

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 1883

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On their return,

The SPEAKER reported that he had, accompanied by certain members of the House, proceeded to Government House, and there informed the Governor that the Legislative Assembly had, in the exercise of their undoubted right, elected their Speaker, and that he presented himself for His Excellency's approbation as the member chosen by the Assembly for that high and honourable office; to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

“Mr. SPEAKER,—I approve, on behalf of the Queen, the choice which the Assembly has made in your person.”

After which he had, on their behalf, laid claim to all the undoubted rights and privileges of the House, and prayed that the most favourable construction might, on all occasions, be put upon their proceedings; to which His Excellency had been pleased to make the following reply:—

“Mr. SPEAKER,—I further recognise, on behalf of the Queen, all the lawful rights and privileges claimed by the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in as full and ample a manner as they have been heretofore granted or allowed by Her Majesty.”

MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. John Donaldson was sworn in, and took his seat as Member for the Electoral District of Warrego.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Shortly after 12 o'clock a message was conveyed by the Usher of the Black Rod, that His Excellency the Governor requested the attendance of the Speaker and hon. members of the Legislative Assembly in the Council Chamber.

The SPEAKER, accompanied by hon. members of the Assembly, proceeded to the Legislative Council, and, having heard the Address of His Excellency the Governor, returned to their own Chamber.

The House resumed at half-past 3 o'clock.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The SPEAKER stated that His Excellency the Governor had caused to be sent to the Clerk of the House the writ for the Cook Electorate, with a certificate of the return of Mr. John Hamilton and Mr. Frederick Augustus Cooper.

MEMBERS SWORN.

Messrs. J. Hamilton and F. A. Cooper were sworn in, and took their seats as Members for the Electoral District of Cook.

BOWEN TO HAUGHTON GAP RAILWAY.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (the Hon. A. Norton) laid on the table the plans and book of reference of the Railway from Bowen to Haughton Gap.

ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER, in accordance with the Legislative Assembly Act, laid on the table his warrant appointing the Committee of Elections and Qualifications for the present session.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from His Excellency the Governor, forwarding a petition against the return of the Hon. P. Perkins as member for Aubigny.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 8 November, 1883.

Presentation of Speaker.—Member Sworn.—The Governor's Opening Speech.—Message from His Excellency the Governor.—Members Sworn.—Bowen to Haughton Gap Railway.—Elections and Qualifications Committee.—Messages from His Excellency the Governor.—Message from the Governor.—Adjournment.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER.

The House met at a-quarter past 11 o'clock a.m., and shortly afterwards the Speaker, accompanied by the Clerk and several hon. members, proceeded to Government House.

The PREMIER (Sir Thomas McIlwraith) moved that the message be referred to the Elections and Qualifications Committee when appointed by the House.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER stated that he had also received a message forwarding a petition against the return of the Hon. B. B. Moreton as member for the Burnett.

The PREMIER moved that the message be referred to the Elections and Qualifications Committee when appointed by the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not intend at present to take any exception, although he might hereafter, to the names that the Speaker had laid upon the table as a Committee of Elections and Qualifications. The Speaker had seven days to consider the fitness or otherwise of them; but what he (Mr. Morehead) wanted more particularly to point out was this:—That unfortunately, no matter whom the Speaker in his wisdom liked to elect to put upon that Committee, this fact would be patent to the country with reference to one of those petitions that had been relegated to that Committee: The Speaker, in his capacity as a journalist, had given a decision in the columns of his paper with reference to the return of the hon. member for Aubigny, and he (Mr. Morehead) maintained that it was not fit or proper that one who had already prejudged that case should nominate a panel to try it. Those were the facts, and there should be no getting out of them. If, of course, it was denied by any hon. member that the case had been prejudged in that paper, he (Mr. Morehead) was quite prepared to bring forth a proof that it had been prejudged. It was one of the first instances of the unfortunate selection that had been made by the House on the previous day. He was not going to call into question the names of the gentlemen whom the Speaker had been pleased to include in his warrant upon the table of the House; but what he wanted to point out he had pointed out, and would continue to point out so long as he sat in the House and had the power of speaking,—it was that it appeared to him to be highly improper that such a power should be put into the hands of any individual who had already prejudged a case and given a decision, that he should be allowed to appoint a jury to try a case upon which he himself had as Chairman of the House already given a decision elsewhere. He did not think it was right that he should say any more. It was patent to everybody that a very gross impropriety had been committed.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER said that he had received another message from His Excellency the Governor, forwarding to the Legislative Assembly the Estimates-in-Chief for the year ending June 30, 1884.

