

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 6 JULY 1882

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 6 July, 1882.

New Bills.—Deeds of Grant Bill.—Petition.—Joint Committees.—Address in Reply—resumption of debate.

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

NEW BILLS.

The SPEAKER read a Message from His Excellency the Governor, forwarding the following new Bills for the consideration of the House :—

A Bill to authorise the Construction, Maintenance, and Working of Tramways on Public Streets and Roads in such manner as not to impede ordinary traffic.

A Bill to amend and extend the provisions of the Divisional Boards Act of 1879.

A Bill to make better provision for the Regulation of Immigration into the Colony of Queensland.

A Bill to consolidate and amend the laws regulating the Sale by Retail of Intoxicating Liquors within the Colony of Queensland and for other purposes relating thereto.

A Bill to amend the law relating to Mineral Lands.

A Bill to provide for the Sale to Local Authorities of Land required for Local Works or other public purposes.

A Bill to amend the Savings Bank Act of 1872.

It was ordered that the Message be taken into consideration on Tuesday next.

DEEDS OF GRANT BILL.

The SPEAKER read a second Message from His Excellency the Governor, forwarding, for the consideration of the House, a Bill authorising the Surrender of Freehold Lands to the Crown, and the issue of new Deeds of Grant to the Owner thereof in certain cases.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. T. McIlwraith), the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

PETITION.

Mr. F. A. COOPER presented a petition from residents at Cook, Port Douglas, Herberton, and the Hodgkinson, praying for the construction of a Line of Railway from Port Douglas to Herberton *via* Northcote, with a branch to the Hodgkinson.

Petition read and received.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

On the motion to take into consideration the message from the Legislative Council of the previous day with reference to Joint Committees,

The PREMIER moved that the following hon. members be nominated members of the Joint Committees of the two Houses:—

For the Library Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. McLean, and Mr. F. A. Cooper.

Refreshment Rooms Management Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Black, and Mr. de Poix-Tyrel. Parliamentary Buildings Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Stevens, and Mr. Griffith.

That these appointments be communicated to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day for the resumption of the debate, on the motion of Mr. Ferguson—"That the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Governor be now adopted by the House"—being read by the Clerk,

Mr. BAILEY said that before referring to the Speech itself he wished to notice a remark made by the hon. member who moved the Address in Reply (Mr. Ferguson), which, though there was nothing perhaps very wrong in it, embodied a tone which had for many years been the tone of the House towards Maryborough:—

"He (Mr. Ferguson) had always maintained, and did so still, that the Brisbane River, being not only an important port, but the waterway of the metropolis, was entitled to consideration. At the same time, in carrying out the improvements of the ports between Brisbane and Rockhampton, he thought the Government had hardly dealt fairly with the latter place. The old dredge "Lyton" had been taken to Bundaberg, and the new dredge "Saurian," built specially for the Fitzroy River, was detained in the River Mary."

As a matter of fact, there was no dredging being done in the River Mary; and the dredge

"Saurian," when finished, might, unless the members for that district exercised more influence than they had done in the past, go elsewhere. He objected to the statement so often reiterated, that there were only two ports in Queensland worthy of notice—Brisbane and Rockhampton. He wished it to be distinctly understood that Maryborough asserted her equal right to be treated as a port and to partake of the advantages accorded to other ports. The Mary, as well as other rivers, required dredging, and required the same facilities for her commerce that Brisbane and Rockhampton had always received from the Government. From that day henceforward, therefore, let it be understood that the port of Maryborough stood on an equal footing with any other port in the colony; and it bade fair to be in a few years, if not the premier port, certainly second only to Brisbane. Turning to the Speech, the first thing that struck him was the position which the Government occupied with respect to Queensland. Queensland was a great mother with seven children, and the Government were by law the protectors of those children. First, there was the pastoral interest, the eldest and biggest boy of the family. Next came farming, then the trading industry, the manufacturing industry, the mining industry, the timber industry, and the sugar industry. Looking through the whole of the Speech, it would be found that the big boy of the family was patted on the back, and the best things given to him at the expense of his brethren. No matter how the other children suffered, that boy had always the best treatment; and, on looking through the Speech, one could not fail to see with what great care the pastoral interest was treated, and with what slight consideration indeed most of the other interests were treated. He would pass over the sentimental parts of the Speech and come down to the paragraph with respect to the British-India Mail Service. Hon. members would no doubt remember that three principal reasons were given why that service should be agreed to by the House—although they never did agree to it. Those reasons were, that it would be an efficient mail service, an excellent service for the carriage of frozen meat, and that the service would absorb at Brisbane every year 30,000 tons of coal. The members for Ipswich were threatened that they would never dare to go back to their constituents if they forced the Government to sacrifice that trade of 30,000 tons of coal a year. As a matter of fact, those three great inducements held out to compel the House to agree to the service had fallen to the ground. It was now acknowledged that as a mail service it was most inefficient—that it was the slowest and perhaps the most expensive mail service in the world—that traders and mercantile men were compelled to send their letters by other routes at exorbitant rates. In short, as a mail service it had been a complete failure. As to frozen meat, he had not heard that those steamers had ever carried any of it—and, indeed, people who now wished to send home frozen meat were falling back upon sailing vessels in preference to steamers; and the 30,000 tons of coal required for the service was obtained, not in Queensland, but from Newcastle. That it was a cargo service everyone was willing to admit, and perhaps a good one, though he was not quite sure on that point—but time would show. If they ever allowed that service to get a monopoly freights would be sent up very quickly, and the Northern men who now gloried in having it would perhaps be the first to cry out against it. The hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge), the other evening, when speaking about that service, did not quite complete his argument against it. To the statement that the trade of Brisbane was

being injured by the service—that as a mail service it was a failure as far as the southern end of the colony was concerned—he ought to have added that the districts surrounding Brisbane, Maryborough, Gympie, and the Burnett, which derived little or no benefit from the service;—that in those districts was the population which contributed three-fourths of the subsidy for the service—a subsidy to a firm or company that was damaging their own interests. That was where the weak point lay. If the subsidy was found by those only who reaped the benefit from it no one would complain; but it was raised in one place to benefit dwellers in quite another place, while the damage was done in the place where the subsidy was raised. It was also stated in the Speech that the value of the service for mail purposes had been greatly impaired by the action of the London Post Office. That was a most miserable whine. The fact really was that the Government wished to compel mercantile men to get their letters here in sixty or sixty-six days, whereas the mercantile men wished to get them in thirty-six days. The English authorities, on the other hand, wished letters to be sent by the most speedy route, and that was why the value of the service had been impaired. The English Government were acting in the interests of the mercantile community of the colony, who could not afford to have their invoices reaching them a fortnight or three weeks after the arrival of their goods. That particular paragraph might well have been omitted from the Speech, for it was evidently quite wrong to say that it was the English Post Office authorities who had impaired the postal value of the service. He hoped to see the day when the Orient steamers would come to Brisbane, not in sixty-six, but in thirty-six days. The next paragraph in the Speech stated that—

“Negotiations have been in progress between the Transcontinental Railway Syndicate and my Government in reference to the construction of a line to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and with other bodies in reference to the construction of lines from the Southern and Western Railway to the New South Wales border. The proposals of the latter have been declined on account of the terms asked being too high. The offer of the former was also declined, but my Ministers believe that terms will be satisfactorily arranged.”

He had not much doubt about that, but he very much doubted that the terms would be arranged satisfactorily for the other syndicates. He had read through the papers bearing upon the matter which had been placed on the table of the House—not very carefully, he must admit—and he had observed that there was a very great contrast between the treatment of the two syndicates. The one was an Australian syndicate, and, he was going to say, perhaps unfortunately for them the name of Gresley Lukin appeared in connection with it; the other was a London syndicate. The one was a syndicate that proposed to make railways by white men, and the other to make them by coolies; that was the difference. The Government were quite willing to come to almost any sort of terms with the coolie one, but the proposals of the one in which the name of Gresley Lukin appeared—the real Australian Syndicate—were treated with such contempt as to rouse the indignation of the promoters, and to cause them to use language in some of their letters that one could hardly think one gentleman would write to another. He could only excuse such language in consequence of the villainous treatment which that syndicate received at the hands of the Government. Why should proposals of such magnitude be pigeon-holed by the Government for months and months—eight months, he believed—and sometimes not even an answer returned stating whether they had received them or not? Informal conferences; nothing written down—conferences, the subject

1882—E

matter of which could be repudiated at any moment—no written correspondence backwards and forwards. But in the case of the London Syndicate there were telegrams and letters; every convenience, every facility afforded them, every encouragement held out to them; everything that that House in its weakest moment would agree to promise; and why? Because it was the London Syndicate, and the greater portion of the line would be constructed by coolie labour. The next paragraph said:—

“Offers have been made by a company to construct a railway from Rockhampton to Port Alma, with no land grant, except such Government land as might be required for the purposes of the railway and wharves. The Government have accepted the offer by agreeing to support a private Bill to give powers to the company to construct and work the line.”

He would ask whether they were to hand over to the company the welfare of the whole of the Central district—in reality to actually give them power to lock up the whole trade and to dictate to that district what course their traffic should take, and in what way they should reach the sea;—in fact, by holding the key to Rockhampton, to hold the key to the whole of that district? He never heard of such a thing in his life. And yet the Government had agreed to it—had actually agreed before the House had met, and not in a straightforward, manly way either, but to support a private Bill for the purpose. If ever there was a measure that should have been a Government measure it was the line from Rockhampton to Port Alma, for if ever there was a line in the colony upon which the welfare of so many thousands of men depended it was that line; and what scheme more deserved to be brought in as a Government measure than one proposing to place in the hands of a private company the very key of the whole Central district? Upon the very face of it, it was mean to place such a paragraph as that in the Governor's Speech, and he wondered almost that His Excellency should have pronounced the sentence telling the colony that for mere expediency they were prepared to hand over to some foreign capitalists the interests of so large and important a district. The next paragraph went on to say:—

“The public works of the colony have been very much retarded by the extraordinary and unprecedented demand for labour in every part of the colony. My Government have taken exceptional steps to increase immigration.”

He thought they had taken very exceptional steps to prevent immigration. He was afraid that if they were going to bring immigrants down the Red Sea, and deaths from sunstroke occurred, as had happened already, they were taking very exceptional steps to prevent immigrants from coming here; for let the report go home to England that immigrants coming down the Red Sea were liable to sunstroke, and they would be very chary indeed of coming to Queensland by that route. There was no doubt that immigrants were required in very large numbers here, and he thought they would have to bring them in the old-fashioned way, or at any rate not by the Red Sea route during certain months of the year. He thought the value of immigration had not been properly appreciated in Queensland yet. He found in the *North American Review* for April last an article headed “Why they come,” referring to the vast stream of immigration to the United States at the present time. A most appropriate introduction was given by the writer to his article. He even quoted Scripture for immigration purposes—

“When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land; for God hath given into your hands a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth.”

If he had been in Queensland he would have added to the text, “and whatever side of the

country you go you shall have coolies to work for you." That was practically what was said by the hon. member for Mackay, last night, in other language, and no doubt if they put in that addition they would get plenty of immigrants. But that was not the sort of immigration he wanted. He believed they would get the scum of London, a good deal of the scum of Liverpool, and an infinite variety of gaol-birds if they held out that promise. The number of immigrants landed in the United States last year, he found, was no less than 720,000 from all nations, and the writer of the article he referred to, in comparing the immigrants from Europe with the labour to which they had been accustomed in the Southern States, that was slave labour—and here he might say that there was not very much difference between slave labour and the servile labour of the kanaka or Indian coolie, it was more in name than in reality, and the advantage was all on the side of the employer—said:—

"During the existence of slavery the cash value of an ordinary 'field hand,' unintelligent and descended from a barbarous ancestry, was 500 dollars and upwards. Each immigrant may safely be valued at double this amount, if we consider the commercial value of hereditary intelligence, and the large proportion of skilled and professional men who are comprised in the immigration of each year. Assuming that each immigrant has in his brain and muscle a power equal to a capital to a metropolis of 1,000 dollars, we gained in the year 1881 alone something like 720,000,000 dollars, and a cash capital (at 85 dollars per head) of over 61,000,000 dollars. Surely the causes which lead to or divert from our shores such a perennial and prolific source of population and wealth are of interest to us and worth our attention."

The same writer, at the end of his article, wound up in this way:—

"In ninety years a feeble people of 3,900,000, occupying a country adjacent to the sea, has been transformed into one of the greatest nations of the world, having a population of 50,000,000, spanning a continent, and possessing untold wealth and boundless resources."

"While its cosmopolitan character in the future is assured, the peaceful blending of many nationalities has resulted in the 'survival of the fittest.'"

"As the English displaced the Indians, and absorbed the Hollanders and Swedes in colonial days, so their descendants throughout these broad domains receive and amalgamate all peoples, languages, and tongues. All who settle here become Americanised. No other result is possible; henceforth, they become part of the most numerous English-speaking nation on the earth."

The argument of the writer was the superiority, the greater value to the country of free immigrants over a servile class of labour, no matter where it came from. Many members, in speaking about the labour necessary for the growth of sugar up North, laboured under a slight error. They took it for granted that with no other labour could sugar be profitably produced; but he was not quite sure of that. He had seen cane grown profitably by white labour. He had known himself scores of farmers who had successfully grown cane on very profitable terms indeed, according to the rates which the sugar-grower was at present obtaining. He had seen more than that. He had seen in a slave country the first step for the abolition of slavery taken by a few white men who ventured to compete in sugar-growing with the slave-holders. He remembered the time well when a few Western Islanders—driven, he believed, by famine from the Western Islands—landed in Brazil, eight degrees south of the line, in a much hotter climate, he believed, than any part of Australia, and where all the sugar cultivation was done by slave labour at that time. Those men managed to make such terms with the planters as were profitable to themselves and their employers, to assist in the growth and manufacture of sugar, and the result was that a system sprang up by which white free labour—intelligent labour—was made use of for the cultivation of

sugar; and in a few years the planters themselves did not object to the abolition of slavery altogether. With such a successful experiment as that, which happened not many years ago, he was quite confident that with a proper class of immigrants, under a system which could be afterwards devised, the whole of the sugar cultivation necessary in this colony could be well and, in fact, much better and much more profitably done by white labour than it was now done by black. He was quite satisfied that no planter dared trust his interests in the hands of hired labourers. No matter how well he might treat his labourers, he would ask no planter to put himself at the mercy of his men at the crushing season. But under such a system as he had seen put in practice, and had seen to succeed, he had a very strong conviction that it would yet be found to be the one most profitable to the planters of Queensland. The Speech then went on to say:—

"Land suitable for sugar cultivation is eagerly sought after, and an immense area has been selected for that purpose in the Northern portions of Queensland. These lands were withdrawn from selection last year, and again declared open, at an advanced upset price, without effecting any diminution in the rate of selection. The cultivation of sugar land promises a great future for Northern Queensland."

He would like to say a word or two about that. He found up North that whilst there were some *bond fide* men selecting land for the cultivation of sugar, that there was also a class of adventurers who were picking the eyes of the country and speculating upon the transaction. They were not cane cultivators or planters at all, but simply men who came up to spy out spots of country here and there, and induced land speculators to back them up afterwards. This land might some time be put under cane cultivation; but, at any rate, much land taken up in the North now had been taken up, not for *bond fide* purposes, but for mere purposes of speculation. There was quite a little mania about sugar lands. They knew that occasionally, in gold mining or any other kind of mining, quite a mania arose for shares of all sorts, and no one troubled about the real value of them. It was a mere gambling in paper; and something of the same sort was now being done up North with the so-called sugar lands. One of the last paragraphs of the Speech—of course that was where they might expect to find it—was about railways. He was not surprised that the very vague way in which that paragraph was worded might lead even some of the Government supporters to think it was a threat held out that if they did not vote for the Transcontinental Railway they would not get the Coast railways. He was very glad, however, to hear from the declaration of the Premier that no such interpretation should be put upon it, but that the coast railways would be dealt with quite independently of any personal schemes of the Ministry. A commission, he observed, had been inquiring into the position of the Volunteer Forces. He had given his opinion years ago that the money spent on the force had been wasted, and his principal fear now was that more money would be wasted in the future in some equally foolish manner. The next paragraph of the Speech stated that there had been a period of drought; and he noticed in an earlier paragraph it was stated that the country had not suffered the disastrous effects caused by the drought in the southern colonies; but for the most part abundance had prevailed in the pastoral districts. Anyone reading between the lines knew what that meant. There had been plenty of suffering and loss in the settled districts of the colony, but that did not matter twopence-half-penny so long as there was abundance in the unsettled districts. The paragraph was not true. Everyone had suffered in the

settled districts, and it was no consolation to the sufferers to be told that things were not so bad somewhere else. Hon. members were also told that there would be a surplus this year of nearly a quarter of a million. Did the Government intend to take that out West, along with all the other moneys? More than half that surplus came from Customs duties which were collected from the people of the colony, nine-tenths of whom resided in the coast districts. Was £160,000 more of the people's money to be spent in making dams and waterholes along the line of the Transcontinental Railway? First, all sorts of water advantages were given to the lessees; then all the land they wanted on the line was handed over to them; and then, according to some of the agreements he had seen, the colony was to be blocked out of its own lands for the next ten years. Was the colony always to keep on paying and taking nothing? There was not a hint of any proposal that this great interest which had been so petted and pampered should now take its stand along with the other interests of the colony. Out of the little of the other interests that abundance referred to had been created, and it was about time that the settled districts should say we have done quite enough for the West. Not that they were going to give it up,—they had paid for it too dearly to do that; but whatever surplus there might be now ought to be spent where it was raised. The Government had now a splendid opportunity of putting themselves right with the divisional boards of the colony by fulfilling the promise made by them to make and maintain the main roads of the colony. The divisional boards would be glad of such assistance, as many of them were perfectly incapable of taking over and keeping in repair the main roads, especially in those districts where there was only a thinly settled population. He had no objection to the expenditure in the outside districts of any part of the surplus that could be satisfactorily proved to have been raised there; but he strongly objected to money raised in the settled districts being sent inland, where so many millions had been sent before. The Government, he understood, were investing in diamond drills and boring machines; but it was an extraordinary fact that throughout the whole Address very little was heard about the mining industry. The Government could not afford to do anything for miners; the most they could do was to make a penal law for them now and again. The miners had, no doubt, contributed a large portion of the cost; and if those boring machines, instead of being used for boring for water were to be used for mining purposes, as in New South Wales and Victoria, the Speech would be far more satisfactory. Not a word was said in favour of that industry, nor of the farming industry, nor of the timber industry—an industry which he believed would shortly, if treated with proper care, rank equal with the sugar industry. It would, however, have to be treated with care, or the Government would wake up some day to find that the forests now so valuable had been destroyed and the colony made dependent on other countries for its supply of timber. The Government, however, had taken no steps to prevent so great an evil or to encourage an industry which might be made second to none in the colony.

