

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 1882

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.*Tuesday, 17 October, 1882.*

Petition.—Formal Motion.—Brisbane Grammar Schools Boarding-house Bill—second reading.—Supply.—Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

Mr. LALOR presented a petition from certain residents of Roma against the abolition of the duty on wine.

Petition read and received.

FORMAL MOTION.

On the motion of the Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH, it was resolved:—

That the second reading of the Town Hall Bill stand an Order of the Day for Thursday, the 19th of October.

**BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS
BOARDING-HOUSE BILL—SECOND
READING.**

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. A. Archer), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was so simple a Bill that it was not necessary for him to say many words upon the subject. The Bill was introduced at the request of the trustees of the Boys' and Girls' Grammar Schools of Brisbane. The object of it was to enable the trustees of those schools to borrow a certain sum of money under the Local Works Loans Act, so as to increase the accommodation of the schools by providing for boarders. It was simply, therefore, to increase the advantages which children might derive from being able to board at the schools as well as to receive their instruction there. As the repayment of the money borrowed was provided for, he did not see how anyone could have any objection to the Bill. There was a precedent for the matter in the fact that money had been lent in the cases of both the Toowoomba and Ipswich Grammar Schools. The 1st clause of the Bill provided that it should be lawful for the Governor in Council to lend a sum not exceeding £5,000 for the purpose of enabling the trustees to erect a boarding-house in connection with the boys' grammar school, and the 2nd clause was to enable the Governor in Council to lend to the trustees a sum not exceeding £4,000 for a similar purpose in connection with the girls' grammar school. The next clause provided for the term of the loans and the manner of repayment. It stated that the loans should be for a term of twenty years, and should, together with interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, be repaid by half-yearly instalments, in accordance with the 2nd schedule of the Local Works Loans Act. Clause 4 provided that the instalments should be chargeable upon the Government endowment to the trustees, and that they should continue to be chargeable upon the endowment until the loans and the interest thereon had been repaid. The endowment referred to meant, of course, the Government endowment for school

purposes. He did not think it necessary to take up the time of the House further upon the Bill, and should therefore move that it be read a second time.

Mr. NORTON said before the question was put he would point out to the hon. gentleman who moved the second reading of the Bill that he thought there was one objection to the Bill which should not be lost sight of. By the establishment of their grammar schools they had shut up almost all the private schools of the colony. The establishment of grammar schools had really prevented men earning perhaps a meagre sort of living, but still a living, as it had prevented them from carrying on their private establishments. Having done that, it was now proposed to initiate a new system which would prevent people in somewhat similar circumstances from taking boys coming from the country to attend the grammar school and finding homes for them during the time they were attending the school. He did not know exactly what was being done in this colony, but he knew that in Sydney numbers of boys coming in from the country to attend the grammar schools there had homes provided for them by gentlemen who had not much means, and who were glad to add a little to their income by finding homes for those boys upon such terms as their parents agreed upon. He was not prepared to say whether the Bill was a good or a bad one, because he had only just seen it; but when it was put into his hands it occurred to him that it might be the means of causing considerable hardship to some people. He should not oppose the second reading, but he had thought it worth while to state his view of the matter, so that hon. members might consider whether there was not something more in the Bill than merely enabling the trustees to borrow money.

Mr. BLACK said he quite agreed with the remarks which had fallen from the hon. member who had just sat down. He thought the proposal was entirely a new departure in the educational system of the colony. He was in favour of that system as carried out in the State schools, but they had already gone farther in endowing grammar schools. It might be a matter of opinion whether that was justifiable—whether the more wealthy class were not able to pay the whole of the expenses in connection with the education of their children. He thought they were; but the House had decided that grammar schools should be endowed, and now it was proposed to go still further, and endow what he could only call lodging-house keepers in connection with those schools. He thought that that was a matter which should really be left to private enterprise. He did not see why the State should be called upon to assist those particular grammar schools or any grammar schools to put up lodging-houses from which they could derive a certain amount of profit by boarding the children of a class who were quite able to pay for accommodation. He must admit that until he had had the Bill put into his hands just now he had not looked into it; but as the hon. member for Port Curtis had objected to it, he (Mr. Black) must say that he coincided with him. He did not know what the feeling of the House might be, but his opinion was very decided—he thought the Bill was a step in the wrong direction altogether. If grammar schools wanted to put up boarding-houses, they should either do it out of their own funds, or leave it to that private enterprise which would certainly step in and supply the want if the want existed.

Mr. McLEAN said he had read the Bill very carefully that morning, and he took an entirely different view from the hon. member who had just spoken. He did not think there was any

attempt in the Bill to endow grammar schools. It was nothing more than the trustees of the grammar schools asking the Government for the loan of a certain amount of money to do certain work, and undertaking to pay the interest chargeable. That did not look like endowment. He thought it was a very wise step for the grammar schools to take. He had no doubt whatever that many parents would send their children to grammar schools more readily if they knew that they would be under the supervision of those connected with the institution, and that they themselves would be saved the trouble of coming to Brisbane and hunting up lodgings in a private family. He believed it was a step in the right direction. He did not know that grammar schools had so greatly interfered with private tuition, because he saw a number of private schools advertised in the newspapers every day.

Mr. NORTON: They are only preparatory schools.

Mr. McLEAN said he was aware of that. He repeated that he thought the grammar schools could not have adopted a wiser step, because parents in the country would be able to send their children to those schools with greater confidence when they knew that there would be proper supervision over them. He thoroughly agreed with the principle of the Bill.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said he disagreed with the principle of the Bill altogether, and he hoped it would not pass. He thought that if they were going to encourage loans of that kind to grammar schools it would open the door to many institutions which would come and ask for aid in the same way, and which would have a perfect right to do so. He quite agreed with some hon. members who had already spoken, that they ought in education to go as far as the three R's, in the State schools, and no further. If there was a demand for higher education, then facilities for obtaining it should spring from the people who desired to get it for their children. He did not think the State should provide governmental lodging-houses for grammar schools, and he should very much like to see those schools left to their own resources at once—giving them in advance such a sum as would liquidate all further subsidies that they expected to receive. The Bill would have his warmest opposition, and he trusted it would receive the same treatment from hon. members on both sides of the House.

Mr. BROOKES said he was glad to see the Bill brought before the House, as it had long been a weakness in their grammar-school system that the schools and residences were separate. He regarded it as of as much importance to look after the residence of the children as to look after their scholastic duties. When he was in Hobart a long while ago he saw there an institution where the boys lived in the house, and he had very much wished that there was a similar system in Brisbane. The interval between the detailed studies of the pupils from day to day was fraught with a good deal of danger, and no school in his opinion was perfect unless there was some proper supervision during that interval. He did not see how pupils from the country could properly be defended from bad influences unless there was some supervision of that kind. In the old English educational institutions the residences were considered a very important part of the institutions. Pupils were, so to say, never beyond the surveillance of the teachers. Inasmuch as it was a matter that was likely to exercise over the girls the control which he regarded as essential as scholastic education, he was very glad to see the Bill brought before the House.

Mr. PERSSE said it was his intention to oppose the Bill. The system of State education

was already overgrown in its dimensions, and the question arose, where they were going to stop? To grant a concession of the kind asked for to grammar schools would only afford a loophole for other institutions to ask for money from the Government. The educational burdens of the country were already too large, and it would be far better to give more encouragement to private enterprise than to throw everything upon the State. He agreed with the hon. member (Mr. Macdonald-PaterSON) that the State might very well impart a rudimentary education to the children of the colony; but beyond that it had no business to go. The particular work proposed in the Bill ought to be taken in hand by private individuals, and not by the State, and he should do all he could to oppose it.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he should give his cordial support to the Bill. There was no interference, as far as he could see, with private enterprise in any shape or form. If ever private enterprise had been put forth on behalf of any object it had been put forth on behalf of the girls' grammar school in Brisbane quite recently. The amount of trouble taken to raise the funds requisite to enable the trustees to claim the State grant was, to his mind, one of the most commendable things that could be witnessed in any community desiring to exhibit the quality of self-help. The Bill simply provided the machinery for enabling the trustees of the grammar school to complete the work which had been so well begun. It was useless for hon. members to quarrel with the fact that the State assisted grammar schools. They had to deal with facts as they found them, and the fact was that grammar schools were in existence; and everything that would tend to make them more efficient and secure for them a larger amount of patronage from the public ought to be freely accorded. There was nothing asked for in the shape of an endowment. The authorities simply wanted a temporary advance, and they would repay the money with interest. Where, then, was the obligation? The trustees could not encumber the property of the institution without the sanction of Parliament, and all they wanted was that sanction, borrowing from the Government rather than from a private capitalist. Nothing could be clearer than that, in the case of girls particularly, they should have that oversight which was necessary while they were attending the grammar school. The Bill would not affect the parents of girls residing in Brisbane and the suburbs, but those who lived at a distance. The grammar schools throughout the colonies were acquiring a high character, and the Brisbane Grammar School stood in the first rank, and they ought to be proud of it. What had been done with regard to the boys' grammar school would be accomplished also, he had no doubt, in connection with the girls' grammar school, if the trustees were not hampered at the outset in their endeavours to make it a pronounced success. In a small community like Brisbane it was an impossibility to secure the requisite number of fit and proper places where the girls could be entertained, and some provision must be made in that direction if the institution was to be made a success, and anything that would tend to make it a success ought to be cheerfully conceded by the House. The efforts of the trustees in that direction had been such as to command the admiration of all who wished well to the higher education of the young people of the colony.

Mr. GARRICK said he did not think the Bill was altogether free from objections. When those grammar schools were started the principle had hardly been fully considered; but as the principle of State education had been made a national one, the House had not objected to

include grammar schools in it. He was doubtful how much further they should go in that direction with regard to secondary education, which, strange to say, was taken up by them before primary education. The Bill was certainly extending the principle. Hon. members said that no advantage was asked for in it. The advantage might not be a large one, still it was an advantage—it was an advantage to borrow money which otherwise they would not have. He felt a little dubious about pushing the principle any further. With regard to the Bill itself, he was in a difficulty about it. He should not offer any opposition to it, but he could not help saying that it did not receive his entire assent—not so much for any reason that had been stated as for another reason which he would not further explain.

Mr. SCOTT said the hon. member (Mr. Norton) objected to the Bill on the ground that it would interfere with private enterprise, but he (Mr. Scott) would mention an important fact bearing on that contention. Some years ago there was a boarding school connected with the Brisbane Grammar School, kept by one of the masters, Mr. Keogh. He left the school and engaged in business pursuits, and in consequence the number of boarders dwindled away, notwithstanding the fact that the trustees offered to recommend parties with whom parents could safely entrust their children. That was the result which followed the departure of Mr. Keogh, and it was not until another grammar-school master began to keep boarders that the attendance of pupils commenced to increase. At first—in 1879—he kept only three boarders, the average number of pupils at that time being 118. In 1880 the number increased to 120; in 1881, to 133; and this year the number was 165. That result was brought about to a great extent by the fact that one of the masters kept a boarding-school to which parents could safely send their boys.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he could see nothing in the statement of the hon. member for Spring-sure to encourage him to support the measure, and nothing to contradict the statement of the hon. member for Port Curtis. It was very clear that they were stretching a long way into the revenue of the colony for the purposes of education, and he was surprised that such a Bill should be brought forward by the Colonial Treasurer. If, as it had been stated, the advantage was not intended to be restricted to the people of Brisbane, why was not the same indulgence granted to the grammar schools in all parts of the colony? Was it fair that the Government should assist that institution by means of a loan? At the end of the twenty years how was the Government to get the money back?

Mr. McLEAN: It will be paid off.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he did not see why the same principle should not be applied to all the grammar schools and to every kind of religious teaching in the colony. Why should that single grammar school be picked out—why not extend the privilege to every educational institution? Did the Colonial Treasurer ever consider that he (Mr. O'Sullivan) took no advantage from that grammar school, though he was called upon to pay his taxes?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: This measure does not tax anyone.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the measure would give the institution an advantage by enabling it to borrow from the Government at 5 per cent. He believed with the hon. member for Rockhampton that they were going too far, and that before many years half the revenue of the colony would be spent on schools. The institution from beginning to end only embraced about two-

thirds, certainly not more than three-fourths, of the inhabitants of the colony. The remaining one-fourth never could or would take advantage of the present kind of education. Was there any justice in calling upon that fourth to pay taxes for such a purpose? He had only just seen the Bill, and had not been able to give it any consideration; and if the hon. gentleman did not choose to withdraw it he would divide the House against it.

Mr. DICKSON said that any hon. member listening to the speeches of hon. members adverse to the Bill would imagine that a concession was being given to the trustees of the grammar school, or that the proposal was to increase the endowment. The measure was only intended to assist the trustees in their endeavour to extend the scope of the benefits of the institution to the districts outside Brisbane itself; and it was on that account he supported it. Parents residing in the city or suburbs did not require the proposed accommodation; but there were a great number of boys who had gained exhibitions to the grammar school in the primary schools in the country, and who were prevented from deriving the full benefits of a superior education through the absence of boarding-schools in town to which their parents could safely send them. It was obvious that the State would be no loser by giving to the trustees the facilities asked for. The money would be paid back in the terms of the Local Works Loans Act, half-yearly instalments of the principal, with interest added, being either paid by the trustees or deducted from the endowment. There could be no question about the security so long as the principle of endowment by the State was maintained. The demand had commenced in Brisbane, but he hoped that the grammar schools of Rockhampton, Maryborough, and other towns would in time make similar applications, and that the benefits of the measure would be extended to them. Whenever questions in connection with grammar schools were discussed he observed that it was considered that the parents of children there did not pay a sufficient sum for their education. He maintained, on the other hand, that they paid a fair, reasonable amount as an equivalent for the tuition given, and that the reason why the grammar schools were so patronised was that the size of the establishment and the endowment by the State made it possible to impart there a class of instruction superior to that which could be imparted in schools maintained by private enterprise. He was very glad to see that action being taken by the Government to give those facilities to the trustees of the Brisbane Grammar School. He had no doubt that the benefits of the measure would be appreciated particularly by the residents of the country districts, who would feel a satisfaction in knowing that their sons and daughters were being sent to a secondary educational institution, and would at the same time be received in boarding-houses under the supervision and training of the masters and teachers.

Mr. BAYNES said that he would remind the House that there was nothing novel in the present Bill. He believed the boarding-house system in connection with grammar schools had been in operation in Toowoomba for five or six years past; and the hon. member for Toowoomba would tell the House that it had been anything but a success. He (Mr. Baynes) could endorse a great deal that had been said by some hon. gentlemen, especially what had fallen from the hon. member for Stanley. The Bill was over-legislation; and it was not required. The House were taking into their hands what should be left to private individuals. He did not see that it was the duty of the State in any way to encumber the taxpayers in the shape of the boarding of

children for education. In New South Wales, as the hon. member for Port Curtis had hinted, it had been left to the masters to board the children, and that had proved more successful than the system in Toowoomba, where the boarding-house was in connection with the school. He should oppose the Bill.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that there seemed to be a misapprehension on the part of many hon. members as to the object of the Bill. There was no proposal either to endow the grammar schools, or to burden the taxpayers to the extent of a single farthing. It was simply a plain matter of business. Under the Grammar Schools Act, passed about twenty years ago, those schools were established, and they received a certain endowment from the State. They were part of the educational system of the colony, of which some approved and others disapproved: he was one of those who approved of it. They could not be established all over the colony, and the advantage of their existence was therefore confined to a certain extent to those persons who lived in their neighbourhood. Scholarships to the grammar schools were open to competition in the State schools all over the colony, and were granted to children attending them. The children in the country districts were of course at a disadvantage in comparison with those living in the towns; and, in order to give the country people a better chance than they would otherwise have, it was decided to have boarding-houses in the grammar schools. Those houses were attached to the grammar schools at Rockhampton, Maryborough, Toowoomba, and Ipswich; but not in Brisbane. The Girls' Grammar School in Brisbane, of course, was a new foundation, and the building had not been commenced. The trustees, who, he hoped, were able to manage their own affairs, considered it desirable to do as other schools had done, and to have a boarding-house in connection with the school. The law did not allow the trustees to borrow money, and they had applied to the Government to get permission from Parliament to borrow money from the Government. The principle had been laid down that public bodies should not be allowed to borrow except from the Government, and it was a very good plan.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that he had thought that the hon. gentleman believed it was a good plan. At any rate that was the principle, and by the Bill the Government proposed to allow the corporations of the Brisbane Grammar Schools to borrow the money. In the case of the proposed loan to the boys' school, £5,000 was to be paid back in half-yearly payments of the principal and interest, at the rate of £400 a year. The security was the annual endowment of £1,000 a year, out of which the Government would retain the £400.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: But suppose Parliament broke up the endowments altogether?

Mr. GRIFFITH said that he was, of course, assuming that Parliament would not do such a thing. He supposed, if they did, the Government would be allowed to take the properties and buildings erected on them, which would certainly be worth the money lent, and would be security enough. Some hon. gentlemen had asked, why should Brisbane have an advantage which other schools had not? But other schools had; the Ipswich Grammar School had got a loan of £2,000 at 5 per cent., and the Toowoomba Grammar School borrowed £2,000 to erect their buildings. Those were the only schools which had asked for the loans, and they got them. Now, the trustees of the Brisbane

schools asked for a loan for rather larger amounts certainly; but it was natural that their buildings, from their conspicuous position, should be of a more costly kind than usual. That was the history of the matter. The trustees were not allowed to borrow the money unless they got it from the country; and the Government asked power to lend it on ample security. He did not see the force of the objections urged by hon. members. Those who objected to the existence of grammar schools were of course right in voting against any advantage being given to them; otherwise he could see no force in any of the objections advanced.