The PREMIER moved that the Estimates be printed and referred to a Committee of Supply.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH: I rise to move an amendment. The Government are, as everybody in the House knows, in a very peculiar position. They have every reason to anticipate their defeat in the course of a few hours or a few days. Under similar circumstances other Governments in other parts of the world where there is a similar form of government have certainly never attempted to usurp the functions of government in the manner in which they have done here. Some cases I shall have to refer to later this afternoon. At present I rise to point this out: that it is not the function of a Government

who are not likely to be entrusted with the administration of the affairs of the colony to frame the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, and that no Government which is not likely to have the responsibility of controlling the expenditure has any right to submit to the House merely an advertisement—for it amounts to merely an advertisement—which can serve no useful purpose, except possibly of embarrassing their successors. Such a thing, I believe, has never been done before. I observed in the document which you, sir, will shortly have to read to this House, when listening to it in another place, that the proposition has been made to expend some £500,000 or £600,000 amongst the electorates of the colony. Such a proceeding as that is unusual at any time. The attempt to do it here now, by way of an advertisement, or by way of embarrassing their successors, is a matter which I think ought to be reprobated in the strongest degree at the outset.

We of course honour and respect His Excellency's message, and there must be supplies granted for carrying on the government. On previous occasions, not only in this House, but in every other country, the course has been to wait until necessity demanded it, and then ask His Excellency to make such a recommendation as was necessary for the circumstances of the time. No useful purpose can be served by allowing this advertisement to be printed and circulated, and for those reasons I move that the words "printed and" be omitted. I will point out that no discourtesy is offered to His Excellency. I do not know how many increases the Government may be going to propose, or how they are going to distribute their *largesse* of £500,000 or £600,000. I make this motion so that it cannot be a record of this House how they propose to use it.

Question—That the words "printed and," proposed to be omitted, stand part of the question—put.

The PREMIER said: I do not think that the hon. member who has just addressed the House understands what he has been talking about. He would have brought a very serious charge against me as Premier, and against my colleague as Treasurer, if we had gone from office without having undertaken the responsibility of saying how we have spent the money for the last five months, and how we propose to spend it for the next seven months. There is not a single Ministry that has gone out of office that has not left a record of that kind behind them, except the Ministry of which I believe the hon. member was one, who were so cowardly as to try to actually obliterate the records of what they proposed to do, so that they could claim the credit of anything which we did when we got into office. We have had the courage of our opinions.

Mr. GRIFFITH: What Government was that?

The PREMIER: We have had the courage of our opinions. We have brought down Estimates showing how we have spent the money and how we propose that it should be spent. The Estimates which have just been sent down are the ordinary Estimates for the year. Who, I ask, ought to be in a position to deal with those except the men who have been in office for the last five years, or who can best show how the money has been spent? Those Civil servants have been working under us, and our opinion ought to be valued by any Government coming in, from the experience we have had; and whether they adopt our opinion or not, they will be in a position to act upon it for the advancing or reducing of salaries. They ought to be grateful to us for giving them the opportunity. Now, sir, the motion made by the hon. member,

if anything at all, is simply absurd. The Estimates are printed now. The ordinary business of the House cannot go on until those Estimates are referred to the Committee of Supply, and they cannot be referred to the Committee of Supply unless they are printed. But, as a matter of fact, they are printed, and everyone will know how that money is proposed to be spent. But even in spite of that they will know simply from the fact that the Auditor-General's report will show how the money has been spent; and hon. members will find that we have kept faith with the House—that we have spent the money in accordance with the promise I gave the House—that it should be on the basis of last year's Estimates, taking into due consideration the amount of extra business required to be done. We have acted not at all with the object of embarrassing the Government that shall succeed us, if we are to die; but have done everything we possibly could to further their labours and enable them to put the Estimates properly and judiciously before the House within a few weeks. On referring to the papers, I find that the hon. the leader of the Opposition has made a mistake. This motion deals simply with the Estimates-in-Chief.

Question put.

