provision should be made for similar institutions further north.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. member ought to congratulate himself on the fact that the orphanages in other parts of the colony did not require increased votes. He regretted that any increase had become necessary in Brisbane. With regard to boots, he agreed with the Minister for Instruction that the children got on quite as well without them.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Mr. McIlwraith) moved that £6,922 be granted for services in connection with the Treasury. There were slight reductions in two of the items amounting to £70.

Mr. DICKSON asked whether salaries had been reduced, or whether the reduction resulted from the promotion of juniors.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that one clerk had been dismissed, and another had been promoted at a lower salary.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £17,000 be granted for Miscellaneous Services. The vote this year had been reduced by £3,500, in consequence of the absence of the usual vote for the hydrographical survey, which had been omitted. Captain Bedwell, the gentleman in charge of the survey, had intimated to the Government that the work for which he received instructions in 1862 had been completed to Bowen. Originally the work had been done by means of a sailing vessel, and at that time the Home Government contributed to the extent of £2,000 a-year; but when in accordance with the expressed wishes of this House a steamer was obtained to do the work much more expeditiously, the Home Government refused to contribute more than £2,500 a-year. The consequence was that the Queensland Government was now paying three times as much as the Home Government, although the latter were more interested in the survey. In 1878-9 the total cost of the survey was £7,839, of which the Home Government paid £2,500, and during the last six months of 1879 the survey cost £4,560, of which the Home Government paid £1,250. Notwithstanding the efforts of this and previous Governments to get the subsidy by the Home Government increased, the Home Government had taken up the position that, no matter how much money might be spent, they would contribute no more than £2,500 a-year. Considering that the whole of the Queensland coast had been lighted without any assistance from the Home Government, their action appeared to be unwarranted. More than half the shipping coming down the coast and reaping the benefits of the survey did not trade with the colony at all. The southern colonies were therefore quite as much interested in the matter as Queensland was, but there were no means of inducing them to contribute. In the case of the Home Government, however, the Government might very well refuse to go on with the survey until the Home Government would consent to pay at least one-half of the expense.

Mr. DICKSON said he agreed with the hon. gentleman that the Home Government had been extremely niggardly; but at the same time it appeared to him to be of paramount importance that the coast should be properly surveyed in order that there might be no impediments in the way of shipping requiring to call at the ports on

the coast. He should be glad to learn whether the Admiralty plan which, as originally proposed, terminated at Bowen, had been completed to that port. Whilst agreeing with the Treasurer that the Home Government had not contributed a fair proportion of the expense, he thought it would be a misfortune if, for the sake of an immediate retrenchment, anything should be allowed to interfere with the completion of the original scheme. He understood that the steamer recently employed was very suitable for the work, and that as much was done in one year as could have been done by means of sailing vessels in three years, and, therefore, it was quite justifiable to ask the Home Government to increase the subsidy. It was very desirable, on the other hand, that the survey should be completed in order that mariners sailing those waters should have the assurance that no unknown dangers were to be apprehended.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Government did not stop the survey of the coast before they received intimation from Captain Bedwell that he had received instructions from the hydrographic department at home to stop the survey at Bowen. The survey was practically carried out at the end of last year; a few days more would have completed it to Bowen, but an accident happened on the "Llewellyn" which stopped the works. It was a good thing in one respect that the work was stopped, because the department at home were not bearing an equal proportion of the expense. They used to pay one-half when the work was done in a clumsy way by sailing ships; but when the Government got a steamship and had the work performed in an efficient way the Home Department would only pay one-fourth of the expense. He was anxious that the survey should be continued, and he intended to open negotiations with the Lords of the Admiralty on the subject.

Mr. DICKSON said he was glad to hear that the survey was to be continued. In justification of the action of the Home Department, he pointed out that when negotiations were made for the substitution of a steam service it was thought that £5,000 would cover the whole expenditure, and on that representation the Lords of the Admiralty were induced to grant £2,500, or one moiety of the expenditure. It turned out that the expenditure was larger than that, and the Lords of the Admiralty demurred to making any further payments. It was also fair to state that they contributed as largely, if not more so, to the coastal survey of Queensland as they did to the coastal survey of Victoria.

Mr. BEATTIE should be glad to see the work proceeded with, but he thought the colony could not afford the extraordinary expenditure which would be necessary to carry it out. There was no analogy between a coastal survey of Queensland and one of Victoria. The amount of work to be done on the Queensland coast was something enormous, and there would be very little return on the outlay because it must be remembered that none of the vessels which came through Torres Straits paid anything towards the cost of lighting except they called at the northern ports. He hoped if negotiations were entered into with the Home Department that it would be strongly impressed on them that it was hardly fair to expect the colony to bear such a large proportion of the cost. Everyone must be anxious that the survey of the northern coast should be made as soon as possible so as to prevent the loss of life and property, but at the same time they must look at the expense.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the action of the Government in stopping the work had been productive of one good result. When he brought the matter under the notice of the authorities at home at the Colonial Office

they admitted at once that the English Government ought to pay one-half the expenses. His (Mr. Mollwraith's) opinion was that they ought to pay two-thirds.

Mr. BEATTIE said he should like to have some information respecting the survey of Point Parker. Captain Pennefather was no doubt a good officer, but he (Mr. Beattie) doubted whether he was capable of doing the survey work properly.

