

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 1881

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 27 September, 1881.

Petitions.—Gulland's Branch Lines of Railway Bill.—Local Government Act Amendment Bill.—Questions.—Police Jurisdiction Extension Bill—third reading.—Fire Brigades Bill—committee.—Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITIONS.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH presented a petition from Members and Elders of the Creek-street Presbyterian Church relating to the Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill.

Petition read and received.

Mr. GRIFFITH presented a similar petition from Members of the Wharf-street Baptist Church.

Petition read and received.

Mr. GRIFFITH presented a petition from certain inhabitants of Brisbane relating to the Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill, particularly in reference to appeals against decisions of justices.

Petition read and received.

Mr. GRIFFITH presented a similar petition also signed by inhabitants of Brisbane.

Petition read and received.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Sir Arthur Palmer) presented a petition from the Executive Officer of the Queensland United Licensed Victuallers' Association, relating to the Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill.

Petition read and received.

Mr. GRIMES presented a petition from the congregation of the Baptist Church at South Brisbane, praying that the Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill, now before the House, be so amended as to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sundays; also a petition from the inhabitants of Boggo, to the same effect.

Petitions read and received.

GULLAND'S BRANCH LINES OF RAILWAY BILL.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan), this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council with the usual message.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith), this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council with the usual message.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked the Colonial Secretary—

1. Are there any Regulations in force, under the Act 26 Vic., No. 5, respecting the introduction of Immigrants from British India?

2. If so, are they printed, and where may they be found in the *Gazette*?

3. Will the Government lay copies of them on the table of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied—

1. Yes.

2. Yes. They may be found in the *Government Gazette* of the 8th July, 1881.

3. Yes.

POLICE JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council with a message in the usual form.

FIRE BRIGADES BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1—"Repeal of Fire Brigades Act of 1876"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he proposed to negative this clause and substitute the following clause in its place:—

The Fire Brigades Act of 1876 is hereby repealed, but nothing herein contained shall affect any act or thing lawfully done or contracted to be done under the authority of the said Act, or in any way affect the constitution of any of the fire brigades created or existing under the authority of the said Act.

Provided that all fire brigade boards and officers of fire brigades appointed under the provisions of the said repealed Act shall continue and be subject to the provisions of this Act, until the appointment of boards and officers of fire brigades in the manner hereinafter provided.

Hon. members might not see a great deal of difference between the clauses now; but when they got further on in the Bill it would be found that the clause had to be altered to make it fit in with other clauses. He moved the clause formally.

Question put and negatived.

Question—That the new clause stand part of the Bill—put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 5, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 6—"Extension of Act to suburbs"—

Mr. GRIFFITH said the clause did not appear to be consistent with the new clause to follow clause 9 which provided that—

"It shall be lawful for the superintendent, or, in his absence, for any assistant superintendent of a fire brigade, in the case of any fire occurring outside the limits of the town in which such fire brigade has been established, to proceed with such members of his fire brigade, engines, and other appliances as he may deem necessary, for the purpose of extinguishing such fire or preventing it from spreading.

"Such superintendent or assistant superintendent shall have and exercise at any such fire the same powers as he is by this Act empowered to exercise in the case of fires occurring in the town in which his fire brigade has been established.

"And any damage caused in the due execution of the powers conferred by this section shall be deemed to be

damage by fire within the meaning, but subject to the conditions of any policy of insurance against fire, which is effected on any building so damaged."

He would ask whether that covered all that was proposed by clause 6, or would clause 6 cover other insurances? Was it intended to extend the area over which insurance companies should contribute?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: By proclamation.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he saw that, but the new clause provided that the authority of the superintendent might be exercised outside the limits of a town.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not see that the two clauses clashed at all. Clause 9 might, to a certain extent, repeat what there was in clause 6.

Mr. BEATTIE thought the clause as it stood was a most judicious one, and one that was very much wanted indeed, as at present fire brigades showed a reluctance to go outside their boundary unless somebody called on them for their services. The clause would also give a very great incentive to the establishing of local fire brigades.

Question put and passed.

On clause 7—"Appointment of officers"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had a new clause to substitute for this, which differed very materially from it. Clause 7, as printed in the Bill, was—

"It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council, on the nomination of a majority of the members of any fire brigade, to appoint a superintendent and one or more assistant superintendents of such fire brigade, and the appointment of every such superintendent and assistant superintendent shall forthwith be notified in the *Gazette*."

Hon. members would see that that clause did not say for what time the superintendent or deputy superintendent should be appointed. He had seen many persons, and heard a great deal on the subject, and he believed the general opinion among firemen—he did not say "universal," because he knew the present superintendent of the Brisbane Fire Brigade was very strongly opposed to it—the general feeling was that the appointment should be an annual one. For his own part, he was not tied down to any opinion, and did not care whether the appointment was annual, or during good behaviour, or during pleasure; but he was rather inclined to favour the appointment being made annually. Under clause 7 in the Bill it might be supposed that the appointment would be a permanent one, which was not meant at all; but the new clause showed much more clearly what was meant. He proposed to negative clause 7, and substitute the following:—

It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council, on the nomination of a majority of the members of any fire brigade, to appoint a superintendent and one or more assistant superintendents of such fire brigade; and the nomination and appointment of every such superintendent and assistant superintendent shall be made annually in the month of March. But nothing herein contained shall prevent the nomination and appointment of any superintendent or assistant superintendent at any other time for the purpose of filling any vacancy in these offices by reason of death or resignation, or any other cause; or the appointment by the Governor in Council of any superintendent or assistant superintendent, on the failure of the fire brigade to make the nomination hereinbefore provided.

Mr. BEATTIE said he hoped the Colonial Secretary would not negative the clause. He felt very strongly on the subject because he thought it would be an injudicious alteration. Let them take a volunteer corps, for instance. A captain was elected to command a purely volunteer corps, but if he was elected every year

how would it be possible to have any discipline; and how would it be possible to get the best men under such a system? He believed it would do a very great deal of injury to volunteer bodies. There would also have to be a provision made in the clause with reference to paid superintendents. Supposing the superintendent was a paid officer of a paid brigade, and supposing any of the towns in the North decided upon having a paid brigade, they would have the whole power and control over their paid servants. The people who subscribed would have to appoint the superintendent and not the men. It would be unfair to the contributors to allow men whom they employed to appoint their own officers. In his opinion it would be a suicidal policy to allow the men in volunteer bodies to elect their officers every year, and more particularly so in the case of volunteer fire brigades. They might elect one of their number simply because he was "hail-fellow-well-met" with them, although he might be totally unqualified to grapple with a difficulty in a great emergency. The provision was not necessary in order to get a bad man out, because no superintendent who had lost the confidence of his men would hold the position for twenty-four hours; no one with the sense of manhood would think of waiting for the end of the year, to go out. But human nature was such that cliques often arose in such bodies, and it might happen that a superintendent would decline to contest an election to the office. In such a case two or three of the men, knowing the feeling of the superintendent, might keep him out by proposing another candidate, and the officer elected would probably not represent the body, but be simply the nominee of two or three of the men. The Colonial Secretary, being so accustomed to discipline himself, and knowing so much about volunteers, would see how dangerous such a provision would be. There could be no objection to clause 7 as it stood, though, perhaps, it might be improved by the addition of a proviso that if insurance companies, municipalities, or other corporations decided upon maintaining paid bodies they should be empowered to appoint the officers. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would not insist upon the amendment, because he thought that its adoption would tend to diminish the *esprit de corps* which now existed in the fire brigades throughout the colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said hon. members should remember in discussing any clause of the Bill that this measure related entirely to volunteer fire brigades. He had tried to include provisions relating to paid bodies, but had found it impossible to do so. The argument of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley—who had himself had a good deal to do with fire brigades—of course, had some weight, but it must always be remembered that the firemen had their own ideas, and that they would probably be able to get good superintendents by means of yearly appointments. It was very unlikely that any clique would be able to drive a good superintendent who had the confidence of his men out of the field. He, personally, had no feeling on the subject, but he certainly preferred the annual election to the appointment for an indefinite length of time. No doubt, under the present system, if a majority of the members petitioned for the removal of a superintendent he would be removed; in fact, in such a case he would be bound to retire. There would be a tendency on the part of a superintendent to be more active and attentive to his duties, supposing he valued the position, if he knew that his conduct might be discussed once a year. If the Committee, however, decided against the new clause, he should not be the least hurt about it; but, even if the 7th clause as it stood should be preserved,

would be advisable to add to it the latter half of the proposed new clause. He was prepared to divide on the subject.

Mr. McLEAN thought the provision contained in the new clause a very wise one. Although the necessity had not arisen in Brisbane, it might have occurred elsewhere, and he thought it was better that the men should have it in their power once a year to say whether they were satisfied with their superintendent or not. If they were satisfied with the conduct of the person whom they had elected to that high and onerous position, the probability was that they would elect him year after year; and, if they were not satisfied, it was far better that they should have the opportunity of expressing their desire at the next annual meeting to have a change than that they should be compelled to petition the Governor in Council. There were times when a change was beneficial, and the prospect of being able to rise to the position of superintendent might often spur the men on to a more active performance of their duties. He should vote for the new clause.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was inclined to think the original clause was the better of the two. No doubt, under the present law, if the superintendent gave satisfaction he would be re-elected, and he was afraid that the provision contained in the amendment, by enabling a clique to elect a man who might be unable to perform the duties would open the door for bad appointments. If a superintendent found that his services were not appreciated he would not care to remain in office, and he thought it would be better to retain the clause as it was. Once get a good man in, it was better to keep him; and, if a bad man got in, it was easy to get rid of him.

Mr. KELLETT said he could not understand the logic of the hon. member for Ipswich. The hon. member said that if anyone objected to the officer he could not hold his seat; but the hon. member forgot that the officer might fancy he was competent, and others might fancy he was not. Superintendents, presidents, and vice-presidents of societies should, in his opinion, be elected every year. He knew some who had been elected year after year by unanimous vote. Sometimes by chance a bad man got in, but if he did not perform his duties satisfactorily it was easy to find a way of getting rid of him. A good man who took an interest in the affairs of the society was elected without a discordant voice every year, and this new clause would give a society an opportunity of getting rid of a man who was not suitable, or who did not do his work.