Mr. FERGUSON said that he was ready to support the Bill, because the trustees were merely asking for the power to borrow money which they were willing to pay back with interest. He did not see why the Government should prevent them from borrowing the money. It was best that any local public body should borrow from the Government. The chief advantage of erecting the boarding-school would be to the country people. In Rockhampton there was a number of pupils at the grammar school who came from the country, and the only drawback was that there was no boarding-school for them. He should be glad to think that they had that advantage in Rockhampton. Townspeople could always look after their children; but people sending them from the country wanted a responsible head to look after them, and it would be well to have them under the control of a head teacher both day and night.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the committee of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

On the Order of the Day being read, the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

The PREMIER (Hon. T. McIlwraith) moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1882-3, a sum not exceeding £475 for a Police Steam Launch. The Government were of opinion that it would be advisable to get a steam launch to be used by the police in patrolling the country north of Cardwell, nearly as far as Cooktown. He believed that the experiment would turn out successful, and that the work would be done more cheaply than it was under the old system. It would be seen that no provision was made for the salaries of the head officers, whose duties it was intended should be performed by the sub-inspector and sergeant of police.

Mr. DICKSON asked the Premier where the launch was to be stationed? It seemed to him as if it would be used more as a pleasure boat for the police than for actual service. He knew that the Sub-collector of Customs at Cooktown had often to go along the coast in search of missing crews or travellers, and in the performance of other duties over which he was required to exercise supervision. He would like to know, therefore, if the launch would be stationed at Cooktown?

The PREMIER said that the launch would not be stationed at Cooktown in particular. It was intended to patrol the coast north of Cardwell, as far, perhaps, as Schnapper Point, going into all the rivers between those places, which could be more easily reached in that way than in any other. It was almost impossible to get to the different localities by land, either on horseback or on foot. The new mode, besides, would be less expensive.

Mr. McLEAN said that he had no doubt that a vessel of the kind was wanted in the North,

but it seemed to him that the Government were going the wrong way to work. Such a launch ought to be put under the care of a seaman who was perfectly well acquainted with the northern coast and ports. It would, in his opinion, be false economy not to get such a man, as otherwise the launch would merely be a pleasure boat for the police.

The PREMIER said it would be in charge of a seaman—Sub-Inspector Douglas, who was to be appointed to the vessel, being one. He could not, however, answer for the qualifications of the sergeant.

Mr. McLEAN said that Mr. Douglas might be a seaman, but he did not look like one. If, however, the Government were satisfied that he was duly qualified to take charge of the vessel, it would no doubt do good service. It would be a mistake to put it in charge of a landsman who knew nothing about the ports.

Mr. WALSH said that he knew the district where the vessel would have to go, and it was perfect nonsense to say that a seaman would be wanted to take charge of her. An engineer would be wanted, but anybody could take charge of her as she would never go out of sight of land. She would never go to sea at all, as she was only intended to go to places which were accessible by the rivers along the coast. He could say from personal experience that the services rendered by such a vessel would be very valuable indeed. It would be economical in its present shape, and would answer all the purposes for which it was required.

The PREMIER said that Sub-Inspector Douglas had passed the Board, and was a licensed master, authorised to command any vessel on the coast of Australia, and to carry passengers.

Mr. BEATTIE said that he differed from the hon. member for Logan, as he thought Sub-Inspector Douglas was a very smart little fellow, and the Government could not have appointed a better man to the position. He would like to see the hon. member for Cook stowed away in the small cabin of the launch. He really thought the Government must have had its intended occupant in their mind when they had the alterations made on board the launch, for the cabin was like a pepper-box. He did not think the Government were acting justly to their officers in the matter. He would ask any hon. member to look at the cabin of that vessel, and see what sort of place the officer in charge had to live in.

Mr. WALSH: He will be on shore every night.

Mr. BEATTIE said if he went ashore he would only get into swamps and scramble from one river to another. He would have a great deal of duty to do on shore, as he was going up there to protect the settlers, which, he presumed, was the object of getting the vessel. He would point out to the Government that 3s. 6d. per day for living was not a sufficient allowance for the officer in charge, as he could not live on that unless he only had salt beef and damper. The master of the "Pearl" received a good deal more.

The PREMIER: What appears on the estimate is wrong; the amount should be 5s.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was satisfied that the duties Mr. Douglas would have to perform would be a great benefit to the country; and he was sure that the hardships that officer would have to undergo would be very great. If it was intended that he should travel in those almost inaccessible places from river to river for the protection of the people in that part of the colony, the Government had acted very judi-

ciously in getting that vessel. At the same time, there should have been a little more accommodation for the comfort of those who were in charge.

The PREMIER said that after the Estimates had been printed, and before Mr. Douglas went away, the matter was brought before him, and the Council decided to increase the amount to 5s.

Mr. McLEAN said he wished it to be understood that he had not one single word to say against Mr. Douglas. What he said was that if the Government entrusted the launch to a gentleman who had no knowledge whatever of seamanship it would be a great mistake. He was not aware that Mr. Douglas had passed as a captain. The hon. member for Cook said it did not require a seaman, because the vessel would always be near the shore; but that was the very reason why it would require a seaman to take charge, as there was always a great deal more danger near the shore than out at sea. It would require a person with a thorough knowledge of the coast to look after the steam launch.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the sum of £33,050 be granted for Charitable Purposes.

Mr. McLEAN said he thought they should have some assurance from the Premier that the Brisbane Hospital was treated in the same manner as other hospitals. There was some discussion on the question last year and the year before, and it was then discovered that the Brisbane Hospital had had a great deal more than it was justly entitled to, with the usual endowment of £2 to £1.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said the figures in the estimate were rather misleading. He should like to hear from the Premier if there were other cases besides that of the Brisbane Hospital where the subscriptions did not come up to the amount that was set down, or whether in point of fact those sums were a true index as to what the Government had paid and would pay in future. He noticed particularly with regard to the Maryborough Hospital, that there was a sum of £900 down for it, whilst he knew as a fact that they got £1,300 or £1,400, because they raised subscriptions to an amount which qualified them to ask for it. A foot-note said, "Or such other sums as do not exceed double the amount raised by private subscriptions," so he took it for granted that the figures given were not a true index of what was granted to charitable institutions. It would be far better in the case of hospitals that the true sum paid should be put down, so that subscribers would know exactly the amount they would have to raise to get the Government subsidy. He should like to have some explanation on the subject, because he could see from the hospital he had something to do with that he got a larger amount than was put down simply because they raised more from private subscriptions. They got some £1,300 or £1,400, whereas they were only down for £900. The Maryborough Hospital should be placed on the same category as other hospitals.

The PREMIER said the vote would in future be put down in a lump sum, because the amount actually put down was only a guess at the probable wants. It did not matter what amount was subscribed, the hospital always got £2 for every £1 from the Government. With regard to the question which the hon. member for Logan had introduced, he was sorry he had not with him the amounts subscribed to different hospitals. Speaking from memory, he was almost sure that the amounts given to the Brisbane Hospital during the present year did not exceed the usual

amount of £2 to every £1. He particularly remarked that.

Mr. McLEAN said the hon. member for Maryborough was labouring under some mistake, because in the Estimates the amount set down was £800 for last year, and on the Supplementary Estimates there was simply £139 6s. 8d.

Mr. GROOM said there was no doubt that what the Premier had said was quite correct. He noticed that Toowoomba was reduced from £1,400 to £1,000. That was from the subscriptions being less than they were previously. That arose from making an experiment. There was some new blood in their committee, and they wished to try their 'prenticed hands and carry out their own ideas. In that case they reluctantly gave way to their chairman, who was of opinion that people would voluntarily subscribe to the hospital, and that there was no need for a paid collector. So they sent subscription lists to every station, and dispensed with the country collector. The result was that only one station responded to what was called the voluntary system, and that accounted for their subscriptions being somewhat smaller this year than on previous years. During the present year they had sent a collector to all the shearing sheds, and he had no doubt the return would be something considerable; at all events, it was likely to be much better than last year's return. He would ask the Colonial Secretary whether or not he was prepared to deal in a liberal spirit with the application made to him from the Committee of the Toowoomba Hospital. Twelve months ago when the Committee of the Toowoomba Hospital took over the new hospital from the contractors—and he would have the hon. members of the Committee to understand that it was almost a Government institution, as half the committee were nominated by the Government and half by the subscribers—they found it defective in a great many respects. It was all very well as it stood; it looked an imposing structure; but immediately they got inside, and the medical men put their heads together, it was found that various alterations were necessary. The Toowoomba Hospital Committee had always had from £800 to £1,000 as a reserve fund, for contingencies. He could inform the Committee that that reserve fund had been drawn upon to the extent of nearly £800 for carrying out the necessary alterations in the new hospital, which should have been provided for before the hospital was taken over by the committee. The matter was represented to the late Colonial Secretary by his hon. colleague (Mr. Aland) and himself, and that gentleman told them that if they put their views in writing he would deal with them in a liberal spirit. He hoped the present Colonial Secretary would also deal with the Toowoomba Hospital Committee in a liberal spirit. He might also say that on going into a new hospital a considerable amount of furniture was required, and some £200 or £300 had been spent by the Toowoomba Committee in that way. As he had stated, in making the necessary alterations their reserve fund had been considerably drained, and he thought they were justified in asking that this outlay should be wholly or partially refunded. He hoped the application of the Hospital Committee, which was at present before the Government, would be dealt with in a liberal spirit, as up to the present time the Toowoomba Hospital Committee had exerted themselves as much as possible.

The PREMIER said the application of the Toowoomba Hospital Committee was before him, and he was only sorry that press of business had prevented him from dealing with it before. He hoped that answer would satisfy the hon. member at present, and he could assure him

that the application would be dealt with in a liberal spirit.

Mr. DICKSON said he understood the Premier to state that in future the Estimates for "Charitable Allowances" would not be displayed in detail; but the amounts required would be given in one sum. He hoped he had misunderstood him, because he thought it was desirable that, so far as possible, the different institutions and the amounts granted to them should be enumerated. They attracted the attention of the Committee, and, although the amounts could only be approximately given, it was better that they should be enumerated separately than that the whole amount required should be given *in globo*.

The PREMIER said when the present system came into force the amount voted was the maximum amount to be granted to the hospitals. If £1,000 was the vote passed it did not matter how much was subscribed, the hospitals never got any more; and it was only within late years that a change had been made—he thought in 1878. That was the year when it was definitely laid down by the Minister that, no matter what was put down on the Estimates, the hospitals would get £2 for every £1 subscribed. At present, therefore, the Estimates upon that vote were, of course, misleading, and he thought it would be better in future to give a list of the hospitals with the total amount of the probable grant and the amount, as nearly as possible, of the subscriptions.

Mr. GRIFFITH pointed out that in the case of relief boards they did not receive grants on the amount of subscriptions, and he did not understand how the hon. gentleman proposed to deal with them.

The PREMIER said that the grant to relief boards were usually disbursed through the police magistrate of a district.

Mr. F. A. COOPER said that while they were upon that vote he would ask the Premier what amount of money was set down for the erection of an hospital at Herberton, as he found the Estimates were silent upon that point.

The PREMIER said the Estimates before them was simply for the maintenance, not for the construction, of hospitals. He believed there was an amount put down on the Supplementary Estimates for an hospital at Herberton.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Is it £3,000?

The PREMIER said he thought it was £2,500.

Mr. FOOTE asked whether he was right in understanding the Premier to say that the grants to relief boards were expended by the various police magistrates in the different districts?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. FOOTE asked, if so, were there any accounts kept?

The PREMIER: Yes, and duly audited.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said the Colonial Secretary was under a misapprehension as regarded Maryborough, at all events. He was chairman and president of the Maryborough Hospital, and he could say that the money granted for relief in that town was expended by the hospital committee and did not go through the hands of the police magistrate. There were about a dozen poor families to whom a small amount was doled out weekly. Of course a considerable amount of the vote granted them was expended in relieving accident and other pressing cases of distress. He did not know what was the amount granted in other places, but the hospital committee in Maryborough received £200 for purposes of relief, and he could assure

hon. members of the Committee that it was of great benefit to the poor of the town.

Mr. BEATTIE said the Relief Committee in Brisbane was managed by a well-known gentleman who took great interest in those matters; and he believed the committee sat every week. They used to have a secretary, but he understood now that the sergeant of police in charge of the police station at Elizabeth street carried out the orders of the committee, and made inquiry into all applications made to the Relief Board for relief. The Police Magistrate had nothing to do with it, as the matter was carried out, as he had said, by a gentleman whom everyone knew.

Mr. FOOTE said that the reason why he asked the question was to ascertain who it was who distributed those sums of money. He thought it was quite necessary that there should be proper supervision, so that only those persons should get relief who were entitled to it.

Mr. ALAND thought the distribution might be managed as it was in Toowoomba. In former times the money used to be dispensed by the chairman of the hospital committee, but it was found to be too much of a tax upon his time, and they got the consent of the Colonial Secretary to the relief money being handed over to a committee of ladies. There were in every town a number of ladies who would be willing to undertake work of that kind, and they had more time to inquire into applications for relief than the chairman of a hospital committee or a police magistrate. During the last three years the money had been administered by the ladies in Toowoomba, and the plan had been found to work very beneficially.

Mr. FOOTE said he found, from what hon. members had stated, that the money was scarcely distributed in two places alike. He knew that in Ipswich there was a Ladies' Benevolent Society, and they made application to the Government to be allowed to have that sum to distribute, but it was refused. But he thought that if the ladies of one town could be entrusted with the money, the ladies in another town could just as safely be allowed to have it.

The PREMIER said that an application was made to him two or three months ago by the ladies of Ipswich, but he thought it was to have the amount augmented. Of course ladies could give very valuable assistance in that way. He forgot what he did with regard to the application, but he thought he gave some decision which was considered satisfactory.

Mr. FOOTE said the reason why he brought the matter forward was because he had been requested to inquire to whom the money was paid.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he was glad to hear the Premier say that he considered a committee of ladies the proper means of distributing relief. In Brisbane great ignorance existed as to the Relief Board, and he had that afternoon heard for the first time who the parties in Brisbane were who had the distribution of relief. He did not say that the gentlemen who had charge of it did not do the best they could, but they might not have as much time to personally inquire into each case that arose as ladies who specially devoted themselves to the work. In Brisbane there was a Ladies' Charitable Organisation, and a large number of persons subscribed to enable that society to relieve deserving cases of poverty and distress. He thought it would be better if those ladies had the control of the money voted by Parliament to relieve distress. They would be able to distribute it on a much more satisfactory basis, because there were numbers of deserving cases which would not come under the cognisance of any officer in

charge of the lockup. The cases which came under the notice of the lockup-keeper were more likely to be those in which persons had spent their money in drink and wanted temporary relief; but there were a great many other cases in which it was necessary to give relief, and he thought the Ladies' Organisation was the proper channel through which to distribute bounty in such cases.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman must have misunderstood him if he considered that he expressed the opinion that ladies were the best means of distributing relief. He doubted that very much. He meant to apply his remarks to the particular case in Ipswich, as he had every confidence in the ladies there distributing the money.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he did not know how outside relief was distributed in Brisbane and other towns; but he knew from his own personal knowledge that in the crisis of 1866 and 1867 the ladies of Ipswich formed a benevolent society, and that they did not get one shilling from any Government; they had begged the money they wanted from the inhabitants. One of those ladies called upon him, and he made application for them in the old Parliament House. The only thing he felt sorry for was that the demand was too small; they only asked for £100, but he was convinced that the House was so far in their favour that if he had asked for £500 he would have got it. He hoped that the Premier, who was always practical in matters of that sort, would place the relief money in the hands of those ladies: he might depend upon it that in Ipswich at any rate the money would not be wasted.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was rather surprised to hear the hon. member for Enoggera, who took a warm interest in such matters, say that that was the first time he had heard who it was who distributed relief in Brisbane. It was well known that the committee consisted of Mr. Petrie, Mr. Edmondstone, and others whose names he had forgotten, and they had a secretary at £150 a year. He believed that nearly everyone knew that in cases of distress Mr. Petrie was the proper authority to apply to. He (Mr. Beattie) always sent applicants to Mr. Petrie, all doubtful cases being referred by the chairman to Sergeant Doyle to inquire into. They got relief immediately. All cases brought under the notice of the board were attended to at once. He had taken a good deal of interest in the matter, and had never heard a single complaint as to the manner in which the duties of that Relief Board were conducted by the chairman, who gave a great deal of his time to it with satisfaction to all concerned.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he did not wish to be misunderstood as having conveyed any imputation of unfairness. No doubt Mr. Petrie was a just man, who would do the fairest thing he knew how; but he was a gentleman whose hands were full of business, and who could not give that amount of personal attention to the distribution of the charity of the Government that ladies with ample time on their hands would be able to give. There was already an efficient organisation in existence dispensing private charity, and they had managed remarkably well in getting subscribers to the funds which they dispensed so well. The chairman of the Relief Board must take the report given him by the police, while those ladies would be able to see not only who were fit objects for the receipt of charity, but would ascertain by personal inspection and inquiry who were fit objects for the receipt of a continuance of charity, and would discriminate much more exactly between deserving and undeserving cases than any gentleman

could do who had his hands full of his own private affairs.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked whether there was any supervision maintained over those hospitals to which the country paid so much money? He held in hands what purported to be an extract from a Herberton paper, in which it was stated that the wardsman went home at night, locked the door of the hospital, and left the patients to themselves.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no hospital there.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Yes, there is.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the paper to which he had referred stated that an aboriginal was placed in the hospital at Herberton, and that the wardsman was cautioned to take care of him as he was delirious. Instead of doing so, the wardsman locked the door at night and went home. During the night the unfortunate black went outside, and was found dead in the morning. If true, that was a very serious matter, which ought not to be overlooked.