Mr. FOOTE said he would not allow the debate to close without a few observations, though he regretted that the matter was not concluded last night, as it might have done if some hon. members on the Government side had not thought it necessary to comment on every paragraph of the Speech. During the last few years many circumstances connected with the colony

had very much changed. When the present Ministry took office the country was in a state of great depression, trade was stagnant, confidence was lost, and the affairs of the colony generally were in a ruinous state. No one could doubt the fact that the colony at the present moment was in a prosperous state; but, upon consideration, this would not appear surprising. The Government had succeeded in borrowing a very large sum of money, with which they were carrying out public works very vigorously and extensively, especially in the North; and the circulation of so large a sum of money must necessarily bring prosperity to the colony. The weather and the state of the crops could have had little to do with the change, because the districts south of Rockhampton had suffered very severely from the drought; though they had certainly not suffered quite so severely as some other parts of Australia had. The prosperity of the colony was certainly not so great in the south and south-west as in the northern parts of the colony. He was not, however, inclined to regard the present state of affairs as entirely satisfactory. As the storm preceded the calm, so a calm might in some cases precede a storm. Speculation was now very rife, but by-and-bye would come a time when money would not be so plentiful. Circumstances outside the colony, such as a prospect of war, might at any time bring about a reverse. During his experience in the colony he had seen many such reverses, and he had noticed that after a time of prosperity the change generally came very suddenly; property then became depreciated, money was not to be had, and, as in 1866, and also when the present Ministry took office, immigrants were not able to find employment, and had to go elsewhere. He did not wish to say that the Government had not taken advantage of their opportunity to carry out the public works that were required; he gave them credit for being men who were keen enough to be able to see their opportunities when they arose. With regard to the mail service, most of the arguments he had intended to put forward had been already advanced. As a mail service it was a complete failure, but as a merchant service there was no doubt it was a very good one. He did not say that it was just to the colony to subsidise a private company to such an extent for the purpose of bringing cargo to the colony. The result in this case had been to run other vessels off, or nearly so. They commenced very well, but it was with the immense advantage of having a very large subsidy to cover a very great deal of their expenses. They commenced with their freights low, so that no one else was able to compete with them; but the result was that they had risen their freights once or twice since, and would continue to increase them, and having a monopoly they could do that. No doubt the service was advantageous to the North and also to the South. One advantage, certainly, in connection with it was, that when orders for goods were sent to England they could tell almost to a day when they would be received; whereas, when the goods came by a sailing vessel they could never tell when they would come to hand until the ship was actually in port. Therefore, even if merchants had to pay a little higher freight, it was actually a saving to them to have their goods sent by the steamers. Even as a mail service he considered that the North had been benefited by it, although the South had not. Of course the South of the colony was not Queensland, nor was everything that was done in the colony to be done for the exclusive benefit of the South. At the same time, while the general interests of the colony were to be considered, the metropolis should not be altogether lost sight of. It appeared to him that such had been the case in this instance, and that the

primary object why the service, whether mail or merchant, had been established had been overlooked. Quick communication by post was very important to merchants, and it was very necessary that letters should not be delayed, but that every facility should be given to merchants. The North was benefited, for, from having been the portion of the colony which got its letters last, it now received them first. A great difficulty had, however, arisen about this service so far as letter communication was concerned. A steamer would leave London, bringing out cargo, with the bills of lading and invoices, and then, two or three days after, a letter containing a draft was sent by post by another line. That draft would be received eight or ten days before the invoices and bills of lading, so that, when it was presented, the person to whom it was addressed would have received no tidings of what it was for. The result was that some people did not care about honouring drafts until they knew what they were going to get for them. He would not say that it did mischief, but it sometimes produced unpleasantness. About the Transcontinental Railway—

Mr. MILES: That is not likely to come on now.

Mr. FOOTE said he would not say anything about it if it was not now likely to come on—or, at any rate, this session, whatever the Government might do in the future. He was not prepared to ridicule the idea, though he did not as yet put very much faith in it. He wished to get all the knowledge and information that he could before the question came on for discussion. The little he had seen, as far as he had gone, and what he had read of the jobs that had been perpetrated in America, had not made him very favourably disposed towards it. He could not say he would not oppose it, as, apart from the railway itself and the land which was to be conceded to the company, an immense power would be given to the company that would enable them to hold the politics of the colony in their own hands, and make them actually able to send men into this House who would vote them large sums of money for the purchase of the line or anything else. That made the scheme appear to him to be a very dangerous one, because he wished to see the government of the country carried on in the interests of the people, and not in the interests of syndicates. It was said, too, that a private company were ready to construct the Port Alma railway, and that the Government were disposed to favour the proposal. He could not yet say whether he would support the construction of that railway or not, but he should want to know a great deal more about it than he did at present before he voted for it. The hon. member who moved the Address in Reply was very reticent about it. He simply spoke of Port Alma, and he certainly praised it very much. It appeared to be, in fact, everything that he could desire. The hon. gentleman went so far as almost to say that it was the key of the colony, and he was not quite sure that he did not hint in a distant manner that it would be the harbour of the metropolis of the colony at some day. At any rate the hon. gentleman said that there was something yet to come, and it was no new idea after all, but was started some time ago. He (Mr. Foote) believed, however, that it was held that it should be placed at Gladstone, a very superior place to Port Alma, according to the information which was given to the House respecting it by the hon. member for Port Curtis. A great deal of injustice had been done to Gladstone in the past by jealous people in Rockhampton, who had kept back that port to a very considerable extent. It was very favourably spoken of in his reports by Mr.

Nisbet, and it was, as far as he (Mr. Foote) could see, a very superior port, and, what was more, when they got on shore they would have good places for buildings, where goods would be able to lie safely and dry without being covered with water in the flood season. When the hon. member for Port Curtis first took his seat in the House he brought the subject of a railway from Gladstone to some point a little beyond Rockhampton before the House, and he made a very splendid speech about it, going well into the question, and at a great deal of trouble to himself giving the House a vast amount of information. The hon. gentleman was complimented by the Government upon the fact that he had brought the subject forward in a more able and clear manner than it had ever been done before. But he had to be satisfied with that patting on the back, and he never got any further. Now, if the Government were going to make a railway, it should be made from Gladstone to some point near Rockhampton, wherever it was found to be most desirable and most convenient for the people. He shared in the opinion that money spent upon the Fitzroy was simply thrown away, year after year. It mattered not how many dredges they had at work upon that river, when a flood took place it silted up as bad as it ever was before. He thought, also, that the Government should take that railway into their own hands, and not entrust it to a private company. It was too important for that, and, besides, the company might only be a bogus company after all; so that, even if they made a beginning, there would be no guarantee that they would be able to complete the line. What was more, they might place a great deal of difficulty and obstruction in the way of a proper working of a line, causing inconvenience to the public and even to the Government of the colony. He therefore thought that the Government should take the matter in hand, and have surveys made from Gladstone as well as Port Alma, and when they had got the reports of the surveyors they would be better able to judge which of the places should be the terminus. A great deal had been said about immigration. He did not know that his views were peculiar on that question, but he could not go the length that many hon. gentlemen did. Immigrants were coming into the colony as fast as the Government could conveniently bring them, for the good system of bringing them by steamer had been adopted, and he was satisfied that in twelve months at least there would be an abundance of labour to meet all the requirements of the colony. He did not like to see the labour market overstocked. They had had enough difficulty in getting immigrants, it was true, but, on the whole, the various schemes tried had been successful. The great evil, however, was that, while they had been able to get immigrants by thousands, they had not been able to keep as many of them as they ought to have been. To a large extent the class of immigrants that came here was that known as skilled labour, which always commanded a high price; and if the attractions here were not sufficient such labour would find its way to the southern colonies, where there was a better market. He did not think it would be well to alter the present system to any great extent. Allusion had been made to America, and especially to the system of immigration in Canada; but it should be remembered that the United States and Canada had an advantage in being nearer to Great Britain than Queensland was, while the climate in this colony was a disadvantage and had considerable influence on the tide of immigration. He was satisfied, however, that if the colony progressed there would be no difficulty in getting abundance of labour.

With reference to the Coolie question, although there would be other opportunities of expressing his views, he would say a few words on it now. It was the duty of the Government to do what they could to supply labour for the various interests in the colony by emigration from Europe; but it was not their duty to frame regulations in order to bring a class of people that it was not desirable to have. Those employers who wanted cheap labour should pay for it themselves. No one would blame—at least, he would not—any gentlemen sending for 200 or 300 labourers if they met the expense out of their own pockets; but he was opposed to any money being voted or any laws passed for the purpose of bringing coolies to the colony—that was to say, at the expense of the country. The Government had gone to some expense in connection with the South Sea Islanders; they had made laws to keep them here, had appointed superintendents to look after them, and arranged to send them back to their homes; all that he disapproved of. They did not call it slavery, but it was as much like slavery as it was possible for it to be without being the real thing. He believed that of the two kinds of labour he preferred the coolie, but no expenditure to bring it here should be sanctioned by that House. If the sugar industry required to be bolstered up by such a system, then it was not worth much. It was already protected to the extent of 5s. per cwt. for raw, and 6s. 8d. per cwt. for refined sugar, which was very good protection indeed. The sugar-planters talked about getting £40 per acre from their industry; and, therefore, he should like to know why they should be supplied with cheap labour any more than the farmer, who was very thankful to get £5 an acre. The farmer could not afford to pay for labour; if he worked his farm with his own family, much of it was untillied. He therefore thought that—as what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander—if the House decided that coolie labour should be introduced, the farmer should also have cheap labour provided for him; and his vote would be in that direction. In the Governor's Speech reference was made to the divisional boards having been a success. If they were a success in some places, they were certainly not so in the district in which he lived. If taxing people and doing nothing with the money made them a success, then no doubt they were a success; but if they tried to find the benefit that those boards had been they would discover it to be nil. His assertion would be proved yet. There had not been a wet season since those boards came into existence; but when there was one he should like the members of the Ministry to be driven over the bad roads, composed of black soil for a distance of fifty miles—then they would be able to see that the boards were not so good after all. However, it was impossible to say what amendments were to be made in the Act. He had understood the Premier to say that the first Local Government Act was of such a character that the people could not possibly understand it, and it was therefore not workable. He also referred to the Act framed by the present Government, and said that they knew that it was not a very good one, but they felt bound to place it before the public in the expectation that the public would become initiated into the working of local government. Now they intended to propose such amendments as would make it, they hoped, a complete success. It should be remembered that at the end of two years the assistance given by the State to the divisional boards would cease; so that, unless in the meantime a good deal of work was done, the people in many districts would still be without roads. In the outside districts every place where the people

could get across was a road: but in the settled districts there must be roads; the people could not get on without them. He therefore hoped that the proposed amending measure would be of such a character that there would soon be roads fit for people to travel on. Had the last twelve months been wet instead of dry, there were many roads upon which they could not drive four miles. Allusion had been made to coal in connection with the mail service, and he thought it was a most unhappy remark. The West Moreton coal would find its way to market just as water found its level, and as soon as the Oxley Railway was opened there would be no difficulty in putting the coals on the market. They intended to raise coal of such a character and at such a price as would defy competition.

Mr. HORWITZ said that after the able speech that had been delivered there was little left to be said. He would remark, however, that when the mail service agreement was before the House he voted against it because he considered at that time that sixty days was too long for the passage and eight years too long for the contract. The Orient liners brought letters to Sydney in 35½ days, and within two or three years would do so in thirty days, and he did not see why Queensland should wait sixty days for letters when Sydney could get them in thirty-two days. As a mail route the service was a failure, but as a cargo service it was of great benefit to the colony at large. The next subject to which he would allude was one of very great importance—viz., that of Coolie Labour. Whenever the question came before the House he would oppose the introduction of that class of labour, and he might as well say so at once. Coolies were British subjects, and after they had resided six months in the colony they were entitled to the same freedom and privileges as other British subjects; therefore they should be very careful about allowing them to enter the colony at all. They should follow the example of America, and not go in for coloured labour. Some hon. members seemed to think there were enough whites in the colony, but he differed from that opinion. They ought to go in for more immigrants from England, Ireland, and Scotland—and Germans did not make bad immigrants either, in fact, they were very good colonists. They were thought very much of in Adelaide. During nearly three years no immigrants had arrived in the colony from Germany, while 27,000 had landed in America within a short period. He should like to see people settled on the lands by land grants, and if they could not make a living the land should revert to the Crown, so that it would become their own, on condition that they could make a living on it, in ten years. If they could not make a living in that time let the land go back to the Crown. For some time immigrants had been arriving in the colony, and the colony paid for bringing them out, but those immigrants did not long remain in the colony. In Adelaide things were arranged differently. He could not understand why members of that House did not go in for the good of the colony. Adelaide was not the only place he knew of where members on both sides studied the good of the colony at large. It was a great drawback to Queensland that hon. members were so split up, because there was plenty of room for all—for squatters and farmers alike; but some kind of jealousy existed which ought not to exist. He was sorry the junior member for Darling Downs was not in his place, because he wished to refer to the promise made by the Premier with reference to the relief of the Warwick waterworks. The Premier wired up to inform the Mayor and Corporation that he would bring in a Bill to relieve the depression caused by the expenditure incurred; and as the junior member for Darling Downs had

seconded the adoption of the Address in Reply, he (Mr. Horwitz) was at a loss to know why the hon. member did not keep his eyes open on that particular point. If he had been in the hon. member's place he would have objected to second the motion for the adoption of the Address unless the promised Bill was inserted.

Mr. GRIMES was very sorry to see the emptiness of the benches opposite. It was discourtesy to refer to hon. members in their absence, but it was also discourtesy for members after making speeches to go out of the Chamber and not listen to speeches in reply; so that hon. members could not complain if courtesy was set aside for the time, and they were got at through *Hansard*. He did not think with the hon. member for Ipswich that it would have been better if the debate had finished last night; they were getting on so very happily, and the debate was running on so smoothly, and having no particular business to transact, he did not see why the debate should not be prolonged. He congratulated the House and the country on the harmonious way things seemed to be going on, because, when the minds of hon. members were swayed with reason and calm judgment instead of vindictive and passionate feelings, they were likely to pass measures which would be profitable to the colony. But harmonious as matters had been, he was very sorry to have to allude to one thing which seemed to have marred the harmony of the debate. He alluded to the reference made by the hon. member for Mackay to a late hon. member of that Assembly who usually sat on the Opposition benches and took a very prominent part in the debates. He considered that those remarks were evidence of exceedingly bad taste on the part of the hon. member for Mackay. The political career of the late member for Rockhampton was such as gained for him the esteem and respect of the members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, and he might safely say of a large portion of the community outside. In the Speech mention was made of the death of one lamented gentleman, and he quite agreed with the expressions of regret at the loss the colony had sustained; but he considered that the services of the late member for Rockhampton were as patriotic and showed that he was as much devoted to the good of the country as was the hon. gentleman to whom reference was made. In some measure the services of the late member for Rockhampton eclipsed the services of the late hon. member of the other Chamber, for while the latter exercised his generosity, and put forth those efforts in his country's cause, he did not deny himself in the least; but the former, whilst exercising his privileges and doing his duty to his constituents in that House, denied himself even the necessities of life. If the constituency of Rockhampton only knew the difficulties under which their late member maintained his position and performed his duties in that House, their gratitude would be given expression to in some tangible form. He considered there were many individuals to whom monuments had been raised who were far less deserving than the late member for Rockhampton. If the hon. member for Mackay would take a little bit of advice from one who was, perhaps, his junior, he would advise him to cure that propensity of his which led him to make sport for himself at the expense of the feelings of others. Before entering into the matter contained in the Speech, there were one or two remarks that had fallen from hon. members to which he should wish to allude. The Colonial Treasurer, in his speech, laid a very serious charge against the members of the Opposition, and when he mentioned it, he (Mr. Grimes) was certainly astonished, and looked in his face to see whether he was really serious.

It was that when there was any attempt made to legislate for the relief of selectors or the farming class the measure was blocked by the Opposition. His (Mr. Grimes) mind went back at once over the business that had been transacted during the present Parliament to see wherein the Opposition had blocked any attempt to offer inducements to farmers to settle upon the land, and he was somewhat relieved when he found the hon. gentleman alluded to the Bill which was introduced last session by the hon. member for Burnett. That Bill might be looked upon as giving relief to selectors, but it was relief to selectors of the wrong kind. It offered no inducements to small farmers to settle in the country, and hon. members would see clearly that that Bill only affected large selectors. By insisting only upon the fencing-in of the land they were benefiting only those who took up large areas of ground, and those who took up 320 acres and under were not benefited at all. He thought that in blocking that Bill the Opposition were rendering a service to the country, and if a similar Bill was put before them this session he should have great pleasure in attempting to block it again. But if the Minister for Lands would bring in such an amendment on the Land Act as would really offer inducements to farmers, he would be one to assist him in carrying it through the House. If he would bring in a measure that would throw open areas of ground on our navigable rivers and on our railway lines, and let it out on lease for seven or ten years at a nominal rental, and at the end of that time grant the fee-simple, and only charge for the survey of the land, he (Mr. Grimes) would be very happy to support such an amendment of the existing laws. That would be a measure that would be likely to induce farmers to settle on the land; but simply withdrawing all conditions about improvements except that of fencing was no good at all. There was another remark of the Colonial Treasurer to which he would allude. He said that it was a misfortune for a man who was not a farmer to be induced to settle on the land. He (Mr. Grimes) entirely disagreed with that remark. Some of the best farmers were men who were never trained to farming. He remembered eighteen or twenty years ago, at the time of the crisis at home, a number of Lancashire operatives and ribbon weavers from the midland counties were brought out to this country. Their employment was such that it had not tended to make them robust; but, notwithstanding that, they turned out useful colonists; many of them were now settled on the land, and they were thriving farmers. They knew nothing about farming before coming out here. He had known farmers, trained at home, come out here with their English ideas and prove miserable failures. One man in particular he knew who started farming, and there was a large amount of couch grass on the land. He took a basket and went over the land picking out each separate stalk. That was an example they had sometimes from the farmers coming from home. He had been somewhat anticipated in the remarks he had intended to make on the Speech delivered by His Excellency, and would not travel over the ground he had intended. With other hon. members, he expressed his gratification at the frustration of the attempt on the life of their beloved Queen, and also his regret at the death of the late President. Coming to the next clause, they were congratulated on their increased prosperity. Well, he would admit at once that there had been increased prosperity; but how far had that been brought about by outside influences? He believed that outside influences had a great deal to do with that prosperity. How far was it likely to benefit the farming classes? The prosperity