Mr. BEATTIE said, if the present clause was retained, the addition of the latter part of the new clause would be an improvement. The volunteer bodies, like other societies referred to by the hon. member for Stanley, made their own internal regulations, and generally elected their officers annually; but this clause was to make an annual election compulsory. That was unfair and unjust to volunteer bodies, and the great majority of the men in his (Mr. Beattie's) brigade were against it. Personally, he had no feeling on the subject, as he had been elected yearly for fourteen years; but he was expressing the opinion of the men as well as his own when he said that the plan was injudicious and was likely to lead to the formation of little cliques. Whatever man might be elected, whether competent or not, the Government, under this Bill, had no power to refuse to proclaim him. The other night the leader of the Opposition spoke of a superintendent who had pulled down a house seven houses distant from a fire. Under this Bill the Government would have no power to remove such a superin-

tendent, and great loss of property might result from his continuance in office. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would insert some provision to give the power of appointment to paid bodies. The new clause made provision for the appointment of members of volunteer bodies, and surely it would be possible to give to the contributors to fire brigades a similar power of appointment. He should not waste the time of the Committee by dividing, but he hoped the Colonial Secretary would see his way to retain the 7th clause, adding to it the latter portion of the new clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member for Fortitude Valley made his usual mistake of seeing everything from his own point of view, and desiring the Bill to be framed just to suit the Brisbane Fire Brigade. The Bill had to be framed to suit the requirements of other places besides Brisbane; and he thought that, on the whole, it was better to leave the men to say annually whether they had confidence in their superintendent or not. The hon. member had suggested another argument in support of that view when he referred to the case of the bad superintendent who pulled down a house seven houses away from a fire. If such an officer had been appointed for years, he might go on pulling down houses in that way every year; but under the present Act he would not be likely to repeat the experiment after the first time. He regarded the new clause as a decided improvement.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he did not agree with the Colonial Secretary: he thought the appointment of superintendent of a fire brigade should be a permanent one. Such an officer might make a mistake through want of experience, and the longer he occupied the position the less likely he would be to make mistakes; and as to comparing his position with that of the president of a society, the qualities required in the two cases were so different that it would be almost as reasonable to compare the Speaker of the House with the general of an army. The qualities required in a superintendent of a fire brigade were nerve, presence of mind, and capability to command men under circumstances of danger, and those qualities were developed by experience and the habit of command. Under a system of annual election, also, there was great danger of men scheming throughout the year, and making friends with the members of the brigade in order that they might oust the superintendent on the election day, and get the position for themselves. There would consequently be incessant canvassing and intrigues going on. If a good superintendent was once appointed it was better to retain him, and, believing that, he should oppose the new 7th clause.

Mr. GRIFFITH said there appeared to be a good deal to say on both sides of the question. He could see a great objection to the system of annual election, and a great objection to the permanent appointment. He would suggest that the brigades might be allowed to decide by their by-laws whether the appointments should be annual or otherwise.

Mr. BEATTIE: They do so now.

Mr. GRIFFITH said, then he understood it was optional now with the brigades whether the officers should be annually elected or not, and this amendment would deprive them of the option. The clause, as it stood, left that ambiguous. At all events, power should be given to the Governor in Council to remove a superintendent if necessary. He was inclined to think that if that power were expressly given the option of having the elections annual or otherwise might be left to the brigades in framing their by-laws.

Mr. GRIMES said that not only members of brigades, but owners of property and insurance companies, were greatly interested in the appointment of proper men. If the appointment were left to the whim of a few members of the brigade, incompetent superintendents might be appointed and great loss of property result. He was in favour of the clause as it stood.

Mr. FOOTE thought the new 7th clause was a very safe one, because it was not at all likely that the men would elect a bad man to a position of such great responsibility. The hon. member (Mr. Beattie), as stated by himself, had been elected yearly for fourteen years, and the hon. gentleman would, no doubt, continue to be elected as long as he chose to retain the position. If a brigade chose to appoint a new man, it was likely that the officer appointed would be, not a raw recruit, but a man who thoroughly understood the responsibility of the position.

Mr. BEATTIE pointed out that the proposed new clause 18 provided that it should be lawful for the fire brigade in any town to make such by-laws for the management of their affairs, and for their proper discipline and regulation, as were not inconsistent with the provisions of this or any other Act; and such by-laws, after approval by the fire brigade board of such town, and confirmation by the Governor in Council, should be published in the *Gazette* and thereafter have the force of law. According to that clause, the members of the brigades might make such regulations as they thought proper with regard to their internal affairs. With reference to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, he thought the Governor in Council ought to have the power indicated by the hon. gentleman.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: So he has.

Mr. BEATTIE said that the usual practice when a superintendent had been elected was to send a notification to the Colonial Secretary intimating that So-and-so had been chosen by a majority of the brigade. The superintendent was then gazetted. He was not gazetted every year, though he (Mr. Beattie) believed that an intimation was sent every year to the Colonial Secretary's office from all the brigades, saying if a reappointment had taken place, or what other appointment had been made, and only the latter were gazetted. He thought the law was good as it stood. So far as the remark of the Colonial Secretary—that he (Mr. Beattie) only considered the question from a Brisbane point of view—was concerned, he would like to disabuse the mind of the hon. gentleman of any such idea. He (Mr. Beattie) did not think about Brisbane at all in the matter. For some time he had thought a great deal more about the outlying districts and country towns, and had been more anxious to see brigades established in them, being satisfied that Brisbane could take care of itself. He had been in communication with the greater number of the officers of brigades in the colony, and was, therefore, to some extent, expressing their opinions in what he said on this point, and not only his own individual opinion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY pointed out that the Government had power to remove. The members of the brigade did not make the appointment of superintendent, but the Governor in Council. The brigade only nominated. With respect to what the hon. member for Fortitude Valley stated on the subject of by-laws, he (the Colonial Secretary) would say that there were legally no such things. There was no power to make them under the Act. Any by-laws they did make were only binding on themselves, and it was not desirable that every association throughout the colony should make different by-laws. It would be much better to have it decided

in the Bill whether the election should be annual or not.

Question—That clause 7 stand part of the Bill—put and negatived.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the following new clause:—

It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council, on the nomination of a majority of the members of any fire brigade, to appoint a superintendent and one or more assistant superintendents of such fire brigade; and the nomination and appointment of every such superintendent and assistant superintendent shall be made annually in the month of March. But nothing herein contained shall prevent the nomination and appointment of any superintendent or assistant superintendent at any other time for the purpose of filling any vacancy in these offices by reason of death or resignation, or any other cause; or the appointment by the Governor in Council of any superintendent or assistant superintendent, on the failure of the fire brigade to make the nomination hereinbefore provided.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9 passed as printed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the insertion of the following new clause:—

It shall be lawful for the superintendent, or, in his absence, for any assistant superintendent of a fire brigade, in the case of any fire occurring outside the limits of the town in which such fire brigade has been established, to proceed with such members of his fire brigade, engines, and other appliances as he may deem necessary, for the purpose of extinguishing such fire, or preventing it from spreading.

Such superintendent or assistant superintendent shall have and exercise at any such fire the same powers as he is by this Act empowered to exercise in the case of fires occurring in the town in which his fire brigade has been established.

And any damage caused in the due execution of the powers conferred by this section shall be deemed to be damage by fire within the meaning, but subject to the conditions of, any policy of insurance against fire which is effected on any building so damaged.

He said that the hon. member for North Brisbane had pointed out that clause 6 and this clause were pretty nearly the same in effect. If, however, the hon. gentleman would look at them more carefully he would find that, while clause 6 gave the Governor in Council power to extend the provisions of the Act to any place, this new clause gave the superintendent or assistant superintendent power to act outside of towns.

Mr. GRIFFITH: That is so.

Question put and passed.

Clause 10 passed as printed.

On clause 11—"Returns to be furnished by fire insurance companies"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved several verbal amendments in this clause, making it read as follows:—

Every fire insurance company carrying on business in any town to which this Act, or the Act hereby repealed, is extended, shall, on or before the last day of February in each year, furnish the chairman of the fire brigade board with a return in the form of the schedule hereto, showing the net amount insured in such town by such company during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of January then last past, after deducting such amounts as have been given off by way of re-insurance during the same period. And there shall be annexed to every such return a solemn declaration by the manager, secretary, or agent of such company, that the said return contains a true account and statement of the net amount insured, after deducting the amounts given off as hereinbefore mentioned by the company to which such return relates, during such period aforesaid.

If any fire insurance company fails to furnish such return so verified, and within the time specified, such company, or the manager, secretary, or agent thereof, shall be liable to a penalty of five pounds for every day such return remains unfurnished, or unfurnished in the manner required.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

On clause 12—"Constitution of fire brigade boards"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the omission of the first two paragraphs with the view of inserting the following:—

The mayor of the town shall be *ex officio* chairman of the board, and at all meetings of the board shall, in the event of an equality of votes upon any question, have a second or casting vote.

One other member shall be nominated by the Municipal Council.

Two other members shall be appointed by the Governor in Council.

And two other members shall be elected annually in the month of March by the fire insurance companies carrying on business in the town, and for the purposes of such election such fire insurance companies shall have one vote for every ten thousand pounds, or portion of ten thousand pounds insured, as shown in the return hereinbefore required to be furnished by each insurance company.

He had had considerable difficulty in arriving at that solution of the difficulty, which met them when the Bill was before the House. Hon. members were no doubt aware that the Municipal Council of Brisbane, and the insurance companies, had each held a meeting to consider the matter; but they had come to no fixed resolution—at least, none had been sent to him. The proposal of the Municipal Council seemed to have met with a good deal of support—namely, that the Corporation should contribute two-fifths, the Government two-fifths, and the insurance companies one-fifth; but he did not agree with that proposal, and thought the one to be moved in a new clause later on was a much fairer way.

Question put and passed; and clause, as amended, passed.

Clause 13—"Constitution of boards under other circumstances"—was negatived on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and the following new clause inserted in its place:—

Should the mayor of any town fail to take part in the proceedings of the fire brigade board, or the Municipal Council fail to nominate a member of the council for appointment to such board, or the insurance companies fail in the election of one or both of their members, it shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to fill all or any of the vacancies so caused by such failure on the part of the mayor, Municipal Council, or fire insurance companies, and to appoint any member of the board so constituted to be chairman thereof; and the board so constituted shall have and exercise all the powers vested in the board as constituted by the provisions of the immediately preceding section.