Mr. WALSH said the incident referred to occurred shortly after the initiation of a temporary hospital in a private house at Herberton. Great difficulty was found in getting a suitable man to act as wardsman, and the irregularity mentioned occurred. The wardsman was at once dismissed, and replaced by another, and the local authorities would, no doubt, take care that a case of that kind should not occur again.

Mr. BROOKES said he would suggest to the Premier that it would not be time lost if he would be so good as to see how that sum of £1,600 was distributed. There were now in Brisbane a larger number than ever of charitable organisations, which were dependent entirely upon private funds, and if those organisations were allowed to be put in communication with the gentleman in charge of that £1,600 it might be made to go a great deal further than it did. It was not generally known that there was that large amount of money voted by the liberality of Parliament for charitable purposes. He had heard that a good many persons were relieved in this way: they were given slips of paper describing what they were to get, and they took them to a shop. It did not always follow in such cases that the people got what they wanted. A system like that could very easily be abused, and he had heard that it was abused. He would suggest, therefore, that if the various agencies now engaged in actual work were allowed to put themselves into communication with the Colonial Secretary, or with the officer administering the charity, the amount voted might be employed to better effect than it had been hitherto.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that he had heard that the Ipswich Hospital had unfortunately, of late, got into the hands of a clique of "white-chokers" who wore blue ribbons, and that no kind of liquor was allowed to be used inside the hospital. It had been stated to him that a man, who recently died in the hospital of *delirium tremens*, might have had his life saved if he had been allowed some liquor for two or three days. He did not know the doctor who was at the hospital now, but he believed the management was not what it had been at any previous time. The hon. member for Ipswich was now the chairman or governor of that hospital; and as the hon. member had established the system now in force, he should be glad to hear from the hon. member how the man he had referred to lost his life.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that, as the hon. member had contrived to get him on to his feet, he would just say that the Ipswich Hospital stood so well in the estimation of the Colonial

Secretary, and of the late Colonial Secretary, that it required no defence from him. The late Colonial Secretary spoke of it as the best-conducted hospital in the colony, and he believed it was so at the present time. As to the present doctor, no one consulted with him in reference to his treatment of patients. Grog was not quite abolished in the hospital, he was sorry to say—it was still kept as a medicine, but very little used; the cost for the last quarter being 3d., and for the present quarter, he believed, nothing. It would be a good thing, he thought, if all the hospitals in the colony were conducted as the Ipswich Hospital was;—it would be good for the patients and good for the servants in the hospital, because they could enjoy other comforts, such as were provided in the Ipswich Hospital. An indication of the success of the system adopted was seen in the fact that the deaths were reduced to one-half of the number during the previous quarter. If the hon. member would call for returns of all the hospitals in the colony, he was not afraid of the position which the Ipswich Hospital would occupy in the return.

Mr. GRIFFITH said it was now some time since he had last asked the Premier about the blacks in Thornborough. He had since received letters and other communications on the subject, stating that private persons had been put to great expense in maintaining the blacks, but he wished to ask again whether the Government had done anything more.

The PREMIER said that nothing more had been done since he last spoke.

Mr. FOOTE said it was hardly fair to let the hon. member for Stanley off scot-free in reference to the Ipswich Hospital. That institution spoke for itself. The returns for the last quarter showed that there was £1,000 to the credit of the committee. The report stated that the committee had not spent one penny on grog, but it did not follow that none had been used or that the hospital was without grog. If wanted, it would be found. He believed the institution was working very well, and he presumed all applicants were received. He wished that outside patients were treated with a little more kindness, and not harassed with objections and strict inquiries as to whether they could afford to pay. The committee had, he believed, been unfortunate with their doctors in times past, and he regretted that they did not give their last doctor a little more remuneration and retain him. The hon. member for Stanley said the hospital had got into the hands of "white-chokers." He did not know exactly what gentlemen the hon. member wished to indicate, but it struck him that a white choker would have a very official and modifying influence upon the appearance of the hon. member.

Mr. DICKSON said he understood the Premier to say that in the country districts the amount for relief boards and the amount for hospitals were dealt with separately. The Auditor-General's report, however, showed that, with the exception of Brisbane, the amounts for both purposes were in all cases disbursed under the head of "Hospital." Was it the practice in the country districts for the hospital committees to administer the affairs of both the hospital and the relief board?

The PREMIER said he was not in a position to give more precise information as to how those affairs were administered at the present time. The matter did not come under his personal knowledge; but, so far as he remembered, he thought the funds were generally administered in country districts by the police magistrate. Sometimes, however, other arrangements were made; as in the case of Maryborough, for instance.

As the hon. gentleman had said, no doubt a large amount was administered by the hospital committees instead of by the police magistrates.

Mr. McLEAN said that, as a rather large amount was administered by the hospital committees, he would like to know whether they kept distinct accounts for the hospital and for the relief board votes, or if the relief board vote was used for the hospital, when that vote did not prove sufficient. A distinct account of the relief board vote from that of the hospital should be kept.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that he saw a vote for a benevolent asylum at Rockhampton. Was that an error, or was there a new institution? It used to be a benevolent society, with an allowance of £400 a year, in addition to an allowance of £400 to the so-called relief board. Was that the old or a new one?

The PREMIER: A new one.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1882-3, a sum not exceeding £3,355 for Medical Officers. There were a few slight alterations in the amounts; officers were required at Herberston and Hughenden, and there was an increase of £50 for Townsville.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1882-3, a sum not exceeding £900 for the Central Board of Health. An increase was necessary, on account of the large number of new boards.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked if the local boards of health were paid as well as the Central Board of Health?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked if that was not an innovation?

The PREMIER: No; that has been the system all along.

Mr. BEATTIE asked if he was to understand that the non-official members of local boards of health were paid?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. BEATTIE said that then all those members of boards round Brisbane could have a meeting every week, and make a nice little salary. Why should the aldermen in the various towns, who composed a portion of the local boards, not be paid if ordinary individuals were paid? He knew that some professional gentlemen in Brisbane, who happened to be members of another Chamber, did not receive any pay, and they were considered efficient members. The consequence was that the Central Board of Health lost their advice and the benefit of their experience. He thought it was a great hardship. It was the first time that he knew that fees were paid on the local boards of health out of that vote.

Mr. DICKSON asked what was the necessity for the increase? Were there more boards?

The PREMIER: Yes; more boards.

Mr. DICKSON said he should like to know who the secretary of the Central Board of Health was. Further, he should like to know what was now being done with the building which was erected for a smallpox hospital. Was there any provision for a caretaker, or for its maintenance in fit condition, in case of a threatened visit of that scourge?

Mr. FERGUSON asked if he was to understand, by the answer of the hon. the Premier to

the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, that the unofficial members of boards of health received pay?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. FERGUSON said that at Rockhampton, of the board of which he had been a member for the last year or two, he did not know of any member getting pay; he did not himself. If it was the rule all over the colony, the boards should be treated all alike. It was new to him that the members were paid. He had thought the central board was paid, but not the local boards.

The PREMIER said that it was also new to him, when a member of the Enoggera Board, he thought, came before him to be paid. He had thought a good deal about the matter before paying him. He thought himself that members of boards should work without being paid, but he believed that there was some difficulty in getting them to do so. The matter required a great deal of consideration.

Mr. BEATTIE said that he knew the matter, as the Premier had said, required a great deal of consideration, because the boards often came into antagonism with the local authorities in divisions. He received as many communications from the Breakfast Creek Board of Health as would keep a secretary going for one week out of every four in the month, and with reference to matters that could be arranged in one minute by the board of health. What else was that body for? He had once gone to the Central Board of Health and pointed out that the local boards did not understand their duties. If there was a nuisance, they should act and have it removed; but instead of that it must cause a lot of correspondence with the divisional board, and two or three days were wasted before the nuisance was removed. Now that he found that the members were paid for their attendance at meetings, he could understand that they were very fond of holding meetings. When he next got such a communication he should want to know all about the matter. If they had the fortune to come across a dead bullock lying in a road, and wrote to the chairman of a division about having it removed, and a letter went back telling them to do their duty and have it removed, the people were being poisoned in the meantime, whilst the board were getting the advantage of the fees.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that he considered it a very bad precedent that the members of the Central Board of Health should be paid for their services. In other towns in the colony—he would take Ipswich, for instance—the corporation inspector looked after the health of the town without any cost to the Government; but when it became known that fees were paid to some persons, the only thing the Government could expect would be the establishment of a local board of health, the members of which would go in for payment also. Members of such boards ought to be glad enough to do the work in the same way as aldermen performed their duties, without fee or reward.

Mr. McLEAN said that the Premier had not answered the questions of the hon. member for Enoggera as to who was the secretary of the Central Board of Health, and whether he held any other appointment; also whether the smallpox hospital was to be entirely abandoned, or if anyone would be appointed to look after it, as there was no sum on the Estimates for the purpose.

The PREMIER said that Mr. Arthur Rawlins was the Secretary to the Central Board of Health, but he could not say if he had any other employment. He had no other Government appoint-

ment, to his knowledge. A sergeant of police would occupy and look after the smallpox hospital.

Mr. BEATTIE said that no doubt the duties of the secretary had increased very much, as wherever the Health Act was brought into operation and a local board was appointed a great deal of correspondence took place. The secretary ought, therefore, to have a fair salary—sufficient for him to live upon. What he objected to was that when a notification was sent to a municipality like Brisbane to form a local board of health, and it did so, the secretary was paid out of the ratepayers' money by the council; but when a board was formed outside a municipality the members exacted fees for every meeting from the Government, the chairman acting as secretary and everything else. In the municipalities the ratepayers paid for the secretary, whose duties were extensive, and also for an inspector of nuisances. He did not complain about that, but he did not see why the one should be paid out of the ratepayers' money and the other out of the general revenue.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that he did not understand the remarks about communications between the Central Board of Health and the local boards. They had nothing of the kind at Ipswich so far as he was aware, nor did they recognise any such authority. What the honourable member (Mr. Macfarlane) had stated was quite true. The inspector was the board of health in himself; he was paid by the corporation, and he had nothing to do with anybody else. The clerk acted in that capacity as a part of his business. In his (Mr. O'Sullivan's) opinion, the business outside the towns should in the same way be placed in the hands of the divisional boards, and the clerks should act as secretaries, receiving a share of payment according to the work that they performed. He was sure that the debate would do good, because it would enable the Premier to look into the matter and do away with such pensioners upon the State funds. It appeared to him as if somebody was established down in Brisbane to be secretary to the Central Board at £150 a year, and he was sorry to hear from the Premier that the gentleman in question had nothing else to do.

The PREMIER: I did not say he had nothing else to do.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that he thought it was a rotten affair altogether. The matter was one which ought to be in the hands of the municipalities and the divisional boards, each of which ought to manage its own affairs within its own limits. Outside characters ought to go and earn an honest living.

Mr. BEATTIE said that he could understand the correspondence between the boards being new to the hon. member for Stanley, because Ipswich had not yet been brought under the Health Act, or they would have very soon got a notification to appoint a local board. He was surprised to hear the Colonial Secretary say that he knew nothing about the secretary, because the hon. gentleman was chairman of the Central Board of Health.

The PREMIER: I did not say that.

Mr. BEATTIE: I understood the hon. gentleman to say that he did not know anything about what the secretary did.

The PREMIER: What I said was that I did not know of his having any other Government employment. He may make a thousand a year besides, in some other way.

Mr. BEATTIE said that when the Health Act was brought into force there was a very

great deal more work for the Health Officer to do than when he held a dual position as Secretary to the Relief Board also. Then he objected to that officer holding the dual position, but now as his work was increased he ought to have a greater salary. He was not anxious to see people do work for nothing. Aldermen of the city of Brisbane, from their position, were not entitled to receive fees. When a board was appointed outside a municipality, those gentlemen could get fees from the Government for every meeting. There were members in that Committee who were members of local boards, and did not get fees. That was a great hardship. If there were fees paid to boards which members of Parliament could attend to outside their duties, they were perfectly entitled to receive fees.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that if there was a scramble he agreed with the hon. member that they should all be in it. He was inclined to propose the reduction of the whole item. That would save the scramble, and the hon. Premier would know how to act.

The PREMIER said he knew how to act. The Government were not in a position to bring in a remedy that year, but there was no doubt that the machinery did not work very well. He did not know until he appointed the Ithaca Divisional Board that the local boards of health were paid. He had thought it was all honorary work. The hon. member for Rockhampton thought they were not paid; but he held in his hand a return of what had been paid for the last year:—Woolongabba, £240; Milton, £140; Nundah, £90; Breakfast Creek, £147; Bulimba, £56; Ithaca, £7; Central Board, £187. He did not know what would be the effect of stopping payment to those local boards, but he did not think it would be very disastrous to the colony. He was perfectly prepared to take instructions from the Committee that the payment of local boards should cease. There was a scare on account of the expected importation of certain diseases which justified the action taken at the time by his hon. colleague. He thought he would be able to do without payment of fees; he did not believe in them. With regard to the payment of fees to the Central Board, nearly all the members were medical gentlemen, and he did not think they would act unless they got their fees. He would himself move that the amount be reduced by £200.

Question—That only £700 be granted—put.

Mr. FERGUSON said he was pleased to have the information he had got upon the question, as it confirmed what he said before, that the payment was only to members of boards near Brisbane. The Rockhampton Board of Health had appointed a health officer who was paid £200 per annum by the municipality. He thought local boards were only a farce as at present constituted. They had no power to act without consulting the Central Board of Health, and then they had to wait three or four months before they received an answer; even then it would be unsatisfactory. There were several matters that had to be referred to the Central Board of Health because the local board had no power to deal with them without their sanction. There were several matters of very great importance in the Rockhampton district alone, which they had no power to deal with without consulting the board of health.

Mr. GROOM said that, so far as the Toowoomba Board of Health was concerned, the members had never been paid or sought to be paid. What the hon. member for Rockhampton had said was perfectly true. The Central Board of Health threatened that if they did not take the action they recommended they would come within the municipality and do it, and charge them with all the expenditure in connection with

it. They were then bound to comply with their conditions, and establish a board of health to carry out the recommendations which had been imposed upon them so far as they could. As the hon. member for Rockhampton had said, the local board was altogether under the control of the central board. He was surprised to hear the payments read by the hon. Premier, as he thought the people of Brisbane were more patriotic. Aldermen were obliged to give their services for nothing, and members of boards of health ought to be in the same category.

Mr. BEATTIE said he hoped the Committee would understand that there were people in Brisbane who were in favour of the members of the Board of Health getting fees. The amount of money the municipality had expended in carrying out the instructions of the Local Board of Health was something enormous. The remarks he made were with reference to boards outside the city of Brisbane. The aldermen who composed the Board of Health in the city of Brisbane received no pay. They were bound to keep a secretary and an inspector, and they had to be paid; but they were paid out of the city rates, while he found the members of other boards of health paid out of the general revenue. The Breakfast Creek Board of Health consisted of two members and a secretary, and he found they were paid £140 a year. It was preposterous. He knew some of that was doubtless required for the removal of nuisances, but £140 was a ridiculous sum to give them.

Mr. FRASER said he was a member of a board of health and he had not yet experienced the pleasure of getting anything for his services in that capacity. Local boards of health were obliged to pay for the services of a clerk for an office and for an inspector. Constant complaints of nuisances were coming in, and they had to incur some expense in attending to them. He was not going to justify the payment of the members of the board, but he knew they were paid in some cases. They were now passing an amended Divisional Boards Bill, in which he saw ample provision to enable the members of the various divisional boards to deal with all sanitary matters in their districts, and he hoped when that Bill was passed they would see and hear the last of those local boards of health. They were appointed every six months, and it would be a very easy matter for the Colonial Secretary, at the end of the six months, to let the matter drop, and allow the divisional boards to take upon themselves the sanitary affairs of their districts. As he said the other night, the local boards of health were practically helpless: they could only point out the nuisances to the divisional boards, as they had not the means or the power to do anything themselves. The local authorities were the proper authorities to take all sanitary matters in hand.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the more the item was ventilated the more they saw that those boards of health were merely annoyances to the local bodies. The whole amount should be struck out and the money voted for contingencies, when if smallpox or any such epidemic broke out the Premier or the Government would be in a position to deal with it. The money should not be wasted in that way.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that a sum not exceeding £2,000 be voted for Public Institutions, in aid of schools of art and mining schools.

Mr. KINGSFORD said he wished to say a word with respect to schools of art and mining schools. Since the reduction of the endowment or bonus of £1 per £1 subscribed for those institutions to 10s. per £1 subscribed, there had been very little

advance in the number of those educational institutions. Scarcely any fresh ones had been started. He would suggest to the Colonial Secretary that the old system should be reverted to, and that, instead of decreasing the amount of the bonus to 10s. per £1, they should at all events up to £100 adopt the old system and give £1 for £1. He could name not a few districts in which the people were destitute of anything beyond the public-house for their educational improvement—save on the Sunday, of course—and they would willingly subscribe for such institutions as were referred to in the vote before them if the Government would meet their subscriptions in a liberal manner. He trusted the Colonial Secretary would take that into consideration, and as soon as possible bring the matter before Parliament; and he hoped the House would go back to the good old times when £1 for £1 was given towards the establishment of those desirable institutions.