The PREMIER continued: Surely the hon. member, now that he sees he has made such an egregious blunder, is going to withdraw his amendment. We should be arrant cowards if we did not bring down those Estimates. They are the ordinary Estimates for the year, and why does the hon. member not admit that he has made a blunder and withdraw his amendment? Then he can make his speech when the next message comes forward.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. P. Perkins): Mr. Speaker,—If the hon. the leader of the Opposition persists in the motion he has made, I propose to read those Estimates.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You want another week.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I simply want to let the country know how it is proposed to distribute the surplus money that has accumulated. I do not see what objection the hon. gentlemen can have to that. Is he afraid of any exposure? What is there in it that can be hurtful or harmful to him? He must come over to these benches without any contrivance of ours, and when he gets in he will have to settle these matters. It can do no harm letting the country know what these Estimates propose. It is rather—in the face of the majority he has secured—I won't say by what means—like cowardice to be afraid of having these Estimates printed. I think, after the scene that occurred yesterday, the sooner we come to business the better, and the easiest and most expeditious way of getting to business is to let the Estimates be printed. I can assure the hon. gentleman that he has no chance of getting his motion carried as easily as he did the appointment of the Speaker yesterday, from the tone of and temper of the House. I am quite sure that, notwithstanding that hon. members opposite come here with a certain flush of victory, still the majority of them desire to see fair play. Therefore I desire to acquaint you that I have no desire to delay business, but if the hon. gentleman persists in his resolution, I will read the Estimates, which will be a rather tedious operation to take in hand. I will take my own time and my own way of doing it.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It may be your last appearance.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not care whether they are cattle-stealers or anybody else who interrupt me; they may just as well

know that. Do I understand that the leader of the Opposition persists in his amendment? If so, I will read the Estimates.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As I am informed that the question will come up in another way, I will postpone reading the Estimates for the present.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put.

The House divided:—

AYES, 19.

Sir T. Mellwraith, Messrs. Chubb, Perkins, Archer, Morehead, Norton, Scott, Hamilton, Macrossan, Black, Donaldson, Palmer, Jessop, Lalor, Cooper, Lissner, McWhannel, Ferguson, and Stevens.

NOES, 30.

Messrs. Griffith, Miles, Horwitz, Aland, Brookes, Isaumbert, Garrick, Foote, Kates, Jordan, Buckland, Salkeld, Bale, Mellor, Smyth, White, Sheridan, Dutton, Foxton, Macfarlane, Higon, Grimes, Beattie, Moreton, Midgley, Hurley, Rutledge, Kellert, Fraser, and Bailey.

Question resolved in the negative.

The PREMIER: Can you tell me, Mr. Speaker, how these Estimates can be referred to Committee of Supply without being printed. I do not wish to press too hard on your inexperience of office, but perhaps you can tell us the result of the very ingenious motion that has just been carried with the object, according to the hon. member, of preventing a fraud tried to be perpetrated on the Opposition; but it was really a plain, straightforward transaction. The Estimates are put before the House in the ordinary way, as has been done by every preceding Ministry on going out of office. The Estimates cannot go before Committee of Supply without being printed, and the very ingenious amendment carried by the leader of the Opposition is that they shall not be printed. They are actually printed at the present moment.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The Premier knows very well that the object of the amendment is that the Estimates shall not be printed and circulated.

The PREMIER: Then your speech was on the wrong motion.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The hon. gentleman knows too much. I am perfectly aware of what I am doing. I am not, of course, aware of the nature of this manifesto, but I have great reason to believe that it contains much that a new Government would not be willing to accept. It is quite unusual for a Government to bring down the Estimates on the first day of a session, the ordinary course being first to constitute the Committee of Supply, which has not yet been done. In every respect the Government are departing from constitutional usage, and under circumstances that may, at any rate, cause embarrassment to their successors. Only on one occasion—and that was not the occasion to which the Premier referred—has an expiring Government sent down Estimates. That was in 1874, and the result was that the next time the House met the Governor sent down another message that they should be returned to him. Those Estimates were sent down simply for the purpose of facilitating the business of the House, and the then Government did it at the request of their successors.

Question—That the message be referred to the Committee of Supply—put and passed.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from His Excellency the Governor, transmitting Estimates for special appropriations out of the Surplus Revenue Fund.

The PREMIER: I move that the message be printed, and referred to the Committee of Supply.