which seemed to exist over the whole colony was brought about in a great measure by the amount of money that they had been borrowing, and were now spending so lavishly in all parts of the country. He looked upon it that no prosperity would be really permanent except it arose from greater production from the soil—greater production of minerals, and more largely utilising the natural grasses of the colony. He disagreed with the remark that the country had not suffered from the disastrous effects of the drought in the other colonies. They had suffered; in no season had the farmers suffered more than last. It might be true of the pastoralists and the sugar industry; but he asked what return had the Darling Downs farmers received, or the farmers in the East and West Moreton and the Wide Bay districts? Fortunately for the colony the drought had been general, and the over-production of the other colonies had not been forced upon us, and prices consequently kept down. It did not matter to the present Government what state the small farmers and selectors were in, and this paragraph of prosperity referred to the pastoralists. That there was abundance in the pastoral districts was all that the Government cared about. He looked in vain for the impetus given to agriculture mentioned in the Speech, except it were upon the sugar plantations in the far North. There certainly had been a large amount of land taken up there, but he felt with the hon. member for Wide Bay that it would yet be proved that a large number of the selections recently taken up there were taken up for speculative purposes. Even merchants and Civil servants in Brisbane were taking up large blocks of land there in the hope of putting money into their pockets by obtaining a higher price for them later on. He need not dwell upon the paragraph referring to the Transcontinental Railway Syndicate; he had already expressed his opinion upon that matter, and he had not changed his views concerning it in the least. He believed the colony was not ripe for that scheme. If they opened up those lands in the interior at the present time, they would only be doing so to have them locked up again in the hands of individuals who would do nothing more than raise cattle and sheep upon them. There was a fail in the ninth paragraph of the Speech to the effect that the public works of the colony had been retarded through the extraordinary demand for labour in all parts of the colony. He thought the Government had themselves to blame in that matter, and, unfortunately, it was not only the public works of the colony that had been retarded by the scarcity of labour, but almost every industry that required a large amount of labour was almost paralysed from this scarcity of labour. He blamed the Government, when there was a scarcity of labour, for pushing on so many of their public works, and entering into competition in the presence of that scarcity of labour with private enterprise. Many of the industries of the colony had been retarded by the action of the Government in this respect. It had been contended that the present Government were no more to blame for the scarcity of labour than were former Governments for a superabundance of labour at times. That contention could not be maintained, because the Government knew very well that, having gone in for a loan of three millions and intending to spread that money over the construction of railways and other public works, they would require more rolling-stock. But, instead of making provision for that, and encouraging that class of labour, they dismissed men who were doing that work from their service; and the result was that they went into the other colonies, and now the Government

were calling for tenders for rolling-stock, and entering into competition with private persons for the labour required for making machinery for sugar-crushing. The foundry proprietors and engineers could not get the labour they required to push on the agricultural machinery they had in hand, and the result would be that many individuals starting in the sugar industry would lose their crops and their profits, as the machinery they required would not be ready in time for the crushing. He agreed with that part of the 10th clause which stated that the cultivation of sugar promised to be the great industry of Northern Queensland. There was no doubt whatever that it was a great industry; but the amount of prosperity it would bring to the colony would depend entirely upon how the matter referred to in the next clause was carried out—that in reference to the importation of coloured labour. About twenty-five years ago the same difficulty was facing the people of Queensland that was now before them; the same question of capital and labour. The owners of stations then called out for labour and made complaints that they could not get shepherds to tend their sheep, or men to shear them, and said that if there were not more labour imported they would be ruined. They even cried out for convict labour. They had an idea that none but the pastoral industry could save the country. Fortunately, just prior to that time a number of respectable immigrants had arrived in the colony, having been induced to come out by information they received from some pamphlets published by the Rev. Dr. Lang, and having landed here they did not wish to see that the colony still continued to be a harbour for convicts from home. They fortunately had at that time a few men here true to the Liberal cause, which was just starting then. There was some agitation, and some of those who took part in it had gone over to the majority and some of them were still living, and he might mention the names of Mr. Thomas Dowse and Mr. Robert Cribb as having taken part in that agitation. Through the efforts of those gentlemen and others they were able to return the Rev. Dr. Lang to represent them in the Parliament of New South Wales in place of Mr. Arthur Hodson. Dr. Lang fought their cause in New South Wales, and when he was obliged to retire Mr. Robert Cribb took his place. The result was that the importation of convicts to this colony was discontinued and free immigrants flocked in in place of them. They were just having the same trouble over again now. The pastoral tenants again said they wanted cheap labour, and a powerful faction engaged in the sugar industry joined them and said that the kind of immigrants they were now getting were not reliable, and that they wanted cheaper labour that they could depend upon and compel to do service. He had not intended to touch upon the Coolie question, but had rather been forced to do so by the remarks of the hon. member for Mackay, who was looked upon as a kind of champion in the endeavour to obtain coolies for the large capitalists of the North. It was a peculiar position hon. members were placed in. They had a planter and employer of coolie labour on one side of the House, and another planter of equal experience, he might say—and who had hitherto, and he hoped would for the future, carry on his operations solely by means of European labour—on the other.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Who is the other man?

Mr. GRIMES said the hon. member for Mackay was the planter on the one side, and he (Mr. Grimes) was the planter on the other, and he perhaps ought to feel abashed at meeting such

a champion. But he did not feel so, although the hon. member for Mackay was supported by a large number of capitalists in the North, and was also supported by the Government and their large majority, who had furnished him with armour within which he no doubt believed himself to be invincible. The Government had published the hon. member's statistics for him in the Government Printing Office, and strengthened his position by distributing them gratis throughout the colony. It was perhaps curious that one who was the representative of a small electorate—composed of small farmers, poor to a certain extent, but certainly honest and industrious—should attempt to reply to the remarks of such an eloquent gentleman as the hon. member for Mackay. He should, however, make the best of his position, and possibly a small pebble might be thrown which would find a crevice in the invincible armour of the hon. member and be the means of doing his cause some damage. The Government had published a paper called "The Sugar Industry in Mackay—Statistics showing the extent to which employment is given to European and coloured labour—by Hume Black, M.L.A." The hon. member (Mr. Black) had challenged anyone to point out any discrepancies or inaccuracies in that paper, and said that it had now been before the colony for some time, and no one had attempted to dispute any of the statements it contained. He should see if he could not pick out one or two inaccuracies in that paper. In the first place, the hon. member stated that there were 428 Europeans employed on sixteen sugar estates in the Mackay district, and 1,594 kanakas. He held in his hand an official document—the Census for the year 1881, taken on the 3rd April of that year—and in that Census he found that the total number of adult male Europeans in the whole of the Mackay electorate was 598, and they were told that there were 428 Europeans employed on those sixteen estates in Mackay. Of those 598 they would find that there were 53 set down as professional men; those engaged in mercantile pursuits numbered 207, and there were 65 miners. If they took those away from the total number of 598, where were they to find the 428 stated in that paper as being employed on the sixteen sugar estates? Besides that they would find that four new mills were being constructed, which would increase the mill-power to 23,200 tons. There were four plantations besides the sixteen that were employing 428 Europeans out of the total 591, and where were the Europeans for those four? Perhaps some of those Europeans who set themselves down as professionals turned out during the crushing season to assist on the plantations. As he had said before, the statistics of the hon. member were not to be depended upon; the official returns were most reliable, but he had been told that they were not correct. He believed that the census collectors had the greater claim upon their credence than the individual who compiled statistics to bolster up a system which, if he was successful, would end in direct personal remuneration. He thought the sworn statements of the official collectors might be believed before those of an individual who compiled them simply for his own benefit. He was sure that the outside public would be able to judge for themselves which were the most likely to be the correct statistics. The statistics of the hon. member for Mackay said there were 7,896 acres of sugar grown on sixteen estates only. The agricultural returns for 1880 gave the total quantity of the cane crop in the Mackay district as 7,880 acres. There were sixteen acres more cane grown upon those sixteen estates than was shown to have been cultivated altogether in the district. It was mentioned in one of those columns

that a quantity of money had been paid to farmers for cane; but where did the farmers grow that cane unless it was outside the Mackay district? Or was it that the census boundary of Mackay was so close to the mills that the farmers outside could grow their cane and bring it to the mills and it not appear in the returns? Again, he asked which were worthy of most credence—the police who were engaged in collecting these agricultural returns, and were altogether disinterested, as they had no system to bolster up, or the statistics of the hon. member for Mackay? That was another matter which would be inquired into by the outside public, and it was worthy of being inquired into by hon. members of that House. Beyond the cane that had been obtained from those farmers, what were the four new mills working upon? Where was the cane coming from to supply them? Perhaps the hon. member for Mackay would be able to answer that question. He thought the community would like an explanation of these serious discrepancies. In those statistics it was shown that the European population had increased by the employment of coloured labour, and it was stated that in 1876 there were 2,479 Europeans and 1,334 kanakas. According to the Census for 1881, there were 3,700 Europeans and 2,087 kanakas. The increase of Europeans was 1,221, and the increase of kanakas 753. It was evident that the hon. member wanted to throw dust in the eyes of the people and hoodwink them, by saying that that was conclusive evidence that the employment of coloured labour did not diminish the amount of labour for Europeans, but that it increased it. Any hon. member on totting up those figures would see that, according to the Census for 1876, there were two Europeans to one kanaka, and in 1881 there were seven Europeans to four kanakas; or, in other words, the relative number of adult European males was actually reduced. In the Census paper for 1875 they would find that there were 460 married people in Mackay, and in the course of events there would naturally be a considerable increase, and there was no doubt that a considerable proportion of that increase would be children. When they considered the kanakas who were introduced were all adult males and able to work, certainly the statements he had made did not benefit the cause of the hon. member for Mackay, and that hon. member had rather put a weapon into the hands of his opponents in that matter. He hoped he had put the matter as clearly before hon. members as he had certainly tried to do, and he hoped that hon. members would look at the Census returns and would go into the figures. If they did so they would find that they were correct. It was certainly a very pretty picture of the good results that accrued from the employment of coloured labour. It was like the work of a not very able artist who just daubed his picture with very high colours, and that was all. He was very much surprised that the Premier had been so fascinated with that pretty picture, and had never examined it closely enough to see whether the lines were properly parallel or not. The hon. gentleman in his tour through the North had taken a large number of those statistics and scattered them broadcast, so that when the question of coolie or coloured labour came up he could say, "I refer you to the statistics that have been published by the hon. member for Mackay, and they will satisfy everyone, I am sure, that it will be an advantage to the colony of Queensland, and an advantage to European labour, that we should introduce black labour." According to the Census returns for 1876, the number of European males over the age of 21 years in the district of Mackay was 591; of the same class, according to the Census returns of 1881,

there were 598 ; thus showing an increase in five years of only seven. He thought he had shown that the figures so unwisely put forward by the hon. member had been turned against himself—the giant had been slain by his own sword. The hon. member (Mr. Black) stated in his speech yesterday—

“Those statistics which he laid on the table last session showed clearly that by the expenditure of £1 on a kanaka the sum of £10 12s. 6d. was expended on a European.”

Looking at the paper referred to it would be found that £6 17s. 6d. of that £10 12s. 6d. was really paid to merchants, traders, and farmers, leaving only £3 15s. for the European labourers. Certainly the hon. member's paper contradicted his speech of yesterday. Let them look at the kind of labour for which that £3 15s. was paid, and they would see it was not for real *bonâ fide* agricultural labour. It must be borne in mind that very few of the real proprietors of the sugar estates at Mackay resided there, and they were therefore bound to employ a manager at a high salary—not less than £500 or £600 a year. That was a good slice out of the £3 15s. Then came a chief overseer and several field overseers. Then there must be on each establishment a blacksmith, a carpenter, a chief engineer, an engine-driver, a sugar-boiler, and, on the largest estates, two sub-sugar-boilers, a storekeeper, and a clerk. That was the kind of white labour to which the £3 15s. was devoted, and not to the real agricultural labourer, who was not wanted on a sugar estate except as ploughman. One hon. member had stated that, after all, kanaka labour was not so very cheap, and that the industry at Mackay did not depend on kanaka labour; but at the same time the hon. member, with a knowing nod, intimated that if they did not get kanakas they would get Chinese. He (Mr. Grimes) quite agreed that the sugar industry at Mackay did not depend upon kanaka labour, nor upon coloured labour of any kind. The difference in cost between sugar raised by kanakas and that raised by Europeans was so small that capitalists would hardly think it worth taking into consideration. The difference was only £2 on a ton of sugar, and the advantages which the Mackay planters possessed in the shape of suitable soil and climate would far more than compensate them for the difference in the cost of labour. As to the cost of kanakas, he would put down the cost of importation at £12—although they were told yesterday that so great was the demand that the cost had gone up to £16; capitation fee, £1 10s.; bond for return, £5; or, altogether, £18 10s. as the first cost. Other expenses would be £6 3s. 8d.; wages, £6; rations, £13—and it would cost every bit as much to keep a kanaka as to keep a white man in rations; clothing and other minor items, £2; average loss of work through sickness, £2; hospital fee, 10s.; medical attendance and medicines which planters were compelled by the Act to provide, 10s. Thus it would be seen that the total cost of a kanaka, per annum, was £34 3s. 8d., putting down nothing for risks. As sometimes happened, a kanaka might die the first week he arrived at the plantation, and the loss of £16 fell upon the planter. The cost of a European would be about £45 a year, and rations £13, or a total of £58 a year. Now, putting the rate down at £45 a year, he was positive that there were thousands of really good agricultural labourers who would be glad to accept the position at that wages and do all the work required, however menial and degrading it might be, as the hon. member had tried to make out. According to the hon. member's statement, they required last year the labour of 1,594 kanakas at £30 a year. That would amount to £47,820, and the produce would be 7,434 tons of sugar. Now, he was positive that

two European labourers, such as he had described, would be willing to come at the rate he had stated would be quite equal to three kanakas, and he was borne out in that by his own experience as against the statistics of the hon. member. In looking over the return he found that the hon. member calculated one kanaka to five acres of cane, while experience showed that one European would cultivate eight acres of cane; so that the proportion was about what he had stated—that two Europeans were equal to three kanakas. At that calculation it would be found that there would be a difference of £13,834 on 7,434 tons of sugar, or a little less than £2 per ton. Now, was it worth while, for the sake of that paltry sum, compared with the enormous profits sugar-planters obtained, to crowd and flood the country with inferior labour, with kanakas and coolies, and hinder their prospects of obtaining European labour? He said it was not. The profit obtained from a ton of sugar was £8. The cost of production, he found from the returns from the different plantations named, varied from £14 to £19, the average being about £14 14s. The value of sugar delivered at Mackay—and in this he thought the hon. member would bear him out—was about £22 per ton, leaving a profit of £8 per ton. The average profit, he believed, of an acre of sugar-cane was £12 in the year, so that they had a clear profit with kanakas of £12 per acre, and with Europeans of about £9 per acre. Another thing to be borne in mind with reference to European labour was that there would be no need for all those overseers. At present, for every gang of kanakas they were obliged to have a white overseer to see that they did their work; and beyond that there would not be nearly the same loss in breakage of implements and machinery. He believed, therefore, he was perfectly correct in saying that European labour, if it could be obtained in the North, would be quite as cheap to planters as kanakas, and he was positive that it could be obtained. The hon. gentleman stated that there was a great complaint that European labour was unreliable. Why was it not reliable? Perhaps he could answer the question. Because there was no interest manifested on the part of the owners of those plantations to make Europeans comfortable when they got them. They expected men to work all day and go and sleep by a log fire at night. He had seen some of those plantations and knew that that was the case—that there was not proper accommodation for European labourers, but they were expected to rough it in the same way as the kanaka. He was positive that if the sugar-planters in the North would go in more for married people on their estates, and spend a little of their capital in putting up decent cottages for them, they would find the extra expenditure more than repaid by the interest the men would take in their work. He had proved that by his own experience. The firm with which he was connected carried on a plantation entirely with white labour; they had never employed black labour, and he hoped never would. He hoped always to be able to obtain sufficient European labour to carry on the establishment without having recourse to black labour. They had men upon their estate who had been with them eight years and more. They had laid aside a certain amount of their profits every year to build decent weatherboard cottages of three or four rooms for each family, who had a small paddock round about the cottage, and were allowed the use of a cow which was fed from the refuse of the farm. This cost them little, but it made a great difference to the men, and turned unreliable labour into reliable labour, for when a married man settled down in a nice comfortable cottage, and his wife got round her a few articles of furniture, it would require a good

deal more inducement than a few shillings a week to move them. They had proved this by the fact that during the last twelve months the railway works had been going on in their neighbourhood, to their great annoyance and loss, and although the contractor was offering 6s. 6d. a day for eight hours' work, while they paid only £1 per week and rations to their men for ten hours' work, only four of them had been induced to leave them for the extra pay. That was pretty conclusive that if the employers of labour would take an interest in their men, and provide them with suitable buildings and comfortable quarters, they would be well repaid by the additional interest the men would take in their work; and instead of their men leaving them they would stay with them until they had a chance of bettering themselves by settling upon property of their own, and when they could do that it should not be the wish of any employer to keep them. The hon. member also stated that there were no successful plantations carried on by European labour either in Queensland or any of the colonies, and he challenged hon. members to name them. Well, he (Mr. Grimes) would mention several places where they were growing cane by European labour, and growing it profitably. Did the hon. member forget the large establishments on the Clarence River?

Mr. BLACK: No, I do not.

Mr. GRIMES: Did they go in for kanaka labour?

Mr. BLACK: Yes; coloured labour.

Mr. GRIMES: No.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government Benches: Yes.

Mr. GRIMES said if it was coloured labour it was paid for at exactly the same rate as European labour. Did the hon. member not know that there were numbers of farmers on the Clarence growing cane by European labour to supply the large mills there, and that one-half of the cane crushed at those mills was grown by them? Persons settled upon land provided for them by the owners of the mills, and agreed to take their cane at a certain price. He had had several conversations on the subject with young men he had met from there when travelling up and down to the Coomera. He had met no less than three or four young men coming up with their intended brides to be married in Brisbane with the intention of going back to settle on those plantations, and they said they had every prospect of being able to make themselves comfortable there growing cane with their own labour. The sugar company provided them with land, giving them a long lease, and guaranteed to take their cane at 10s. per ton on the field, or 11s. carted and delivered at the wharf; and these persons told him they could make a capital living out of it. And yet there was no successful plantation worked with European labour! But he need not go so far as the Clarence River or the Tweed. On the Logan there were numbers of Germans who had small mills, who cultivated their crops of cane and crushed it themselves, and employed no kanaka labour; and there were numbers of others who were cultivating cane for other mills in the neighbourhood, and doing so successfully, and it would take a good deal to attract them from their occupation at the present time. And why should they not grow cane? If a European could grow maize at 2s. or 2s. 6d. a bushel, why should he not grow sugar-cane at £10 per ton? The return from an acre of maize, at forty bushels to the acre, and 2s. per bushel—which was about the average price paid to the grower, although it was sometimes lower than that—would be about

£8 for the two crops in the year. There was not a bit more trouble in growing a crop of cane ready for the mill than in growing two crops of maize; in the one case the farmer would get £8 for his two crops of maize, and in the other he would make probably £20 for his crop of cane, as many farmers were doing in the colony. If farmers could grow maize, he was perfectly confident there was nothing to prevent them from growing cane. The hon. member (Mr. Black) said that labour in the canefields was so menial and degrading that he would not ask European immigrants to engage on the plantations; but he would ask the hon. member to name any kind of work connected with sugar producing which was menial or degrading to any white man.

Mr. BLACK: Where did I mention those words?

Mr. GRIMES said the hon. member was reported to have said that "he should never suggest such a thing," as the hon. member for Enoggera had referred to, "and his idea was to elevate labour"; and further on the hon. member said:—

"They would not come, and he, for one, would be ashamed to try and entice English immigrants to work on their canefields and do a description of labour which was at present carried out by their coloured population. He might add that 500 immigrants had been landed in Mackay during the last five months, and if that 500 had been 1,000 the whole of them would have been absorbed in that district."