Mr. DICKSON drew attention to the note at the bottom of the page referring to that vote. It said the subsidy was not to exceed 10s. for every £1 subscribed, nor was any grant to exceed £100. He thought the time had arrived, seeing that their circumstances had so much improved financially, when they could afford to deal more liberally with schools of art and similar institutions throughout the colony. While he should be glad to see the suggestion of the hon. member for South Brisbane carried out, he would go further and say that the subsidy should not stop at £100. They adopted that principle to a greater extent with their hospitals, and he was of opinion that it was a desirable thing to provide schools of art and mining schools throughout the colony, as they should provide healthy nourishment for the mind as well as for the body. He thought, therefore, they should increase the subsidy given at present. £100 was a miserable pittance to give if they desired to see those institutions increased to any extent. He might, perhaps, be looking rather far ahead; but he trusted the time would soon come when they would have a large public library established in the metropolis, such as they had in Victoria, and in the meantime they should endeavour to advance the cause of the reading and thinking portion of their population by placing within their reach a means of getting access to works of literature which they could not have at the present time, and which their schools of art would not supply unless they existed in larger numbers and received a larger endowment from the State than they did at present.

Mr. BROOKES said he would, with the senior member for Enoggera, be glad if the Government could see their way to re-establish the plan of giving £1 for £1 to those institutions. There were no doubt a good many places in the colony where it was difficult to establish literary institutions. As an instance, he might mention Lutwyche. Five or six years ago an attempt was made to establish a school of arts there, and he did not know of any place that was more in want of one. There was a considerable population, including a number of young people, and it was exactly the place where a school of arts would do a great deal of good; but the people were unable to obtain the necessary funds, and they got two public-houses instead. Now, he did not believe that anyone, whatever his opinions on temperance or social reform might be, would prefer to see two public-houses to a school of arts. If the old plan of giving aid were re-established, it would be the means of supplying the people of Lutwyche and other places with a rational mode of passing their evenings. It was well known that in mental matters the supply must exceed the demand; the demand followed the supply. He hoped the Committee would see their way

to go back to the old state of affairs of giving £1 for £1, including the amount subscribed for buildings.

Mr. NORTON said there were many small places for which much more could be said than the place mentioned by the hon. member. In places such as the hon. member referred to, people had an opportunity of going to the School of Arts in Brisbane and taking books home with them. In the bush it was very different. The hon. member had said that although there was no school of arts there were two public-houses in Lutwyche. He hoped the hon. member did not mean to imply anything by that, as he (Mr. Norton) had been staying at one of those public-houses for the last week, and a more respectable hotel he had never stopped at in his life. With regard to the school of arts, it was three years since the subsidy was reduced, and he protested against it at the time. There was not so much necessity for subsidising the large institutions as the small ones that were not able to keep themselves. In towns there were a great many people who, by subscribing a small sum, could keep up their school of arts, but in the country it was not so—the people were dependent upon themselves. They had no theatres or concerts to go to to pass away an evening, and what little reading matter they had was got through in a very short time, and they had nothing left to fall back upon. He knew of one place where there were only 100 people, yet they had a school of arts. He thought, now that the country was in a more prosperous condition, and the Government had a surplus revenue, that they might revert to the old system, or at any rate apply it to the small places which were in isolated positions, and were not able to help themselves.

Mr. ALLAN said that, having been connected for many years with schools of art, he could bear out what had fallen from the last speaker. As president of schools of art in the neighbouring colonies and Warwick he knew the great disabilities under which they laboured from having such small assistance, and the trouble they had in collecting subscriptions. The object of the schools of art in the country districts was simply to get together a few books to enable working men to have some other place than the public-house to go to. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would see his way to give £1 for every £1 subscribed. He was sure the money could not be expended more profitably.

Mr. BAYNES said he fully endorsed what the two last speakers had said, and their arguments applied in every way to Gayndah and Nanango. Both those towns had young institutions that had struggled into existence, and they felt it a hardship not to receive the bonus that used to be given. He hoped the Premier would see his way to concede to the general feeling of the Committee, and re-establish the practice of giving £1 for £1.

Mr. FERGUSON said he was of the same opinion as the hon. member who had just sat down. The School of Arts Committee at Rockhampton had decided to put up a building to cost £4,500. He knew they would have to borrow the money; the interest would be a great strain on the institution, and there would be a great struggle to meet it and pay the principal sum back. He should certainly like to see the old system reverted to of giving £1 for £1.

The PREMIER said he differed in opinion entirely from hon. members who had spoken, and he considered that, if any stranger coming here visited the country districts and was told the great advantages schools of art had in receiving 50 per cent. on the amount raised,

he would say that the Government acted in a most munificent manner. The question was thoroughly thrashed out in 1880, and that was the general opinion then. Hon. members must consider that that was not the only advantage those institutions derived. They got their newspapers carried to all parts of the colony at the Government expense. That ought to be taken into consideration. The great bulk of the people of the colony could not take advantage of those institutions, and they had to pay for their own newspapers and reading matter. He did not think the request to grant £1 for £1 was reasonable, and he certainly thought those schools of art could not be put upon the same footing as the educational establishments of the colony. He saw the sense of the Committee was against him, but he had expressed his own opinion undoubtedly against the proposal. With regard to granting a subsidy of £1 for £1 on money raised for building purposes, he should oppose that still more strongly. That was a question that must come before the House in a special vote, and the money could not be taken out of that item.

Mr. KELLETT said he remembered in 1880, when the matter was ventilated before, the reduction was only carried by a majority of one, and that was caused by the mistake of one member who did not understand the question. He entirely agreed with the remarks that had been made by other hon. members, and he thought that if they went back to the old system of giving £1 for £1 up to £200 they would not be going out of the way.

Mr. BROOKES said he never supposed that a work like that mentioned by the hon. member (Mr. Ferguson) would come within the compass of the vote, nor did he mean that it should when he spoke of Government assistance being given to the erection of buildings. He only wished to show the direction in which he thought it would be wise for the Government to go with reference to those institutions. As to the remark of the Premier that the subject had been thrashed out in the House, it had never been thrashed out while he (Mr. Brookes) had been in it; and, if they were to accept the Premier's dictum on a matter of that kind, he wondered how many subjects there were on which he would be able to express an opinion. No subject was thrashed out as far as he was concerned, for every subject was constantly taking new shapes. A remark of that kind, therefore, went for nothing. He should be very pleased were the Premier to take a view more in accordance with the spirit of the times. Look at the immense sums of money they spent on the Police and in the Administration of Justice! They never begrudged anything on either of those heads. A little more liberality towards the literary and mental welfare of the colony would be money most judiciously expended. He knew that bushmen had to pay for their own papers, and the Premier seemed to think it a great thing that they had their papers carried free. He (Mr. Brookes) looked upon that as one of the wisest ways of spending the public revenue. If the bushmen and stockmen had to pay a heavy postage on their newspapers, it would not compensate for the evils likely to arise from the ignorance and want of information which the gratuitous carrying of newspapers tended to dispel. He remembered a remark made by a lady travelling in France, that there was not a town in that country of from 5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants where there was not a really excellent free library. He was not going to say that they ought to have free public libraries in every town in this colony, but there was no good reason why there should not be, and if such a scheme were set on foot it would have his warmest

support. He regretted to hear the Premier express himself in a manner which he could not but regard as behind the times. The more intelligent the people were, the more easily they could be governed; the more abundant their access to sources of sound information, the better it would be for every interest in the colony. It had been said by a Minister some days ago that there was a certain class of newspapers which published lies. How were the public to distinguish between lies and truth unless they had access to copious sources of sound information? He had not a very great opinion of newspapers himself, and he believed that if people read more good, solid, substantial books, and trusted less to newspapers, their opinions would be sounder than they were. It was for those reasons he regretted that the Premier should show his unwillingness to accept what seemed the plain opinion of the Committee—that they should revert to the system that for every £1 subscribed £1 should be given by the Government.

Mr. GRIMES asked whether subscription^s towards the building of a school of arts would be entitled to a subsidy of the amount named?

The PREMIER replied that that had not been the case hitherto.

Mr. GRIMES said he hoped the system would be extended to subscriptions given for the erection of schools of art in country districts, to the extent of at least £100 a year.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he had assisted somewhat in the erection of schools of art, and his experience had been that schools of art really did not assist in the education of the working classes of the colony. In Ipswich the School of Arts, as far as he could see, was played out, and had been so for a long time. If any man went there and wanted a book, he could not get it unless he was a subscriber. Books were so widely scattered now that one could find a library in nearly every house in the colony. He agreed with the hon. member (Mr. Brookes) that it was very desirable that the people should be more intelligent; but he did not think the hon. member had established the fact that they had become more intelligent by means of schools of art. School of arts might be of some use in the bush, or in places where there was a small population; and he would go so far as to say that the Schools of Art at Ipswich was by no means so objectionable now as it was some time ago. Formerly, every man who wanted to abuse his neighbour went there; but he was happy to say that during the last two or three years there had been nothing of that kind. It was, however, a place for public meetings of any description, and there was only one little room in the building for a reading-room. He did not know the number of members now, but at one time he believed they did not number more than about thirty. He was not so much inclined to vote against the subsidy now as he was some years ago, when the institutions were so much abused as to become almost disgraceful. With regard to the proposed new building which the hon. member for Rockhampton said was about to be erected in that town at a cost of £4,500, he was very glad to hear of it; and he should advise the hon. member to adopt the same plan as the trustees of the Brisbane Grammar School were adopting, and borrow the money at 5 per cent. for twenty years. He hoped that all institutions would be supplied with funds for building purposes in the same way.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that in that case the committee of the Rockhampton School of Arts would be able to give better security for repay-

ment than the trustees of the Grammar School could, seeing that the latter had nothing to offer but their endowment. He was not inclined to oppose the vote now, although he was satisfied that the real working man derived not the slightest advantage from it. There was scarcely one labouring man who was now a subscriber to the Ipswich School of Arts, and there were plenty of local libraries and private collections of books where a man could get a book to read without paying a guinea. There was no such want in any of the populous towns, though schools of art might be useful in the outside districts. With regard to free libraries, he would give any assistance in his power towards the establishment of places where the working man could get a book to read for nothing. It was a strange argument advanced by the hon. member for North Brisbane, that because a school of arts was denied to Lutwyche two public-houses were started. He held that there was plenty of room for both in the same town. He was happy to bear testimony to the fact that during the last two or three years the Ipswich School of Arts had been much better conducted than it was previously, though he maintained still that it was more used as a source of profit than for its legitimate purpose. Anyone could hire the hall for 30s. or £2, which was little enough, and such places tended to fall under the management of little cliques who made the affair a little personal property.

Mr. FERGUSON said the hon. member for Stanley was under a misapprehension if he thought the committee of the Rockhampton School of Arts intended to borrow the £4,500 from the Government. When he spoke in favour of increasing the endowment from 10s. to £1 for every £1, he referred only to the amounts raised by subscription for membership, and not to money raised for building purposes. The committee intended to raise in Rockhampton the amount they required for building purposes.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was glad to hear that the hon. member for Stanley was not going to oppose the vote. The hon. member was evidently coming round, as three years ago he was very much opposed to it. It was evident from what he had said that the hon. member was not a member of the Ipswich School of Arts, because otherwise he would have known more of the working of it than he seemed to know. The hon. member said that some time ago there were only about thirty members, but he (Mr. Macfarlane) never remembered that time, and there were now between eighty and ninety subscribers. He would also point out that nearly all those who used the School of Arts reading-room were of the working class, as the hon. member would see if he took the trouble to visit it. Seeing the very general opinion expressed by hon. members, he hoped the Premier would see his way to go back to the old system. At the time when the subsidy was reduced hon. members were inclined to economise, and salaries were being kept down; but now, with a large surplus on hand, the position of the Government was very different, and he thought the old rate of subsidy might be restored.

Mr. GROOM said the time was coming when the Government would have to exercise a more stringent supervision over those institutions than they had exercised hitherto. That was the conclusion he had come to after considerable experience in the House with regard to votes in connection with such institutions. In certain cases in connection with the public hospitals the Government had the power—and he thought it exceedingly wise that they should have it—of taking the hospitals over and placing them

under a committee, half of the members of which were nominated by the Government and half by the subscribers. The same system if applied to schools of art would be a good one. An institution he was once connected with had £700 granted to them by that House on condition that a similar amount was raised by private subscriptions. The amount was raised and the grant obtained, but now that institution was in such a state that some of the subscribers suggested it should be sold. That was an instance which showed that an institution intended as a benefit had become ruined, in consequence of what the hon. member for Stanley called getting into the hands of a narrow-minded clique who could not see beyond their noses, and who had brought it to grief. If the Government were to have those institutions partly under their control, so as to nominate three members while the subscribers elected the same number, there would not be so much heard of their coming to grief. Otherwise they should be placed under the control of the municipal councils, as in Ipswich. He attributed a good deal of the success of that School of Arts to the fact that it was not under a clique but under the Municipal Council, which changed every year. He was sure that the Colonial Secretary would have to come down soon with a definite proposal to have those institutions under the control of the Government. He (Mr. Groom) believed that the system of schools of art had been productive of a great amount of good. The old country furnished many instances of self-taught men who owed their success to schools of art, and in the colonies there was a fair share of men who were not ashamed to confess their indebtedness to them. Still the system was liable to abuse. If the Government would exercise more control, less would be heard about their coming to grief. As was pretty well known, he was in favour of the £1 for £1 endowment. When the Government proposed that that should not be continued, he proposed a series of resolutions for its continuation. It was met by an amendment proposing that 10s. for £1 be subscribed for the endowment, and the amended proposal was carried by a majority of one—one gentleman who had intended to vote for the original motion, and who told the House that he did not know he was voting for the lower amount of 10s. The change was therefore owing to an accident.

The PREMIER : The motion was for 10s.

Mr. GROOM said he thought not, though he was speaking from memory. An amendment was accepted by the Government for 10s., and he was advised to press for £1; but the lower amount was carried by a majority of one, as he had described. He hoped the hon. the Premier would take the suggestion into consideration.

The PREMIER said that he had not altered his opinion since the time when he had proposed the reduction in 1879. He well remembered the circumstances then, and the terms of the discussion. The amount of 10s. was actually lost in division. However, that did not matter. He acknowledged at once that but for the hardness of the times and the depressed state of the colony he would not have advocated the reduction. He saw that the Committee was entirely against him in the matter; and he believed that if the £1 for £1 subsidy was proposed by resolution in the Committee it would be carried by a large majority. If it was carried, some limit should be fixed. It would be unfair to some institutions to grant £1 for every £1 to every school of arts. Institutions in large towns and cities were better entitled to it than those in small ones. He proposed, in order to meet the views of hon. members and that they might have an opportunity of discussing the

question, that he should place an increase of £2,000 on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. DICKSON said that if the present note in the Estimates—"Subsidy not to exceed 10s. for every £1 subscribed, nor any grant to exceed £100"—were not altered he was of opinion that the Auditor-General would have to report upon the granting of £1 for £1 as being in contravention to the vote passed by the House. Would not the hon. the Premier alter the note?

Mr. BROOKES said that, as he might not otherwise have an opportunity of saying a word to the hon. members for Rockhampton, he would remind them that it would be just as well that they should not get into difficulties with their proposed new school of arts, as the Brisbane institution had got into. Some years ago there was a debt of about £7,000 on that institution, owing to a private mortgage, which was foreclosed. The consequence was that a very suitable building with 132 feet frontage to Queen street, and 75 feet to Creek street, was sold for little more than that sum, or a quarter of its present value. He would suggest to the gentlemen interested in the Rockhampton institution that the time might come when they would have to bring in a Bill similar to that relating to the Brisbane Grammar School.

Mr. GRIMES said that he would like to understand whether the hon. the Premier would extend the granting of subsidies to subscriptions raised for the purpose of building schools of art. There was some doubt about that in the district he (Mr. Grimes) represented. An endeavour was there made to raise a subscription for the building of a school of arts, but it was not known if they could receive a subsidy from the Government, and the thing fell through. If they could get some subsidy from the Government they would be able to manage it, and he had no doubt many country districts would be only too happy to adopt the course, if they were entitled to do so.

The PREMIER said that the vote only dealt with the subscriptions to the institutions.

Mr. DICKSON said that he did not think the vote should pass in its present form, as there would be nothing on their records to show that the Committee had decided to revert to the original sum of £1 for £1, and from £100 to £200. The foot-note clearly stated that the "subsidy was not to exceed 10s. for every £1 subscribed, nor any grant to exceed £100." He preferred that the Government should move an amendment to it, and either alter the foot-note or alter the amount.

The PREMIER said that the discussion was quite useless, as by altering the foot-note they would increase the vote. He asked the ruling of the Chairman upon the point, if that could be done in committee?

The CHAIRMAN : It has been done in committee.

The PREMIER asked if an instance had occurred where an amount had been increased in committee by the alteration of a foot-note increasing the amount—that was the point?

The CHAIRMAN was understood to say that he did not think it would make any alteration in the vote.

Mr. DICKSON moved that the words "ten shillings" be omitted with a view of inserting "£1," and that "£100" be omitted at the end of the line with a view of inserting "£200."

The PREMIER said the only practicable way in which the vote could be carried was as it stood. He believed he had said that he would carry out the wish of the Committee and bring in a supplementary estimate to the amount required. That would get over the difficulty.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The foot-note stands the same.

The PREMIER said he understood the Committee to give instructions that the amount should be 20s., and he would carry it out, though he asked them to absolve him from any responsibility in the matter.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that even if they got the supplementary vote they would be limited by the foot-note if it was left as it stood. That would be absurd, and would only cause unnecessary complications. If the Premier was sincere he would withdraw the vote altogether, and bring it in as a supplementary estimate.