Clause 15—"Fire brigade plant to be vested in board"—passed with a verbal amendment.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, a new clause was inserted after clause 14, providing that the superintendent of every fire brigade shall be responsible to the fire brigade board for the safe custody and proper order of the whole of the plant of such board, and for the due efficiency and discipline of the fire brigade, and stating the periodical reports which the superintendent had to furnish to the board as to the condition of brigade and plant.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that clauses 15 and 16—"Payment of assessment by insurance companies," and "contribution, if any, by Parliament" be omitted, with the view of inserting the following new clause:—

For the purpose of raising a fund for the support and maintenance of the fire brigade in any town, the Municipal Council thereof shall annually in the month of March pay to the fire brigade board such sum as they may deem necessary, not being less than four per cent. nor more than eight per cent. on the total amount of "general rates" received by such council during the year last past, as shown by the detailed account which they are required to furnish to the Colonial Treasurer, in support of their claim to the annual endowment provided for in the Local Government Act of 1878.

The Colonial Treasurer shall, on receipt from the chairman of the fire brigade board of a certificate of the

amount contributed by the Municipal Council, cause a like amount to be paid to the fire brigade board in support thereof.

And the Insurance Companies carrying on business in the town shall contribute to the board a further like amount, and such contribution shall be made by the Insurance Companies proportionately to the amount insured by each as shown in the return which each company is hereinbefore required to furnish to the board.

That was one of the most important clauses in the Bill, for it was to provide funds for the maintenance of the fire brigades. In order to enable hon. members to arrive at the sums derivable from municipalities under the 4 per cent. assessment, he had had a statement made out for the year 1880, from which it appeared that Allora would have to pay £9 6s. 5d.; Bowen, £10; Blackall, £5 5s. 7d.; Brisbane, £504 17s. 7d.; Charters Towers, £35 7s. 2d.; Clermont, £7 9s. 7d.; Cooktown, £23 10s. 5d.; Dalby, £15 1s. 7d.; Gayndah, £4 17s. 7d.; Gladstone, £22 4s. 10d.; Gympie, £22 4s.; Ipswich, £53 13s. 7d.; Mackay, £35 4s. 10d.; Maryborough, £96 8s.; Middle Ridge, £3 16s. 10d.; Rockhampton, £105 16s. 10d.; Roma, £19 18s. 5d.; Sandgate, £4 9s. 7d.; Toowoomba, £90 12s.; Townsville, £44 7s. 2d.; and Warwick, £51 6s. 5d. The amount contributed in Brisbane in 1877 for the fire brigade by the insurance companies was £276 11s. 3d. It was necessary that a fund of some sort should be contributed or else fire brigades would come to an end; and this seemed the fairest way to do so. At the rate of 4 per cent. the Corporation of Brisbane would pay £500, the Government £500, and the insurance companies £500, making in all £1,500, which he thought would be just about enough to keep the brigade in a good state of efficiency. It would afterwards be proposed, in a new clause to follow clause 18, to give power to boards to make regulations for payment of allowances to members of fire brigades. Those men were volunteers, and were often taken away from their work. Many were employed by masters who required their services, and they had to attend fires at a great loss to themselves. It seemed only fair that they should be compensated in some way, although he proposed to leave the remuneration entirely to the boards, whose regulations would afterwards have to be approved of by the Governor in Council.

Mr. GARRICK said £1,500 seemed an enormous sum for the Brisbane Fire Brigade. He should like to hear what were the contributions from the insurance companies to that brigade last year. He understood they amounted to £270.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was for 1877. The receipts of the brigade for 1879 amounted to £566 19s. 10d., of which the insurance companies contributed £363 9s. 9d. In 1878 they contributed £307 2s. 6d.

Mr. NORTON said it seemed that the insurers were very much handicapped. In the first place, they paid rates to the municipal council; then they contributed towards the sum paid by the council, and then towards the sum provided by the Colonial Treasurer; and the insurers also supplied the money paid by the companies. He believed no charge was at present made by brigades for attending fires, though it used to be so. That used to be the case in Sydney, and it was only fair to insurers that the uninsured, who received just as much advantage from the brigade, should also pay something.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said the insurance companies would be very heavily handicapped. The clause provided that the insurers carrying on business in the town should "contribute to the board a further like amount," and so on. An insurance company in Brisbane would have to contribute in proportion to the amount of in-

surances. The effect of that would be that if a company had agents at Ipswich, Toowoomba, and other towns of the colony it would also be assessed on the insurances effected in those towns. In that way there would be no end to the assessments, which would be a great drain on the resources of the companies. He did not think such a thing was contemplated by the Colonial Secretary; but the clause would make it not worth while carrying on business. Everybody knew the profits were next to nothing at present in consequence of competition.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said if the insurance companies were so badly off as to feel that amount, the sooner they gave up business the better. The hon. member, as usual, came into the House during a debate and spoke about things that had been dealt with previously. The great outcry made was against the difference between what was proposed to be paid by the Bill, and what was paid in 1879 by the companies—about £130. That was in Brisbane. The larger the amount they had insured, the larger were the profits of the companies.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said the Colonial Secretary seemed to assume that Brisbane was the only place where a brigade would be established; but he was not talking about Brisbane. He did not rush into the House without knowing what he was talking about, but had been there a considerable time before this clause came up, and was quite competent to form an opinion on what was intended by the clause. The Colonial Secretary had not answered his objection, but said that only £130 more would have to be contributed by Brisbane. He (Mr. Rutledge) was talking about other towns, because the Bill would be a direct encouragement to the establishment of fire brigades there; and if the same company was called upon to contribute in every town, the difficulty would be very serious.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the longer the hon. member spoke the more he showed his ignorance. If he was in the House and heard, but did not heed what he the Colonial Secretary said, that was why he did not know that Brisbane was mentioned just as an example. Brisbane would be very much the largest contributor, paying nearly five times as much as any other town. The next largest was Rockhampton, which would contribute £105 16s. on a 4 per cent. rate; the next was Maryborough, £96 8s.; the next Toowoomba, £90 12s.; and then came a number of smaller towns, whose contributions ran down to £5. Where was the hardship? He took Brisbane merely as an extreme case, showing what the companies would have to pay.

Mr. BEATTIE said it was singular, when a case came up in which individuals were interested, how soon they found it out. But it was singular also that they did not look further away. They talked about paying money in country towns, but did they not have risks and get premiums in those places; and should they not pay something for the protection of their interests? Another great advantage they received was the salvage. They also forgot that the Government would contribute under this Bill, and the municipality would contribute, neither of whom would receive any salvage. Three or four weeks ago a fire took place; the stock was valued at £400; and a few days afterwards the salvage was sold. What was the liability of the companies? Why, £30. The brigade saved them £370, and surely they were not going to grumble at having to contribute. If they read about the brigades in the other colonies, and at San Francisco, they would see how they were supported. In Sydney there was a paid

brigade, and a large number of volunteer brigades. The companies had a brigade paid by themselves. They formed themselves into a board, and the admission into that board was 50 guineas. They had also to pay a *pro rata* sum, as proposed by this Bill, to the other brigades. The expense of the paid brigade, which consisted of twelve men, was on an average £1,900 a year. These companies had branches in Newcastle and Maitland, and all the other large towns of New South Wales, and had to contribute according to the business done at those branches. Hon. members were taking a one-sided view when they spoke about Brisbane in the way they did. If they had to contribute in Ipswich and Toowoomba, they had risks in those places which required some protection; and the companies should be the last to complain. The amount contributed by the companies last year was something like £385, and the difference proposed by the Bill, as the Colonial Secretary said, was about £130. And the time had arrived when men who had given their services for twelve or fourteen years ought to have some recognition from the companies of the services rendered. It was unfair for them to lie in their beds when they knew there was a body of men willing to turn out to protect their property, and then refuse to contribute to their support. It was a very great mistake for men to give their services to people who had shown such ungrateful feelings to men who had saved hundreds and thousands of pounds for them during the last fourteen or fifteen years.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said he looked on the assessment as very fair and equitable, and could see no cause for the complaint made by the hon. member for Enoggera. Maryborough would be called upon to pay £96; but the municipality would not object to that. Such a sum, and no less, would be adequate to work the brigade. Something of the kind had been wanted for a long time, and would not be a loss to the companies at all; in fact, they would gain by the protection afforded them. There would be fewer fires, and consequently less property destroyed. The only thing which rather puzzled him was how country brigades were to get their plant with which to commence operations. They might levy an assessment for their maintenance and future proceeding; but, unless the first assessment could be appropriated to the purchase of a plant he did not see how they were to get it. He was better satisfied with the assessment as now proposed than that which appeared in the Bill on the second reading; it was just to the companies, the ratepayers, and to the Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he knew of no other way to provide plant in the first instance than by private contributions. He believed that was how it was obtained in Brisbane. The contributions proposed by the Bill would be sufficient to carry on operations after the plant was obtained.

Mr. DICKSON said he had not heard a reply from the Colonial Secretary or the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, to the hon. member for Moreton as to the cause of the large proposed increase in the revenue of the brigades under this Bill. While he admitted that they should endeavour to keep the brigades up, still they ought not to impose a greater assessment on municipalities than was absolutely necessary for the efficiency of the brigade. Although the Colonial Secretary had illustrated the revenues acquired on a 4 per cent. rate, still the clause allowed municipalities to be assessed to the extent of 8 per cent. Of course they were not likely to assess themselves more than was absolutely necessary; and unless it could be shown that the brigades were in want of that larger revenue, he

could not see why the maximum assessment should be fixed so high. He saw also that the contribution by the insurance companies was to be not less than 1s., and not more than 5s.; and he thought 5s. would produce far more than was required by the brigades.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had stated before that the additional sum raised, if the Bill became law, would be not more than sufficient for the purposes required. If the hon. member for Enoggera would look at the new clause to follow clause 18 as printed, he would see that the Bill proposed to give the board power to make regulations for payment of allowances to members of fire brigades as follows:—

“The payment of members of the fire brigade for loss of time in attending drill;

“The payment of members of the fire brigade for their services in attending fires;

“The payment of medical attendance to members of the fire brigade, in case of sickness or injuries received in the discharge of their duties as such members; and for loss of time occasioned by such sickness or injuries; and

“The payment of gratuities or annuities to the widows of members of fire brigades who may lose their lives in the discharge of their duties as such members.”

That would absorb a large portion of the additional amount, which was not very considerable after all. If the Bill became law, they would find that proper provision had been made for extending the operations of fire brigades to the suburbs; and that would require, in view of the present great extent of Brisbane, very considerable additional plant and additional men. Additional stations would also be required, for they had at present only one fire station in Brisbane, while three at least were required. Every penny of this amount would be used, and there would not be a penny too much. He believed he knew quite as much of the feelings of insurance companies as any hon. member in the House, and he must say that he had not received one solitary remonstrance from any board of directors of any insurance company in this city as to this amount. Individual members might growl; that they could not help. The only thing they wished to be considered, as far as he understood them, was that it should be made incumbent upon municipalities and the Government to pay an equal amount. He considered it was a fair Bill. It had given him a great deal of thought and trouble to get it together; and he thought it treated all alike with impartiality. All the insurance companies had seen the proposed provisions, though he was not prepared to say that they had had copies of all the amendments. They had, however, been consulted on the subject of contributions to the fund.