Mr. WALSH said it was a curse to the colony having so many ports. If there were one or two ports they would become large and important, but as they were now they would never come to anything. It was necessary to employ at the ports a staff which was capable of performing ten times the amount of work which there was to do. For all practical purposes Cooktown would supply the wants of the northern portion of the colony. It was the natural outlet for the Peninsula. With a small expenditure the harbour could be made equal to any in Queensland—a judicious expenditure of the money already voted would do that. The harbour was perfectly safe, and it was easy of access to the interior at all times, the country being well watered and grassed, and suited for travelling stock of all kinds. Point Parker, he was told, could not possibly be made a port, except at the expenditure of probably millions of money, and he was told, also, that the country in the immediate vicinity of it was flooded—that there were flood marks there twenty feet high. That was the place some people were trying to run away to and make a new port! They had too many ports in the colony already, the interests of one being antagonistic to the other; and the amount of expenditure necessitated thereby was, like the Civil service, entirely out of proportion to the population of the colony. He hoped the Premier would be very careful with regard to Point Parker, and that before he went to any expenditure there he would look at Cooktown and see its capabilities.

Mr. MOREHEAD did not agree with the hon. member (Mr. Walsh). He thought it was the duty of the Government to discover where the best ports were, and he regretted to see the item for Admiralty survey struck off the Estimates. He maintained that it would be very much better to have a steamer for this purpose, such as they had a few years ago, and that it would be more economical than doing exploration work of this kind by the "Pearl." The colony had already acquired, and very properly acquired, the reputation of having, for a young colony, the best explored coast in the colonies, and he should like to see the survey continued. He hoped the exploration at Point Parker would result in a very fine harbour being found there; whether it would or not, of course, remained to be seen.

Mr. NORTON hoped that if they discovered any more ports they would be good ones, and that they would not endeavour to carry them as far inland as possible. They had already expended £70,000 or £100,000 in trying to bring the port of Moreton Bay up to Brisbane, and it was proposed to continue that ruinous system. In almost every port of the colony expenditure was incurred in the most reckless way in really trying to open out what Nature was doing her best to stop up. Their system of harbour and river improvements was recklessly bad. Where they had a good port they should make use of it. No doubt hon. members would think he was referring to Port Curtis, and so he was. It was really the best harbour in the colony; there was hardly any better in the whole of Australia, and yet hundreds of thousands of pounds would be spent in improving the Fitzroy, while nature was doing her utmost to prevent it. As the hon.

member for Mitchell pointed out on a previous occasion, they were spending so much money there that possibly they would soon be able to run a railway down the river. He (Mr. Norton) was sure they would spend many hundreds of thousands of pounds upon it before they made Rockhampton a port.

Mr. MOREHEAD quite agreed with the hon. member. They were throwing away hundreds of thousands of pounds in the Brisbane and other rivers; and it was a pity that some Government could not be found strong enough to put vested interests on one side and look at what was really for the good of the colony in this respect. What they wanted here was a railway to deep water; and they wanted the same at Rockhampton: whether the line went from Rockhampton to Gladstone or to some point on the river was, so to speak, beside the question; but he was certain that one-third of the money spent at Rockhampton and one-tenth of the money spent at Brisbane would have made both those places good ports, where vessels could load and discharge with convenience. As to the dock, he hoped it would remain as a monument of the utter selfishness which appeared to rule the Brisbane community, who could not see that they would be in no way injured by a railway to deep water, but would be benefited by it. The same remarks applied to Rockhampton. It would be a tremendous advantage if they could get rid of this enormous expenditure for works for which the whole colony was taxed, which required a large sum to keep in order, and which gave no return.

Mr. SIMPSON hoped the discussion would lead to something being done with reference to a railway to deep water. They talked a great deal about a mail service, and bringing the mail steamers and other vessels up to be docked in Brisbane, but from his experience he thought the river was getting shallower. He knew that whenever he went south he had a great deal more difficulty now in getting up and down the river than he had ten years ago. This morning he came up, and they steamed at half-speed for twenty-four hours in order to arrive in time to suit the tide, and when they did arrive it was with the greatest difficulty that a ship drawing 13 feet 6 inches dragged through. She grounded four or five times between the entrance of the river and the wharf in Brisbane; and when he asked the captain, who had been running to Brisbane for many years, what his idea was with regard to the channel, he said they simply took the mud out of one place and put it in another. He (Mr. Simpson) believed there was less water now on Francis Channel than there was ten years ago. It would be far better to make a railway to the Bay, which could be made in a couple of years, and which would greatly benefit the whole southern portion of the colony and assist it to go ahead, than to continue spending money on that miserable dredge which was scarcely ever at work.

Mr. AMHURST was understood to say that at a cost of not more than £100,000 the river could be so improved that at low water there would be 15 feet at any part, and at high water a vessel with a draught of 22 feet could come up, and that there would be no likelihood of it filling up.

In answer to a question from Mr. GRIFFITH,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no additional information regarding the new port in the Gulf of Carpentaria. He had had several reports respecting it. Lieutenant Connor reported that there was seven feet of water at the bar of Point Parker. The Customs officer, on the other hand, had stated that there was thirteen feet. The "Pearl" was down there now, and should she report that there was a harbour, the native police, from whose officer

information had been received that the port was easily approached, would be sent down to mark a road to it.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said the next item would probably cause a lot of discussion, and he would therefore move that the Chairman leave the chair and report progress.

In reply to Mr. GRIFFITH, the PREMIER stated that the first business taken to-morrow would be the Local Works Loan Bill, and after that the Licensing Boards Bill, the Local Government Bill, and Supply.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he would take that opportunity of asking the hon. gentleman when he intended to finish the Committee of Ways and Means. It was a very unusual thing to be collecting fresh taxes merely on a resolution of the House, especially after such a lapse of time had occurred since the resolution was passed.

The PREMIER said he would take the earliest opportunity he could to get the business in Ways and Means completed, but there were some circumstances beyond his control which had prevented him from doing so up to the present time. As soon as the Government could possibly do so he would continue Ways and Means.

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

The House adjourned at twenty-seven minutes past 10 o'clock.