Mr. GRIFFITH : I rise to move the adjournment of this debate. There is no necessity to refer these Estimates to the Committee of Supply at the present time. If they went before the Committee of Supply they could not under any circumstances come under consideration for many weeks to come. It will, therefore, be better to adjourn the debate, as the message will then be in our hands in case it should happen that the Estimates are ever required by this House. I need hardly say that it is a highly undesirable and improper thing for the Government, in their present position, to desire to circulate and publish as an advertisement or a manifesto in the manner in which they propose to appropriate five or six hundred thousand pounds of the public funds. I do not wonder at some members of the Government proposing to do such a thing, but I do wonder that some other members should allow themselves to be led into such a course. It is entirely unprecedented and unconstitutional, and can serve no useful constitutional purpose. Under the circumstances, I think it would be better to adjourn the debate, and if that motion is carried the debate can be resumed this day week or fortnight.

The PREMIER : Had the advice just given come from any other man on the Opposition side, I perhaps might have given some consideration to it; but coming, as it does, from the hon. leader of the Opposition, who himself perpetrated the most outrageous obstruction of constitutional government in this colony when he remained in office in 1878 until the very time when the money was all expended, and then came down with a most glorious literary manifesto or advertisement, as he calls it, two months after his Government were defeated, I cannot understand the audacity of the hon. member in offering it. He presumes to give advice to me not to come forward and let the country know what we propose to do simply because he has got a majority at his back. I will let the country know what we propose to do, and I have a much better right to do so because I have had a much greater hand in bringing the country into its present state of prosperity than any other hon. member. I propose to let the country know how we should have spent the money which we have saved. We have done well. We came into office when there was a large deficit, and in spite of the obstruction of the Opposition we worked through times of the greatest difficulty, and got rid of that deficit. The obstruction of the Opposition was carried on day after day, week after week, in order to force us to tax the people of the colony for the purpose of getting over that deficit. What did I then do? I did not cave in to the Opposition; I stuck to the helm. In spite of the obstruction of the Opposition, and of their continual reiteration that nothing except additional taxation would suffice, I stuck to my determination that there should be no additional taxation, and now what is the result? There is no deficit, and, after paying all the debts of the colony, we have to-day £691,000 of surplus. That is the money we have saved, and leave to them; and now they come forward and say we should not even whisper what, if the good government instituted by us were to continue, we should have done with it. I intend to let the country know exactly what we should have done. We have the honour, though now probably in the minority, of having, against an immense amount of unpopularity, initiated local self-government in this colony. The hon. member, when a member of the last Government, avoided the question by bringing in a Bill which he never had the courage to put into operation. He left that hardest task to us. We faced the unpopularity of the measure, and we actually taxed the people, according to the

ideas of the Opposition, for the purpose of putting it in force. But the apparent additional taxation which we put on was really no taxation at all. All the money spent previously on roads and bridges had been spent by the central Government, and the effect of the initiation of self-government was this, that the people who actually paid the money had the power of spending in their own districts money which before they had paid into the general revenue. We were hounded down because we put on this so-called additional taxation, but we went through and made local self-government an actual success. Having succeeded in doing this, having ourselves seen some defects in the Act which we passed and put into operation, and having succeeded in making a surplus in the revenue by which we could tide over some of the difficulties connected with the Act, I think we are the most legitimate advisers of this House on a subject of this kind. Being the authors of the Act, and having succeeded in making a surplus by which the defects in the Act can be cured, we are surely the most experienced and best advisers that could come forward. As the late Treasurer, therefore, and Premier of the colony, I claim the right of saying that the money so saved should be spent in one particular way, and the way in which I proposed that it should be expended is this: I propose that for the repairs of bridges in the different divisions £50,000 be spent; that for new bridges over the Mary River at Maryborough, over the Burnett River at Bundaberg, over the Pioneer River at Mackay, over Ross Creek at Townsville, and over the Annan River, near Cooktown, £150,000 be spent. On the next item I may mention that a report has been made by a commission which was appointed to inquire into the working of our railways, and we propose to make very large re-arrangements with regard to the railway workshops. For the purpose of shifting those workshops to Woollongabba we propose that £50,000 be spent. Having been the authors of local self-government in this country, having presided at its birth, and having seen it well matured, we claim also the privilege of letting the country know why we consider that that principle should be very much extended. I know very well what the fault of all Liberal Governments in this country has been. Their fault has been that as soon as they got the money in their hands they became fools. They spend it injudiciously, and bring the colony into difficulties which may possibly lead to disaster. That has always been the failing of Liberal Governments, and they have always gone out when they saw difficulties in the Treasury. I do not leave the Treasury with any difficulties: there is any amount of money there; and I propose to give this present Parliament some sound advice so as to put checks on the expenditure of the Government. When the old roads and bridges *véginé* was in force, and the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Foote)---

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : Bundamba.