The PREMIER said that he would not do that. Surely no member of the Committee doubted his sincerity in the matter! The supplementary estimate would state that the 10s. in the £1 was to make up the subsidy to the original amount of 20s.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said that he would like to see it plainly expressed, to the effect that the alteration of the foot-note would increase the estimate before the Committee. He took the foot-note to be a direction as to the distribution of the amount, and if the sum was insufficient the Premier had promised to bring in an additional amount on the Supplementary Estimates. To allow the vote to pass in its present form would, however, be very improper, and therefore he would ask the ruling of the Chairman, whether the alteration in the foot-note of 10s. to £1, and from £100 to £200, would prevent the Committee from discussing it?

Mr. GROOM said that the question was a very simple one. If they altered the amount and increased the figures at the end of the foot-note they would increase also the amount to be received, which the Committee could not do; or at any rate he had never seen it done yet. The way suggested by the Premier was the proper one, and the Auditor-General would clearly understand the wishes of Parliament and act upon them. He would inform the Premier that the old foot-note in 1878 made the maximum amount £200.

The PREMIER: No amount was given at all.

Mr. GROOM said he knew that the Brisbane institution received £200, and because it had such a large number of subscribers it was only fair that it should be so. It was, of course, quite in the power of the House to limit the amount to £200.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said that the Chairman had not answered his question, and he would not let the matter pass in that way. He put his question in courteous language, and with all due deference to the Chair he expected an answer whether it would be in order or not to discuss the alteration.

Mr. WALSH: He has ruled already.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said that it had not been ruled very definitely. He wished to know whether the alterations he had mentioned in the foot-note would be regarded as an alteration in the body of the Estimates? He wanted to know for his own future guidance, without respect to anyone else in the Committee. He submitted that he was entitled to the decision of the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN said that in his opinion the increase from 10s. to £1, and from £100 to £200, would be an increase to certain societies, and was therefore not admissible.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Is it an increase in the estimate? Do you regard it as such? He was sorry to give the hon. Chairman so much

trouble, but—inadvertently, possibly—that gentleman stated in his answer to his (Mr. Macdonald-Paterson's) question that it would increase the grant to certain societies. That was not his question. The question he asked was whether in the opinion of the Chairman the alteration of the foot-note would increase the estimate

The CHAIRMAN said that if the hon. member wished to know whether in his (Mr. Scott's) opinion the alteration of the foot-note would increase the item of £2,000, he must say it would not; that item would remain the same.

Mr. DICKSON asked whether it was the intention of the Government to pay £1 for £1 upon the amount subscribed to the extent of £200, or £300? There was some uncertainty about the matter. For his own part he should prefer to see the subsidy untrammelled by any limit.

The PREMIER said he had already explained two or three times that he would bring in a supplementary estimate making the amount of the subsidy £1 for £1, and not to exceed £200 in any case.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the sum of £16,080 be voted for Miscellaneous Services. There were several increases set down, and there was one new item—that for a marble statue of Her Majesty the Queen. That was in accordance with an arrangement made with Mr. Marshall Wood, who, he learnt from late intelligence from home, was now dead. In order that the Committee might understand what that arrangement was he would read the letter in which the agreement was embodied. The letter was as follows:—

"SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 17th ultimo, and to your subsequent interviews with the Colonial Secretary upon the subject of the erection of a marble statue of Her Majesty the Queen in the vicinity of the Parliamentary Buildings, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that, as Sir Arthur Palmer is of opinion that it is advisable to place on record the terms on which your proposals have been made, he desires me to state that the arrangement, as he at present understands it, is that the entire cost of the terra-cotta statue already erected is to be defrayed by yourself, the Government merely providing the pedestal upon which it stands; that this statue is to remain in its present position for the inspection of members of both Houses of Parliament, and the general public, until after the end of next session; that the Government undertake to place a sum of 3,000 guineas upon the Estimates for the ensuing year for the erection of a marble statue of Her Majesty similar to that now erected in the less costly material, which, in the event of the vote passing the House, you undertake to execute for that sum; and that it is distinctly understood that beyond placing the amount on the Estimates, and supporting the item, the Government undertakes no further responsibility, nor will they consider themselves in any way liable for any expenditure beyond what they have already incurred, should the item be rejected by the Committee of Supply."

He had heard nothing from the executors of Mr. Marshall Wood to show whether or not that gentleman had taken any action with regard to the statue, and he thought that if any action had been taken and the statue had come into existence he would have heard of it. He put the item on the Estimates for the purpose of keeping faith with the sculptor, and he believed the best thing the Committee could do would be to pass the item, for he did not think it would come to anything, as he did not believe the statue was made before Mr. Marshall Wood died, and the agreement he had read was made on the distinct understanding that the statue should be made by Mr. Wood and by nobody else. There was another item on the estimate, that for "Loans to Cemeteries." It appeared on the Estimates for the first time for several sessions; but he had found from the

frequent claims which it was almost impossible for the Government to resist that it was a very useful vote. Cemeteries required some assistance at the time they were not self-supporting, and he had put it down on the Estimates, so that the money could be granted under the Local Works Loans Act of 1880.

Mr. KELLETT said he wished to draw attention to the item "Agricultural and Horticultural Societies." That item was in the same position as the item for schools of art which they had just discussed. The subsidy upon the item he referred to was reduced to 10s. per £1 at the same time as the other and for the same reasons, and he hoped the Colonial Secretary would see his way to deal with it in the same way as he intended to deal with the item for schools of art and mining schools.

The PREMIER said he would adopt the same principle with regard to agricultural and horticultural societies that he intended to adopt in the case of the vote they had just passed. It was upon the vote for those societies that the whole debate and previous action was taken before, and he would bring in a supplementary estimate for those societies for £1,000.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether the hon. Premier would tell the Committee upon what principle the allowances were made to clerks of petty sessions under the Electoral Rolls Act?

The PREMIER said that the bench of magistrates recommended the amount to be paid to the clerks, and that amount was always revised by the Government. Of course great reductions took place, and the Colonial Secretary got the best information as to the amount of work done by each clerk.

Mr. H. PALMER said he was glad to see the item for loans to cemeteries. He knew of one board of trustees who were now much in want of funds to improve a cemetery. He was also glad to see that the Premier had assented to the vote for agricultural societies being augmented in the same way as the vote to schools of art. That would be much appreciated, especially in the country districts, and therefore he was glad that the Premier had assented to it in such a graceful manner.

Mr. McLEAN said he did not think the vote of £2,000 for cemeteries would work under the Local Works Loan Act of 1880, because in a large number of cases trustees of cemeteries would not be in a position to make the necessary annual payments. Money was required for cemeteries generally at the beginning, more particularly for fencing, preparing plans, and laying out the ground; and there was no income to speak of for a considerable time. He believed, therefore, that the same principle would have to be adopted as hitherto under the Cemeteries Act: the money would have to be given as money advanced by the Government. The proposed system would not work for a considerable time at all events, especially in the country districts, simply because there would be no money to pay the interest and principal. He would, therefore, like to ascertain from the Premier if it was his intention to insist that the money should be repaid under the provisions of the Local Works Loan Act; if so, there would be very few applications for it. He should like also to know if it was the intention of the Government to erect the marble statue of the Queen on the site of the present terra-cotta statue. In his opinion that site was a mistake, because it blocked up the principal gateway to the Parliamentary Buildings. The marble statue of the Queen at the Parliamentary Buildings in Melbourne was under cover, and he thought the Queensland statue should also be under cover. It ought to be

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erected in one of the public parks or inside the enclosure of the Parliamentary Buildings.

The PREMIER said that his opinion was that the statue ought to be erected in the gateway.

Mr. BAILEY said that, as the terra-cotta statue had its back to the loyal subjects of Her Majesty in that House, it was a very singular place to put it. If there was to be a statue of Her Majesty, it ought to be placed in such a position that her back should not be turned to the hon. members of that House. But Her Majesty lived in the hearts of her subjects, and in Queensland they required no lump of marble to arouse their loyalty and admiration for their Gracious Sovereign. That small sum of money—some £3,000 or £4,000—would be so many thousands wasted; it would be no practical benefit to anyone. They all respected and admired and were loyal to Her Majesty, and they did not want to go into any nonsense about her. They had plenty of ways of spending money without placing statues of Her Majesty in front of Parliament Houses. He hoped, therefore, that the item would be omitted. With respect to the loans to cemeteries he could speak with some experience. He would far rather see the amount put down as grants to cemeteries. In the country districts they often found that the death of a member of a family involved the family in great distress, through the expenses of funerals. After perhaps a long illness, and after great expenses had been incurred, the mainstay of the family, perhaps, gone—then came in a heavy bill for cemetery expenses. He thought that the least the Committee could do—if they were desirous of encouraging the decent burial of people—was to grant an occasional sum to cemeteries, and not by lending money make the establishment of cemeteries a profit and loss business. He hoped the Government would accept the suggestion he had made.

Mr. GROOM said he thought the sum put down was one of the best items on the Estimates. If there was one place more than another that ought to be kept in repair it was the place where they buried their dead. So far from trustees making burials a matter of profit and loss, they did nothing of the kind. He knew something of the duties of trustees of cemeteries, and he knew there were no ruinous bills sent to poor families. So far from that, there was a rule that if a family was too poor to pay the expenses of burial an order from one of the trustees to that effect would relieve them. He did not see how the poor man could be dragged into the matter at all. He regarded the vote as a very useful one. There were many country cemeteries where there was hardly a fence round them, and he considered that if there was one thing that ought to receive the attention of the Colonial Secretary it was certainly the vote before the Committee. The work of trustees was a labour of love, and they undertook to ornament the grounds and make them a place of public resort. He hoped the vote would remain, and he was sorry to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Wide Bay. In most of the towns he knew the trustees took a pride in their work; and he might say that had it not been for loans granted to the cemeteries of Brisbane, Toowoomba, and Ipswich they would never have been in the state in which they were now in. There was no profit or loss in the matter; but if there ever were a few pounds over, the money was generally devoted to improvement in the way of tree-planting and foot-paths.

Mr. PRICE said he approved of the vote. The cemetery in his district was in a disgraceful state, and he hoped it would be taken

better care of. He believed his hon. colleague (Mr. Bailey) was a trustee, and he could not congratulate him on the state of the grounds.

Mr. BAILEY said he was not a trustee of any cemetery, but he knew that there were many country people who thought the cemetery charges so high that they preferred to bury their dead in their own grounds. The cemetery that he knew most of was simply a fenced-in paddock, and it took all the money the trustees could raise to keep the grass burned and the timber felled from year to year; and to ask those trustees to borrow money was simple foolishness, as they could never repay it. He could safely say that, as at present conducted, cemeteries were not the places where poor people could bury their dead.

Mr. McLEAN said he happened to be one of the trustees of a cemetery, and he never found there was any pressure brought to bear upon poor people. He knew that numerous cases had occurred in which people had been buried and no payment had been made. The hon. member for Toowoomba had told them that the cemetery in that town received loans, but he did not say whether the trustees paid the loans back again. The trustees of his cemetery got a loan, but they never found themselves in a position to repay it. It took all they could get to pay the working expenses of the burying-ground at the present time. It was only making a false show to put the amount on the Estimates as loans, as they would never be paid.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was very glad to hear from the hon. member for Logan that the trustees of his cemetery were so very kind to those who required assistance, but unfortunately, from his own experience and observation, the trustees of all cemeteries were not alike. The hon. member forgot, besides, that there was a paupers' corner in every cemetery, and that poor people were put there. Hon. members said the trustees did not want to make a profit, but he remembered many years ago the case of a cemetery at Newtown, near Sydney, and it was not a very gratifying thing to hear the chairman of the trustees come forward on one occasion and express his gratification to his brother committee-men that the business had increased during the last twelve months so much that they were able to declare a dividend. The Government were themselves horrified when they heard it, and they took steps to close that cemetery. If that objectionable system did not exist of having paupers' ground in cemeteries he would not object to lending the money, but there was no probability of trustees repaying the money unless they made excessive charges upon those who were obliged to bury their dead. He remembered paying for a piece of ground five times over to bury five children in. He paid £2 14s. five times over for the same ground. That was in the cemetery respecting which the chairman declared the dividend. He hoped trustees would not adopt that system here.

Mr. BAYNES thought a matter like that under discussion should be treated with more gravity. He supposed those loans to cemeteries were put to the credit of a sinking fund.

Mr. KINGSFORD hoped the vote would not be disturbed, and that it would be used very largely for beautifying cemeteries. If there was a spot on earth that ought to be looked after, God's acre ought to be most beautiful.

Mr. McLEAN said that, whatever might be the case in Brisbane or elsewhere, he could assure the Committee that there was no "paupers' corner" in the Beenleigh Cemetery. The cemetery referred to by the hon. member (Mr. Beattie) must have been a private speculation; such a system could not possibly occur in connection with any of the Queensland cemeteries.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said it seemed ridiculous that the Committee should be wasting three-quarters of an hour or more with the trivialities that were at present occupying it. What did it matter to them, sitting there as a legislative assembly, whether a corner of a burial-ground should be ornamented or not. The small things they were talking about were fit only for a cemetery board or a parish vestry.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said there was a good deal more involved in the matter than the hon. member (Mr. Weld-Blundell) seemed to think. There was a good deal of importance in the suggestion of the hon. member (Mr. Bailey), that the word "grants" should be used in the item instead of the word "loans." It was well known that not a single loan to the trustees of a cemetery had ever been repaid, or even the interest promised and due upon it. If that was the case, what was the use of perpetuating the fallacy? Would it not be much better to deal with cemeteries as they dealt with hospitals and schools of art, with the exception that the dispensing of the grants should be left entirely with the Government of the day? He trusted the Premier would accept the suggestion, and alter the word accordingly.

Mr. BAILEY said that, as the Government did not seem to agree to the suggestion, he would move, as a formal amendment, that the word "loans" be omitted, with the view of inserting the word "grants."

Mr. GRIFFITH said the only question on which he desired to say a word was with regard to the item of £3,150 for a statue to Her Majesty. He did not think it undesirable to have a statue of Her Majesty in the colony, however much she might live in their hearts. It would be a good thing if they had a few more statues; they would familiarise the people with works of art; but he hoped the Committee were not going to vote 3,000 guineas for a particular piece of sculpture when the sculptor himself was dead. There seemed to be no sense in voting the money; and besides, the bargain was at an end. It was not a question of giving 3,000 guineas to anybody to make a statue of the Queen. If they had one at all it should be a good one, and by someone to whom Her Majesty would sit for it. They did not want an imaginary, ideal statue of Her Majesty; and he presumed that Her Majesty had sat to Mr. Wood. If the money was voted, it would leave it open to the Government to give 3,000 guineas to anybody they liked to make a statue. He understood the Premier invited the omission of the item. If any expense had been incurred it ought to be recouped to Mr. Wood's representatives, and the Committee would have no objection to do so; but it seemed absurd to vote a sum of money for a statue to be executed by a gentleman who was dead.

The PREMIER said that, as he had already explained, his only reason for putting the item on the estimate was that it was possible that the statue might have been made before Marshall Wood died, and he was only keeping faith with the letter he had alluded to. He did not think it likely, but it was quite possible, and it was only to keep the faith pledged to Mr. Wood by Sir Arthur Palmer that he put the item on the estimate. He did not think himself at liberty to move its omission. It was quite understood that the vote, if passed, was for a statue by Marshall Wood—not only made by him in the rough, but finished by him—and nobody else.

Mr. NORTON said he remembered reading in some paper an announcement of Marshall Wood's death, in which it was stated that the statue intended for the Queensland Government had been

all but completed—that all it wanted was the finishing touches. He did not know whether that was true or not, but he had seen it somewhere; but if it was the case it would be a mistake to omit the item.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he should have felt inclined to move the omission of the item but for the statement made by the hon. member (Mr. Norton). It was highly improbable that the statue was finished before Marshall Wood's death, but he was satisfied with the assurance the Premier had given. It would be a very unfortunate thing if the Government were to offer 3,000 guineas to anybody who would make a statue of the Queen, which, perhaps, might not be worth 300 guineas.

Mr. BAILEY said he had already proposed an amendment to substitute the word "grants" for "loans" in the vote for cemeteries. The amount was too small to quibble about. Surely the country could afford £2,000 to be granted to the numerous cemeteries in small sums to assist the people in a labour of love! He hoped the Government would assent to the request he had made.

The CHAIRMAN: I am of opinion that the amendment cannot be put, because by the substitution of the word "grants" for "loans" the estimate would be virtually increased.

Mr. KELLETT said he was quite satisfied that the amendment could not be put, but he hoped the Premier would assent to the request of the hon. member. As a loan the item would be useless, because he did not see how the trustees, especially in the outside districts, could be made responsible for the interest. Formerly the item, whether described as a loan or a grant, was considered to be a grant, and it was struck out at the time when the votes for agricultural societies and schools of art were reduced. The vote was very necessary for outside places, and it was only just and right that the amount named should be made a grant.

The PREMIER said he hoped that the time of the Committee would not be wasted over the item. As it stood he thought it would be very satisfactory. No doubt the amounts previously voted had been granted as loans, and those loans had not been paid simply because no proper provisions had been made for the repayment of principal and interest. There could be no hardship in granting the vote as loans, and he was quite certain that in that form the vote would meet the views of correspondents who had been asking for assistance.