Mr. BEATTIE said he had not heard the slightest objection to the contribution *pro rata*. He did not think there was a working man about Brisbane who would object to give ½d. in the £1 for the protection of his life and property from fire. This 4 per cent. simply amounted to a ½d. in the £1, and he did not think anybody would complain about that. With reference to the amount required, the Colonial Secretary had very justly said that it was intended to have a branch station in two other parts of this city. If that was done the first year's contribution would be swamped at once, for there was not at the present moment sufficient plant in the city of Brisbane to put out a large conflagration if it occurred to-morrow. In every metropolis there was a large amount of money and property at stake. It must be borne in mind that there was something like £3,000,000 of insured property in the city of Brisbane, besides which there was the Government pro-

perty, which was not insured, and a large amount of municipal and other property which was not insured at all; so that, altogether, the value of the property at the present time in Brisbane under the protection of one fire brigade was something like four or five millions. As to a contribution of this description, he looked upon it that the Government were acting judiciously in introducing it into the Bill. The time had arrived when men must be paid for their labour, and the only objection that he had in the matter at all was that the board, being contributors, ought to have more voice in the management of the affair. He considered that the Colonial Secretary deserved a great deal of credit for the Bill.

Mr. ARCHER said a great deal of what had fallen from hon. members in opposition to the Bill—or, rather, to the contributions that were to be paid by insurance companies—had resulted from hon. members not understanding that, however they might tax the insurance companies, these insurance companies would not be carried on unless they received a profit, and, of course, payment would always have to be made by insurers. When a number of people subscribed and formed themselves into a body for the purpose of insurance they must get a profit, or the company would die. If it died he thought it would be a great advantage in many cases, for he knew that it would save a great many fires in the country. It was certain that if they taxed the insurance companies for the purpose of keeping up a fire brigade in the town the insurance companies would not pay it, but those who insured. It was an axiom of political economy that it was the consumer who paid the duty, whether on tea or sugar or any other thing—not the merchant; and, in the same way, under a Bill of this kind it would be the persons insuring that would have to pay, not the insurance companies.

Mr. GARRICK was understood to say that the hon. member for Blackall seemed to show a partiality for laying down abstract principles when he said that the burden of this contribution would fall on the insurer. But in ordinary life it was found that these principles were not applicable. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley spoke like a general, and it was well known that the more they spent on the army the better the general liked it. An army was now about to be established, and the hon. member, so long as they spent a good deal of money on it, no matter where they got it from, would say nothing against it. He (Mr. Garrick) considered that there was a large margin between 4 and 8 per cent., and would suggest that lower figures should be inserted. As they were introducing a new matter of this kind, he thought that 2 and 5 would be a sufficiently high percentage.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Move it as an amendment.

Mr. GARRICK said he wanted to get the Colonial Secretary's opinion with respect to it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had a very decided opinion on the matter. He had put the figures as low as he could, and if the hon. member would look at some other towns where there were fire brigades—such as Cooktown, for instance—he would find that the 4 per cent. would only amount to £23 10s. 5d. Would the hon. member say that something like £11 15s. 2½d. ought to be enough for that place? If the hon. member looked at the enormous property at stake he would see at once that the amount was not enough, and he (Sir Arthur Palmer) sincerely hoped that in a few years they would get up to 8 per cent., and have efficient fire brigades. He did not know what the object of the hon. mem-

ber's objection was to that paltry sum. It was only 3d. in the £, as was pointed out by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley; and if the insurance companies in the city would just look at the thousands and thousands of pounds that these brigades had saved within the last few years, as at present established, they would see that it ill became them to object to an assessment of the kind.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Mr. Perkins) was understood to say that in future the companies would probably be more cautious in accepting risks than in the past, for some of them must have lost by one fire more than would have paid one year's fees. There would probably be fewer fires in the future, as it was proposed to strengthen the brigades and to give them remuneration for their losses. He hoped that they would get a brigade in every town.

Mr. GARRICK said it had been stated that the contribution would fall on the insurers, but he did not see why the insurance companies should be made responsible for it. He did not see why the business done by the companies should be disclosed, and he did not see why the insurers should be made to pay for the non-insurers, who paid nothing and yet got the whole benefit from this contribution. They paid nothing except their rates and general taxes, and he did not see why they should get the benefit of the money paid by the insurers.

Mr. BEATTIE said if the hon. member for Moreton would read the Bill he would see that the general had nothing to do with the money at all. All he had to do was the fighting, and somebody else was appointed to deal with the money. He thought the system introduced by the Colonial Secretary a good one, for it was the duty of every individual, no matter what his position in society might be, to contribute towards the maintenance of fire brigades. He was rather surprised that the hon. member should oppose this provision, because it was for the benefit of the whole community.

Mr. DICKSON said the burden might not fall on the insurance companies, but it would fall on the holders of property. They had reduced the municipal revenue of Brisbane on the previous night to a very great extent; and now they were going to increase the assessment for the maintenance of fire brigades, the result of which he believed would probably be a special rate levied on property in the city for the support of the fire brigades. He would take exception to the remark made by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, that the time had arrived when men should be paid for their services. This was totally opposed to the idea of voluntary service; and if this Bill became law few would volunteer in the suburbs, to which the Bill was to be extended, when they found that the members of brigades in the municipality were paid. They would all expect an equal share in the spoil. He believed that, eventually, the contribution would fall most heavily on owners of property who were the largest insurers.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said the hon. member for Fortitude Valley seemed to forget that, with an efficient fire brigade, the risks in a city like Brisbane were not so great, and that the consequence was that the insurance companies were enabled to reduce their rates, so as to give every man who had property an opportunity of insuring it.

Mr. GRIFFITH said, according to this provision, the corporations really had the power of levying a tax of thousands of pounds on the insurance companies, and this seemed to him to be something startlingly new. The corporation of Brisbane might meet, and in their wisdom might determine that the insurance company should pay

£1,000 a year, and that the Government should pay a similar amount. This was too large a discretion to give to any corporation. The Government or insurance companies should not be called upon to contribute a larger amount than the minimum amount that might be contributed by the municipal council without the consent of a majority of the board. It seemed to be an anomaly that one constituent part of the board should determine what amount should be contributed by the other two constituent parts. If the amendment was considered by the Committee worthy of adoption he would submit it. The following proviso would give effect to the suggestion he had made:—

Provided the amount to be paid or contributed by the Colonial Treasurer or insurance companies shall not, without the consent of the board, be greater than a sum equal to 4 per cent. of the amount of such general rates.

It seemed to be an anomaly to allow the municipal council to tax the insurance companies.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would accept the amendment if the words "without the consent of the Governor in Council" were inserted in place of the words "without the consent of the board."

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had no objection.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 16—"Contribution, if any, to Parliament"—put and negatived.

On clause 17—"Recovery of assessment and penalties"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he wished to amend the clause, in the 38th line, by omitting the words "assessment payable by a," with a view of inserting the words "sum payable by the municipal council of any town, or by any."

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to suggest, before the question was put, that the clause should read in this way:—

The minimum sum payable by a municipal council of any town, or the sum payable by any fire insurance company, etc.

They could not provide for the compulsory payment of anything more than the minimum sum.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the Bill—put and negatived.

The clause was amended by the insertion of the following words at the beginning of the clause:—"The minimum sum payable by the municipal council of any town or the sum payable by any;" and was further amended, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, by the substitution of the word "sum" for the word "assessment," in the 43rd line.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 18 put and negatived.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the insertion of the following new clause, to take the place of clause 18 as printed:—

It shall be lawful for the fire brigade in any town to make such by-laws for the management of their affairs, and for their proper discipline and regulation, as are not inconsistent with the provisions of this or any other Act; and such by-laws, after approval by the fire brigade board of such town, and confirmation by the Governor in Council, shall be published in the *Gazette* and thereafter have the force of law.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the insertion of the following new clause, to follow new clause 18 as passed:—

Nothing contained in this Act shall be taken to prevent the fire brigade board of any town from making such regulations as they may deem necessary for—

(a) The payment of members of the fire brigade for loss of time in attending drill;

- (b) The payment of members of the fire brigade for their services in attending fires;
- (c) The payment of medical attendance to members of the fire brigade, in case of sickness or injuries received in the discharge of their duties as such members; and for loss of time occasioned by such sickness or injuries; and
- (d) The payment of gratuities or annuities to the widows of members of fire brigades who may lose their lives in the discharge of their duties as such members.

But such regulations shall not have any force or effect until approved by the Governor in Council and published in the *Gazette*.

Question put and passed.

Clause 19 passed as printed.

Schedule with verbal amendments, agreed to.

Preamble passed as printed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Bill was reported to the House with amendments.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for tomorrow.

LIQUOR RETAILERS LICENSING BILL—COMMITTEE.

The House went into Committee to further consider this Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that when the Bill was last in committee some very important amendments were made in it, which were outside the scope of the Bill as originally intended. He had accepted some of those amendments, feeling at the same time very doubtful whether he was doing right or not. That morning, however, he had had a full consultation with his colleagues, and they were unanimously of opinion that the amendments made were outside the scope of the Bill. He did not think it would be right to proceed in a matter of such importance at once in a comparatively thin House; but he intended, when the Bill was next in committee, to recommit it for the purpose of reconsidering the amendments which had been already made. He referred particularly to the amendments relating to the grocers' license, and the license for private hotels. It had been forcibly brought home to him, and to the Government, that those amendments were outside the scope of the Bill, and would lead to almost infinite complications; and that, if the Government went on with the Bill at all, they must go on with it simply as it had been brought in—"A Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Laws regulating the Sale by Retail of Intoxicating Liquors in the Colony of Queensland, and for other purposes relating thereto"—and, as it was very properly described, "a Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill." He did not propose to recommit the Bill that night, but to do so when there was a fuller House. He, therefore, moved that the Chairman leave the chair, and report no progress.