The PREMIER : They are one "bunch"; it does not matter. When the Ipswich bunch had the command of the Government, and consequently of the Estimates, money was spent there lavishly. Why, half the population lived on the Government, and he was thought to be a good member who always made a point of lavishly providing for whole families. That sort of thing, of course, could not last, because there were so many other parts of the colony which wished to become just as Ipswich was; they wanted some of the loaves and fishes. Therefore, when Mr. King became Minister for Works, and attempted to treat Ravenswood and the Palmer and other districts as Ipswich had been treated, it was found that the money was

gone. That sort of thing has always brought the Liberal party to grief. I propose now to further extend the principle in the Divisional Boards Act by spending the amount of money that is expended at present on the rivers and harbours of the colony by Act of Parliament, and through the means of boards instead of by votes of this House. No one will for a moment deny the good that local self-government has done; we see it in municipalities and in the different divisions of the colony. Even the most violent opponent of the Act, who is, I believe, the hon. member for Bundamba (Mr. Foote)—

Mr. FOOTE: The boards never built a bridge yet.

The PREMIER: The most violent opponents of the Act have admitted the immense amount of good that it has done; and I am satisfied that nine-tenths of the members of this House, and nine-tenths of the intelligent people of the colony, believe that it is a good Act. The principle is sound, because you give the supervision of the expenditure of the money raised in the different districts to the people themselves. Taxation is not increased; that is the same as before. I don't say that there is an additional amount of money raised; but even though the amount is the same, the advantage is that the money is spent by men who are interested in its economical expenditure, because it is part of their own money. We intend, therefore, to apply this principle to the different harbours and rivers of the colony by the establishment of harbour trusts. In order to do that, we propose to do what we did in initiating local self-government under the Divisional Boards Act: we will grant a subsidy, and in that way we propose to dispose of £60,000, part of the surplus which has accrued up to the 30th June last. When the Bill to establish these trusts is brought forward, I shall be prepared to go at greater length into an explanation of their operation. It is quite enough now to say that we have, with the object of establishing these trusts, got over the initiatory difficulty: that is to say, we have a certain amount of money for the purpose of starting them. The Opposition do not like the country to see what we are doing; but, as I said before, who have a better right to submit a proposal for the disposal of the surplus than those who made it? We had a surplus of £310,000 on the 30th June last. The other day, when I made inquiry at the Treasury for information for His Excellency for his Speech, I found that the surplus was £691,000. Probably it is a little more now, and there may be £700,000 in the Treasury. That is a state of things which has never been seen in the colony before. Any generous opponent would grant us some meed of praise for what we have done. We have managed the finances of the colony in such a way as to have raised the colony out of difficulties. We have carried it through perilous times, and we leave the finances in the best position they ever were. Considering the revenue of the colony, considering the sources from which the revenue has been raised, I say that it contrasts favourably with any statement that has ever been laid before a Legislature in any colony. I do not think there is a single colony that has ever at this time of the financial year shown, in proportion to its general revenue, the immense amount of surplus that we have got. I know very well that in New South Wales at one time there was an extraordinary amount of money occasionally coming into the Treasury from large land sales; but New South Wales had to suffer for that, and I do not think it was any record of the progress of the colony. We have not sold anything like the amount of land we were authorised by Parliament to sell. We could have sold a great deal

more, and thus increased the balance very considerably; but we have actually sold less than appeared in the Budget speech of my friend last year, and yet we have a surplus of £700,000. I think that is something to boast of; and I think, besides that, we have to remind gentlemen who are so anxious to jump into our shoes that they will get in in much easier times than when we got in; but we brought to our work at that time stout hearts and strong hands, and we succeeded in pulling through our difficulties. I am astonished, on reading the papers which represent the Opposition, as I do now, to find that they are already in a funk about the position of the colony. Let anyone, sir, read the articles written by yourself, for instance, in the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, and also the articles that have appeared in the *Telegraph*, and what will they find?—that, notwithstanding that the people are rushing into the colony in a way they never did before—

Mr. GARRICK: And out of it.