Mr. BAILEY said that a note in the appendix said that the advances would be made on the principle of loans under the Local Works Loan Act, on condition that the trustees agreed to the repayment in the manner prescribed by that Act. If, therefore, the amounts had never been repaid before, it was certain that repayment would in future be compulsory, seeing that the trustees would be compelled to become personally responsible. It was very hard that the Committee should vote £3,150 for a statue of a live queen, and at the same time grudge £2,000 for the burial of their own dead. That was a paradox.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. Pope A. Cooper), in moving that the sum of £4,915 be granted for the Law Officers of the Crown, said that hon. members would notice that there was a considerable increase in one item. The reason of that increase was the generally expressed wish of the Committee on a former occasion, that the Crown Solicitor, whose salary had been increased from £500 to £1,000, should have no private practice. That gentleman's salary had, there-

fore, been doubled, and he would in future perform all the civil work for the Crown. The salary of the Secretary to the Crown Law Officers had also been increased from £400 to £500. That gentleman was also the chief clerk, and as his labours would be very considerably increased, the allowance was very reasonable. The new arrangement had also necessitated the appointment of an additional clerk at £75 a year. Those were, he believed, the principal increases.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the learned Attorney-General had told the Committee about a change in the arrangements, but the hon. gentleman had not shown how it was proposed practically to carry out the change. It was very well to say that the Crown Solicitor would not in future be allowed the right of private practice, but there was a great deal of work in the Crown Solicitor's Office in connection with civil cases. Would he be Crown Law Officer in all civil cases? In civil cases where the Crown succeeded and received costs to indemnify the Crown, was it intended that the Crown should take those costs and make a profit out of them? He should like to know the intentions of the Government with respect to that matter, if they had any.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that in a case such as the hon. gentleman had suggested the costs would go to the Treasury. In Sydney he believed the Crown Solicitor, though in the receipt of a very much larger salary, also received those costs, and also fees for patents. It was not intended here that the Crown Solicitor should receive costs in civil cases.

Mr. GRIFFITH said it appeared as though the hon. gentleman had no clear idea of the way in which the proposed change would work. In proposing a radical change in the conduct of an office which had been carried on for upwards of twenty years upon the same system, the hon. gentleman should have told the Committee definitely what the intentions of the Government were. Hon. members could only infer from the remarks of the hon. gentleman that the Government had no definite intentions whatever. The hon. gentleman might have stated whether the Crown Solicitor would be allowed to receive fees of any kind. Some members of the House—one of whom was now a member of the Government—had at times past talked about the immense fees charged for examining and certifying to the correctness of documents required for the passing of titles for runs and other properties registered in the Lands Department. He had heard a story told by those hon. members about a power of attorney being initialed all over by the Crown Solicitor at the rate of £2 2s. for each time of initialling. No doubt that story was apocryphal, but such statements as that had been made seriously by a member of the Government, and he wished to know whether the same system was to be continued. First, he wished to know about the remuneration to be given, and then he should have something to say about costs.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the fees which the hon. gentleman referred to had hitherto always been received by the Crown Solicitor. Fees had always been received by him, but it was intended now that he should not receive any fees whatever, but only the salary of £1,000 a year for performing the civil work of the Crown.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that, judging from the interjection of the hon. gentleman made during his (Mr. Griffith's) speech, his conclusion had been arrived at on the spur of the moment.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have consulted with the Crown Solicitor several times.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he was glad some conclusion had at last been arrived at. With refer-

ence to costs, suppose the Crown received £1,000 costs—such a case had happened before—and by way of profit paid it into the Treasury: they would actually make an unsuccessful litigant contribute to the revenue of the colony. No expense was incurred by the Crown, not a single shilling extra, yet the unsuccessful litigant must pay a fine towards the revenue of the colony! In no place where the Crown Law Officers were paid by salary was there any system of that kind allowed. It was simply absurd. What would be thought of a private person who made a bargain with a solicitor that the costs should be paid to him for himself instead of their being paid to the solicitor? On the part of the solicitor that would be considered so scandalous that he would be struck off the roll, and the client would not be called an honourable man. Was a dishonourable act in private life to be an honourable one on the part of the Crown? He could not see that it was. There was always a difficulty in providing for the Crown Solicitor doing Crown work without extra remuneration; and that had been felt to be the case in other countries when it was attempted to grapple with the situation. It was a difficult question. There were two solutions of the difficulty: one was that costs should not be recovered from the unsuccessful litigant, and the other was that they should be paid to the Crown Solicitor. But for a litigant to make profit out of the professional expenses supposed to be incurred did not deserve to be called commonly honest—it was disgraceful. One of those two solutions must be adopted. He had always had doubts as to whether that step was desirable, or that any advantage would be gained to the country. The work would not be more efficiently done than hitherto, for there had never been cause to complain on that score, and the result would be an increase in the staff of the office. Whenever it was considered that litigation was increasing, and extra expense would be incurred, it would be proposed to increase the staff. Increase would beget increase; and in a few years there would be a large staff in that office, as there was in each of the other colonies; and what would be the gain? Possibly the fact of the Crown Solicitor having private practice might have caused complaint some years ago; but of late years nothing of the kind, even in name, had happened. The Attorney-General ought to have told the Committee more distinctly than he had how he would get over the scandalous practice of the Crown taking money for expenses pretended to be incurred, but not really incurred, in obtaining professional advice.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the question under discussion by the Committee was the salary of the Crown Solicitor. He understood before he came into office, and he knew since he came into office, that the wish had been expressed that that salary should be fixed, so that the officer should not receive fees. The salary was now to be fixed at a certain sum. When the question arose as to what might happen with regard to the disposal of costs—when a case occurred that would no doubt be considered. It was not his duty to decide now as to what would be done with the costs from an unsuccessful litigant. The question now was, were the Committee to fix the salary of the Crown Solicitor? He had put the sum on the Estimates because he understood it to be the wish of the House.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that the hon. gentleman seemed strangely to misapprehend the functions of hon. members. He proposed to fix the salary of the Crown Solicitor; and hon. members now wanted to know what would be done in regard to the costs in civil cases. He did not seem to know what would be done with them. During his (Mr. Griffith's) speech, the hon. gentleman

had interjected an answer; and now he said he had not decided the question. It was a difficult scheme, and required great consideration; and those difficulties had, during his (Mr. Griffith's) term of office, prevented him from making any proposal to Parliament.

The PREMIER said that as a layman he certainly could not see the difficulty put before the Committee by the hon. member for North Brisbane. He seemed to consider that that would be one of the most dishonourable transactions to a lawyer. Well, if he (the Premier) as a private individual, instead of hiring a lawyer for each case, made an arrangement to pay him, say, £300 a year, and paid him year by year, whether lawsuits occurred or not, there was nothing dishonourable in it. But supposing there came a lawsuit at last, and the lawyer gained it, and the other party had to pay costs, and he received them from the lawyer, would not that be a dishonourable transaction? The legal profession might have their rules of honour; but with them he was not concerned. He considered it would be a reasonable transaction that he should pocket the costs from the other side; and he would feel that he was an honest man after doing so. That was what the Government were doing instead of the system hitherto carried on. All their work would be done by one man, and instead of paying fees they would pay him a salary. A case might arise where the Government was engaged in a suit with a private individual who lost and had to pay costs, yet the hon. gentleman thought it a dishonourable thing to pay those costs into the Treasury.

Mr. GRIFFITH: They are not expenses actually incurred.

The PREMIER said that they were incurred. In keeping a solicitor and paying him a salary year by year they might not pay him each time he was required, but they incurred the expense. The costs actually recovered from the other side were fairly incurred by the Government. Whether paid in salary or by any other method, it was an expense really incurred by the Government. The only part that was not was the profit the solicitor might have made in his business. He did not see why the Government should not have their own solicitor and their own barrister, and charge as good a fee against the unsuccessful litigant as they could. So far as the profession was concerned he could see no objection. There would be some means of assessing the fees by which they were paid. If the litigant was not successful over the Government, he thought it quite honest to put the costs in the Treasury; and he did not think the legal profession would be scandalised at all. The proposition was a sensible one, and he had thought it would meet with the consent of the hon. member (Mr. Griffith). He had heard it spoken favourably of in the House on many occasions. So far as he was concerned as a member of the Government, he would find it a great convenience. They could not always run to the Attorney-General for legal advice, nor was it always desirable to do so, some cases requiring the advice of a solicitor, for which at the present time they had to pay fees to Mr. Little.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Pay fees to Mr. Little!

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman knows it very well.

Mr. GRIFFITH: We never did it in my time.

The PREMIER: I don't think it has changed. If lawyers can screw anything out of the Treasury they always do it.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he would like to know whether at a time when it was thought desirable to

introduce reform in the office of the Crown Solicitor, who was in future to give his services exclusively to the Government for £1,000 a year, it had been thought advisable to appoint a functionary whose duties should be analogous to those of the Solicitor-General in some of the other colonies. The want was very greatly felt in Queensland of an officer who should act as public prosecutor in the northern and southern branches of the Supreme Court, and who could be called upon to perform the functions of an acting district court judge at such times when it was considered necessary to appoint one. They already paid to one officer for prosecuting in connection with the northern branch of the Supreme Court a salary of £500 a year. It was known that the duties in connection with that office were not heavy, as the cases were not very numerous. Again, other gentlemen were frequently called upon to represent the Attorney-General as prosecutors at Ipswich, Brisbane, Toowoomba, Maryborough, and Rockhampton, where the southern branches of the Supreme Court sat, especially when Parliament was sitting, the Attorney-General very seldom prosecuting in person. As a consequence, fees were frequently being given to counsel, so that over £1,000 a year, taking one year with the other, was expended for the prosecution in the northern court and the fees to counsel representing the Attorney-General in the southern court. They must also, in addition to that, take into consideration the fees paid to acting judges, one of whom received last year 300 guineas, while the fees he had referred to for counsel amounted to £200 or £300. All that was constantly being done now, and the time had arrived when a public functionary should be appointed to conduct the prosecutions in the Supreme Court, who could also be called upon when required to perform the functions of an acting judge. A considerable saving would thereby be effected, and the work would be done in a no less efficient manner than it was now performed in. Seeing the reform introduced by the Government in reference to the Crown Solicitor, it would be just as well if they would appoint a public prosecutor at a similar salary of £1,000 a year. He did not know whether the matter had engaged the attention of the hon. gentleman in charge of the vote. It was not the first time it had been mentioned, and, if the previous mention of the one matter had justified the Attorney-General in acting as he had done, there was equally good reason why the other matter should have received equal consideration. He would like to hear from the Attorney-General the views of the Government on the subject.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that he thought the hon. gentleman was mixing up two things, for he asked him whether he did not think it right to appoint someone to prosecute generally in all cases, and also to take the place of an acting judge at times when other judges were absent; or, in other words, that the gentleman should one day be prosecuting in a court and on the next day be sitting in it as a judge. Such an idea had never certainly entered his mind, and if it had he should have rejected it at once. He did not think that even if it was advisable for them to appoint a public prosecutor, they would be likely to get a competent person to devote all his time to circuit and Supreme Court work for the small salary of £1,000 a year. They would have to give him a much higher salary than that.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that he had not thought it necessary to inform the Attorney-General that he had not meant that the officer he had referred to should be employed as acting judge in the same court as that in which he had acted as public prosecutor. He thought the Attorney-

General would have understood that he meant that the officer would act as acting judge in the district court and as public prosecutor in the Supreme Court. He did not think there was any mixing up of matters at all, for they saw it constantly done even now, and nobody complained of any impropriety in connection with it. Crown prosecutors went as acting judges on circuit simply for a week or a fortnight, as the case might be, and no impropriety was seen in it.

Mr. WALSH said there were a few items in the vote which he considered very objectionable: those were the items in connection with the expenditure at Bowen. Some years ago a Supreme Court was given to Bowen, as a sort of boon to the North, by the Macalister Government. It never had been a boon to the North, but it had been a useless, idle toy. It was never made use of, as there was no Bar in connection with it, and he should be very sorry to do any of his business there should the necessity arise; all the law business was done in Brisbane. There had been an agitation for its being removed to Townsville; but he was opposed to it at either place. Where it should be was in Brisbane, where there was a proper Bar. It was of no use, legally, to the people of Bowen at all, and was a useless and wasteful expenditure of public money.

Mr. BAILEY said the Supreme Court at Bowen cost the country over £2,000 a year, and he would like to ask the hon. Attorney-General how many cases had been tried there during the last twelve months. They could then strike an average and see how much each case had cost the country.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that if he could furnish the hon. member with the number of cases tried in the Supreme Court at Bowen he could not then strike an average; because the learned judge resident at Bowen travelled also to Cooktown and Townsville, and he should therefore have to give the number of cases tried at those places before the hon. member could strike an average.

Mr. BAILEY asked if he understood the hon. Attorney-General to say that the Supreme Court judge resident at Bowen also visited Cooktown and Townsville?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I said Cooktown and Townsville.

Mr. BAILEY said he should still like to know how many cases the learned judge tried in those towns for the £2,000 a year he was paid by the colony.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had wondered the other day why the motion of the hon. member for Mackay (Mr. Black) for a return of all the cases tried in the Supreme Court at Bowen was not allowed to go as a formal motion. There was no doubt that what the hon. member for Cook (Mr. Walsh) had said was true: nearly all the Northern legal business was done in Brisbane. The largest portion of the business arising in the northern portion of the colony was tried in Brisbane, and it would be so until there was a larger Bar at Bowen. Where the necessity was for a Northern judgeship of the Supreme Court he did not know, but the people there attached a great deal of importance to it, and some weight must be given to their opinion; but as a matter of fact that most of the business was done in Brisbane was indisputable.

Mr. BAILEY said he noticed that there was £500 down for a Crown Prosecutor at Bowen, and £200 for a Crown Solicitor there—a place of little or no business, and yet clerical assistance was asked for those gentlemen. They were asked to vote £100 for clerical assistance for those

gentlemen, as a new item on the estimate. It was perfectly absurd. He was not disposed to move any amendment upon the vote, as he thought the Government or the Attorney-General knew their own business best, but he should like to know why the increase of £100 for clerical assistance was asked for?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the £100 set down was paid to the former Crown Solicitor of Bowen, the late Mr. Crawford, and it was only through an oversight that it was omitted from last year's Estimates. It was now put on merely because it was omitted from last year's Estimates, and because the present Crown Solicitor's predecessor received it.

Mr. GARRICK said he did not quite understand what the Attorney-General said about the Crown Solicitor's fees, but he understood the hon. gentleman to say that that gentleman got no fees at all as Crown Solicitor—that he simply got his salary of £1,000 a year and nothing else. Did he not also get the fees ordinarily paid for examining certificates as to powers-of-attorney?

The PREMIER: They go to the Treasury.

Mr. GARRICK said he should like to have an answer from the Attorney-General.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They go to the Treasury. They do not amount to more than about £60 a year.

Mr. GARRICK said he thought the Attorney-General was somewhat in error when he said that the fees did not amount to more than £60 a year. He knew that those fees in the other colonies were received by the Crown Solicitor. The Crown Solicitor in New South Wales (Mr. Williams) received those fees amongst others, and in addition to his salary as Crown Solicitor; and he wanted to know whether the Crown Solicitor here was placed in the same position?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He gets nothing more than £1,000 a year.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said he could hardly hear what the Attorney-General said.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he thought he had conveyed his meaning to the House. He understood the hon. member for Moreton to ask him whether the Crown Solicitor received anything more than £1,000 a year. He said, nothing whatever but the £1,000 a year. He received no fees.

Mr. DICKSON said he understood, then, that the fees were paid into the Treasury as part of revenue. He would ask the Attorney-General how the Auditor-General was to satisfy himself that those fees were correct fees? The Auditor-General had to satisfy himself upon all the items of revenue, and he would like to know how he satisfied himself in regard to those fees.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he supposed the Auditor-General would take steps to satisfy himself upon that point. He did not know what steps that gentleman would take. The fees referred to were, he supposed, the fees paid upon the certificate of the Crown Solicitor as to powers contained in certain powers-of-attorney, whether they were sufficiently comprehensive to include certain matters. The Crown Solicitor had received a fee, he thought, of £2 2s. upon a certificate of that kind. Those fees, instead of being received by the Crown Solicitor as hitherto, would be handed into the Treasury, and he believed there would be no difficulty about the Auditor-General satisfying himself that they were correct fees.

Mr. GARRICK asked whether Mr. Little really understood that he was to receive no fees—nothing but his salary?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Mr. Little thoroughly understands that.

Mr. GARRICK said he was very much surprised to hear that the Crown Solicitor had accepted the office. When Mr. Williams accepted a similar office in New South Wales, it was by the inducement that he was to receive some of the fees; it was admitted that £1,000 a year was an insufficient salary for a gentleman with his qualification. He congratulated the Government on having obtained the services of Mr. Little on terms more than reasonable. He did not know any other member of the profession of Mr. Little's standing who would have accepted the office at that salary.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that there was no doubt Mr. Little was a most efficient officer, but he had accepted the office on the terms mentioned. With regard to Mr. Williams, it must be considered that there was very much more work to be done in New South Wales than in Queensland; probably as much was done in two or three months there as was done in Queensland in a year. No doubt when the work increased in Queensland the salary of the Crown Solicitor would also be increased.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that the objections made by the leader of the Opposition to the system it was proposed to adopt of paying the costs of unsuccessful litigants into the Treasury had not been answered. The Premier had disposed of them by saying that the costs obtained from unsuccessful litigants might be taken as part payment by the country for the services of the Crown Solicitor, and that it was perfectly legal to make them pay their share of his salary. But it would only require three or four unsuccessful actions in a year to pay the entire salary. Why should three or four persons pay the whole of the salary, and the whole colony have the benefit of the Crown Solicitor's services without cost? He thought such a plan was beneath the dignity of the Crown to have recourse to. It might be contended that the unsuccessful litigant was in justice bound to pay the Crown the costs that would be ordinarily charged in an action when a solicitor conducted it; but the arguments advanced against the proposal were absolutely unanswerable. He thought it would be a pitiable thing indeed if the Crown descended to the level proposed by the Attorney-General; he could not see any justification whatever for it. It could not be shown that such a system existed in any other colony; and the public, he was sure, would prefer to see the system at present in force continued.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said he would like to hear from those hon. members who had spoken on the subject whether the system would not have the effect of encouraging a crop of litigants against the Crown if they knew that they would not pay the penalty in costs in the event of being unsuccessful. He did not express any opinion one way or the other; he only wished to hear other hon. members on the point.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that it had been stated by the hon. member for Enoggera that three or four unsuccessful actions in a year would pay the Crown Solicitor's salary. But he must say that he followed pretty closely the several cases that were tried, and it was exceedingly seldom that any civil actions were fought against the Government. There was one a few years ago, and it was certainly not successful; and there was one the other day about the closing of a road, but there were very few large cases in which the costs would amount to

much. Suppose the Government had lost the case about the road, the costs would not have amounted to a great deal; or suppose there were three or four large cases, why should not the costs be paid as proposed? He thought that the arguments that had been used were untenable, so far as inferring that actions against the Crown were not only very numerous, but that the Government were as a rule victorious. Private individuals were pretty sure of their cases before they took action against the Government, and he was not aware of any instance where the Government had won a case. The hon. member for Enoggera, if he took the trouble to look the matter up, would find that cases generally went against the Government.