Mr. NORTON said he must say a few words with regard to this matter. Perhaps it was not right to be surprised at anything, but he must say he was a little surprised at what had taken place. He had certainly received a slight intimation that day of the course which the Colonial Secretary proposed to adopt, but only at midday he had received, marked "immediate," some printed amendments to be proposed in the Bill by the hon. gentleman himself. He therefore thought that there was nothing in what he had heard. Apart from that he must disagree with the hon. gentleman when he said that the amendments were outside the scope of the Bill. It was quite possible that the amendment relating to the grocers' license might be, but that relating to the private hotel license was certainly not. It dealt with those who

would be licensed victuallers if they could get the necessary license, just as much as other parts of the Bill dealt with those who were already licensed victuallers; and it enabled a licensed victualler to get a different license from that which he had been able to get hitherto. He did not intend to say much about the matter now, as he should have an opportunity of doing so when the motion was made to recommit the Bill. Because the Government had come to the conclusion that it would be better to do without the amendments, it could not be supposed that every private member would agree with them without hearing some substantial reasons. Having listened to the discussion of the subject in the House, he was of opinion that no serious reasons had been urged against the proposed amendments. Until he did so he should feel most certainly bound to carry out what he had done hitherto, and try as far as he could to get the amendments he proposed, with regard to the hotel licenses, kept in the Bill. He did not think that any harm could come from them, but, if sufficient reasons were given to him why he should do so, he should be prepared to withdraw from that position. His object was to see the Bill passed through the House, and whatever occurred he should do his best to make it a good one, even if he did not carry his amendments. There were other amendments which he hoped to see made to the Bill before it passed through, but he hoped they would have full reasons given for the change that had taken place in the opinions of the Government.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he also had been very surprised to hear the announcement of the Colonial Secretary, as he had understood that, though they were going to object to the private hotel licenses, they were not going to object to the grocers' licenses. He had every reason to suppose that the Government would have accepted the grocers' licenses after what had taken place before. Since this Bill had been committed last week, he had seen a deputation from the Licensed Victuallers' Association, and they had used arguments which were embodied in the petition presented that day by the Colonial Secretary, and which were of a very convincing nature, changing his opinions very much in respect to private hotel and grocers' licenses. So far as the private hotels were concerned, he had come to the conclusion that it would not be right to allow them at all except on the same conditions as to inspection and supervision as any other hotel. On any other conditions the danger of abuses in these cases would be so great that it would not be safe to sanction them. He was always open to reason, and that was the conclusion that he had arrived at on this point. The deputation had also pointed out that a great number of abuses might arise in connection with grocers' licenses under the provisions which existed in Victoria and Great Britain, and as they were proposed to be introduced here. He believed himself, however, that all these possible abuses might be remedied by proper provisions, and in consequence of this revision and change in his views he had given notice of an entirely different scheme for granting grocers' licenses, the printed copy of which would have been distributed that evening had the Colonial Secretary gone on with the measure. His scheme was that grocers' licenses should, in the first place, be granted only to spirit merchants; and, secondly, that they should be granted only to actual grocers—that was, persons who actually carried on business as family grocers on premises whose annual rateable value was not less than £50; that the minimum amount for sale should be a quart instead of a pint; that the hours of sale should be limited to between 8 in the morning and 6 in the after-

noon; that the licenses should be only in force while these conditions were complied with; that such licenses, instead of being granted as matter of course to any spirit merchant, should be applied for to the licensing board just the same as any public-house license. In order to get rid of the abuse which it seemed probable might arise where a man calling himself a grocer might sell beer on draught, he intended to propose that the licensee should not be allowed to keep anything of that kind on draught on his premises at all, but that he should only sell or keep it in bottles or jars properly corked. The effect of this would be that these licenses would only be given to those who were actually carrying on the business of family grocer on a considerable scale, and they would not be able to supply people with wines or spirits actually in a condition to be drunk on the premises. The difference between such a scheme and the one he had previously proposed, and which was objected to in the petition, was enormous. There would be very little danger of abuse if this were carried out, and therefore he had been surprised to hear that the Colonial Secretary had so entirely changed his opinion about it. Anxious, as he was, as anybody to avoid allowing any abuses to creep into such a system, he at the same time wished to consider the interests of all classes of the community. It was a strange thing that the representations of the Licensed Victuallers' Association and the Temperance Association were at one on this point. It was strange, yet it was quite possible that it might still be desirable to have grocers' licenses in some form. He had not even yet distinctly made up his mind upon the subject, but he thought that with proper safeguards they might be made a great convenience, while they would do no practical harm to the community. He had taken the opportunity of mentioning these points because a great deal of attention had been directed to the point, and it was desirable that the House should be fully informed before it was called on to discuss it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said his object in taking the course he had was not to have had the debate gone on with in a thin House. He could give a good many reasons for the action he had taken, but he had preferred to leave it until it could be more fully discussed. He was anxious not to be thought to be stealing a march on the House, especially on a Bill of such importance. There were two ways open to him: one was to recommit the Bill as he was doing, and the other was, in the manner shadowed forth by the hon. member, to so load grocers' licenses with obligations that they would not be worth having. He had preferred to take the open course. His opinions had changed on the subject, though other members of the Ministry had not changed their opinions at all. He was open to conviction, as he did not claim to be omniscient, and had changed his opinions; and the hon. member for North Brisbane had done the same. The Government did not intend to go on with the Bill with the grocers' licenses and private hotel licenses in it at all.

Mr. FOOTE regretted that the Colonial Secretary had taken the step he had with respect to the opinion which he had held on this subject when it was before the House previously. He was surprised that the Colonial Secretary was going to abandon all that he had done in reference to the grocers' and lodging-house keepers' licenses. He thought the liquor traffic should not be confined to the licensed public-houses altogether; but that others, who were taxpayers, and who were willing to pay their money, should have a right to participate in it. There were many who had merchants' licenses, and he did not see that

they should be restricted to quantity as they were now, whilst they were willing to meet the Government with any reasonable amount by way of fees that the Government might choose to place on them. Other people had a perfect right to be considered in the Bill as well as the publican. He should, however, take this as an indication that the Government saw they could not—they did not dare to go on with the Bill. They found their popularity was going off. They were not prepared to risk it. He was thoroughly satisfied that the House would not see or hear any more about the Bill this session.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was delighted to hear the change of opinion that was going on in the House on this subject. He had not changed his opinion a bit, but he was glad to hear that others had come round to them. He could assure the Colonial Secretary that he could not have taken a better step than that which he had adopted—to confine the Bill to regulating the licensing of public-houses. He would not go into the arguments about the Bill until it was again before the House.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Mr. McIlwraith) moved that £6,922 be granted for the Treasury, Stamp Office, and printing and engraving maps and securities. The items were the same as last year.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £18,000 be granted for Miscellaneous Services. The only item calling for special notice was the award of £2,000 to William Landsborough for his explorations in Queensland. Something was said concerning that last year, and more particularly the year before; and now was the time that Parliament ought to do something towards carrying out the almost unanimous opinion of the House. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee by referring to Mr. Landsborough's services to the colony, for they were perfectly well known to hon. members who had taken an interest in the colony since its separation from New South Wales—services of a kind which in the colonies were generally rewarded by a high Government appointment. Unfortunately, a man might possess great qualities as an explorer, and yet it might not be a proper reward to put him in a position for which he might not be qualified. The more straightforward way was to give him a direct reward for his services, and there was no more appropriate time for that than the present. Mr. Landsborough was one of the first explorers—he (the Colonial Treasurer) thought he was the very first—of that important part of Queensland that was being taken most notice of at the present time. For years after he made the discovery he held the opinion with unswerving faith that the rich lands out there would come to the front and would be a source of profit to the Government; and he had never varied from that view, which had turned out right. Now that the Government were securing such a large revenue from the lands which he discovered, he thought they ought to recognise his services in that rather too modest way. He did not pretend to say that those lands would not have been discovered without Mr. Landsborough, but he was the prominent figure in the discoveries; and that he helped by those discoveries to hasten the progress of Queensland he

(the Colonial Treasurer) had very little doubt. He believed the Committee would agree with him that this was anything but an extravagant way to reward Mr. Landsborough for his services as an explorer.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he must confess he was rather surprised at the proposal. He had a very great respect for Mr. Landsborough, who was an estimable man, and he was sorry he had not got a better position from the Government than the one he was now filling. To single out Mr. Landsborough from other explorers, by giving him a large pecuniary reward for his services, raised the question whether those services were of such a character as to justify it. He did not profess to have any accurate knowledge of what took place twenty years ago, but there were plenty of hon. members who must know perfectly well what Mr. Landsborough did. From recollection, and from what had been told by others who knew more about the matter than himself, it appeared that what Mr. Landsborough did was this:—Burke and Wills started from Victoria to go to the Gulf of Carpentaria and they were lost, and a number of expeditions were sent out in search of them. Amongst others, Mr. Landsborough was sent out by the Victorian Government. He went round to the Gulf, and started southwards from the Albert River. He did not find Burke and Wills, nor did he ever go near their track, but came down to the central part of the Warrego district, which was then a settled country. What Mr. Landsborough did on that expedition was trifling—if he (Mr. Griffith) was wrong he hoped to be corrected—and as for the rest of his explorations, he did not know that he had done anything more than others had done. Mr. Landsborough went out into new country, got a good many runs, and sold them. Beyond that he did not know that Mr. Landsborough had explored very much. He was not saying that Mr. Landsborough did not deserve well, for he believed he did deserve some recognition at the hands of the Government. The reward he got was a seat in the Legislative Council, and he was afterwards appointed a police magistrate, an office which he did not hold very long. The present Colonial Secretary was the Minister who relieved him of that appointment, and could probably tell the reason why. He (Mr. Griffith) had always been under the impression that Mr. Landsborough was rather hardly treated on that occasion. Since then he had held a somewhat poorly paid appointment in the Government service. Was this £2,000 to be paid as compensation for ill-treatment, or as a reward for his distinguished services as an explorer? If the latter, there were other explorers with a higher claim than Mr. Landsborough. There was Mr. Gregory, for instance, with whose services those of Mr. Landsborough could scarcely be mentioned in the same breath, and who was undoubtedly one of the greatest explorers of the Australian continent. It was true that Mr. Gregory held a Government appointment for some years, but if one was to be rewarded by a money grant they should all be dealt with in the same way. Some further explanation was needed before the vote was passed. Mr. Landsborough's services—although he had been a most enterprising and useful colonist in the old days—were not of such an exceptional character that he should be singled out above all other explorers in this manner.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said a very considerable change seemed to have come over the hon. gentleman since last year, when he was one of those who joined in the unanimous sentiment that Mr. Landsborough's services deserved recognition. The hon. gentleman had