The PREMIER: Notwithstanding the fact that people are rushing into the colony in a way they never did before; notwithstanding the fact that men are being employed at rates of wages which have been sustained all through, and which were never higher in the colony than at the present time; notwithstanding the fact that there are districts exceeding more than half the colony where labour cannot be got even at the extraordinary rate of wages that is being offered;—notwithstanding, I say, all these facts, we find that there is a surplus in the Treasury, and things are going in a way that has never been seen before, so far as the tradesmen of Brisbane and other places are concerned. Business is profitable at the present time. Do we find the merchants calling out? Do we find the retail shopkeepers, the tradesmen, or the labourers calling out? No. The only thing I have heard has been the cry of employers for additional labourers. I should think that is a sign of increased prosperity in the colony, and the other side should not get faint-hearted when they come in with such a surplus. The hon. member for Moreton (Mr. Garrick), in reply to the remark that immigrants are coming in in numbers never before equalled, said, "Yes, and going out." I deny that statement. When the hon. member and the leader of the Opposition left office men were flocking from every part of the colony, and the Government would have been glad to have paid the passages of those men but for shame, because they would have starved had they remained. When there is such an immense amount of immigration there is bound to be a certain number come in fraudulently, and some time ago the Government used every endeavour to convince the Opposition that the Immigration Act did not provide the means of preventing frauds in the way of false nominations, and men coming out without any intention of residing in the colony; but the Opposition at that time, assisted by a number of members on the Government side, from a sort of pseudo-philanthropy towards those poor servant-girls and others who should not, if they could help it, be curbed in their attempts to obtain passages fraudulently—the Opposition succeeded in putting out the only clauses in the Bill by which I could possibly have punished people for getting money paid for their passages and then leaving the colony. Even if more were leaving the colony the onus would lie with the other side of the House, but I deny that they are leaving. No matter what penal clauses are inserted in an Act, a certain number of men will always try to get out on the cheapest terms; and I used the best efforts I could to restrict the number that came out fraudulently, but was debarred from doing so by the Opposi-

tion unanimously voting against the penal clauses and striking them out of the Bill. They are frightened at the state of things. They do not know how they are going to provide work for the immigrants coming out at the present time. It is amusing to look at the different phases of opinion on the immigration question during the elections. When they commenced, things looked quite rosy in the opinion of the leaders of the Opposition—their opinions are very well expressed in the *Telegraph* newspaper. At that time it seemed that sufficient employment would be found for the immigrants coming to the colony. There was a rush of people from the country to take people from every ship, and no doubt it was a matter of self-congratulation to the members opposite, then before their constituents, that they had helped to bring about that state of things. No Government had ever been so determined in carrying out an immigration policy as they, and they actually proposed to bring out 20,000 immigrants a year. And what did the hon. member for North Brisbane do? He was not going to allow a card of this sort to be played without bringing out another one to top it. He said, "Why 20,000! I will bring out 40,000."

Mr. GRIFFITH: I never said anything of the kind, and you know it.

The PREMIER: He said, "I'll bring out 40,000;" but the *Telegraph* said, "This won't do: 40,000 immigrants a year! Let us get back to common sense." The *Telegraph* brought the hon. member for North Brisbane back to common sense pretty soon, and told him this sort of thing would never do. Other people said, "It is bad enough for McIlwraith to bring out 20,000 a year, because at that rate he will swamp the country, let alone Griffith with his 40,000." In the course of a few weeks he (Mr. Griffith) explained that if he got into power and remained there sufficiently long to carry out his measures he would make such sweeping changes, and pass such seductive land laws, that people from the other colonies and from all the countries of the world would arrive voluntarily at some future time at the rate of 40,000 a year. Could anything be more ridiculous than that? And when he commenced to turn tail and get funky, of course all his followers did the same and began to cry out against white immigration.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: No!