Mr. BLACK: Where are the words "menial and degrading"?

Mr. GRIMES said the hon. member also said:—

"He would rather see coloured labour doing the inferior work than see the women and children on their selections working hard to get a subsistence. It was his endeavour to elevate the condition of the working man and not to degrade him."

That was to say, that rather than allow white men to engage on these canefields he would see them starve. The hon. member also said in another part of his speech—

"He could imagine the immigration agent at home, in his lectures in the different agricultural districts of England, telling the people to emigrate to Queensland and work in the canefields, as it would not be possible to procure coloured labour any more. It was not likely they would get immigrants under those conditions."

Mr. BLACK asked if he was in order in requesting the hon. member not to misquote him to the extent he had been doing? The expressions the hon. member accused him of using were the very expressions which he had entirely repudiated. He (Mr. Black) had stated that those were the expressions used last night by the hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge).

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to correcting the words made use of.

Mr. GRIMES said he was quite content to allow the words as reported to go before the public. They would bear him out in the statement he had made, that the hon. member considered work in the canefields menial and degrading. He should take a further opportunity of referring to the subject when the Coolie Labour Bill was before the House. A remark had been made by one hon. member to the effect that the sugar-planters in the North would have a good claim for compensation if the Coolie Labour Act were to be now repealed. Such a monstrous statement he had never before heard. Surely, the immigrants who had been brought to the colony under the belief that there was an opening for their honest labour would have a greater claim if, by the introduction of coolies, they were deprived of their proper and legitimate

employment! He would quote one more passage from the speech of the hon. member for Mackay, as followed:—

"Hon. members often alluded to it as cheap labour, but it was not; it was, however, reliable labour, and the coloured man undertook the labour that was distasteful to a European, and which Europeans, having seen coloured men doing, would not think of attempting."

The hon. member had not told him of any work necessary to be done in sugar-growing which was menial or which Europeans would dislike to do. One remark of the hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Allan) required to be noticed. The hon. member had lately visited cane-fields where the cane was from 12 to 14 feet high, and he had been told, apparently to impress him with the necessity for coloured labour, that men had to go and work in that cane. Such, however, was not the case; no work had to be done after the cane was breast-high until the time came for cutting, and that was done from outside.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: It has to be trashed.

Mr. GRIMES said that trashing was not needed. After thirteen years' experience in connection with the sugar industry he had proved that trashing was useless, and for the last eight years his firm had not trashed a single acre of cane. They had tried an acre trashed and an acre untrashed time after time, and had found the results in the mill about the same. The trashed cane gave a higher density, but at the sacrifice of a quantity of juice, because nature protected the portion of cane exposed to the weather by thickening the skin. As a proof of the excellence of the sugars produced from untrashed cane, he would refer to the numerous prizes taken by his firm, and to the gold medal which he was wearing. He valued the medal principally as a proof that they were not behindhand in the production of sugar, although they employed European labour. He could appeal also to the merchants who had purchased their sugars to testify to the quality. Trashing had been put forward as the work that Europeans could not do; but if it were for that only that coolies were required, they were not wanted at all in Queensland.

Mr. GOVETT said he should like, before the debate closed, to say that he endorsed all the congratulatory remarks that had been made in connection with the happy escape of the Queen; and that he was very pleased to hear one of the oldest members of the House (Mr. Groom) refer in fitting terms to the late Sir J. P. Bell. Reference had been made in the Speech to a number of very useful measures, which he hoped would be treated by the House in a liberal spirit. The prosperity of the colony was a fact that could not be questioned; in the inland districts, as well as along the coast, it was very apparent. There were towns now springing up far inland hundreds of miles away from any sugar lands, and he thought the prosperity of the country was assured. He had listened to a great deal of what hon. members had stated about the sugar industry, and considered that they all ought to be proud of it, because by it country was made available that was of no use for anything else, not even for grazing. The Government were entitled to considerable credit for the authorship of the British-India Service, for no one could deny that it was of the very greatest benefit to the North as well as the South. Although it had been spoken of as being of no use as a mail service to Brisbane, there was very little question but that ultimately it would be found the quickest mail service existing in the colonies. The country had been brought into prominence by it at home, and, in that sense alone, it was of great use. The fact that immigrants were able to

come out direct by it was also worthy of notice. The present Government had done much for the colony in bringing out immigrants so speedily because it was of the greatest importance that there should be a steady flow of population to our shores. They talked of those immigrants as labourers; but it was no hardship for men to accept a good rate of wages, such as they at all events had never been accustomed to previously, as after a time, when those people had been acclimatised, they became employers themselves; and he knew numbers of men who in a very short time, say two or three years, had become large employers themselves. With regard to the Central district, he thought Rockhampton would in course of time become a great port. When he mentioned the Central district he, of course, included the Mitchell, which he had the honour to represent. As the districts grew in importance they must, of course, extend their railways; there was no stopping them in so large a colony—the larger the colony the more railways they required. He would advocate the extension of the Central Railway as a means of opening up the country. It could not possibly stop at Bogantungan, as there was yet an immense extent of country that still required the railway to give it a start. In wet weather it was utterly impossible to travel in the district, and in dry weather the teams could not get through for want of water. Teams almost refused to travel except at a very high rate of carriage. He had hoped that some other member would have spoken on this question, as it was one that required ventilating. With regard to coolie labour it had been shown, even by the members who had spoken against it, that it was an absolute necessity. Coolie labour, he admitted, was not required inland, nor did the people inland ask for it; but it was altogether different when the question of sugar cultivation was considered. For that it was an absolute necessity. It had been said by many hon. members that the immigrants brought out here went away as fast as they came; but he thought the very reverse of that, and that was that this country was attracting labour from the other colonies. If some of the hon. members who had spoken would take a trip into the inland districts, they would find small towns and homesteads springing up in every direction, and that would not be the case unless there was an influx of people. While on the subject of railways he had forgotten to mention that he was altogether opposed to constructing them on the land-grant principle, as our estate was too valuable altogether to give away. He was glad indeed to hear so many hon. members say they were in favour of the conservation of water. This was an essential to the welfare of the country and the welfare of the people; and he might say that, if water was properly conserved, where 1,000 people had prospered previously 10,000 would when they had a good supply of water. There was one satisfaction, that in so large a country where they had so many different industries one would assist the other. Drought did not extend over the whole country at the same time, and perhaps at one time the sugar industry would flourish and at another the pastoral interest, and so on. He trusted, however, that the Government would push on the railways, for they were the only means of conveyance in some of the outside districts. The amount of capital the people themselves spent in improvements was enormous; and the Government, by making railways and conserving water, would materially assist them. At one time they could go along roads that were dry for forty, fifty, and sixty miles; but now they could not travel far without coming to water

that had been conserved by private parties. There had been much good work done in that way, and people there wanted some little consideration. He hoped hon. members would not forget that there was a great industry some hundreds of miles from the coast, and as he had faith that the Government would this session bring forward a measure that would benefit the district he trusted it would be well supported. He might say that he represented one of the largest electoral districts in the colony. He voted there when there were only some thirty or forty electors to return the present Postmaster-General, and he had seen the district progress until there were over 2,000 electors on the roll, whilst, when the revised roll was published, it would be found to contain about 3,000. That would give hon. members some idea of where some of the immigrants had gone. There was plenty of room, he believed, for thousands more immigrants. The hon. member for Rockhampton (Mr. Ferguson) said he did not wish to see the country flooded with immigrants; but the country was a large one, and it was in a condition at the present time to receive and absorb an enormous number. The district which he represented was of great advantage to the country, and he thought that by helping such outside districts the whole colony would be benefited.

Mr. STUBLEY expressed his pleasure at the allusion in the Governor's Speech to the escape from assassination of Her Majesty the Queen, and regretted the death of one of the most worthy men in Parliament, the late Sir Joshua Peter Bell. He was glad to hear from the remarks of the previous speaker that the Mitchell district had been well dammed; it was a consolation to know that something was being done in that direction. His main object in speaking now was to express his views on the Coolie question. He had shown before that sugar-cane had for years been grown successfully at the Tweed, Clarence, and Richmond without coolie labour, and he maintained that it could also be grown without it in the northern parts of the colony; but even supposing it could not be grown without that labour, he should vote against the introduction of coolies. The squatters and the miners were the pioneers of the country to a great extent—they had opened up the northern parts; and if owing to the cost of labour it did not pay to grow cane there, they were quite satisfied to be enabled at some future time, when they had saved some money, to take up some of that land and cultivate it. It did not necessarily follow that because land was fit for the growth of the sugar-cane it was not fit for any other purpose. He maintained that the land on the Northern coast was fit for growing anything. He did not see, therefore, why that land should fall into the hands of monopolists. Complaints were made of the want of labour and of wages being high. If wages were high it was simply a good indication of the prosperity of the colony. Employers could not afford to pay high wages if they were not doing well; and it was simply a farce to say that, because labour was scarce and wages high, therefore railways should not be constructed. He remembered, when in Victoria, railways were made—and were considered to be made cheaply—at £20,000 or £30,000 per mile.

Mr. BAYNES: A long time ago.

Mr. STUBLEY: It was certainly a day or two ago. Those railways had paid very well, and they had certainly been the means of opening up the country and settling the people on the land. That was very different to the mail contract in this colony, where the people were taxed another 10s. a head without receiving any earthly benefit. There was not a single commodity in the North cheaper than before the mail service began, and

they were certainly being taxed for nothing; and, as the hon. member for Ipswich had said, merchants in Brisbane got their drafts and invoices a fortnight before the goods. A case of that kind had just occurred. Letters had been delivered in Brisbane that day, brought by the British-India Company's steamer, bearing the same date as letters received a fortnight ago *via* Suez. With regard to kanaka labour, he had always said there was no necessity for it. They could do without it, and, as far as the Northern people were concerned, they would do without it. They would try to get rid of both kanakas and Chinese and make this a European colony, and people who did not think proper to live here could go to another colony. There were thousands of persons who would be only too glad to work in those places at any kind of labour, provided they got properly paid. He maintained that the sugar plantations could be worked in the same way that he treated his mines in the North. The work in the sugar-cane brake was not more arduous than the work of developing a mine in the North; and when owners of mines could not afford to pay £3 10s. or £4 a week to men to do the work they let the mine on tribute. That was a very simple remedy; and why could not the planters do the same with their plantations? Let them advertise in England, and they would find plenty of people glad to come and work plantations where the cane was planted and the machinery erected; they would do that on tribute, and it would be a profitable thing for both parties. The Government had recently been giving monopolists the best land on the coast; and he considered them very little better than the Kelly gang in disguise. They secured sufficient for themselves, and then they raised the price of the rest from 5s. to £1 per acre. That was the way the country had suffered. Settlement was required, but that was not the way to bring it about. When the Government saw that people were willing to take up the land they increased the price. The planters said "We must block this; it is not good enough. We shall have too many people near our plantations, and, as they will have small areas, there will be too many votes, and we shall not be able to get any kanakas to work our plantations." If settlement was wanted, then the price should be reduced. The area might be limited, but by reducing the price and encouraging settlement the value of the land would be increased. He did not quite agree with the hon. member for Oxley in reference to 160-acre blocks. They might be very well where the land was very good, but the area should be extended to 1,000 acres on poorer lands further from water or other carriage. To say that the wish to bring in coolies was a sign of the prosperity of Queensland was a farce. He maintained that Queensland could do without coolies; and the Government would not be game to bring their Bill before the House. If they did it would be because they had behind them a phalanx of hon. members who supported them, not from their own knowledge of the subject, but from other causes; and if they went to the country on the Coolie question they would never come back to that House. The hon. Minister for Works, when in the North, made use of an expression to the effect that the coolies were British subjects. He (Mr. Stubbley) took that for granted at the time; but, after hearing what had fallen from hon. members on the Ministerial side of the House during the debate, he was not at all certain on that point. If they were British subjects he presumed they were on the same footing as other British subjects wherever they might be; but the Minister for Works assured the people of Kingston that the Indian Government would secure their return after a residence of three years in the colony.

He (Mr. Stubbley) contradicted the statement then, and he contradicted it now most emphatically. If they were British subjects they could come and go just as they liked, not only after the three years had expired but before, if they chose to break their agreements, in which case they could only be brought before a magistrate and be put into gaol and fed there; in fact, they could make it so uncomfortable for their employers that they would be glad to get rid of their coolies. And after their time was up they had a right to go to any part of the colony they chose, and could not be taken back by any power of the Indian Government; and, if that were not the case, then they were not British subjects. That was why he was in doubt. The remarks made on the other side, by Ministers too, showed either ignorance on their part or that they were conniving at what they knew to be wrong. He denied that coolies could be brought to the colony as slaves to be sent back after they had served their time. If the Government could make regulations affecting Her Majesty's subjects it was nearly time a stop was put to their capers, because they might bring in regulations preventing the Opposition from speaking, unless allowed to do so by the Government—in fact, they had already said so to some extent. The Colonial Treasurer said the other evening that the debate was very mild, and there had been no stone-throwing, because there was nothing to fight about, nothing on which to rake up their little bits of spite and their little personalities. He (Mr. Stubbley) felt so much grieved that the leader of the Opposition had not introduced something of the sort into the debate that he did not come to the House last night. However, he would now try to throw in a firebrand somewhere, so as to please the Government, for it was only by looking on while others were fighting that one could enjoy himself in Parliament. When an hon. member began to argue and bring forward facts in support of his arguments the Government simply said, "Ha, ha, ha." He would swear that there was no reasoning power in any of the Ministry as far as certain subjects were concerned—not because they were not endowed with that power, but because it would not suit them to look at those subjects from a reasoning point of view. The railway arrangement was a nice syndicate; and it was extraordinary that a private individual could employ labour profitably and enhance the prosperity of the colony, and that the Government could not afford to pay the wages to effect the same results. He supposed the Government had reduced the rates of carriage so that they had to get men to work for nothing, or for as much as would buy bread and water. He was one of the largest employers of labour in the North, and he was always pleased to pay good wages, and would not pay small wages while he could get good men for big wages, because he found it beneficial to pay 5s. or 10s. a week more for good men. If the railway rates had been reduced so much that the Government could not pay such high wages as individuals could afford to pay with profit to themselves, then it was time they raised the rates of carriage. A few individuals, headed by—he thought—a knight or a lord of the garter, in England, and including one or two gentlemen of colonial extraction, started a syndicate and determined to make a railway, costing two or three millions, from one end of the colony to the other, and they only asked the Government to ensure them 3 per cent. on the outlay! It was extraordinary that the Government could not get men to do the same work and make it pay. In the other colonies people would much rather work for the Government than for private individuals, especially if

they could put on the Government stroke. According to General Feilding's expressed belief, the country through which the line would run was fit only for sheep and cattle; and if his syndicate could afford to spend money, employ labourers, and give away large areas of land, it was strange that the Government could not construct a line where people were already settled on and developing the lands, and where lines were wanted immediately. The Government said that if they had to construct the Transcontinental line they could not make branch lines, but he (Mr. Stubbley) most distinctly gave his veto against the Transcontinental line while coast lines were required. He could mention several that were needed. One from Bowen to Houghton Gap, a line from Junction Creek to Ravenswood, and those were lines that would pay the greater portion of the interest on the cost of construction. A line was wanted from Cairns or some other port to Herberton—he should prefer Cairns—and there were perhaps two or three others that would pay not only from the time they were completed but from the day on which the first few miles were open for traffic. Objection was made to the range at Cairns, and he supposed it would be the same in regard to Port Douglas, because it would not do to give the miners any assistance. The Government were ready to assist those large capitalists who took up 8,000 or 10,000 acres of sugar land, and who wanted a shipful or two of kanakas or coolies; but they left the miners to look after themselves. There were thousands of tons of tin-ore on the grass at Herberton, and if that were taken to port, even at £3 a ton, there would be immense fortunes made; but the Government would not even cut a track until they were almost forced to do so by pressure of some kind. There could be no objection to starting the line from Cairns to Herberton at once, as there was grand agricultural country in every direction, and only forty miles of railway was required. The timber that would have to be cut down would almost pay for the construction. But he supposed digging never would receive any assistance from the present Government because the diggers had not treated them properly, except in one or two places. To revert to the Chinese and coolie labour, he should put them both on a par, so far as having anything to do with them was concerned. He should use his influence against them, and he should vote against coolie, kanaka, and Chinese labour to the very last extreme. If they could not find sufficient European labour to cultivate these so-called magnificent sugar lands they were better without any of it at all. If they got anything by it—if it was only 1d. a lb. off sugar—there would be something in it, but it was not so. The owners of plantations employed men to work, but they themselves lived in England or elsewhere. If the present Government attempted to bring in either the Transcontinental line or the Coolie Labour question—if they did not go to the country for it they ought to do so.

Mr. LOW said that he considered the mail service was one of the grandest things that had ever been introduced into the colony, or that possibly ever would be. Reflections had been made about the excess in charge for postage, but that was only a trifle compared with the advantage they derived from the mails going direct from this colony to England. And so with the wool-growers. For every 1,000 tons of wool sent home through Sydney there was a loss of £500 to the grower as compared with the new means of sending it. The £55,000 subsidy was, therefore, a mere trifle. He thought the Government ought to be well thought of and well supported for the way they had managed that service. He

wondered that the matter had not been mentioned before during the course of the debate.