endeavoured to lead the Committee to believe that Mr. Landsborough's only exploration was when he was sent by the Victorian Government to search for Burke and Wills. That was one of the very smallest of his explorations. Mr. Landsborough had explored more country adapted for settlement, and been the means of throwing more country open for settlement, than any other explorer in Queensland. It was owing to him that nearly all the good pastoral land in the West was taken up and occupied; and, although he did take up some runs nominally on his own account, they went to benefit his partners and not himself. With reference to his employment by the Government, Mr. Landsborough, though a very worthy man—as worthy as any he knew—was about the least fitted for Government employment, and was himself aware of it. He would not shine, for instance, as a barrister in the Supreme Court, or as a legal luminary like the hon. member for North Brisbane; but a more thoroughgoing, honest, straightforward fellow there was not to be found anywhere. The recommendation of the House last year was almost unanimous that the Government should appoint him to some more lucrative office. There was no such office under Government for which Mr. Landsborough would be fit. There was nothing like plain facts. But that Mr. Landsborough was entitled to consideration from the House he thoroughly believed; and £2,000 would be a very small acknowledgment for the services he had most undoubtedly rendered. The hon. gentleman had also said that there were no instances on record of rewards having been given for exploration. What did the hon. gentleman call the rewards given for discoveries of goldfields? Thousands and thousands of pounds had been paid in that direction. The discoveries made by Mr. Landsborough had been of as much importance to the colony as all the goldfields hitherto discovered. There were plenty of examples to show that it was nothing new to give direct rewards for exploration.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he did not remember saying that there were no instances of rewards for explorations, but if he did say so he was, of course, mistaken. He thought, however, they ought to know on what grounds the present proposition was made. He inferred from what the Colonial Secretary said that this was a reward, not for the trip which caused that gentleman to be made a member of the Legislative Council, and magnified in many other ways, but for other explorations. If they were to reward all the men who had made explorations of that kind, they would have to reward thirty or forty. The Colonial Secretary had detailed some of his explorations, which he (Mr. Griffith) believed were in the Leichhardt district, but he believed an hon. member was present who had been much further west. An hon. member was in the House last week who had travelled much further into the interior on explorations of that kind. If the vote were granted it should be on a definite basis, so that others might know what to expect. Pioneers went exploring partly for the sake of adventure, partly for profit, and partly for the benefit of the country; and it would be a great mistake to lay down as a rule that men who had imperilled their lives to advance the interests of the country should not be entitled to the consideration of the Government. At the same time, so many people came under that head that it was desirable to have some definite principle in granting rewards. This was the first occasion on which such a reward had been proposed in that House, and he was therefore anxious that it should be understood to be voted on some definite ground. He should like to hear some hon. members who knew more about the matter speak on the subject.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could not find better words to express the reason for the vote than what was said on the Estimates—"Reward to William Landsborough for his explorations in Queensland." It was all very well for the hon. member to say that what that man did in 1861 was to land in a brig at Burketown and come down to the Warrego district; but of all the explorers none were more heroic than Burke and Wills, and Landsborough was not far behind them. Without knowing what Burke and Wills had done, he travelled over country which had not been travelled over by white men before, and came right down as far as they came, and with far less equipment than they started with. He worked well and thoroughly, and had done a great deal better than even Burke and Wills. But there were his subsequent explorations to be considered. He went out, no doubt, for his own profit. He failed to make that profit, but did an immense amount of good to the country; and he did not see why the country should forget that. They had plenty of instances of rewards for opening up industries—the sugar industry, and gold discoveries, and other things. The hon. member (Mr. Griffith) said if this vote were granted there would be thirty or forty more applicants, but he (the Premier) did not think so. He did not mean to disparage the Surveyor-General, who was in many respects a great man and worthy of the respect of the country, but he was a man very different from Landsborough, and had in a certain way got his reward. Since this sum appeared on the Estimates he had received applications from other men whose claims could not be entertained for a moment. He did not think the hon. member need fear that this would be looked on as a precedent, because it had been acknowledged that Landsborough's services had not been acknowledged. Considering that such a large amount of revenue was being derived from the land explored by this man, it was only proper to recognise in some way his services.

Mr. DE SATGE said it was the unfortunate circumstances in which Mr. Landsborough was placed which caused him to ask for this reward, for no one cared to go to the Government for a grant if he could possibly avoid it. The instance mentioned by the hon. member for North Brisbane of Mr. Gregory was different, inasmuch as that gentleman did not require assistance. But Mr. Landsborough had been unfortunate; his talents for business were shaken by the hardships of his several trips, which had incapacitated him from taking any onerous position in the Government service. This was why he considered the Government had very rightly made an exception in asking for this small recognition of the great services done to the colony. He thoroughly concurred with what had been said in favour of Mr. Landsborough's services, and he thoroughly sympathised with him in the misfortunes which had obliged him to claim anything from the Government. If he could do without it he would gladly refrain from asking assistance. He hoped other explorers, either past or present, would be able to help themselves in some other way, so as to do without the assistance of Government. There was no doubt that the country opened up by Landsborough might properly be called the future Queensland; and he hoped the House would consider what had fallen from the Premier as to the revenue derived from this country, and that, in recognition of the enormous future wealth of those districts, they would lose no time in developing, as far as water supply and storage went, the districts which had been the cause of such hardships to explorers.

Mr. FOOTE said this gentleman might be a very deserving person, but there were plenty

of persons who might claim to have rendered quite as good services to the country. He had a remembrance of another gentleman, the Rev. Dr. Lang, whose case was brought before the House session after session. He believed the amount was once actually carried, but the amount did not get on the Appropriation Bill, and the gentleman did not get the money. He had noticed that if those who asked for votes of this sort got the ear of the Government the money was granted, and he should not be surprised if this vote passed. But no doubt there were others whose services should be recognised if this vote were permitted to pass. It was parting with the taxpayers' money too easily, and if anyone would move a reduction he would support him.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was saying very little for Mr. Landsborough to compare his services with those of Dr. Lang, who went home and "gassed," and romanced, and induced people to come out on false pretences. That gentleman did nothing which entailed hardship, labour, risk, or sacrifice; but Landsborough's name was a household word—

Mr. FOOTE: Outside.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the outside was very useful to the inside. They could not get on without an outside and an inside too, and there would be very little of the hon. member without his inside. He maintained that Mr. Landsborough deserved thoroughly of this colony. Through some fault or misfortune of his own he was not able to fill a sinecure; but it spoke well for the Ministry that they had no comfortable sinecures. They wanted working men in whatever offices they had to fill. Though Mr. Landsborough was not a business man, no one in the House could deny that he had done good service to the colony.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said he would be quite willing to let the vote pass in a silent manner. He read the debates on this question last session, and, from his recollection of the discussion which took place, he believed there was a unanimous wish that some compensation should be made to Mr. Landsborough. His services were fully recognised, and he (Mr. Palmer) believed the unanimous opinion at that time was that Mr. Landsborough was entitled to some compensation. He thought, after that expression of opinion, that it would have been far better and more graceful if the vote had been allowed to pass without discussion. Speaking from his recollection of Mr. Landsborough as an explorer, he could safely say that his opinion was that he had been a very great benefactor to this colony. He knew of no other traveller who had done so much for the benefit of the colony; and as to saying that this might be made a precedent for other explorers coming forward and making claims, he did not see how that could be, for he knew of no other explorer who could make a claim in the same way, with the exception of one gentleman, who had been named. The leader of the Opposition had stated that there were thirty or forty who would put forward claims, but of the early explorers of Queensland he believed there were only two survivors—Mr. Gregory and Mr. Landsborough. They all knew that Burke and Wills met their fate from the effects of hardship, that McKinlay died from the effects of hardship also, and that Walker, the next great explorer, also died while travelling in Queensland; therefore, there could be no possibility of any other claim being put forward for compensation for exploring. As to Mr. Gregory, he had no doubt that that gentleman would be entitled to a claim, but as he was now in an independent position he probably did not wish to make it. He had very great pleasure in sup-

porting the item, and hoped it would be granted without further discussion.

Mr. FOOTE said he did not agree with the last speaker. He thought when an item was brought before the House, recommending for compensation the services of any gentleman, no matter what he had done in the interest of the colony, it should not be passed over without discussion. He was not one of those who would pass this vote in silence, and it was not his intention to do so. Notwithstanding what had been said of Mr. Landsborough, he thought it did not say much for him that he could do so much for the colony and nothing for himself. It had been stated that he (Mr. Landsborough) had selected lands; if so, he must have been benefited in that way to some extent, at anyrate. He might not be a man of business, but he might be employed by the Government for some purpose. He (Mr. Foote) thought this was simply a question of gratuity to a gentleman who took upon himself the duty of exploring the country, and who, because he was in poor circumstances, came to the House to ask for relief. It was very possible, as the hon. member for Gregory had stated, that if that gentleman had done great service towards those who were engaged in pastoral pursuits they would be willing to let the vote pass. They would have great sympathy for him. Supposing that he (Mr. Foote) was indebted to Mr. Landsborough for some map or some information which he could sell or turn to his own advantage, he had no doubt that he would have great sympathy for Mr. Landsborough, and would support a vote of this kind in his favour. But he said it was parting with the money of the taxpayers too easily; and it was not the only case, as the hon. member for Maryborough would see if he remained long in the House.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in moving that the sum of £30,551 be granted for the Customs Department, said there was an increase of about £400 upon last year's estimate. The salaries of gaugers in Brisbane had been increased, but the cases in which increases were made, apart from the general increase in the service, were such that they could not be passed over by the Treasury.

Mr. DE SATCHE said he saw an item, under the head of Thursday Island, of sub-collector, with no salary attached.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The police magistrate performs the duty.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he saw a new item of £50 for coast-waiter at Cardwell. Was there any extra work there? He should be very glad to hear that there was.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the amount had been paid all along. It had been part of the pilot's salary.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was not going to find fault with the increase of the salary of the officer in charge at Ipswich from £250 to £275, but he thought the Treasurer must have made a mistake and given the increase to the wrong officer. The clerk and locker had been in the position for about seventeen years, and had a great deal of work to do, and he fully expected an increase of his salary this year. If it was really intended to give this increase to the officer in charge, he thought he might safely ask for a like sum to be paid to the other officer. It would not be a very large increase, and if the Colonial Treasurer would promise to increase the clerk and locker's salary by £25, he (Mr. Macfarlane) would be quite satisfied, for he thought that when a man had served faithfully in an office for seventeen years, he ought to be

properly remunerated. The Colonial Treasurer would be aware that this office had been worked quite as cheaply as any Customs office in the colony, and he hoped he would give the promise which he (Mr. Macfarlane) asked for.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I have made no mistake in this item, and I have no intention of making such a promise to the House.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he would like to know what was the reason for having an officer in that place at all. He did not know the details of the business, but it seemed extraordinary that they should have a Customs office at a place like Ipswich, situated on a river. It seemed to him that everything passed up there through the Brisbane office, and he could not conceive that that was a part of the country where an establishment of that kind ought to be kept up at a cost of £500 a year, besides the expenses connected with keeping up the building.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it had been discussed by the House two or three times. The House came to the conclusion that the railway coming down to Brisbane would do away with the Customs establishment at Ipswich altogether, but the result was, when the department tried to work it in that way, that it was found to be more expensive than when the Customs office was retained at Ipswich.