Mr. GROOM asked who was paid the £300 on the Estimates for drafting Bills?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that was paid to various gentlemen—to nobody in particular. The sum put down on the Estimates last year had been found insufficient.

Mr. GROOM: Who got the money last year?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he could not tell exactly. He believed Mr. William Coote received several sums. The amount paid last year was £120.

Mr. GROOM asked if there would be anything to pay for drafting Bills that they had had submitted to them that session?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I think not.

Mr. BROOKES: Did Mr. Buzacott receive any fees?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. BROOKES: Is he going to receive any?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. BROOKES: Has he ever received any?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not know.

Mr. BROOKES said he was very much afraid of that gentleman's connection with drafting Bills. Might he ask who drafted the Tramways Act?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not know anything about it.

Mr. BROOKES said that perhaps he was asking questions which he should not put. He would ask another. Was the drafting of Bills in the Attorney-General's Department?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the drafting of Bills that were sent from his office were, of course, in his department. He had nothing to do with the drafting of Bills from other departments. The drafting of Bills properly ought to be in the hands of a parliamentary draftsman, as it was everywhere else but in this colony. The various departments gave their Bills for drafting to the individuals they thought best fitted for the work. In his department only £123 was paid last year for the drafting of Bills.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that was a most extraordinary statement. In his opinion the Attorney-General was responsible for drafting Bills, and that was why that item was put in the Attorney-General's estimates. He was responsible for all Bills that came before the House; and that had been the practice of the colony up to the time the last Government went out of office. Did the Attorney-General suppose there was another vote out of which the drafting of Bills were paid? He should have been very much surprised when he was Attorney-General if his colleagues had submitted Bills to the House without his knowledge. It would have been absurd to hold him responsible for Bills he had not seen.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not say that any of his colleagues drafted Bills and submitted them to the House without his knowledge. He never said such a thing. When the hon. gentleman said the Attorney-General was responsible for every Bill brought before the House he said what was perfectly true; but so was every other Minister of the Crown. As for the particular language in which a Bill might be couched, the Attorney-General was not responsible for that. That depended upon the capacity or the fancy of the individual who drafted the Bill. If the hon. gentleman supposed that the Attorney-General was going to revise every Bill and put it into shape before it came before the House, he was saying that which the present Attorney-General, at all events, would never do. It was not part of his duty to perform the functions of parliamentary draftsman.

Mr. BROOKES said they did not ask the Attorney-General to draw out all the Bills. That would be unreasonable; but on his own admission there ought to be a parliamentary draftsman, and until there was such an officer he thought the House might fairly hold the Attorney-General responsible for the parliamentary draftsman's work. Did the Attorney-General admit that?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Certainly!

Mr. BROOKES said Bills that had been brought before the House that session had been very badly drawn, and he did not wonder that they were badly drawn now that he knew who drew them.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: We do not know.

Mr. BROOKES said their knowledge of who drew them was but partial, but their want of surprise at their imperfections would probably be greater still if they did know. There was evidently a screw loose, and here they had a flood of light shed on what had been inscrutable. He would do the Attorney-General the justice to say that he (Mr. Brookes) never supposed that he ever drafted or looked at some of the Bills that had been brought before the House. That was no more than common justice. It would be very unfair to suppose that the Attorney-General had looked at them; but how long was that system to go on? Was that wretched system to continue, or would the Government appoint a parliamentary draftsman? He did not hesitate to say that if the Tramways Bill, the Divisional Boards Bill, and some other Bills had been prepared by a competent parliamentary draftsman, the time of the House would have been very largely saved. He only spoke as a layman; but the leader of the Opposition knew how a Bill should be drawn, and it was a matter of public notoriety that if that hon. gentleman had not given that attention to Bills when brought before the House which ought to have been given to them before they came to the House by the Attorney-General, the Bills would have been unintelligible, and could never have passed.

Mr. McLEAN said it would be well if the Attorney-General would tell the Committee all he knew with reference to the drafting of Bills. He had told them that he knew of £123 which had been paid in his department. How much had been paid in the other Government departments for the same kind of work?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have not the least idea.

Mr. McLEAN said the hon. gentleman ought to find out before he got his vote. Bills had been introduced from all the other departments, and they wanted to know how much had been paid from those other departments in addition to the

£123 paid from his own. Surely the hon. gentleman was in a position to give the information asked for! If not, it was only fair that the vote should be postponed until he was.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the question was easily answered. The sum of £123 was the only sum that had been paid for drafting Bills, and there was nothing more to be said about it. If a single pound more had been paid it would have been shown. That was the whole sum paid for drafting Bills, and there was no more information to give on the subject.

Mr. GARRICK said the Colonial Treasurer was in conflict with the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General did not tell the Committee that that £123 was all that had been expended; but, as he understood him, he could not tell whether more had been expended or not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he was asked who had drafted Bills in the other departments, and what fees had been paid; and his reply was that he did not know. He did not know what was done in other departments; all he knew was that £123 had been paid in his own department.

Mr. GARRICK said the Attorney-General's last statement differed from the one he made a little time ago.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not think so.

Mr. GARRICK said that, perhaps, he was wrong; but he understood him to say that he could not tell whether anything had been paid by any of the other departments, but he knew that £123 had been paid by his department.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I can only tell you that there is this one vote, and that that sum has been paid out of it.

Mr. GARRICK said the Committee wanted to know how much money had been paid last year by the Government for the drafting of the Bills. Surely, the Attorney-General was in a position to tell them!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the sum named was all that had been paid, and he was perfectly certain that none of his colleagues had paid any other sums for the drafting of Bills.

Mr. BAILEY said the report of the Auditor-General for the year ending the 30th June, 1882, showed that £226 had been paid for drafting Bills. Was that in addition to the £123? He suspected those were two different amounts.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Not for this year.

Mr. BAILEY said that, according to the report, that amount had been expended during the year 1881-2. They would probably find another item of £200 somewhere else.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is some mistake about it.

Mr. BAILEY said he had no doubt of it; and they could not account for that sort of mistakes. All they were anxious to find out was, who were the gentlemen in the colony capable of drafting Bills? Session after session Bills were drafted in such a shameful way that the time of the House was wasted day after day in putting them into legal and legible phraseology. He knew that Mr. Coote was a draftsman and that Mr. Buzacott had also made it his hobby to draft Bills, and they knew that there were two or three legal gentlemen—officers—well able to draft Bills. They wanted to know who was the best man, so that he might not have such a petty picking as £200 a year, but a good salary as the parliamentary draftsman. They would find the man, if only the Attorney-General would allow them to pick him out.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it was quite refreshing to hear a gentleman of the great legal experience of the hon. member for Wide Bay gravely discoursing upon the bad quality of the Bills introduced into the House. He would undertake to say that if two Bills were put before the hon. member—one most miserably drafted and the other drafted as excellently as it could be done by a professional man, the hon. member would not know the difference. It would be better for that hon. member to allow some of the legal gentlemen on his side to give their opinions about a badly drafted Bill, and when they had shown what they considered to be a badly drafted Bill someone would have an opportunity of answering them; but for a mere layman to get up and say that various Bills had been badly drafted was to try the patience of the Committee uselessly.

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Wide Bay might be a mere layman, but he was not very good as that, as the hon. member had been referring to a document which he pretended to understand, but had quoted from the table showing the expenditure for the year 1880-1, which was not what he wanted at all. In the next place the hon. member referred to Mr. Buzacott as having drafted Bills; but that gentleman had never received one single farthing for that purpose.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said that, following the observations of the hon. member for Cook with regard to the Northern Supreme Court, he would trouble the Committee with a few figures. The number of causes set down for hearing by that court during 1881 was thirty-seven, out of which only five were entered for trial. Of those five, two were tried at Bowen, one at Cooktown, and two at Townsville. Of the two at Bowen, the plaintiff was nonsuited in each case. At Cooktown the case was withdrawn. Of the two cases at Townsville, the damages claimed amounted to £8,332; the result was that the juries gave verdicts for £119 6s. damages in the aggregate. Those were the only civil cases heard in the Northern Supreme Court during the whole of that year. There were eleven insolvencies, six orders *in banco*, no intestacy business, no admiralty business, and four small matters under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Mr. McLEAN said the Attorney-General had given the name of one gentleman who had drafted Bills for the Government. Was that the only gentleman who had received payment for drafting Bills out of the sum mentioned?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. McLEAN: Will he tell the Committee what Bills Mr. Coote drew?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the Bills he drafted were the Legislative Council Amendment Bill and the Additional Water Supply Bill.

Mr. McLEAN asked whether he understood that Mr. Coote received £123 for drafting those two little Bills, one of which the House had heard nothing about, except in the Governor's Speech.

The PREMIER: It is a very good Bill.

Mr. McLEAN said, in that case, why had not the House heard something more about it? It would be interesting to know what proportion of the £123 that Bill had cost. In South Australia, as he understood, it was usual to print the name of the draftsman on the face of every Bill introduced to Parliament, and he thought it would be a good thing to adopt a similar plan in Queensland. He hoped the Government would secure the services of someone who would give better value for the payment.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the sum of £5,441 be granted for Services in connection with the Supreme Court. There was only an increase of a little more than £100 on the estimate of last year, and that amount was made up of small increases to deserving officers.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he regretted very much that the Government did not take advantage of the recent vacancy in the office of Registrar of the Supreme Court to put that office on a satisfactory footing. An opportunity like that, the office being vacant, and the Estimates not prepared, might not occur again for a long time. He ventured to say that the duties of Registrar of the Supreme Court had never been performed in the colony, and that very few people in the colony knew what the duties of that office, as performed in other countries, really were. If the duties were properly performed the position was one of the highest responsibility, and they were quite as arduous and important as the duties of a Crown Solicitor or a district court judge. Those duties had, however, never been performed, for various reasons which it was unnecessary then to go into. It was probably because the duties had never been performed that the salary had always remained the same as it was fixed very many years ago. The Government had, however, recently had an excellent opportunity of remodelling the office. Hon. members might not know that under the system of jurisprudence followed in the colony the Registrar of the Supreme Court had to perform the functions of a jury in the very large proportion of cases that came before the court—cases often of great magnitude and difficulty. That part of the duties of the office had, however, never been performed. A case was before the Supreme Court the other day which was fortunately settled before those duties had to be performed; but had that case gone on to the end the Registrar would have had to perform duties which for difficulty and intricacy, and the need of accurate knowledge and discrimination, would have exceeded the functions performed by all the juries in the colony in the course of twelve months. The officer holding that position should be competent to perform the duties, and he would relieve the judges of the Supreme Court of many matters which they could not so well attend to as he could do. That would also expedite and cheapen the administration of justice to an enormous extent. The officer who had been put in by the Government, and who was entitled to the position if the former arrangements were to be continued and could not be well passed over, was not acquainted with those duties. In the other colonies the duties of registrar were performed by two or three officers. In New South Wales there were two—the Master in Equity and the Prothonotary—each of whom received £1,000 a year. In Victoria there were also a Master in Equity and a Prothonotary, and he believed that the former received more than £1,000 a year; and so it was proportionately in the other colonies. The fact was that the duties of the office had never been performed properly, and that was a principal cause of the complaints made about the costs of administration suits. The late Registrar was an excellent officer, but he had never seen the way in which his duties should be done; and the present officer, who was one of the best in the Service, had never had an opportunity of knowing how they were performed. It might be a long time before the Government would have another opportunity of rearranging the office.

Mr. BAILEY said that he would draw the attention of the Government to the item of the allowances to witnesses attending Supreme and District Courts. The time had arrived when

some provision should be made for the accommodation of witnesses, who, when ordered out of court, had to stand about in passages or outside on the steps of the building; and that lasted for the greater part of the day, for many days together. They had nothing to sit upon whilst waiting. They were liable to be called into court whenever required; and it was a most wearisome thing for respectable witnesses coming sometimes forty or fifty miles to have to stand on stone steps outside the court. If it was wet weather they were subject to great discomfort, and it was not respectful to them that they should be exposed to that discomfort. Some provision should be made for their accommodation.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that that was a matter to which his attention had been directed before. He knew how inconvenient it was for witnesses to be waiting about the court, but it was indispensable that they should be there, and ready to be called upon as soon as a case was heard. Witnesses were often ordered not to be within hearing of the court; and the hon. gentleman could hardly expect that witnesses should be provided with seats in a building at a distance from the court. They had to put up with some inconvenience, but he had endeavoured always to make things easier for them and he had had seats put up in court. They were nearly always ordered to remain out of court in civil cases.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that the hon. gentleman had made no attempt to defend the action of the Government in the matter he (Mr. Griffith) had referred to. He would now ask, with reference to the vote for a messenger, whether the messenger whom he had known at the court from a boy up, working his way, had got the junior clerkship, which he understood was vacant a short time ago?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that he had. His salary had been increased to £100 a year; he was really junior clerk and messenger, though called messenger in the vote.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that it had been under consideration, by a Government of which he had been a member, whether a circuit court should be appointed at Roma. Had the Government come to any decision on that subject?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the Government had come to no decision on that point. There was very little business in that district.

Mr. McLEAN asked if quarters were provided for the tipstiffs, who were put down at £130 each; or for the court-keeper of the Supreme Court, who received £26?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that there were; and that one of the tipstiffs also undertook the duty of court-keeper and caretaker. It had been found that boys and other persons got into the grounds and disfigured the buildings, and it was necessary to have a person always present during the day. A cottage had been erected in one corner of the grounds, and there was a watchman there at all times. It was important that someone should always be about, and that person got the cottage for his services.

Mr. McLEAN: Was that the only amount the court-keeper got?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes; but he was also tipstaff to the Chief Justice.

Mr. McLEAN said that he had previously understood that the amount was in lieu of rent for quarters.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; it was as court-keeper.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL, in moving that a sum not exceeding £4,030 be devoted to the department of the Sheriff, said there was a slight increase upon last year, which included some small increases of salary to clerks. There was also an increase of £50 to the salary of the chief bailiff, who was known to every legal member of the House as a very efficient officer, who had been a long time in the Public Service, and very richly deserved the recognition from the Government.

Mr. McLEAN said that the increase was a large one to be given all at once, and the Attorney-General had supplied no reason for it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the increase from £250 to £300 was not a very tremendous one. The efficiency of the officer was very well known; and during the whole of last year he performed the duties of under-sheriff, in the absence of the gentleman filling that office. He did not think the advance was at all too great.

Mr. H. PALMER said that he would have been very glad to see an increase in the salary of the Sheriff himself, for that gentleman had received very poor recognition at the hands of the present Government. He believed that Mr. Sheriff Halloran had not been well treated. He had been for thirty years in the service of the Government. Commencing in the high position of police magistrate and commissioner of Crown lands, when he came from New South Wales, at a salary certainly not less than £500, he had always held high positions; yet he now only received £200 a year over and above what he commenced at.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He receives £800 a year—£700 as Sheriff, and £100 as Inspector of Prisons.

Mr. H. PALMER said that he had certainly thought that the Sheriff's standing in the Service should not be less than that of an Under Secretary, and he was glad to hear that it was not so.