Mr. JESSOP said that, like the junior member for North Brisbane last night, he rose to introduce himself to the House, as he felt he would not be doing his duty if he did not do so, and failed to join in the sentiments that had been expressed in reference to the escape from assassination of Her Majesty the Queen. He wished also to pay respect to the late Sir Joshua Peter Bell, who was a former representative of the constituency he (Mr. Jessop) now had the honour to represent. He knew the late gentleman for many years, and in expressing his regret at his death he knew he was also expressing the regret of his constituency. When the news arrived in Dalby the regret was so extreme that every business man put his shutters up immediately out of respect to the deceased gentleman, who was a good colonist, a good representative, and a sincere friend. If he (Mr. Jessop) went into the whole Speech his remarks would only be a reiteration of the sentiments of other hon. members, and, besides, the late stage of the debate and the anxiety of gentlemen to get to their homes would also prevent him. He could, however, at any rate, copy the hon. member for North Brisbane in one remark he made, with a slight difference. That hon. gentleman said that he was sent to the House for the express purpose of turning the Ministry out. He (Mr. Jessop) was sent for the express purpose of keeping them in. When he went before his constituents he announced himself as a Government supporter, and as a Government supporter he intended to act so long as he found their measures such as he could support with benefit to his constituents and the colony at large. He was not a blind supporter, nor a voting machine, to be told to hold up his hand like a schoolboy. He would use his own discretion, and vote when and how he thought best, and he claimed to be as free and independent as any gentleman who sat on the cross benches. He believed the Government to be the right men in the right place, and therefore he supported them, and because he really believed that the tide of prosperity the colony was now enjoying was greatly attributable to their foresight and energy. But for them the colony would not be in the position it now occupied, with a good credit balance in the bank, although, of course, good seasons, finds of gold, and many other things had something to do with it. It was a well-known fact that when the other side were in power for a time they always left the Treasury chest empty, whereas the present occupants always left something in it. And the same thing would occur again when the other side came into power once more, which they must do sooner or later, and no one would know where the money was gone to. The best remedy for that was for them to spend the surplus themselves, and in reproductive works. All through the debate he had noticed that hon. gentlemen spoke of Brisbane, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Cooktown, and other coast towns, but no reference was made to the inland districts. The only reference to anything west of Ipswich had been as regarded the water storage. Now, he thought that the best thing the Government could do—and he hoped they would take the hint about it—was to spend some of the £250,000 inland as well as in dredging rivers and building wharves. They had a claim to a share, for they had contributed largely towards the surplus, and had received very little hitherto. He hoped the Ministry would take this into consideration and give them a fair share. That was all he asked for. With regard to what fell from the Premier as to the Minister for Works not being able to carry out reforms in his department, he

(Mr. Jessop) was of opinion that if anyone, whether he was head of a department or any other officer, refused to obey orders he should be given his walking-ticket, and he believed any hon. member would do the same; and if any man in his employment would not do anything that was in his power to do when he was told to do it he would be told quickly to come inside, get his cheque, and go about his business. The Minister for Works had, in his opinion, too much to do in his various offices, and he was glad to see, therefore, that the Government were calling for applications for a Traffic Manager, though he thought they might have found someone in their own department fit to be placed in the position if given full power, and who could fulfil the work to be done as well as anyone they could get from England. He had heard a good deal about the mismanagement of the railways, and from time to time he had had brought before him instances of irregularity in the delivery of parcels, etc. Only the other day a party came to him in Dalby and said that he had received a letter three days previously saying that a parcel had been sent to him by train, and it arrived three days afterwards with more freight to pay for it than if it had come by post. However, the Government had already promised to make great alterations in that respect. The mail service had been a good deal discussed in the debate, and it appeared to him that everybody knew best how the service should be worked. In his opinion every credit was due to the Government for the establishment of that service. Reference had been made to the three deaths from heat which took place in the Red Sea on the last steamer that arrived. But if they read the telegrams they would see that several deaths occurred during the passage of the new steamer "Austral." Why, if people died on that large steamer, belonging to the largest company in the world, should they not die also in the other boats? Those allusions from the other side of the House, meant to throw ridicule upon the service, he looked upon as mere nothings. People had died in New York from sunstroke a few years ago—ten, twenty, and even thirty a day. Besides, those people might not have come on board in good health, and how could the Government tell whether people took proper care of themselves and were cautious enough? He did not think the Government were at all to blame for that, and if the hon. members who made those remarks would consider the matter, they would find that they were wrong. A great deal had been said about the subsidy of £55,000 per annum—what a heavy expense it was, and what a heavy tax upon the people of Brisbane. He had it from the very best authority, and could mention names if required, that over £35,000 had been spent in Brisbane alone by the British-India Company in the first year of the service, besides what had been spent in Rockhampton and other ports. In all, up to £55,000 had been spent in the colony by the Company in the first year; and if that were so—and he was assured it was so—the colony was receiving a great benefit from that mail line in place of being at a loss through it. The Coolie Labour question he would say very little upon. It had already been drummed into their ears so much that it was not necessary for him to say anything about it; though at another time he would have something more to say upon it. He would now go this far, and say that he did not believe in coolie labour in the South, but where it would be of benefit to the colony—and he believed it would be of benefit to the colony in the North—he would support its introduction, for the simple reason that he considered that it would undoubtedly make labour for the white man. The proposed Bill to provide for the construction, maintenance, and

management of Works for the Storage and Distribution of Water he looked upon as the most important item in the Speech, and the Government were to be complimented upon their forethought in bringing that Bill forward. The hon. member for Northern Downs, he thought, in speaking upon the Divisional Boards Act, taxed the Government about that matter, and said that dams ought to be constructed by the local boards. He (Mr. Jessop) asked how the boards could be expected to do so without the assistance of the Government, as they had not the money themselves? Hon. members seemed to forget that, in laying out money for water storage, they were not only benefiting the people about those works, but were benefiting the whole colony—Brisbane in particular, and he hoped to see the Government carry out that part of their programme in its integrity. The Bill to Amend the Pastoral Leases Act he thought was most important. The hon. member for Port Curtis said last night that it was levying blackmail to put upland and sell it as the present Act provided, and it was not only the rich pastoral lessees who suffered from the levying of blackmail, but the *bonâ fide* selectors also suffered from it, and he hoped it would be remedied. The Immigration Act he had no doubt would be a good one, and he agreed with the Government in their desire to regulate immigration. He quite agreed with the remarks made by the hon. member for Mitchell (Mr. Govett), and was quite sure that the hue-and-cry about immigrants going South was all a mistake; they were absorbed here, and some of them were put into good situations as soon as they landed. As the hon. member for Mitchell had stated, there was room for thousands and tens of thousands more. The Divisional Board Act had been a great bone of contention, and was brought before the House several times by members on the other side as not being worth contending for. He had been watching the working of the Divisional Boards Act ever since it came into force, and he could give the House his word that it was one of the greatest boons the country had ever had. He wanted some amendments, and the Government had promised to make them, and when the necessary amendments were made it would prove one of the greatest boons the country could have. And he would tell them why: Before the Act was put in force he was living outside of Brisbane, and knew very well what it meant. If they wanted anything done they had to send a petition to their member, who had to go to the Minister—whoever he might be—and beg and pray of him to do what was wanted, and the result was that one-half or a quarter of the amount of money required was granted; in addition to that local men were not employed. A staff of men and an overseer were sent up in a dray to do a £300, £400, or £500 job—he had known men sent up to Dalby to do a three or four month's job, and in the end it was not well done. It was very different in the hands of the divisional boards. They had the power of legislating for themselves. They knew what work was wanted done, and how far they could go; the work was done 50 per cent. cheaper and 50 per cent. better, and local men had some chance of earning something out of it; it was all log-rolling before. Now there was no necessity to petition the hon. member for a district, and everyone was satisfied. There was one more matter he would speak to. Last year he was sorry to see the Selectors Relief Bill brought in by the hon. member for Burnett (Mr. Baynes), thrown out by the House. When that Bill came before the House again—and he trusted it would be in a very short time—he hoped to see every hon. member support it, as he thought it was one of the most important measures that could come before the House. As things now stood a man with £200

or £300 took up a selection—and they knew that men tried to take up every acre they could to the last shilling—and the consequence was that he did not know what to do for the next year's rent. Some people were not so injudicious; they saved some money, but found after taking up the land that they had to lay out 10s. in improvements which were totally useless, and by the time they came to get their certificates they found they had their money thrown away on useless improvements when they might have used it in stocking their land. At the end of a year or so they had to borrow money to pay their rent, and the result was that as soon as they had done that, they were so much indebted they had to sell out at cost price. He hoped, therefore, that when the matter came before the House again it would be seriously considered and entered into. Individually he would go further, and would allow children to select land in small areas; and he thought it was monstrous where there were four or five in one family taking up a homestead selection that they should not be allowed to live together on one of the selections instead of compelling a young man or a young woman to live in a house by themselves half-a-mile from the occupant of the next selection. He thought it would be quite sufficient if they were allowed to live in the one house upon one of the selections, so that they might lead a better kind of life, and become better members of society than they would by stopping in a hut by themselves.

Mr. FRASER said that at that late hour of the night, and after listening to so many speeches, he should be excused if he did not attempt to occupy the time of the House for any great length of time. In the few remarks he had to make he might premise that the aspect of the House, so far, must be satisfactory to all members who wished to see the business of the House carried on seriously and deliberately. He joined with the hon. member who preceded him in the several congratulations that had been made, and especially upon the prosperity which was universally acknowledged to prevail in the colony, although he might differ from some hon. gentlemen as to the cause of that prosperity. He had not the slightest wish to detract from any grain of credit to which the present Government might be entitled; but although it had been asserted over and over again that a great deal of the prosperity had been owing to their legislation and administration, no attempt had been made to show one solitary action of the Government that had tended to bring about the prosperous condition of the colony at the present time. The hon. member for Mackay boasted last night that they had secured a credit balance of £245,000, and, lest he should be accused of misquoting, he should take the opportunity of using his own words. He said last night:—

"He would rather be a follower of a Ministry which could show an honest, straightforward surplus of £245,000 on the year's transactions than be a follower of any Ministry that had existed before. That surplus had not been achieved by any doubtful means such as carrying money forward which stood to the account of Railway Reserves in previous years."

Surely that hon. member must have forgotten what had been done by the present Ministry in former years with respect to that very item of railway reserves. It was the carrying over of the very sum of £380,000 odd that had enabled the Ministry to show that surplus balance; and, if that had not been done, instead of having £245,000 of a balance to the credit of the Consolidated Revenue they would have a deficit of £137,000 odd. He did not blame the Ministry for that, but he pointed it out to show how unjustifiable assertions of that kind were. The Colonial Secretary had congratulated the Ministry upon the little blame or fault that had been found with their

administration during the recess. But how could fault be found when they had all been away enjoying themselves? One went north, another south, and a third west. There was one point upon which they had failed in their duty, and that was, that they should have congratulated themselves that after the celebrated adventures of the Minister for Lands they still retained that hon. gentleman's services. How far the country had cause to congratulate itself on the narrow escape of that hon. gentleman he was not prepared to say, but he was glad to see him in his place, and that he had not sounded the vasty deep, as he might have done more than once. With respect to the mail service, he did not intend to traverse the ground that had been gone over so minutely already, but he felt bound to make a few remarks with respect to that question. After the manner in which it had been so unqualifiedly praised, perhaps he might be thought bold in finding any fault with it; but there was one observation made by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, the other evening, which he would notice—and, by the way, he might express his very great pleasure at seeing that gentleman occupying the seat on the Treasury benches—that gentleman reminded them of the opposition offered to that service when it was first introduced, and pointed out that the results proved that they had been exceedingly blind, and the Government had had a very good forecast of what the practical result would be. With respect to the service, it was a misnomer to call it a "Mail Service." He would remind hon. members that the Colonial Secretary, when introducing this measure, most distinctly stated that as a mail service there was not very much to justify it. Their subsequent experience corroborated his anticipations, and thoroughly justified the objections that were raised from the Opposition side of the House. And it should be borne in mind that there were very good and sound reasons why they should object to it—namely, the manner in which it was brought into the House and carried into effect; and it should also be remembered that the sanction of that House was never given to it. It was laid upon the table of the House open for discussion, and although amendments were proposed and were actually in print, they were told distinctly the contract was there to be accepted or rejected. It was their bounden duty to protest against such a course as that. It might prove to be one of the greatest blessings they had received, yet he should always protest against the manner in which it was initiated as a dangerous precedent. It might be true that the service was of vast importance to the Northern ports, but he objected to the manner in which hon. members opposite attempted to keep alive a sort of spirit of antagonism between the North and South. There never was a word heard from the Opposition side of the House against the interests of the North; and he challenged the Minister for Lands to produce one instance; but, if that feeling was not kept alive, it was not the fault of some hon. members. Hon. members on his side of the House did not begrudge the Northern ports of the colony any advantage—postal or otherwise—that they might derive from this service; but he could not concur with some remarks made by his hon. friend the junior member for Enoggera, the other evening, that so far as the Brisbane merchants were concerned the service affected them very little. It should be borne in mind that prior to the initiation of this service the principal supplies for the North were obtained from Sydney, and the merchants there might suffer very much more from the direct intercourse of the North with the mother-country than the Brisbane merchants. The merchants of the North would find that this mail

service was not so beneficial as they at present considered it. The times seemed to be prosperous; but if an adverse current should come, and supposing money became tight and the banks put on the screw, and bills were becoming due in London, how were they to obtain renewals? They could not do it. But they might get such accommodation from their friends in the southern colonies as would enable them to weather the storm. That the South should complain of it as a postal service was not a matter of surprise. It should be borne in mind that fully two-thirds of the population of the colony resided in what was, properly speaking, the southern part of the colony, and were consequently compelled to contribute two-thirds of the subsidy. He might observe that the hon. Colonial Secretary's explanation, the other evening, as to the differential postage rate, was anything but satisfactory in any way whatsoever. The hon. gentleman based his defence upon this, that it cost them all they were charging. But was that the principle upon which the postal service and telegraph service was carried on? Let them apply that to their own internal postal arrangements, and how would it work? The fact was that all over the world the postal service was an exception, and if they could live till the colony became sufficiently populated, and their postal communications sufficiently numerous, the day might come when it would pay the cost, but not before. For years after the introduction of the 1d. postage in England the deficit was enormous. At the present time he believed it paid the cost. But because they paid a certain sum for delivering letters by the southern route between Queensland and London was no reason why they should be handicapped in the way they were being. It was the principle of the thing that was essentially wrong, and it should be borne in mind that the South were paying fully two-thirds of the sum by which the service was subsidised. Another fair objection that was raised to the service was that the colony had no right to subsidise a mercantile service, and place in the hands of one company a monopoly, to the disadvantage of all other companies who might feel disposed to frequent the Queensland ports. He was not at all surprised at the apologetic strain in which that paragraph was introduced; they all knew the service had not come up to what was expected of it. He did not deny that ultimately it might be a great benefit to the country, or that it had not been of considerable service already. They never had objected, on his side of the House, to a direct steam service with England. They were quite as desirous of it as any member on the Government side, but they did object to the style in which it was brought about. There was one observation made by the hon. member for Mackay the other night that he should like to refer to. The hon. member for Ipswich complained that the mail steamers did not use Queensland coals, and the hon. member for Mackay affected to make light of that and, in a manner, sneered at it. He must remind hon. members that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government and the hon. Minister for Works did not think it a trifling matter at the time they were advocating the service. Both those gentlemen made an important point of that as one of the advantages that they were to derive from the service, and the Colonial Secretary said:—

"In entering upon the contract the company had calculated upon getting coals at Brisbane. He had distinctly told the company that the coal at present delivered was not so good as Newcastle coal, and they were satisfied from what they knew, and from one of the directors who had inspected some mines not many years ago, that coal of a far better description would soon be found. At all events, they had taken that into consideration."

There was another passage, he believed, though he could not lay his hand upon it just now, where it was stated that the company were bound to take the coals from Queensland. The Minister for Works was even still more precise. That hon. gentleman said—

"He had reckoned that the steamers coming and going both ways would use altogether throughout the year from 24,000 to 25,000 tons of our coal. Any member who had gone into the calculation would see that he was not exaggerating."

Those points were urged when the service was being forced on their attention, and yet, if acted upon at all, had only been acted upon to a very small extent indeed. There were in the colony gentlemen prepared to supply coal to those vessels in the Bay; and their coal certainly would not be of a worse quality than it was when the directors of the company had an opportunity of examining it. With respect to the Transcontinental Railway, it was evident, from the expression of opinion on both sides of the House, that very little indeed would be heard of it during the present session. The Premier had told them that he was prepared to stake the existence of his Ministry on the carrying of that railway, but he (Mr. Fraser) was inclined to think that very little would be heard of it for some time to come; consequently, there was no need to discuss it at that stage. Personally, he had not seen or heard anything which would induce him to vote for the construction of the line. Without discussing the question of the construction of railways by land grants, he could not see, at that stage of the colony's existence, with its small population, the little traffic there could possibly be for such a line, and the conditions under which it was proposed to be constructed—he could not see but that the initiation of such a system at present would result in anything else than serious damage to the colony. The paragraph respecting public works and immigration had been variously dealt with. He had a strongly decided opinion on the question of immigration, and that was that if they treated men properly when they came to the colony, and endeavoured to get the right class of men, they need not care how many they could land on our shores, where there was room for thousands, nay, millions. He was glad to hear the hon. member (Mr. Govett) controverting the opinion advanced that as soon as immigrants reached Queensland a great number of them left for the southern colonies. Anyone choosing to take the trouble would see that, except during one or two years, the balance of immigration over emigration in connection with the southern colonies was greatly in favour of Queensland—proving that if they did lose a few they gained a great many more. Intimately connected with that question was the question of the land laws. It was Mr. (now Sir Charles) Lilley who said that every man had a Land Bill in his head. That might be so, but the time had arrived for a thorough revision of the land laws of the colony. They had acted for a long time under the Act of 1868, and then under that of 1876, but they would never get that large population without which greatness was impossible without a thorough revision of the land laws; and there was never such a favourable opportunity as the present for securing the right class of population. The agricultural industry of Great Britain was, and had for some time been, at a very low ebb. In some parts of the country farmers had been compelled to abandon their farms, and, instead of ten or twenty applicants for each farm, it was in many instances impossible to get tenants for them. He was amused at the description of a speculator given by the hon. member (Mr. Black) last night—namely, as a pioneer, a man of enterprise who

1882—F

opened up the country, developed its mines, and cultivated its sugar-fields. He (Mr. Fraser) had always looked upon a speculator as a man who laid hold of land or anything else, kept it uselessly, awaited his opportunity, and turned it to the best account. That was not a class that ought to be encouraged. The hon. member, advocating the cause of the small selector with £200 or £300, proposed that the land should be put up to auction; but what possible chance could a man of small means have, in a block of 50 or 100 acres at auction, against his large neighbour to whom an advanced price per acre would be nothing? Such a system as that could never settle population on the land. He was glad to see that there was such a general opinion in the House that greater facilities should be given for settling population on the land. Why should not Queensland act a paternal part as America did? Their circumstances were certainly different, but they had only to adapt themselves to the circumstances of the colony, and they would be able to carry out colonisation as successfully as the United States or Canada. He would touch but briefly on the question of coolie labour. Members of the Opposition had been twitted with not having the courage of their convictions; but all they desired was to find out the merits of the question before discussing it. It would be ridiculous and absurd to undervalue the importance of the sugar industry, but the question was—and it had not been solved yet—was it essential for the carrying on of that industry that Parliament should pass exceptional legislation for it? Was it necessary that there should be special legislation for any particular industry? He maintained that if that was justifiable in the interests of the sugar-grower, it was equally justifiable in the interests of the pastoral tenant, the maize-grower, or those engaged in any other industry. It had always been a matter of perplexity to him how Europeans could stand the Northern climate in the laborious work of mining, timber-getting, and other hard industries, and yet could not stand the labour of sugar cultivation. The hon. member (Mr. Black) had said he should be sorry to see Europeans employed in the labour now done by kanakas. Of course they would object to work in company with kanakas—competing with them. But put the kanaka and the coolie out of the way, bring out the agricultural labourer of Essex, or Sussex, or other southern parts of England where he had to live on a wage of 8s. or 9s. per week, and ask him to undertake the cultivation of the cane-fields at the remuneration he could get in the colony, and he (Mr. Fraser) ventured to say he would be only too glad to have the opportunity of doing it. The most extraordinary view expressed on the question was that of the hon. member (Mr. H. Palmer) that the planters would be entitled to compensation should the present Coolie Bill be repealed. Surely gentlemen who had taken up land for sugar cultivation were like those engaged in every other enterprise, and must take all the contingencies into account. The Government had no more right to provide them with labour than they had to provide him (Mr. Fraser) with any labour he might want. It was absurd, then, that if the Act were repealed those gentlemen would have a just claim for compensation against the Government. That was the vested right that existed in West Indian slaves, and nothing else. The thing had only to be named in order to see the absurdity of it. One more remark before he passed from that subject. They no sooner objected on that side of the House to anything that was thought to affect the interests of the North than they had immediately the bugbear of Separation held up before them,