Mr. FOOTE said it appeared to him that the only thing the inhabitants of Ipswich had to do was to pay taxes and reap no benefit from them. Any sum voted for Ipswich, even if it was only one shilling, was enough to arouse the indignation of the House. For his part, he did not care whether this office was taken away or not; but in common with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects, he had a right to go to the Customs and pass his goods without coming to Brisbane to do so. With reference to the observations of the Colonial Treasurer, he thought, so far as the increase was concerned, it was right enough. But he believed both of the officers should be increased, and especially the second officer, as he had been so long in the Service. The Collector of Customs, he was sure, would bear testimony to the fact, that he was a very good officer.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Colonial Treasurer what the amount of income derivable from dutiable goods at Port Douglas was. The same amount was paid for keeping up the Customs establishment there as at Ipswich, and he found that the average amount collected per annum at Ipswich was £20,000.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: £9,261.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that was only about half of what was collected at Ipswich, and yet the two places cost the same to keep up.

Mr. FOOTE said he should like to ask the Colonial Treasurer what amount of revenue was collected in Bundaberg during the year?

The PREMIER: £3,015.

Mr. ARCHER said one would fancy, from the way in which questions were being asked, that Custom-houses were made for the benefit of the places where they were established, and not for collecting the revenue of the country. It was evident that the Ipswich Custom-house might, perhaps, be done away with—he did not say it ought to be—and the revenue might be collected in Brisbane; but at Port Douglas they must have a staff of officers, because there was no other place where the revenue could be collected. It was fortunate for Ipswich that the position of the town would enable them to do away with the Custom-house.

Mr. FOOTE said that his object was to show that in asking for an increase for the clerk and

locker at Ipswich it was only reasonable considering the amount of work that that officer had to do, and his long service. It was only reasonable when they considered the amount of revenue derived from the place in comparison with other places; and he had no doubt that in a few years' time the place would contribute four times as much to the revenue.

Mr. BEATTIE said there was no doubt that the man was an estimable officer, but he was getting £225 per year. He was sure that his duties were not greater than those of the chief locker, who had charge of very large bonds in Brisbane, and who received only £220. He knew that some officers in Brisbane were very old hands indeed—some had been twenty years in the Service, and not the slightest attempt was made to increase their salaries. At the same time, he saw that there was an increase in the beginning to some clerks who had been in the Service four or five years only, and who certainly got the blue ribbon in the Customs Department. Some very old clerks had not got increases at all, and he did not see that the clerk at Ipswich had anything to complain of. He was getting £225 per year, and he knew some other officers in much more responsible positions who were getting less.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that, although the man was put down as clerk, he also had other duties to perform, and, the work of the office being small and few hands employed, nearly the whole of the work fell upon this one person. All that £20,000 passed through his hands, and it was a very responsible position. He was not only locker, but had the management of the financial department; and he (Mr. Macfarlane) was sure that if the Colonial Treasurer would only ask the head of the department he would get a very good report indeed as to the way in which the work was managed by the clerk in question, and that he was very worthy of the advance that was asked for.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he wished to get some information upon a matter which he was informed was considered as a grievance. He referred to the case of Mr. D. Elliott, who was for many years in the Customs Department at Brisbane, and was, he believed, first landing-waiter, and who, he was informed, was summarily dismissed. He understood that he had not been allowed to resign, or was not allowed any of the privileges usually granted officers of his station. He was informed that this man was summarily dismissed, and was deprived of a pension he had fairly earned.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if the hon. member knew the circumstances of the case he would not bring it before the House. He did not want to say much about this man, but he certainly deserved dismissal, and if he (the Colonial Treasurer) had known of his conduct he would have been dismissed before he was. He had got a board to examine into his conduct, and the board were unanimous in recommending his dismissal.

Mr. BEATTIE said the less said about the matter the better.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that he thought when a man had a grievance it was his duty to bring it before the House. When he met that man in Sydney he understood from him that he had a grievance, and he was asked to bring the matter before the House. He could not, of course, say whether his version of the matter was true or not. He was also under the impression that the man referred to was offered the option of his pension, and that, considering that such pressure should not have been brought to bear upon him, he had declined the offer, and he was then summarily dismissed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that that was not the view of the case brought before him, and he was now informed that no such promise or offer was ever made to him, as under the circumstances it was impossible to do so. He was quite prepared to have the papers in connection with this matter placed upon the table of the House.

Mr. BEATTIE said he thought it would be much better not to have these papers brought before the House. He knew the Collector of Customs had done what he could to bring the man to his senses upon this matter, and get him to take advice; but he would not be guided by anyone.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum not exceeding £2,922 be granted for the service of the year 1881-2, for Border Customs Patrol. There were two additions made in the vote—one of £108 for a storeman, and another of £132 for an extra constable.

Mr. McLEAN asked if the Colonial Treasurer could give them any idea of the amount of Customs paid for goods coming across the border.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: £7,500.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the sum of £2,550 was granted under the head of "Distillation."

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £950 be granted for expenses in connection with the Marine Board.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether the resolution of the House with reference to no fees or remuneration being paid to members of Parliament had been observed in the case of the Marine Board.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Fees have not been paid.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked if the hon. gentleman would give the reason why he had adhered to the resolution of the House in the case of the Marine Board, and departed from it in the case of other members of Parliament.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the House had thoroughly debated the matter. He did not approve of one of the resolutions, but in this instance he had observed the resolution of the House.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the Colonial Treasurer supported both resolutions. The first of them was fully discussed, and the second was carried without a division. Surely one was as binding as the other. The fees to the members of the Marine Board were payable under statute; those in the other case were paid under the will and pleasure of the Government. Hon. members were told the other day that a resolution of the House was only binding during the session in which it was passed, but in this case a resolution passed some years since was held binding.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman appeared to be trying to prove that, because he (Mr. McIlwraith) had not paid sufficient deference to a resolution of the House on one occasion, therefore he was not to observe it in any other case. He was, in this instance, going to adhere to the resolution, and pay some respect to the hon. gentleman's opinion at the same time. As to the gentlemen taking fees being Government supporters, he would like to know which were the Government members who would be entitled to receive those fees. One of the members of the Marine Board was Mr. Fred. Hart, a member of the Upper House, and another was the hon. member for Fortitude

Valley—unless that hon. member had resigned, as he believed the hon. member once expressed an intention of doing.

Mr. McLEAN said hon. members had been told distinctly and emphatically the other night that a resolution of the House was only binding for one session, but now that it suited the Government to make it binding they did so. If a resolution of the House was binding in one instance it should be binding in all cases. The Government ought to be consistent in their actions, and not tell the House with one breath that a resolution was only binding during one session, and, with the next, that a resolution passed some years ago was still binding.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said the answer given by the Colonial Treasurer showed how utterly the Government disregarded the wishes of the Opposition and the opinions of the public—and not only the opinions of the public, but also the unanimous decision of the House. He regarded the present Parliament as being a mere matter of form. Hon. members were called upon to go through a solemn farce, and to witness the spectacle of a Government making all sorts of acrobatic performances by which they were able to leap over or wriggle through all Acts of Parliament or resolutions of the House which outside the House were supposed to be absolutely binding. If it had come to this: that the Premier could reply to the leader of the Opposition by saying, "I choose to regard one resolution as binding and the other as of no effect," the sooner this Parliament was sent about its business, and another elected more efficient in the performance of its duties and more in the confidence of the country, the better it would be.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the answer of the Colonial Treasurer amounted to this: that the Government claimed to have the power to subsidise their own supporters out of the Treasury if they thought fit, and meant to exercise that power. They might as well speak plainly. They had not power to do that legally, but they had got the power in some extraordinary way at the present time, and they were able to exercise it. When a Government did such things, and said when their attention was called to the matter that they did so because they chose to do so, it was well to call it bribery and corruption, as it was. He should like hon. members to read the history of the last ten years of the last century, and the first ten years of the present century, with regard to the bribery and corruption in the House of Commons in those days. In the history of those twenty years hon. members would see the state of things which the Government were trying to re-enact in this colony. It was just as well to call a thing by its true name, and that was its proper name.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that, if he wanted to dip a little into the history of bribery and corruption, he should go to the history, not of the commencement of the present century, but of the latter days of the last Government. He did not expect he should be able to find in the history of the century anything to surpass that. It was wasting time to go into a discussion of this sort. He had adopted a certain principle which the hon. gentleman said was wrong; and now the hon. gentleman wanted him to be consistent, and carry the same principle right through. To that his answer was that he did not choose to do so. Then the hon. gentleman said that he (Mr. McIlwraith) acted in one way to suit his friends, and in another way with regard to his enemies. But he would remind the hon. gentleman that the Estimates were printed before any application was made by the Board for their fees. He believed that they had since made an application, and he expected, if they had waited till

he had read the speech of the hon. member, he might have come to the decision that the fees must be paid to them after all. He had not, however, come to that decision yet.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that, in his opinion, the fees should not be paid, and he was not suggesting that they ought to be; but he wanted to know whether the Government had been consistent in their action or not. The Colonial Treasurer had referred to corruption during the latter days of the last Government. Would the hon. gentleman give one instance of bribery and corruption by the last Government, or anything that by any stretch of the terms could be so described? He defied him to do so.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was his business to pass the Estimates through, and not to bandy words with the hon. gentleman; but he could, if he liked, give an instance which would surpass anything else that had since been heard of.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman had no right to make charges unless he was able to give details. He defied the hon. gentleman to give any instance of bribery by the late Government. The hon. gentleman could not do so, and the statement he had made was entirely without foundation.