Mr. BAILEY said that he desired to bring under the notice of the Attorney-General what they often saw in the public Press—the shameful way in which jurors were treated in some of the courts—more like criminals, in fact, than citizens who were doing their duty—being placed in a room very often without seats or tables, and deprived of food and drink until they agreed upon a verdict, so that the man who could stand out the longest would, as it were, win the verdict. Many jurors were not men in robust health, and the way they were treated was sometimes calculated to seriously affect them. He mentioned the matter as the Attorney-General had expressed himself willing to do all he could for the jurors in the different courts.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that a sum not exceeding £7,970 be granted for District Courts. There was an increase of £500 a year under the heading of "Allowances to witnesses and jurors," the amount put down last year having been found to be insufficient for the purpose.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that he thought it his duty year by year to bring forward a matter which he regarded as being of very considerable importance, in connection with the efficient administration of justice in the district courts of the colony. It was true that he had been unsuccessful every year up to the present, but at the same time he believed that each year he had brought the matter forward a larger number of the members of the Committee had come to the conclusion that the time had arrived for something to be done in the direction he had indicated. Every year he had brought

forward a suggestion with regard to the increase of the salaries of the district court judges. He did not wish to repeat on the present occasion the reasons he had advanced on former ones why a substantial increase should be made in the salaries of those judges, but he might state at the very outset that there was no reason why there should be such a disparity between the salaries of the Supreme Court judges and those of the district court. It was very well known that a district court judge had to do a considerable amount of work and that he had to do it at very considerable inconvenience to himself. As the colony increased in population the number of courts would be also increased, and the area over which the district court judges would have to travel in the discharge of their duties would be very much larger. They were subjected to an amount of hardship and inconvenience to which the Supreme Court judges were strangers. The Supreme Court judges were paid salaries of £2,000, and in the case of the Chief Justice £2,500 a year, and they were entitled to a pension. It was very right that such should be the case, and no one would for a moment say that the salaries were one penny too high. In fact, if they were higher the colony would not in all probability suffer in any way, the object of having sufficiently large salaries being that the Executive should be able to command the services of the most capable men for those high positions. In a colony like Queensland, however, the larger proportion of the administration of justice must devolve upon the district court judges, especially in the scattered districts of the colony, where there was a large amount of litigation, and where everything depended on the capability as well as the fidelity of the judge presiding over the district court. Leaving out the sentimental arguments as to compensation for the hardships they had to undergo, he asserted that it was of the utmost importance that the Government should be able to command the services of the most capable men to fill the positions of district court judges. The Attorney-General would not contradict him when he said that the most eligible men at the Bar at the present time would, if offered the positions of district court judges at the salaries which were now paid to those officers, simply decline such an appointment. That sum was considerably less than the most eligible men for the position were in the habit of making, and the inducement for leaving the larger profits of the profession by the prospect of a pension when they became incapacitated was wanting in connection with that case. They knew in connection with the elevation of members of the Bar to the Supreme Court bench that there was always a considerable sacrifice in the shape of annual income; but it was compensated for first of all by the dignity of the position and the great social power and influence consequent upon that elevation, and by the fact that when a judge of the Supreme Court became incapacitated through age or accident he was provided for; and that was something to be able to look forward to. That was not the case where district court judges were concerned, and therefore the men most eligible for the position would refuse to accept it. He had brought in a Bill two years ago, and had got as far as the Committee with it when it was withdrawn, after the Premier had acknowledged that a very good case had been made out. The object of that Bill was to provide a pension of £500 a year in the event of a district court judge becoming incapacitated, but he believed the same object might be accomplished by making the salary of a judge of the district court £1,500 a year. He felt that unless something of that kind were done the best men would not be induced to accept the

position, and no one could advocate for a moment that cheapness in a matter of that kind was any recommendation. It was patent to everyone that the salary was not a sufficient inducement to eligible men to accept the position. He supposed the Attorney-General had considered the matter, and he (Mr. Rutledge) was certain that the time had arrived when an increase in the salaries of district court judges was necessary, as at present a great injustice was being done. A vacancy had lately occurred upon the district court bench by the lamented death of the late Judge Blake, and that vacancy would have to be filled up, and he was sure the most eligible man to fill it would not accept the position were the salary allowed to remain at what it was at present. It might be said that so long as the country could command the services of men like the late Judge Blake they need have no fear; but men of the late Judge's stamp were becoming very rare in the colony. The late Judge Blake was a man of great legal learning, and a man whose decease was a loss professionally to Queensland, and he was quite sure that had he been in the prime of his faculties he would not have consented to occupy a seat on the district court bench at the salary provided. He should have been glad if his Bill had been carried by which some provision would have been made for the late Judge; and he deeply deplored that the unfortunate decease of the late Judge had cut his family off from the means of livelihood which his continued existence would have supplied to them. There was no reason why the salaries of district court judges should not be increased. They required to be men whose legal acumen was as great as that necessary to fit occupants for the Supreme Court bench. He did not mean to say that they required to be equal to Supreme Court judges in point of learning, but in their judicial capacity as far as the jurisdiction of the district court went they should have as much legal acumen, ability, and integrity to carry out their duties as the occupants of the higher seats on the Supreme Court bench. He hoped, in the interest of justice in the colony, the salaries of district court judges would be increased to such an extent as to offer an inducement to the most eligible men to accept the position.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he could not consent to discuss the matter the hon. member referred to. He did not consider that was the place or time to do it. The salaries of the district court judges were fixed by Act of Parliament and no pensions were allowed them. He did not see how the matter came in on the question of the Estimates for the district court judges. The estimate was the same as last year.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he knew very well that the minimum salary to be given to a district court judge was fixed by Act of Parliament. He did not want any alteration of the estimate, but he wanted to know whether the Attorney-General had thought the matter over, and whether, after having done so, he was of opinion that the time had come when in the interests of the colony something ought to be done to increase the salaries of district court judges, or to provide a pension for occupants of the office. He wanted to know whether the hon. gentleman considered it desirable that there should be an increase of that kind. If he did, he had no doubt the hon. member would take the time which in his judgment was the most fitting time to give effect to his opinion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that if he had been of opinion that the salaries given to district court judges was not sufficient he should have taken steps accordingly, and should not

have laid before the House the same estimate as last year. The fact that he had not introduced a Bill to increase the salaries of district court judges was sufficient proof of his opinion.

Mr. LOW said he did not understand what the hon. member for Enoggera meant by speaking about the hardships of judges of district courts in going from one district to another to hold courts. They were paid their expenses, and had every comfort, and surely there was nothing like hardship in that. It was the poor squatters who followed their sheep through dry and wet seasons who really suffered hardships. The hon. member for Enoggera had, he thought, tried to make out an admirable case for his appointment to the vacancy on the district court bench.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. the Attorney-General had singular notions of the functions of Committee of Supply. He appeared to think that they were not to discuss the subject which came before them, but simply to vote the sum of money set down and no more. Those who had more experience of parliamentary practice would know that the present was just the time and place for the discussion raised by the hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge). If there was any change thought desirable in the present practice, the present was the time to suggest it. He was quite sure that the Attorney-General would find considerable difficulty in filling the vacancy caused by the death of the late lamented Judge Blake, who was one of the best judges who ever sat on the district court bench in Queensland or in any other Australian colony. As good a man could not be got at the salary now offered; but he (Mr. Griffith) was not prepared to vote an immediate increase for all that. He thought that the absence of any retiring allowance had probably as much to do with it as the smallness of the salary. Very important duties were performed in the district courts, especially in the northern part of the colony where there were mining districts, and it was of great importance that the positions of judges should be filled by competent persons. He would like to know from the Attorney-General whether he had received any complaints of late as to the hurried manner of holding courts. He had seen in the Northern papers lately complaints of that kind. When, in 1878, the District Courts Act was before the House, provision was made that the times for holding the courts should be revised by the Attorney-General in order that ample time might be allowed for getting through the whole of the business, but he believed the complaints were as great as before. He knew that it had frequently happened in some parts of the colony that when a case had been on the judge had expressed his intention of leaving at once, and—although the matter was of considerable importance—sending his judgment by telegram without hearing arguments. The consequence had been that litigants, despairing of getting cases fully argued, had referred them to arbitration. Some of those cases were of great importance. That was a matter to which he had called attention in 1878. Attention had been called to it since, and he thought it required very careful consideration, especially with regard to the administration of justice in the more remote parts of the colony, because the people there could not so easily avail themselves of the right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that there was no doubt that in some places the holding of courts had been hurried, as mentioned by his hon. friend; but he had taken care to revise the calendars of the district court judges, and had allowed sufficient time for the transaction of business in the various towns. Only one case had occurred recently which had been mentioned in

the papers. That was a case in which the judge hurried away to catch the steamer and said he would send his judgment by telegram. Since that time he (Mr. Pope Cooper) had given instructions that the judge should remain a longer time in the town.

Mr. BLACK said that in his opinion the Northern districts had never received from the hands of the district court judges that attention they ought to have received. He found that an enormous sum, compared to the amount of good that was done, was put down for the judges in the Northern districts; and he was quite sure that the people there did not get a proportionate return for it. He did not know how it might meet the views of hon. gentlemen connected with the profession, but he was aware that very great dissatisfaction was frequently expressed in the Northern districts at the hasty way in which the judges got through their business, and he did not believe that that would ever be remedied until the judge lived in the district. The Judge of the Supreme Court in the North involved an expenditure of £4,000 a year. There was a Judge, Crown Prosecutor, Crown Solicitor, extra clerical assistance for the very small amount of work that was done, registrar, clerk, judge's associate, tipstaff, sheriff, bailiff, and official trustee—all connected with the Bowen Supreme Court, and they cost the country £4,000 a year. The number of cases tried last year was five, and in order to try those five cases, involving a sum of about £9,000, the country paid £4,000.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The total verdicts were less than £200.

Mr. BLACK said he did not think that any hon. member would say that the country was justified in continuing that enormous expenditure without they got some better results. He knew, of course, that besides Bowen there was Townsville and Cooktown. With regard to the district court judge, there was an expenditure of £1,600. In addition to that, there was a proportion for travelling expenses of £1,400, and fully one-half of that was in consequence of the judge living in Brisbane.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. BLACK said that a very considerable part of it was. He thought the whole of the business might be reorganised, and it would reflect a great deal to the credit of the Attorney-General if he would undertake to do it. He could not believe that it was necessary to expend so much, seeing the very little good they got for it. He was but expressing the feelings of many of the inhabitants in the North, that either the expenditure ought to be cut down very much, or else very much greater results ought to be derived from it.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said he would take the opportunity of correcting the hon. member's figures. The gross expenditure in connection with the Supreme and District Courts was far greater than £5,000. The expenditure in connection with the Supreme Court, allowing £600 for travelling expenses, amounted to £5,000 alone; that was irrespective of any item whatever in connection with the district court.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he had no doubt that some of the complaints that had been made with regard to the hurrying away of the judges from the different towns, and the celerity with which they tried to get through the business, was owing to the fact that the Government endeavoured to get the work done cheaply; consequently it was not done well. If there was a larger salary put on for the judges, all concerned would feel impressed with the greater importance of the work to be done, and there would be a greater inducement to spend more time in the

various districts. Judges were not always to blame, as sometimes the prosecutors were equally at fault. If the Attorney-General would look through the calendar he would see whether the time allowed for the despatch of the duties in one town was sufficient for all purposes; and if the time allowed was not sufficient he could have it extended.

Mr. LOW thought the work could be better done if the judges got £2,000.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the sum of £1,350 be granted for Insolvency.

In answer to Mr. GRIFFITH,

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the department was self-supporting.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the sum of £952 be granted for Intestacy.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether the Intestacy Department was also self-supporting?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the department paid about half its own expenses.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Archer), moved that the sum of £3,516 be granted for "Secretary for Public Instruction." The salary of the Under Secretary had been raised £100 so as to put him on a level with other under-secretaries.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the faster the Government got through their Estimates the more unreasonable they became. He had never seen the Attorney-General's estimates go through in three hours before. The usual time allowed for them was a day and a-half. Because the Opposition had assisted the Government in getting through more quickly than usual, they wanted to go on for another hour with the estimates of one of the most important branches of the Public Service. A great many persons thought the Education Department deserving of consideration, and that the devotion of an hour or two every year to it was not too much. It was not much time, and it was quite certain that that time could not be devoted to it at that hour. It was most unreasonable to go on with those estimates at a late hour of the evening. After the Opposition had actually assisted the Government in carrying through their Estimates they wanted to force more work upon them at that hour. He (Mr. Griffith) had a good deal to say on the subject of public education, but he was certainly not going to say it then.

The PREMIER said, from the slow way in which the Estimates got through last night, he thought it necessary to remind the Committee that they must be prepared to sit later hours than they had been accustomed to do. He thought that was a very reasonable request. He considered there was a great deal said on the estimates of the Colonial Secretary which led to small discussions which might well have been left out. No doubt the hon. member was right when he said the Attorney-General got his estimates through quicker than usual, but there was very little to discuss in them as there were few changes. They had now done six pages of the Estimates, and had forty more without including the Supplementary and Loan Estimates, and at the rate they were going on it would take another five weeks to get through the work. The hon. gentleman had understood that it was the object of the Government to try and finish the session by the end of the month. If he (the Premier) received some assurance from the hon. gentleman that the Opposition would assist him in passing the Estimates, then he was willing to meet them by

adjourning at an early hour. At the present rate of progress it seemed hopeless to expect that they would get through in another month.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he could give no assurance that the Estimates would not be properly discussed. They ought to be properly discussed. It was not only the right, but the duty, of the Committee to discuss the Estimates fully; but that was not obstructing. He could not say how long it would take to get through the Estimates. Four or five pages might go through as one vote, and there might be a great deal of discussion on small items. There was the change in the Crown Solicitor's Office, for instance; that had never been so briefly discussed before, and, although it had come forward now for the first time in a concrete form, it had been passed through as quickly as possible. As to the Colonial Secretary's estimates, the discussion had taken place chiefly on grants to schools of art and cemeteries. But he did not stand there to apologise for any discussion on the Estimates. It was the duty of hon. members on both sides to discuss the Estimates, though not at an inordinate length; and the discussion that had taken place had led to some good results to schools of art and agricultural and horticultural societies. There was no department that more deserved full discussion than that of Public Instruction.

The PREMIER said he had no objection to the legitimate discussion of the Estimates, but a good deal of the talk that took place on the estimates of his department was quite unnecessary. With regard to schools of art, after listening to half-a-dozen members, he gathered that the opinion of the Committee was against his own, and he announced what the intentions of the Government were. A lot of time was then wasted with little speeches on small points, which could do no good whatever. If the hon. gentleman desired he could give the Government an assurance about getting the Estimates through. He (Mr. McIlwraith) was perfectly determined that they must have later hours in order to get through, and if hon. members would persist in discussing matters at an inordinate length they must have an extra sitting on Friday. He could not keep the House longer than the end of the month, and, now that the ordinary work of the session was over, the leader of the Opposition could, if he so wished, help him to close the session by that time. When he (Mr. McIlwraith) was leader of the Opposition he used his most strenuous efforts, after finding out the strength of the then Government, to help to close the session at the time the Government desired; and the obstruction they met with was mainly from their own side, and sometimes from their own colleagues, in the Ministry. There was no doubt that discussing items over and over again injured the House in the eyes of the public. Now that the Opposition knew the strength of the Government, he expected their assistance to enable him to close the session at a reasonable time.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said there were two opinions as to what was legitimate discussion. The Opposition held one opinion on that point and the Premier held another. As for the leader of the Opposition giving an assurance of the character suggested by the Premier, he for one would distinctly decline to be bound by any such assurance. Every member was entitled to discuss any item on the Estimates in the way he thought fit, without respect to his leader or his party at all. The discussion that evening had been on the whole practical and to the point, and during the four or five sessions he had been a member of Parliament he had never seen the Estimates go through more rapidly and quietly. He had seen

evening after evening wasted over one or two items; but now very good business had been done, and the Premier ought to be contented with it. Why were not the Estimates brought forward at an earlier part of the session? He had come to the conclusion that the Estimates ought to be the first thing disposed of when the House met. At present they were always held dangling over hon. members' heads, and then they were attempted to be rushed through when the session was coming to an end. It would be a good thing if the Estimates-in-Chief were laid on the table the first day the House met, and were disposed of before any Bill was passed. The Committee had been most considerate towards the Attorney-General, whose estimates they had allowed to go through in a remarkably short space of time. The estimates of the Attorney-General had been allowed to pass very easily, and he thought the hon. gentleman might help the Opposition to get away.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said hon. members would sympathise with the Premier in his desire to close the session before the end of the month; but the hon. gentleman should remember that, had he called Parliament together at an earlier date, the necessity for hurrying would not have arisen. The facility with which the estimates of the Attorney-General had been allowed to pass was in itself the best possible evidence of the sincerity of the desire on the part of the Opposition to pass the Estimates without unnecessary delay. He feared the hon. gentleman must have taken his cue from a leading article in the *Courier*, which suggested that the Opposition might possibly obstruct on the Estimates; but they had shown no disposition to reverse the decision of the House on the occasion when the Government got their precious majority of two. He would also point out that the Committee was already sitting later than usual in continuing the sitting till 11 o'clock—10 o'clock having been considered, during the early part of session, to be the proper time to rise. The Premier said that he, when in opposition, assisted the Government to finish the Estimates; but the hon. gentleman should remember that his late colleague (Sir Arthur Palmer), when leader of the Opposition, always maintained that he would not sit to do business after a certain time. That was proper ground to take up, and he hoped the Opposition would resist anything like coercion. It did not put hon. members into a good humour to have a new and very important estimate introduced at 11 o'clock at night.

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Rockhampton had not shown a good result of his four years' experience when he advised the Government to get through their Estimates at the commencement of the session. He should be quite willing to do so, but he would point out that, having brought down his Estimates slightly earlier than usual in each of the two years previous to the present, the leader of the Opposition had on each occasion deliberately prolonged the discussions during the earlier period of the session on the ground that the Estimates were brought down too soon, and had also assured him (Mr. McIlwraith) that if they had been brought down at a later period when the heavy burden of the work was removed they would pass through a great deal more easily. He did not object to a proper discussion, but he knew from experience that a good deal of the discussion that night had been carried on for the purpose of delay. He hoped the House would be with him when he asked hon. members to sit till a later hour for the remainder of the session, and also give up Friday for the consideration of the Estimates. That was a fair thing, and he asked it on behalf of country members. Hon. members of the

Opposition would no doubt some day stand in his place, and they would then be glad to have a precedent for allowing country members to go away in reasonable time.

Mr. FRASER said that, having taken no part in the discussion during the evening, he could not be accused of having contributed to the delay. The estimate now proposed was perhaps one of the most important matters of the session, and he was sure it would lead to a considerable amount of discussion. He should himself have a good deal to say on the subject, and he would submit to the Colonial Secretary that the introduction of so important a matter at a late hour in the evening was calculated rather to hinder than to facilitate the passing of the Estimates. The wiser and better course would be to adjourn.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, the House resumed, the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, intimated that the business for the next day would be Supply.

Question put and passed, and the House adjourned at ten minutes past 11 o'clock.