That was a matter with which he had been familiar ever since he had been a colonist of Queensland. He remembered when Separation at Daves Range was agitated for very warmly; and, if he mistook not, the present Colonial Treasurer went home to lay a petition at the foot of the Throne: he thought that was the language used. Whether the petition ever got there or not he did not know, but if it did he was inclined to think it remained there. Then the next stage was, that Separation should be at Cape Palmerston, and there it remained until the present day. And really he did not see that it would be such a very serious matter for this part of the colony if Separation did take place at any moment. But let him remind hon. members, when they talked about the matter, that there was more than the North to be consulted on the question of Separation. He could tell them, if they did not know it, that there was at present in Queensland a despatch from the Secretary for the Colonies emphatically stating that the British Government would not countenance or sanction any further subdivision of the Australian colonies. If hon. members bore that in mind they would find the bugbear of Separation an empty bubble. They could not get Separation without the sanction of the Imperial Government; and instead of encouraging Separation, the British Government on every hand were endeavouring to promote the federation of the colonies. A good deal had been said about railway management, or mismanagement, as the case might be, and the Colonial Secretary, the other evening, admitted that the department was not managed with the satisfactory results that it ought to be. Some hon. members evidently thought that that was a condemnation of his own colleague, the Minister for Works. It might be so, but he (Mr. Fraser) hardly regarded it in that light. He regarded it more as the fault of the system than the fault of that hon. gentleman. In fact, if the hon. gentleman erred at all, he rather thought it was in attempting to do too much himself—that he attempted to deal too much with details. Fault had been found repeatedly with the Under Secretary for the department. He was not there as the apologist of that gentleman, but he was inclined to think that he was more to be pitied than found fault with. He was placed in a position for which his training never fitted him. He (Mr. Fraser) had not the slightest doubt that he was an excellent officer in some parts of the department, and that, were his services confined to dealing with the construction of lines in the clerical part of that branch, he was a most efficient officer. But when they brought in a man who had been trained all his life in the lines of red tape, and placed him in control of one of the most important departments of the Government which ought to have at its head a practical man possessing business knowledge—a man of experience capable of organisation of the first-class—it was an injustice to that man, and it was not to be wondered at that he failed to give satisfaction to the country. He was glad to see that this defect was going to be remedied, but he could not say he was pleased with the step the Government had taken in sending to England for a man to fill the position. He believed that if they had made the attempt they would have found very competent men in the colony. He was not quite sure, but he was inclined to think that they should have a man of colonial experience. If they brought out a man from England, trained in the English system, and unacquainted with colonial habits or requirements, ten chances to one he would get at loggerheads, not only with his subordinates, but with the public, in a very short time; and, perhaps, like Mr. Statham Low, be sent about his

business, and the colony be called upon to pay him compensation for loss of his office. Another matter he would call attention to was this: About the time of the opening of the railway to Sandgate there was a revision of the fares, and the system of return tickets from Saturday until Monday was, no doubt for very good reasons, done away with. He thought that was a mistake on the part of the Minister. He thought every facility and encouragement should be given to induce the public to travel. He was not going to raise the question of Sunday trains now. That was a matter he held his own opinion on; but he would point out that return tickets to Sandgate were issued on Sundays, and he did not see why they should not be issued on Saturdays. Many offices and places of business closed at noon on Saturdays; and he was sure that if return tickets were issued on those days many men and their families would take a trip to Sandgate, who, if it were offered to them for nothing on Sunday, would not accept it. He made the suggestion to the Minister for Works, and thought it deserved his attention, because it would benefit the revenue, and confer a boon upon members of the community who otherwise could not avail themselves of it. He would not occupy the time of the House further than to say he thought they should congratulate themselves on the good tone in which the session had commenced, and he hoped it would be continued throughout. He had no doubt, looking over the Bills that were to come before them, that there were many questions to settle upon which there would be very great diversity of opinion, and which would very likely be warmly discussed; but, at the same time, he did not think they need violate the rules of courtesy or good behaviour.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said the hon. member for South Brisbane had told them that they should congratulate themselves upon the peaceable aspect of the commencement of the session, and he quite agreed with him. Probably it was because they were getting older and were getting wiser; but whatever might be the cause, he hoped it would continue, and that they would not find the same scenes this session that they had seen in the past. The Colonial Secretary, when speaking the other evening, he thought, made a very great mistake in a statement which had been canvassed a great deal on both sides of the House in regard to Mr. Herbert, the Commissioner for Railways. It was a mistake, he was satisfied, that was not intended. It was a slip of the tongue, as he believed the impression his hon. colleague intended to convey was that Government railways were worked under disadvantages which private railways did not labour under—that was, that political influence was brought to bear on all sides, not only upon the Minister, but upon the Commissioner for Railways. This political influence extended from the heads of the department down to the very lowest labourer in it. He could speak from experience of Mr. Herbert—that he was not only willing, but anxious to carry out any instructions that might be given to him, and that he carried out his work conscientiously and to the best of his ability. That he might have failed as a traffic manager was to be expected. He had not been trained as a traffic manager. When the late traffic manager was dismissed, he did not ask for the position, but he was asked by the then Minister if he would accept it, and he did so. He had been in the office four years, and he (Mr. Macrossan) could say that, so far as the management of the railway was concerned, it was much more economically managed than it was under the late traffic manager. He agreed with what his hon. colleague intended to say—that was, that there

was great difficulty in managing Government railways as compared with private railways. As a rule, he had found in his experience—and he believed he had had greater experience for the length of time he had been in office than any former Minister for Works—that the most incompetent men in the department—he did not speak of the higher officers, but of the lower—generally managed to obtain some kind of influence to retain their position. There was no man in the department who had not got political influence of some kind. There were very few members of the House who did not know that as well as he (Mr. Macrossan) did. He should not make any special reference, but there was another thing which made their railways very difficult of management, and it was this: There was a kind of *camaraderie* amongst the men themselves, so that when inquiry was made by a superior officer it was impossible to get at the truth. If a fault was committed by one of the men, they thought it a point of honour to screen each other; and generally, when inquiries were made, he found it was not the fault of the Railway Department at all. If a complaint was made by a member of the outside public, he was always brought in fault. It was never, or scarcely ever, the fault of any one connected with the railway. He could instance a great many cases of that kind, but would not take up time by doing so at that late hour. Several members on the Opposition side of the House, and one or two on the Government side, had also complained that the works were not being pushed on vigorously enough, and that there was a scarcity of labour, for which the Government was responsible. He was, however, prepared to prove that works had been pushed on more vigorously by the present Government than by any former Government of the colony; that they had made more miles of railway by double in the same length of time, and that they had called for tenders for more than double the number of miles of railway. The ground of the complaint was really that every district expected to get a railway; every district in which a railway was being made expected to get that railway pushed on faster; and it was impossible to push them all on fast. Taking the whole colony through, the Government were pushing on with railways at a greater rate than had ever been attained before. As to the Government being responsible for the scarcity of labour, that was said because they had suspended immigration for a short time; but they alone were not responsible for the suspension. They had simply accepted the position into which they were placed by the action of their predecessors. Hon. members who had been members of the late Government must know that they themselves instructed the Agent-General to moderate immigration, and that the present Government simply continued that instruction and carried it further, because even the moderation suggested was not sufficient. Lest any hon. member of the late Government should be oblivious of that fact, he would read the first paragraph of a letter written by the late Colonial Secretary, Sir A. H. Palmer, to the Agent-General, dated 4th February, 1879—that was to say, within three weeks after he took office:—

“Referring to my predecessor’s telegram of the 4th of September last, instructing you to moderate emigration for the next four months, and to your reply thereto under date the 13th idem, and to my telegram of this date, I have the honour to inform you that the Government find, with regret, that they are compelled not only to confirm Mr. Douglas’ instructions in the matter, but to require you to make arrangements for a still further reduction.”

When the present Government came into office they found men being employed by corporations and by the Government on what were usually

called labour works. He had found in Townsville nearly 300 men in camp waiting for employment by the Government, and he was forced to commence the Charters Towers Railway on the small contract system—a system which had been abandoned—in order to give employment. Under those circumstances it would have been cruelty to continue bringing out immigrants at that time. Further than that, when the announcement was made at the commencement of the session of 1879 that immigration had been moderated and stopped, was there a single hon. member objected? If the Government had done wrong, why did not hon. members then object and show cause why immigration should be continued? Now hon. members, very wise after the event, said that the supply should have been continued. Hon. members, also, all said they were strongly in favour of immigration; but the Government had shown that no one could be more strongly in favour of it than they were by their action in instructing the Agent-General to send out immigrants at the rate of 10,000 a year. Allusion had been made to the large number of immigrants going to America. No doubt America had the great advantage of continually attracting those whose friends had emigrated before them, leaving out of the question the easier and shorter passage; but if America received twice or nearly three times as many as it did, it would not be receiving more, relatively to population, than the Agent-General had been instructed to send out. Ten thousand to Queensland would be equal to two and a-half millions to America, and the Americans had never received more than a million in a year. The proposed immigration to Queensland was the largest in proportion to population that ever existed in the world, and if the Government continued that they would be doing their duty to the country. It was also said that there should be a land system in connection with immigration as in America; but it would be well if the hon. members who advocated that had first studied the American system. As a matter of fact there was no Government system of immigration there and never had been; their immigration was carried on by those syndicates to which some hon. members had such an objection, and by means of the large land-grant railways which had been made in America. The syndicates were so anxious to have the land occupied by industrious people that they employed agents all over Europe; and those were the immigration agents. They were not paid a single penny by the Government, nor were they under its control. Even the great immigration depot in New York was a voluntary agency, and not under the control of the Government. The Australians, indeed, were almost the only people in the world who had a system of State immigration. When the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) talked about stopping the natural flow of immigration he did not know what he was talking about; the flow to Australia was artificial, the natural flow being to America. Before hon. members argued against land-grant railways, and at the same time called upon the Government to imitate America, they would do well to instruct themselves so that they might talk more reasonably and be able to instruct their constituents on the subject—a thing which many of them had not done. He was not going now to take up the subject of the Transcontinental Railway. It was a large question, which he should be prepared to argue when it came before the House; and he should be prepared, with the Premier, to stake the existence of the Government upon it. It had also been said that large numbers of immigrants left for the southern colonies—in fact, that they left in shoals; and one hon. member (Mr. Thorn), if he

was to be believed, would make the Government stop immigration altogether. But the Government, in order to ascertain the truth, had employed a policeman to watch the different immigrant ships, and it was found that the number that went down to Sydney or Melbourne was so small as scarcely to be worth taking into account. The flow from the other colonies to here was much greater; and even if people in New South Wales or Victoria took advantage of the system of Queensland unfairly, the colony was still the gainer, seeing that it was getting acclimatised workers in exchange for a few new chums. In connection with railways, an hon. member, Mr. Macfarlane, made a very serious charge against him (Mr. Macrossan) about rolling-stock. He was sorry the hon. member was not present to hear his remarks; but he was not responsible for an hon. member's absence. This was given as an instance of bad management:—

“On a recent occasion three or four persons were disabled on account of an accident caused by the breaking down of a truck which was being taken to the works at Ipswich for repairs. In such case it would have been better to send the damaged truck by luggage train instead of attaching it to a passenger train, and thereby endangering the lives of the passengers.”

It was true that a truck broke down; the rest existed only in the hon. member's imagination. No one was injured, and it was not a damaged truck. It was an ordinary mineral truck engaged in bringing down metal for the Brisbane roads; and the trucks were going up empty by the 5.30 train. The guard in charge of the train supposed that the accident was caused by the break of the truck coming down and catching the V of the point, which pulled the truck off the line. If that was the only instance of bad management that could be produced, the management of the line would come out clear of blame. The hon. member also said that many of the trucks that had been made on the new system had cost more for repairs than trucks that had been running on the line for ten years. Whoever might have informed the hon. member, the piece of information was just as truthful as the statement the hon. member was obliged to apologise for making last night. What the hon. member really disagreed with was the system which he (Mr. Macrossan) had introduced of getting rolling-stock constructed outside the Ipswich workshops. He had tried to establish tradesmen in different parts of the colony who would be able to make trucks and passenger carriages for the Government, thereby carrying out the views of the protectionists in regard to the encouragement of local industries. Since he had been in office he had ordered by contract 540 vehicles, which were either made now or were under contract at the present time, as against 738 altogether existing before that time. It was that system to which the hon. member objected, as no doubt Ipswich had suffered to some extent. He was sorry for that; but it was necessary for him to study the whole colony and not Ipswich alone. Those trucks were being made all over the colony—in Toowoomba, Ipswich, Maryborough, Townsville, and Bundaberg; and what Ipswich lost the colony gained. In addition, also, to those 540 vehicles, either made or being made, he might state that he was also having made, by contract, at home, twenty-eight engines for the use of the railways of the colony, so that, in reality, the scarcity of rolling-stock that had been spoken of existed to some extent, just the same as the scarcity of labour. It could not have been foreseen, but as far as he had been able he had tried to overcome it, and he was glad to say he had succeeded to a large extent. Before leaving the question of railways he would notice a remark made by the hon.

member for Enoggera (Mr. Dickson), who, in his eagerness to combat the arguments of the Premier as to the advantage of having private railways to compete with Government railways, made the assertion that the Home Government had been buying up railways in England. He asked the hon. gentleman to name one, but he did not, and for a very good reason—he could not. Not a single railway was owned by the English Government. It was, in fact, a debatable question still whether they should be owned by the Government or by private persons; but no English Government had as yet attempted to move in that direction. There was not a single Government railway in America—the United States. Every one was made by private enterprise, and there were very few otherwise in Canada. In France the same system prevailed, with this exception: they were guaranteed by the French Government, and six of the principal lines had received aid in the shape of subsidies, and the Government had the right to buy them back in ninety-nine years. In Belgium the railways were all under the State; in Italy they were partly under the State and partly in the hands of companies; in Germany the same. So there was really only one country in the world of any importance in railway connection where all the railways were owned by the Government. He must, however, admit that the Belgian railways were very well managed. He maintained that it would be very much better if they had some railways here managed by private companies. They would have a comparison, and not only that, but an opportunity of obtaining trained men. In connection with that he had been asked if it was true that he had sent home for a traffic manager. He replied that he had done so. He made a promise to the House last year that he would get one. He had tried to get one here amongst the employés of the Railway Department, but he could not find one that he could thoroughly trust with the traffic management. He had also tried in a small way in New South Wales during his visit there, but the only persons he could obtain were what were called traffic inspectors—men of a very subordinate position—and he had men here equal to what they were. Then, though he did not like to do so, he was obliged to send home for one. It was, as was said, an experiment, and might be successful or not. As the hon. member for South Brisbane had said, the man chosen might, after a year or two, have to be sent about his business, and compensation paid to him for loss of office. That might occur, but he hoped it would not. He hoped the time would come when they would be able to supply themselves, not only with traffic managers and other officers connected with traffic, but with men of other grades, and engineers, in the colony. He thought they should train them in the colony, and render themselves independent of Home or any other place; and the sooner they did it the better it would be for Queensland and for Queenslanders. He could not allow some remarks made by the hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge) to pass unnoticed, but before noticing what he said he would express the opinion that the hon. member for Oxley was rather severe on the hon. member for Mackay for what he had said about the late junior member for Rockhampton, Mr. Rea. The hon. member for Mackay said nothing very disrespectful of the deceased gentleman. It was a great pity, in his (Mr. Macrossan's) opinion, that they could not sometimes have what he would call correct records of all the proceedings of the House. They had, of course, *Hansard*, which gave the words spoken by them; but it would be well, also, if the people who read *Hansard* were able to understand how the hon. gentlemen's arguments

were received by their friends. He must say that he never, since the night when he sat there and heard the "Nursery Rhymes," saw the House so much amused as it was by the statements of the hon. member for Enoggera. Before the hon. member rushed in to make such statements he should consider them more, as they were not very becoming to a gentleman of his pretensions or antecedents. It was quite certain that the hon. gentleman meant nothing, but that he spoke without consideration and without having proved his correctness very few members of the House would deny. On the evening in question he made a very ridiculous statement about the Queensland Investment Company—about a trap or lift in the ceiling through which the money went up to it from the bank below. Had the hon. gentleman considered that, if his words had any weight at all, he was doing what might be a serious injury to a legitimate commercial company? He (Mr. Macrossan) did not think they would have that weight, but it was quite possible that the company, if not stronger than it really was, might suffer from statements of that kind. If the hon. gentleman had only taken the trouble to inform himself what the company really was, the amount of capital it possessed, the amount of capital there was lying in the bank, and the amount invested in colonial securities, he would never have made such statements as he had, but have seen at once that the company had no reason to borrow money from the Queensland National Bank, and that it had money enough of its own and to spare. The hon. gentleman was a lawyer, and as lawyers were supposed to be correct, the hon. gentleman should have taken the trouble to be more correct than he was. He held in his hand the "Australasian Insurance and Banking Record" of September 9th, 1881, which contained the report of the third annual general meeting of the Queensland Land Mortgage and Investment Company, and the statement—the balance-sheet—laid before the general meeting of shareholders showed how the company stood. At that period—probably the period when the hon. gentleman was acting Asmodeus over the top of the House—the company had £140,000 of its own money which was not laid out at all. There was really no necessity for the hon. gentleman to imagine that it would get any money by means of that patent lift.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: The Glasgow Bank had a better account when it closed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. gentleman also made another statement which he ought to have inquired into. He read from the *Trade Circular* that an individual had borrowed £45,000 from the company upon the security of 43,000 sheep and 100 head of cattle, and that the sheep were worth at that time 11s. per head and cattle £4; therefore that fortunate or unfortunate squatter obtained double the amount for which the company had security.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: I gave exactly what was in the *Trade Circular*.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Did any hon. member think that was financing? Was it by such means that the company was able to pay dividends to its shareholders? If the hon. gentleman had taken the trouble to spend 1s. and gone to the Real Property Office he would have found that there were 50,000 acres of land in addition to the sheep and cattle. As a lawyer the hon. gentleman ought to have known something about that, and he ought to have known that the *Trade Circular* was not a land record. This was not the first time the hon. gentleman had rushed into statements of that kind, and he always had to be corrected. He (Mr. Macrossan) hoped this would be a warning to him, and that he would be more careful

in future. It seemed that the only great sin that the Government had committed during the recess had been to receive regulations for the control and management of Indian labourers from the Indian Government; and he had a few words to say on that, and also to his hon. friend opposite (Mr. Griffith). That hon. gentleman said in several places—at Cooktown, for instance—that he had been asked to prohibit the importation of kanakas, and that he had refused, and consistently refused, to do so. Now, why did the hon. gentleman refuse? Was it because he thought kanakas desirable? Was it because he thought they were necessary for the cultivation of any tropical or semi-tropical products? or was it because many of his own liberal friends employed kanaka labour. He (Mr. Macrossan) did not know which of those causes actuated the hon. gentleman in refusing, but he could say that no man in that House considered kanakas and labour of that kind more undesirable in this colony than he (Mr. Macrossan) did. There was no man who had endeavoured to do more, and had done more, to keep out Chinese than he had. He had no doubt what he had done at Herberton to keep Chinese out there was well known, and he said now that if the Government of which the hon. member was a member had taken his (Mr. Macrossan's) advice in 1874, when he was as young a member as any in this House at present, the Chinese question would never have arisen as it did in 1876 and 1877. The first thing he did on coming to Brisbane in 1874 was to suggest to Mr. Macalister the desirability of taking some steps to prevent the influx of Chinese. He had the foresight to see that, owing to the proximity of Cooktown to Hongkong, and the fact that there was a mail service from Hongkong, the Chinese would flood Cooktown in twelve months. Gold had been discovered at the Palmer, and he knew that the Chinese only came after gold had been found in a place. Previous to that only a few imported by squatters had come. Mr. Macalister, however, refused to do what he suggested. If the hon. gentleman (Mr. Griffith), when he became Attorney-General, had taken the precaution that the Government had taken at Herberton, the influx of Chinese would, to a large extent, have been stopped. He informed the hon. gentleman in 1877 that, in his opinion, all that was required would be found in the Goldfields Act; but he submitted to the hon. gentleman's opinion, though he held his own at the same time. The present Government had acted on that opinion, and had prevented Chinese coming to the Herberton Tinfields.