Mr. KINGSFORD said the hon. member for North Brisbane had stated that the Government had power to use the public funds to subsidise supporters, and also that the Colonial Treasurer had stated that he would do so; and, as usual, the hon. member threw out all sorts of innuendoes. Would the hon. member say which of the Government supporters had been subsidised? Let him bring forward one case, and say who had been guilty of bribery and corruption on this (the Ministerial) side of the House. The hon. gentleman might laugh—any booby could do that. Let the hon. gentleman, instead of attempting to fling dirt, stand out manfully and say who had been guilty of bribery and corruption and who had received a bribe. Had any member on the Government side of the House done so? He demanded an explanation. Let the hon. member send his charge home, or for ever hold his peace.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he presumed the hon. member was lecturing the Premier. He (Mr. Griffith) had asked the hon. gentleman to give one instance of bribery and corruption by the late Government, and when the hon. gentleman had done so he (Mr. Griffith) would give an instance to which attention had been directed both inside and outside the House within the last seven days.

Mr. BEATTIE said he had not intended to speak, but he was rather astonished when the Premier seemed to insinuate that he (Mr. Beattie) ought to resign his seat on the Marine Board.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Not at all.

Mr. BEATTIE said it looked like that. He flattered himself that he had been of some service on the Board, and that he had never neglected his duties. He had always held that any work performed for the Government by members of Parliament outside their ordinary parliamentary duties should be paid for. When he heard the decision that had been arrived at in the House with reference to fees to members of Parliament, he made no application for his fees until after the statement made by the Premier, and then he made an application, feeling that he was entitled, the same as any other person. He still believed that he was justly entitled to his fees. He believed that any member who sat upon a board that did not interfere with his parliamentary duties should be paid for his services. He had lately been down to the Marine Board for

ten days in succession, and it was a great hardship. He did not see why he should have received an intimation that he would have to resign his position as a member. When he did anything unworthy of that position they might depend upon it he would very soon chuck it up; but until he got an intimation that he had done so he should retain his position on the Board.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the hon. gentleman was wasting his indignation, as it was not his intention to make any such suggestion. As to the hon. gentleman's qualification for his position, he had nothing in the world to say against it. He would not say that every word the hon. gentleman had spoken was not perfectly true.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £22,585 be granted for Harbours, Lighthouses, and Pilots.

Mr. BEATTIE inquired if the return furnished to the order of the House, made on the motion of the hon. member for Port Curtis, of the amount of money expended upon lights in the various ports of the colony, was a satisfactory one. He (Mr. Beattie) thought there was something wrong about it. He thought that hardly one-third of the expenditure was shown on it. For instance, the expenditure at the port of Brisbane was stated to be something like £5,000 for the ten years. Why, the salaries alone would come to more than that.

Mr. NORTON said he did not know whether the return was correct. The amount struck him as being very small. The information, however, which he wanted was not the cost of maintenance, but the outlay in providing lighthouses.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that there was some uncertainty about the wording of the motion of the hon. member which did not convey its meaning clearly. The hon. member had gained his information at the Port Office. The return gave the actual expenditure on buildings and plants, but no service.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said that he would point out to the Treasurer the undesirability of carrying on the Wide Bay pilot service as it now was—one sailing vessel and a small tender. The importance of Wide Bay was becoming very great—he supposed it ranked next to Brisbane as the second most important port in Queensland, not excepting even Rockhampton. More shipping entered and left there than other port of the colony. It was a very expensive service. There ought to be a small steamer provided for it, and then there would be a considerable amount of economy effected. The schooner had not only to attend to the shipping in the Bay, but also had to attend to six or eight lighthouses, one of which was out at sea, another was at the extreme end of Great Sandy Island, and another at the extreme southern end—the two latter being sixty or seventy miles apart. Besides that, they had to buoy and beacon the whole Bay, and were constantly moving about. In times of bad weather this vessel could not overtake the work, and it was often very much behindhand in consequence. She was not far short of twenty years old, and it was only by great care that she was kept in her present state of efficiency. When large vessels came into the Bay they had to wait for a pilot, because this vessel was employed in some other part of the Bay. She had employed in connection with her no less than fifteen hands. If a small steamer were used, about one-half the number of hands would do the work much more effectually; a steamer would never be behind time, and the buoying and beaconing work would be properly

attended to. He hoped the Premier would give some attention to this subject.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had had the matter referred to under consideration two or three times during the last few months. He had not the slightest doubt in the world that it would be cheaper to get a steamer. His only doubt was where to get the money for it. As soon as he saw his way to do that, he would make the change; and the first thing would be to have the beacons properly attended to.

Mr. BEATTIE said he did not wish to waste any time, but he must point out again that if they intended to go on in the manner in which they were now doing, spending such a large quantity of money in maintaining up and down their long coast—something like 1,100 miles—lights and beacons, it would soon become very burdensome to the taxpayers. There could be no doubt that it was going on increasing to a large extent. The year before last—the returns for this year were not yet published—showed a deficiency of something like £18,000 on the harbour dues—the difference between the amount paid by the Government in maintenance and the amount of revenue received at the Custom House. When the Premier entered into an arrangement and issued some regulations exempting the whole of the foreign-going steamers which came from Eastern countries, through Torres Straits, from paying any sum other than for the cargo they landed, he thought it was a great mistake; and he was glad to find that the Treasurer had altered the system which was in force while he was in England, and by which these vessels were in the habit of interfering with the intercolonial trade. It was a great hardship if this was allowed to be carried on, and if these vessels were allowed to receive these great advantages. He had considered that it was judicious to encourage trade with the Eastern ports, but he found that it began to interfere with the intercolonial trade and to injure the trade of their home ports, because the expenses of the vessels trading between the other colonies and the Northern ports were very great indeed; and yet they were actually supplying nearly the whole of the revenue which the colony received to enable these lights to be kept up. He would give the Committee an instance. Some little time ago there was a steamer running between Sydney and Brisbane, and sometimes going as far as Normanton—the "Corea." On the trip before last she left Sydney, bound for Brisbane, Townsville, Cooktown, and, he thought, Normanton. She left 7½ tons in Sydney which she was unable to carry. She came to Brisbane, discharged what cargo she had for that port, and took in cargo for Cooktown and Townsville. She paid on each of these ports half-pilotage in and out. She went on to Normanton, and it being her first trip there she paid 6d. per ton in and out, which amounted in all to a very large amount of money by the time she got back to Sydney. The 7½ tons came on by one of the favoured ships and was landed—the services of a pilot being obtained in and out—the only quota paid as her contribution to the existence of lights, etc., being 7s. 6d. This was all she paid in and out of every port, so that the intercolonial vessels were unable to compete with her. If the revenue was to be decreased in this manner the colony would very soon have to pay the whole of this expenditure, while getting no return for it. Some hon. members had an idea that our ports ought to be free—that the taxpayers of the colony ought to provide, for nothing, harbours, lights, and pilots for vessels bringing cargo to the colony. He had no such idea, and he did not believe that allowing articles to be landed free reduced the price of them to the consumer by one farthing. The Colonial

Treasurer ought to see that those vessels did not interfere with the coastal trade of the colony, and that they ought to pay something towards maintaining the coast lights in a state of efficiency. It would be a sorry event if those steamers were going to drive all the shipping out of Queensland, for then the colony would have to pay the whole of the harbour and light dues.

Mr. DE SATGE said he could not agree with the hon. member. The receipts from harbour and light dues was £17,000, and the expense of maintaining them about £34,000, and the difference was very well spent in attracting direct traffic and making Queensland as independent as possible of the Southern colonies. That was an object for which they might well afford to spend a few extra thousands a year. When once the traffic was secured, they could impose what dues they liked.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £12,970 be granted for Lighthouses.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £481 be granted for Powder Magazines.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £3,700 be granted for Harbours and Rivers—salaries. The items were the same as last year, with the exception of an increase of £50 to the Assistant Engineer.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he wished to call attention to a matter which was referred to last session—the three hopper barges that were being constructed at Maryborough. The matter was mentioned on the 15th November last, and it appeared from papers then on the table that tenders had been called for three barges. The lowest tender was that of Messrs. Smith, Forester, and Company, of Brisbane, at £5,648, or £5,168 delivered at Brisbane in eighteen months. Another tender was a joint tender from Tooth and Company, of Maryborough, and McIlwraith, McEacharn, and Company, for £5,849, the barges to be respectively delivered in eight, nine, and ten months. The higher tender was accepted, the ground alleged being that the time fixed by the Brisbane tenderers was too long. Penalties were imposed of £5 a day or £150 a month. The tenders were accepted on the 5th November, 1879, so that the barges ought to have been delivered in July, August, and September of last year, under those penalties. They were told on that occasion that the barges were nearly ready. He (Mr. Griffith) happened to be in Maryborough a week or two after that—four months after the contract time—and he saw that the first barge was not finished, that the second was still further off completion, and that, of the third, some of the plates of which it was to be built were lying on the wharf. It was evident that the excuse for accepting the higher tender was not going to be justified by events, although with the penalty at £5 a day the country might perhaps have been indemnified. During the present session, on the 28th July, the hon. member for Fortitude Valley asked when these barges were finished, and the answer was that they were handed over to the Government on the 9th January, 4th March, and 22nd April, 1881, respectively; so that the first was six months late, and the second and third seven months each late. The penalty for the first would be £900, and for the second and third £1,050 each; making a total penalty of £3,000 incurred by the contractors. Did the Committee suppose that penalty was enforced? The penalty actually enforced according to the Colonial Treasurer's answer was £358. That was the way that Government tenders were

given out and dealt with. The highest tender was accepted on account of speed; but the speed was not carried out, and the penalty was remitted. What confidence could there be in any Government department when things were carried on in that way?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the papers in connection with that case came before him, and he acted principally on the report of the Engineer. The Engineer, he believed, took a proper view of the case, and the Government followed out his (Sir Arthur Palmer's) views, and imposed a penalty which, he believed, met the full justice of the case. The delay was caused by accidents which could not be avoided, and penalties which met the justice of the case were enforced and were paid. It should also be remembered that that was the first instance on record of a Government in that department having collected any penalties at all.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he knew very well what the accidents referred to were. The barges were imported from England, and after the expiration of ten or twelve months some of the materials required for their construction had not arrived in the colony. This was the more remarkable, as one of the conditions was that the barges were to be constructed under the supervision of the Government Engineer.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Chairman left the chair, reported progress, and leave was given to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

In moving the adjournment of the House, the PREMIER intimated that the business to be taken to-morrow would probably be the further consideration of the Licensing Bill and Supply.

The House adjourned at a quarter to 10 o'clock.