Mr. GRIFFITH: How?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let the hon. gentleman find out; he should not tell him. Having said so much about his antecedents in connection with Chinese labour, he thought he had a right to say something now on the Coolie question. The hon. gentleman said at Cooktown:—

"He had in the past been asked to prohibit the introduction of kanakas, but he had not done so. At the same time he regarded black labour as a thing not in itself desirable—a thing to be allowed, if necessary for the development of any interest in any particular portion of the colony, with proper safeguards. *Prima facie* he regarded the introduction of coolies as undesirable, but, if necessary, with proper safeguards he had no objection to offer to it."

Mr. GRIFFITH: That is the telegram.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; that was the report of the hon. gentleman's speech, and it was a correct report. The hon. gentleman was reported not only by the special reporter of the *Courier*, but by the editors of two newspapers at Cooktown. He (Mr. Macrossan) had read all the report, and he quite agreed with the state-

ments made by the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman had given notice of the repeal of a Bill passed in 1862; but if that Act was repealed, what safeguard would there be left for the control or prohibition of coolies?

Mr. GRIFFITH: They could not come at all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. gentleman thought they could not come at all: but he had surely forgotten his law. Did he not know that, although the Indian Government prohibited the exportation of coolies to any country where there were no arrangements or regulations, they could be got elsewhere? Did he not know that in Mauritius there were 250,000 coolies serving terms of five years, and that their terms were expiring at the rate of 50,000 a year? Did he not know that in Natal there were 20,000 under the same circumstances, and that in Ceylon there were two million and three-quarters of inhabitants, every one of whom could come to this colony, and no Government here could prevent them? They were proud to have the privileges of British subjects, but, with their citizenship, they must also accept the responsibility, and the responsibility was that whatever distinctions were made by the Legislature, neither Her Majesty nor her Ministers knew any distinction of colour. And no law the hon. member could pass if he should repeal the present Act, no regulation the Government might make, would prevent those men from Mauritius, Natal, Singapore, the Straits Settlements, Ceylon, and every other dependency where coolies were taken from coming to the colonies.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Cannot we do by legislation what you cannot do by regulation?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member admitted that it required legislation to control them. But they could not be kept out. It had come to the knowledge of the Government that the sugar-planters in the North were determined to have some other source of labour than they were employing at present. Whether they were right or wrong was not the question; whether sugar could be cultivated with or without kanakas or coolies was not the question, but the question was, how they must regulate their introduction. They knew that the planters could inundate the colony with any number of coolies, and the Government must have some control over them, and prevent them entering into competition with European labourers in every walk of life. For that reason the Government entered into negotiations with the Indian Government, in order to protect the rights and privileges of the working men of the colony in the same way as they would have been protected had his advice with reference to the Chinese been taken before. The Government had the foresight to see that they could be introduced—it was now being done. A telegram appeared in the *Courier* less than ten days ago, stating that a gentleman had made arrangements to bring 100 Cingalese to the colony—could the Government stop them by any law?

Mr. GRIFFITH: Why don't you try?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. gentleman knew they could make no law to stop them for the reason that they were fellow-citizens. They made a law against the Chinese under the convenient phrase of Asiatic or African alien, but any Chinaman from Hongkong who could prove British citizenship could walk through that law; but there was no such convenient phrase that could be made applicable to British subjects. That was the position they occupied. The Government did not wish to introduce coolies; they were not advocates of their intro-

duction; but they knew that coolies would be introduced, and that they could not be stopped. Therefore, they wished, for the purpose of protecting the working men of the colony—which they wished to see occupied as far as possible by Europeans—to control those men and keep them at the work for which they were imported. He would read a letter the Queensland Government had written to the Indian Government, and also the regulation they had made. Probably it would be said by some after he had read the regulation that they could not enforce it; that it was too severe to send a man to prison because he would not go back to his own country; but hon. members must know, as was stated by the hon. member for Darling Downs the other night, that even Englishmen were treated in the same way.

Mr. GRIFFITH: By law?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was a British Seaman's Act which compelled any seaman leaving his ship either in this or in any other colony to go on board under pain of imprisonment till the day the ship sailed.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Not by regulation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that when they passed an Act of Parliament empowering the Government to make regulations having the force of law, they had the same force as the Act, and the hon. gentleman knew it.

Mr. GRIFFITH: An Act of Parliament does not authorise any such regulations; and you know it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the debate had gone on very amicably till now. That was the third night, and there had been no interruptions until his arguments on the Coolie question which the hon. gentleman did not like. Then he began to interrupt. He hoped the hon. gentleman would not continue the interruption, but that he would allow him (Mr. Macrossan) to continue his arguments, and when the hon. member brought forward his motion for the repeal of the Act he could answer those arguments; but interrupting was not answering. The letter he would read was addressed to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Madras. But he must preface it by saying that the Government received a copy of regulations which the India Government submitted for their approval. It was not a fact, as the hon. gentleman, the other evening, would lead the House to believe, and through the House the outside public, that the Government were being forced into accepting what they ought not to accept—viz., regulations forced by one dependency upon another—regulations which they ought to make themselves. The regulations of the Indian Government were for the protection of their subjects in the way of securing to them their wages, food, clothing, &c.; and it was well known that the Indian Government was what was called a paternal Government. They accepted those regulations as far as the protection of coolies in Queensland was concerned; but, on the other hand, they wished to insert regulations for the protection of Europeans. Those regulations had been framed and sent to the Indian Government for their acceptance. The letter was as follows:—

"Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd of February last, with accompanying copy of the revised draft regulations relating to the proposed introduction into this colony of native labourers from British India.

"I have carefully considered the amendments made by the Governor-General of India in the draft code sent to you by my predecessor, and have now to acquaint you that the whole of these amendments have met with the approval of this Government. You will observe, on reference to Part X., that some slight alterations have been made in the regulations, with the object of restricting

the employment of those immigrants who have completed their first or subsequent periods of service in the colony to persons engaged in tropical and semi-tropical agriculture.

"In framing the regulations this provision was overlooked, but you will at once see how necessary it is to guard against the indiscriminate employment of this labour by other than those for whose particular benefit it is to be introduced. Under the regulations, as approved by the Governor-General, there is nothing to prevent time-expired immigrants from engaging themselves as domestic servants, etc., to town residents and others entirely unconnected with tropical agricultural pursuits, the effect of which would be that those immigrants would not only come into active competition with European labourers, but they would escape that supervision at the hands of the Government Protectors which not only the Indian Government but the Government of this colony are anxious to secure. These alterations, I have no doubt, will be acceptable, as I observe, in looking through the correspondence on the subject of coolie emigration, that it is the desire of your Government that coolie immigrants should, if possible, be confined to field labour.

"You will note that a slight addition has also been made to the Form of Contract, whereby the immigrant binds himself, before leaving India, not to work for any employer in the colony other than one engaged in tropical or semi-tropical agriculture.

"With regard to the appointment of a special officer with Indian experience and a knowledge of Indian languages, as Chief Protector in Queensland, I have to inform you that the Government will have no objection to the appointment, provided his salary be not made a charge upon the public funds of this colony. There is, however, no necessity for the appointment of such an officer by the Indian Government, as our Immigration Agent, who is also Chief Inspector of Pacific Islanders, has a well-organised staff, consisting of officers residing in the several districts of the colony, charged with the duty of carrying out the provisions of the Pacific Island Labourers Act, who would be available for the performance of the work usually undertaken by the Chief Protector.

"I enclose a copy of the regulations as amended, and shall be glad to receive from you an early intimation of the decision of your Government thereupon. If you can suggest any further amendments, whereby the desire of our Government to confine this labour strictly to tropical or semi-tropical agriculture can be more effectually secured, I shall be glad to submit them for favourable consideration.

"I have, &c.,

"THOMAS McILWRAITH."

That was the regulation he referred to just now—regulation 72—

"Any immigrant who refuses to return to his native country within one month from the date of the certificate granted to him under section 69, or from the date of the cancellation of his agreement, as the case may be, or to enter into a fresh engagement for a further term of service either with the same or some other employer engaged in tropical or semi-tropical agriculture, shall be liable on conviction thereof to imprisonment for any period not exceeding six calendar months. Should such immigrant, after completing his term of imprisonment, still refuse to return to his native country or enter into a fresh engagement, he shall be liable on conviction thereof to imprisonment for a further period of six months, and so on for every such refusal to return or re-engage as aforesaid."

So far, therefore, from it being one dependency forcing upon another dependency, it was the act of two contracting parties having power to make binding agreements between themselves, the same as the act of any two nations making a treaty, and if the Indian Government agreed to that regulation there was not the slightest doubt that coolies would be compelled to go back to their own country after their term of service had expired here. The hon. gentleman professed to be anxious that the dignity of the country, it being a country in which responsible Government existed, and being a free country, should be guarded, and that the Government should not submit to any dictation on the part of the Indian Government. Hon. members, after hearing the letter he had read, would be able to come to the conclusion at once that nothing had been left undone by the Gov-

ernment to preserve the dignity of the Queensland Government in their dealings with the Indian Government. They had not in any way consented to or attempted to go away from the position they occupied as being, in this particular negotiation, the equal of the Indian Government. They had never for a moment supposed when in treaty with the Indian Government that they were other than the equals of the Indian Government. And any agreement or arrangement made between them and the Government of this colony would be a mutual agreement as binding upon one as upon the other, and also acknowledged by the Imperial authorities in Great Britain. The hon. gentleman in the speech which he made the other evening implied that nothing of the kind had been done by saying it should not be done. Of course, that was the kind of imputation made that such and such should not be done when he knew or ought to know that no attempt had been made to do it. He (Mr. Macrossan) said that the Government had taken every step to preserve their own dignity as a Government, and had taken every precaution to preserve from undue competition the people introduced into this country already. If they had accepted the regulations as sent to them by the Indian Government they would be in this position: that immediately these men worked out the five years of the engagement which they had made with the employer they would be at liberty to come into the towns the same as the kanakas did at present, and what would be the result? A far worse result than anything that could possibly arise from kanakas being allowed to come here.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Hear, hear.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the reason was that the Indian coolies, as far as he knew—he had no experience of the people further than having seen them in the Mauritius—were expert, tractable, and dutiful servants. The result he had spoken of would be that there would be no more domestic servants required for Brisbane or any other town in the colony, and from what he had seen of them in the Mauritius he could say that they would not only become domestic servants, but would become carpenters, blacksmiths, and shoemakers, and everything else, and in a very short time the colony would be like Natal or the Mauritius. The Government, seeing that, had taken the precautions they had done in dealing with the Indian Government, and in doing so he claimed, on the part of himself and the rest of the Government, as being the real protectors of the working men of the colony.

Mr. GRIFFITH: That's too thin

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that he had followed the hon. gentleman after he went North. A short time after the hon. gentleman went North, he (Mr. Macrossan) visited most of the places visited by the hon. gentleman, and some places he had not visited. He made the same statements there that he did here. He had never varied a statement in any way. He told the miners of Herberton—perhaps the most democratic body of men in the country—what he had told the House, and the action the Government intended to take, and, as far as he could ascertain, there were very few men there who did not think it a right action. As far as he could ascertain their sentiments were these: "If these men are confined to the sugar plantations we do not care how many of them come." He asked the hon. gentleman whether he in his peregrinations always told the same story that he told in Brisbane? He did not think he did. His hon. friend the Premier showed that the hon. gentleman had made his statements when

he was in the North to suit the North, and, in fact, that he had been all things to all men.

Mr. GRIFFITH: He did not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he had stated over and over again that any sugar-planter could bring Cingalese or expirees from Mauritius, and they could not stop them. He said that if he was a rich sugar-planter and were inclined to bring the men here, he could have 500 of them in less than six months. He knew there were planters in this colony waiting upon the action of the Government—whether they would employ these men brought in under the regulations they wished to have imposed, or whether they should be compelled to take the step he said they could take. He knew one very wealthy company upon the Herbert River prepared to take that step; and with that knowledge in his possession and in the possession of the Government they had acted as they had done. He hoped the result would be that the Indian Government would permit their men to come here under the strictest regulations which could be imposed for sending them back again. If that were done the people of the colony would suffer nothing from these men coming here; on the other hand, they would gain. The land that had been taken up for sugar cultivation in the north of Queensland on the Johnstone River at Cairns, and other places north of that, had not all been taken up for speculation. There would be thousands of acres of land in that place having sugar-cane upon them in less than three years. Very extensive preparations were being made at the present moment on the Herbert River. When he was there four months ago he saw sugar-mills going up, more than one having a capacity of more than 2,000 tons a year. With those facts staring them in the face, and the knowledge they possessed, they would have been unworthy of their position had they not taken the steps they had to protect the people

the colony from undue competition with those men when they came, as they would come. He hoped he had made the matter clear to every member of the House. He did not think it was a kind of labour that was desirable, and he had never employed a kanaka, or coolie, or Chinaman, although he could employ them by the dozen if he chose to do so. No member of the Government employed coolies or kanakas, and never had done so.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition Benches: Oh! oh!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he challenged the hon. members who cried "Oh! oh!" to find the slightest scintilla of proof that any member of the present Government ever employed coolies or kanakas. It was a bold statement to make, but it was a true one, and it was one which he made at Herberston, when a gentleman at a meeting he addressed got up and declared that Mr. McIlwraith employed kanakas and coolies upon his stations. He made the same declaration then that he made now, that the Government did not employ one, and no member of the Government ever did, and they should protect white men from them when they did come.

Mr. MILES was understood to say that during the debate no member on his side of the House had ever made such a serious accusation against any hon. member opposite as had been made by the Minister for Works against the leader of the Opposition—that he would allow coolies to be admitted under some circumstances. The leader of the Opposition had never admitted in his (Mr. Miles') presence that he would allow coolies to be admitted into the colony; of that he was perfectly sure. Hon. members must be aware that during that hon. gentleman's Northern tour there was not a single town that he visited where he

was not entertained; and he was perfectly well satisfied that no gentleman could have got a more cordial reception than the leader of the Opposition got at the Northern towns. When the hon. the Premier was on his Northern trip, and was banquetted at Charters Towers, the Divisional Board had to pay the cost from their funds; but in the case of the leader of the Opposition people always volunteered to pay the expense. With reference to the statement made by the hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge), a few evenings ago, in connection with the Queensland Land Mortgage and Investment Society, he admitted that the hon. member had made a mistake. The shareholders of that company were chiefly English, whilst the directors of it were also the directors of the Queensland National Bank. That was, no doubt, a very great convenience to the bank, as whenever they had any rotten securities they could hand them over to the Loan Company. He mentioned that because the statement made by the hon. member might cause some uneasiness to the country, and might lead people to think that the funds of the colony were likely to come to grief. He believed the hon. member for Enoggera would admit that he had made a mistake. He (Mr. Miles) had heard a great many expressions of opinion from hon. members opposite congratulating the Government upon the prosperity of the colony, and giving them credit for doing their best; but the hon. member for South Brisbane had shown that the Ministry were mostly away enjoying themselves during the recess. There had been a great deal said about the Commissioner for Railways, and he felt proud of the explanation that had been made by the Minister for Works in connection with Mr. Herbert, as he knew, from his experience of that gentleman, that whatever instructions he received he carried them out to the best of his ability; but so many extensions had been opened that there was more work than the Commissioner could do properly, and therefore there ought to be a traffic manager appointed. There was another point to which he would briefly allude, and that was the calling Parliament together at so late a period of the year. The financial year closed on the 30th June; it was now July, and they would shortly be called upon to pass a vote on account. It was unconstitutional to call Parliament together so late year after year. Unless he was mistaken, the Government were now paying money without the authority of the House, as the money voted for immigration must have been exhausted some time ago. But the present Government were not very particular to abide by the law; they did as they thought proper. The Appropriation Bill was last year introduced in an unconstitutional way, although the House bowed to the decision of the Speaker, who ruled that it was in order. A memorandum, however, was sent to the Governor by the leader of the Opposition, but nothing more was heard of it. He believed the Governor prevailed upon his hon. friend not to insist upon sending the memorandum home. He referred to that matter to show the propensity of the Government to override the law. There was another matter which did not redound to the credit of the Government. Some years ago the House voted a sum of money on the Loan Estimates for public buildings in his electorate, one of which was a post and telegraph office at Allora. The late member, Mr. Kates, and himself frequently urged the Government to construct the building, but they persistently refused. All constituencies represented by Opposition members were terrorised over because they would not humbly follow the Government. Was that to be commended? And yet they were told by hon. members on the other side that it was the

best Government the colony had ever had. The efforts of the Government were to make all the constituencies servile. His constituents, however, did not complain; they were prepared to suffer and wait until justice was done them; but the facts would be remembered. On the resignation of Mr. Kates that constituency returned a gentleman who sat on the Government side, but who when he came forward was an independent candidate. However, that hon. gentleman had not only succeeded in getting the post and telegraph office at Allora, but he had succeeded also in getting the Warwick Hospital constructed, for which the money was voted at the same time. Was the change to be accounted for by the fact that the hon. member (Mr. Allan) had bound himself neck-and-heels to the service of the Government? Anyhow, he had succeeded, and the works had been done. If that was fair treatment he could not understand it. The Minister for Works had accused the leader of the Opposition of changing front, but so had the Government. If the reports of the Press could be relied upon, when the Premier was at Townsville he condemned that breakwater as a waste of public money, and announced that not another shilling would be spent upon it, and yet tenders had been called for its completion.

The PREMIER: I never made such a statement, nor was it ever reported that I did.

Mr. MILES said he was prepared to accept the denial, but he had read it somewhere. With regard to the proposed railway from Rockhampton, he would point out that the thing would be illegal. The Government had, according to the correspondence, informed the company that the Bill in connection with it must be a private Bill, but that it would receive the support of the Government when introduced. He thought that the Railway Preliminary Act provided that it should be the duty of the Secretary for Public Works to get such a Bill as that prepared, and that it should be brought in by the Government. He was under that impression; but perhaps it had escaped the knowledge of the Government, or, as usual, they set the law at defiance. There had been a great deal said about this mail service, and they had also heard a great deal about the hulloobuloo between the Government and the London Post Office. In fact, it would appear from the leading article in the *Courier* that morning, that it would very likely lead to the colony cutting the painter, because the Liberal Government in England did not pay proper attention to our Government here. He hoped such a small affair would not have such a serious result. It would be a very serious thing indeed if they had to pack the Governor off and send him about his business. It was no doubt a very great hardship that people, and especially those engaged in business, who wished to get their letters out by the quickest route, should be handicapped in the way they were by extra postage, while at the same time they had to pay an enormous subsidy to this mail service. The mail by the "Orient" steamer, which came in on Saturday last, was delivered from London in thirty-six days, while the Torres Straits mail, which was delivered yesterday, took fifty-six days. One gentleman told him that he had had to pay 5s. 10d. on one letter. He (Mr. Miles) believed that was quite illegal—that the Post Office here had no right to charge the additional postage. The postage was advertised at a certain rate, and when letters came here, what did they find? That this Government that was conducting the business of the country in such an admirable manner, arbitrarily and illegally imposed additional postage. He was free to confess that the Torres Straits Service was beneficial to the North, and agreed that every facility should be given to

the North in that respect, but at the same time it was a great hardship that the public generally should be handicapped with a subsidy of £55,000 a year for a service which was of no earthly use to them. It was just possible, however, that it might become a quicker service. He believed that under the contract entered into with the British-India Company, they were exempted from penalties for the first twelve months, and he presumed that if they were behind time now that that term had expired the penalty would be exacted. Whether the Government would do it or not was, of course, uncertain. With reference to the Transcontinental scheme, he thought it was a farce to think of carrying it out, and that in justice to the syndicate, who were induced to come here at such large cost to examine the country, they should be told at once that the thing could not be entertained. As to the correspondence with the syndicate with which Mr. Gresley Lukin was connected, there had been so much huxtering that they were actually bringing the colony into degradation by these infernal transcontinental schemes. If hon. members would read the correspondence they would think as he did. The company made concession after concession to meet the views of the Government, and they were always met with a demand for some further modification, and at last they were thrown over altogether. There was one letter he should read; it was dated Melbourne, 25th February, 1882, and was addressed by Mr. Collier to the Colonial Secretary:—

"Sir,—I have the honour to inform you, on behalf of the members of the Australian Railway Syndicate, that we have perused your letter of the 14th instant, addressed to Mr. Gresley Lukin, our representative in Queensland, in which, whilst replying by direction to that gentleman's letters of the 18th ultimo and 11th instant respectively, on the subject of our proposals to construct the Warrego Railway, you state 'that, the Premier having yesterday submitted the proposal for the consideration of the Cabinet, it was decided by Ministers that the offer was not such as could be accepted as the basis of a provisional agreement under this Act.'

"I have to protest in the most emphatic manner against the character of this reply. Our original proposals were submitted to the Government more than eight months ago, and, after prolonged discussion with the Premier, were printed by the Government Printer in an amended form to suit the Premier's views, and were fully and formally considered in Cabinet so far back as the 15th June last. The later proposals, which are those now under consideration, were placed in the Premier's hands on the 3rd October last, and were framed after frequent and exhaustive deliberation between the Premier and the representatives of the company, in a form so modified as to meet, in all essential points except that of area per mile, what were represented to be the views of the Premier and his colleagues generally. In subsequent interviews with the Premier our representatives were led by that gentleman to believe that the proposals, except possibly so far as the area asked for was concerned, would not fail to meet with the approval of the Government. In these circumstances, the curt intimation that our offer is 'not such as could be accepted as the basis of a provisional agreement under the Act,' is entirely without justification.

"I respectfully submit that we should be informed in what essentials our proposals are objected to: whether the area asked is considered excessive; or whether any, and which, of the various provisions and conditions informally agreed upon between the Premier and the company, after so many months of careful deliberation, have not met the approval of the Cabinet. In conclusion, I claim for the company that it is entitled to special consideration; and respectfully submit that, by adhering to the terms of your letter, the Government would be treating the company in a manner utterly devoid of both equity and justice."

The company had suffered grievously by the action of the Government, who were constantly requiring some amendment of the proposals whilst they kept the Transcontinental scheme dangling before the promoters. He hoped this would be a lesson to all other companies to have

nothing to do with these transcontinental railways. At all events, if they came before the House they would have his opposition. With regard to the coolies, the Minister for Works tried to lead hon. members to believe that he desired to protect the coloured population by regulations. It appeared that 40 per cent. of women were required to be brought with the coolies, and a number of the men were obliged to return. In that case, was the country to keep the women and children who remained? If so, he hoped some provision would be inserted in the Bill to tax employers for the purpose. Surely the Minister for Works was not going to saddle the working population of the colony with the expense of keeping those children. The Minister for Works had the audacity to tell hon. members that it was impossible to keep the coolies out; but it would be nothing short of a miracle if the hon. gentleman were able to carry out the regulations that had been suggested.

Mr. GARRICK said he had not intended to say a single word, but the speech just delivered by the Minister for Works was sufficient to galvanise anyone into making a few remarks in answer. He had constantly had to complain of what he must term the disingenuousness of the Minister for Works, and he could only account for the continual appearance of that disingenuousness in so many of his speeches by supposing that the positions occupied by the hon. gentleman at different times during his political career rendered it necessary; the hon. gentleman had been so very inconsistent that an immense amount of disingenuousness was necessary to account for his position at various times. If the hon. gentleman should ever become so distinguished as to have his biography written, the work would be read by him with a great deal of pleasure. Who that had been acquainted with the hon. gentleman's history could forget the tribune of the North—the great miner of the North who was unable to pass a stump without jumping upon it to harangue the people about the wrongs of miners? Now hon. members found him reconciling himself to coolie labour, and to account for occupying such an inconsistent position the hon. gentleman had need to be disingenuous, as he had been to-night. Every hon. member must have remarked how the hon. gentleman, turning round and surveying his colleagues apparently with great pride, asked who could point to one of them as being an employer of kanakas. The inference which the hon. gentleman evidently meant to convey to the country was—"Do you think that I, John Macrossan, who knew you so well long ago, would for an instant be a colleague of any man who was an employer of kanaka labour?" Had the hon. gentleman now forgotten that for three years one of the chiefs of his party—a colleague with whom the hon. gentleman, apparently, worked in great harmony—certainly did employ kanaka labour? He referred to Sir Arthur Palmer. The hon. gentleman certainly sat on the same bench with that colleague, and as far as the country was concerned he never remonstrated with that colleague on his action in employing kanaka labour. Now the hon. gentleman would have the country infer that he could not bear the unclean thing near him. He had got to account for the position which, chameleon-like, he occupied—the creature declared to be black was at last produced,

"And, lo! 'twas white."

The hon. gentleman said the reason why he did not object to the scheme for the importation of coolie labour was that the planters could, independently of any Act, inundate the colony with black labour from Ceylon, Mauritius, or Natal.

The hon. gentleman said he saw that this could be done, and the House could not help it. The inference left for the country to draw was that in order to stop the possible inundation the House was going to pass regulations; but the regulations had nothing to do with it at all. Let the hon. gentleman pass any regulation he might choose, the planters would still be able to bring labourers from Ceylon, and also those who had served their time in Mauritius or Natal. The artfulness of the Minister for Works was apparent, and he hoped the country would see that the proposed regulations had nothing at all to do with the difficulties that the hon. gentleman said would arise if the regulations were not passed. The hon. gentleman said that he could not prevent them. About that there was a difficulty, but he did not think that it was an insuperable one. If the hon. gentleman was in earnest, and if the Government were in earnest—if they had really feared the inundation of the colony by hordes of these people, would an idle and worthless regulation like this have been passed with a view to frustrate it? Would not the John Macrossan of old have gone even in the teeth of the Imperial Government, and though they refused him once, have knocked at the door again and again until it was opened to them? At that time it was thought that there was an insuperable difficulty to the coming of the Chinese from Hongkong and other places in China. Constitutionally there was the same difficulty in bringing those people to the colony as there was now in bringing persons from Ceylon. But let them fight the matter out, and not attempt to put it aside by any idle pretence of this kind. Let them meet the difficulty and pass a Bill, and if it was refused assent, let the Minister do as he did before—as the States were now doing with respect to the Chinese—present the Bill again and again, and then, no doubt, the final result would be that they would get what they wanted. He (Mr. Garrick) had not intended to make a speech that evening, but he really could not, as a representative of the constituency he represented, allow the hon. Secretary for Works' speech to go to the country without this explanation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. P. Perkins) said that it was sometimes very fortunate to be without a political character, and he believed the hon. gentleman who had just sat down occupied that fortunate position. He would not say anything about that hon. gentleman, however, except that in the late Government, of which he was a member, it was notorious that he was known as the idle and lazy member, and he could certainly say himself from actual experience that the hon. gentleman did not leave many marks behind him in the department of which he was the head, and in which he (Mr. Perkins) succeeded him. He would not allude to his private character—

Mr. GARRICK: You will leave your tracks there, no doubt.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that he would leave his footprints behind. As the hour was so late, and as so much had been said on the previous evening—as nothing in the Government programme had been assailed, or, at any rate, had not been admitted to be necessary for the benefit and welfare of the colony—he would only occupy the House for a few minutes. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Moreton on his hon. colleague, he would say that, from the remarks the hon. gentleman had made that night, he could say there was no change whatever in his opinions now and what they were years ago. He now came to the hon. member for the Logan, who had been

pleased to introduce him and to talk about his mode of dealing with the public lands. The reason he (Mr. Perkins) spoke of the matter was that, if you gave a lie a start for twenty-four hours it took you a considerable time to catch it. If the hon. member had wanted to play into his hands to show that he was careful and vigilant in the public interest he could not have done better than quote that letter from Goondiwindi. The writer of that letter was a Mr. Vaughan Jenkins. Although that gentleman had pretended to have some transactions with him, he had had none in his life, nor had he made any bargain with him. He (Mr. Perkins) had made some arrangements with Dr. Jenkins, the proprietor of the estate of which the other Mr. Jenkins sometimes represented himself as the proprietor—though he was not so—which the Doctor would have carried out but for the unauthorised interference of his overseer, Mr. Vaughan Jenkins. The Doctor had promised to buy a large block of land, good or bad, as it was, and at the same time he (Mr. Perkins) reserved the right to make reserves for water for travelling sheep. Then there was some complaint, and he introduced into the sale a condition that if they failed to get the upset price, the sale was to be stopped. He had his suspicions, and gave instructions to the auctioneer, keeping it secret till the morning of the sale. Dr. Jenkins was not present at the sale. Had he been so he (Mr. Perkins) believed that the arrangements would have been carried out. But Mr. Vaughan Jenkins was there acting for him, and, to his surprise, when he failed to bid the upset price the sale was stopped. The consequence was that whatever scheme he had was frustrated altogether. The Doctor had one idea and he had another. His (Mr. Perkins') idea was that he was to take all the land, good and bad, for the sake of getting it at 10s. an acre. His idea was to buy what he chose, and to leave the rest. The transaction would bear inquiring into, and was approved by both the members for the district, Mr. Jacob Low and Mr. de Poix-Tyrel, who justified him in his action, and said that he had done the right thing. He had not seen the land, but the Under Secretary, Mr. Tully, thought that if the land was purchased in the way proposed the State would have a very good bargain indeed. Mr. Vaughan Jenkins had made a proposal to him to exchange certain land, to which he had not consented. He did not consent to this arrangement. He discussed the matter with a deputation that waited on him, and they were most profuse in returning thanks. When he did not consent, this gentleman managed to get up public meetings on the matter. He might mention, also, that this same gentleman had been instrumental in getting the Police Magistrate, Mr. Cummings, at Goondiwindi dismissed. The letter which he desired to read was as follows:—

"Goondiwindi, 19th June, 1882.

"The Hon. P. Perkins, Minister for Lands, Brisbane.

"HON. SIR,—

"My object in writing to you is to explain why my name appears on the petition of Mr. Jenkins, asking for the Goondiwindi Station to be set aside as a commonage for Goondiwindi.

I was induced by improper representations to sign the petition in question, and I have further to explain that more than three-fourths of the other signatures were received owing to my name being previously upon it. I am now of the belief there was no purchase ever intended, but by a petition of this kind it was intended that the station should be withdrawn from lease by you without any purchase in the matter.

"I regret now my name being upon it, and trust to your honourable sense of justice to secure me against any unnecessary injury it may have been contemplated towards me. In no way is the Goondiwindi Run suitable for a commonage, which requires no explanation from me.

"I have under consideration the early purchase of my pre-emptive, which I intend to have completed in a short time.

"I have, &c.,

"A. COVENTRY."

That was one of the signatures to the petition, and he thought that disposed of the matter. He now came to another business. The hon. member for Ipswich and other hon. members were continually calling out, "Why don't you prepare for the immigrants; how is it you don't cut the sugar lands into small allotments and let the people have them?" Now, he maintained that there was no country in the world where there were greater facilities for getting land than in Queensland at the present time. He had before him a return of the land selected in the North since December last. Out of the whole list there were 179 homesteads of 160 acres each; and as those homesteads were got at 2s. 6d. an acre, and the people had five years to pay, they might be worth £4 or £5. He thought that was about the easiest way of taking up land that could be discovered in any British colony at the present time. Those who desired to select homesteads had a priority as against conditional selectors. Therefore homestead selectors could and did pick out the eyes of the country. One-half the sugar land in the North was treated in that way. Having the priority of right, it was only reasonable that they should take up 160 acres of the best land; they were not likely to take up the worst. He was instrumental in increasing the quantity from 80 to 160 acres, and he should like to know what more could be done? He believed that if the Government were to get a plough and turn up the land some people would still be dissatisfied. Then, with regard to what the hon. member for Wide Bay had said about farming. He (Mr. Perkins) had a picture of the hon. member's farming—he was sorry the hon. member was not in the House—and it was like the farming of a good many more on that side of the House. He had the picture from a reliable source—a railway contractor, and a friend who was incapable of saying what was not true. He told him that he saw the hon. member for Wide Bay in the fork of a wooden plough—one of a primitive description, such as was used by the Maories before Europeans got amongst them. He had a horse that was blind in one eye; on one side there was a sugaun, and on the other side a bit of hay-lashing for traces, and the trace on one side was about three inches shorter than on the other. The hon. member in the fork of the plough, and with that poor skeleton of a horse, would go along for about five feet, then would take a jump of a few feet and again penetrate the surface to about the depth of an inch and turn over the weeds. He did that for a few days, and then he went and held meetings for the purpose of rousing up the people. That was a fair picture of the hon. member's farming. And he might say of the hon. member for Logan that he also took care not to stop at home. The hon. member was a selector, but what use did he make of his selection? None; he had too much sense. He went about agitating and holding meetings, which he found more pleasant. He went about the country swearing-in Good Templars, using that as a cloak for the purpose of electioneering. That was the way he farmed. Both those hon. members ought to be good practical men by this time. He would not have mentioned those facts were it not that they were continually hearing about what ought to be done for the poor farmer. He thought the poor farmer was best left alone, for he was surfeited with sympathy. He (Mr. Perkins) did something for the farmer that was practical: He put his hand in his pocket, and he did not think any hon. gentleman on the other

side of the House could say the same. He had now a word to say about the hon. the leader of the Opposition. That hon. gentleman was good enough the other evening to turn off the track as follows—

“Mr. GRIFFITH said he should like to hear what the hon. gentleman who had just uttered ‘Hear, hear’ would have said on the matter if he had been on the Opposition side of the House. Why, there was no one who would have denounced it more violently. The hon. gentleman used to be the champion of white labour—

“The MINSTER FOR LANDS: So he is now.

“Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman used to be the champion of European settlement and the champion of farming settlement; but he had apparently become the champion of large monopolists, the champion of coolie labour, and the champion of enormous estates. What a difference a change from one side of the House to the other sometimes made.”

He could only say that there had been no change in him. When he sat on the other side with the hon. gentleman he had not discovered what he was; and it took him some time, being new to politics, to find out what were the aims and intentions of the hon. member. He would invite the attention of the hon. gentlemen who had lately been elected to what he was now about to say: Suppose some new members came to the House who were in doubt as to which side they would take, or were even perfectly neutral in the matter, if they had only watched the conduct and listened to the sentiments expressed during the past two or three nights, all doubt would be removed as to their future line of policy. So it was with him (Mr. Perkins). If he had to sit on the opposite side of the House, and associate with some individuals who held the opinions expressed on that side, wearing the veil of hypocrisy—preaching one thing and acting another—if he had to do that, he would walk out of that House and take to some other occupation. A gentleman in the position of the leader of the Opposition was supposed to be accurate in his remarks, and should not carelessly make statements about him (Mr. Perkins) without any foundation. He could stand there and say that he had not changed; it was the hon. gentleman who had changed, if there had been a change. During his business relations he had had plenty to do with white men, and nothing to do with black men; and to the white man he had shown his sympathy in a substantial way. Could the leader of the Opposition say as much of himself? If they were to believe the hon. member's compeers at the Bar, he was very careful of what he had, and very covetous and greedy to get more. The hon. member's remarks about his encouraging the monopoly of large estates reminded him of what he heard at Townsville about the hon. member being so anxious to secure large estates. He (Mr. Griffith) had not told the House about his paddock, or the circumstances under which it was purchased, which were, he believed, very shady; nor about his land at the Herbert River, nor about his partnership with Mr. Sachs. All those things required to be explained before the hon. member could make charges against him, though he did not feel them in any way. But the mask should be torn from his face, and he should not be allowed to pretend to be a friend to humanity when his friendship was only skin deep. The hon. member should give some substantial proof of his friendship or sympathy. He (Mr. Perkins) failed to discover any inclination to do so on the part of the hon. member, who should be more careful in his remarks about others. As a member of the Bar and leader of the Opposition he could afford to scoff and pretend to treat with scorn other persons; but he did not intend to let the hon. member run riot and make remarks, and then run away and turn round to some other

subject. He was afraid the hon. member was inclined, like the hon. member for Enoggera, to be loose in his remarks, and that his object was to get them into print in the hope that they would be believed by a number of the people outside; but he (Mr. Perkins) intended on every occasion when any false allusion was made to him by the hon. member to deny it, even though, as on the present occasion, he should trespass on the patience of the House at that late hour. A good deal had been said on the other side that might have been left unsaid, though he was pleased with the general tone of the debate. He must congratulate the House on its accession of debating power; and he was sure that, with a little experience, those hon. members, the mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply—the member for Mitchell and the member for Darling Downs—would improve in debate and probably help to prevent some of those scenes that had previously occurred in that Chamber.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the House meet at 3 o'clock on Tuesday, and proceed to Government House at half-past 3 o'clock to present to His Excellency the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to 12 o'clock.