The PREMIER: I claim great praise for having dealt manfully with the white immigration question. Those on the other side said, "This is a diabolical measure for the purpose of swamping the colony at the time these poor devils are coming into office." What possible reason have they for jumping to a conclusion of that kind? I believe myself that had proper means been used I would have had a majority in this House. I worked all through believing and knowing that I would be returned—not wishing it on account of considerations of my own—believing with confidence that we would be returned at the head of the polls. But the hon. member says we knew we were going out, and that it has been our object to put difficulties in his way. It has never been any trouble to me to dispose of the labour that arrived, and I deny that immigrants have been going to the Southern colonies in any number. There may be dribbles going, and there always are some going to New England in the summer time; but that we are losing in the fluctuation to and fro is not correct. We never had the slightest trouble in seeing that the immigrants were provided for, and if the present Government were to remain in power they would not have the slightest trouble in their mind as to how the hungry applicant-

for work could be met. The hon. member need not be afraid to bring out immigrants as long as the colony continues in its present state. Wages were never higher in the colony than they are at the present time in the Western districts, and the demand for labour is greater there than ever it was before. All that is required is a judicious Colonial Secretary, who will take care to see that the supply in the different places is equalised. I think my statement to this effect will give satisfaction to the country. I believe myself that it is a mere party dodge for the members on the other side to cry down the Government for having brought the country into bad times. The country is not in bad times: so far as its name is concerned, it is good; so far as capital is concerned, it is good also; and so far as its revenue is concerned, it never was in so prosperous a condition. If there is any doubt in the minds at all of some people in the colony, it is a doubt of what is going to result from the change that seems to be inevitable. That is the doubt. If the people of the colony, and if the people of the neighbouring colonies understood that a firm and tried Government that would not tamper for party purposes with the big industries of the colony were to have settled power here, times would be infinitely better for the working classes than they are even now, and that is saying a great deal. It is a doubt that the hon. member and his satellites have managed to inspire into the people of the colony that has made things so very doubtful to capitalists in the South and in England. The hon. member has made very considerable difficulties for himself during the recent elections. I have been in Parliament for a great many years, and I have never seen an election fought out on such low principles as the elections that have just been concluded. The number of falsehoods that have been deliberately told by the leader of the Opposition with regard to the public men of this colony is unequalled in any political contest. Public men are put in this position that they cannot refute it. They cannot go about the constituencies of the colony refuting the different lies that are told against them. They must remain and allow their pure lives to be exposed to the frightful lies told against them. I believe myself that there will be a retribution that will come upon the hon. member himself for the lies that he has fostered throughout the colony. He has not only said untrue things, but he has led people to believe those things that he did not believe to be true, and which from his own knowledge he must have known to be untrue. I will take an example, and this is one that referred to myself: The hon. leader of the Opposition, at a banquet at Ipswich the other night, by innuendo led the people at Ipswich, because they cheered vociferously, to believe that I was myself connected with the British-India Company.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: You did.

The PREMIER: Anyone who read that speech could see that the cheers referred to one thing that would prove that I myself was one of that company. It was proved, in addition, by the fact that the Press—even your own paper, sir, for you were in the secret yourself—you knew everything that was taking place with regard to the foul vituperation that had been hurled upon the Government, you know perfectly well the stories and fables that have been told against them, and know perfectly well as a pressman that they were not true;—you knew at the time you were saying them that they were not true—that they were made for the purpose of misleading the people, and yet, like the leader of the Opposition, you encouraged them. Take this particular charge, that I am connected with

the British-India Company. We made that bargain with the British-India Company, and it was ratified by this House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: No, no!

The PREMIER: It was ratified by this House. I never knew, except on the presumption that the six men who signed the contract on behalf of the company were shareholders, who were shareholders in that company or interested in it. I have no knowledge in the world of a single individual, living or dead, who has now, or ever had, a share in the British-India Company. There is no relation of mine that I know, and I am perfectly satisfied I would know if there was. So far as I know, there is no relation, or friend, or acquaintance of mine in this world, or has been for the last five years, who has the slightest interest in the British-India Company. I utter the same denial to the statement that has been alleged against me that those large immigrant steamships that come out are owned by me or my friends. I do not know the owners; I never knew the owners. I have no interest myself, and I never had, and never intend to have; and I never gave the slightest occasion to mortal man, or to the coarse, foul minds of the men who edit the *Telegraph*, to consider for a moment that I have any interest in it at all. I could go over a great many more scandals that were put about at the last general election in the same way. It was the foul language of those who circulated the slanders that is demoralizing the electors. The more they make the electors believe in such things the lower they make the status of these men. I have no doubt that the false stories that have been circulated with regard to my Ministry and myself have had the effect of lowering the character of the Opposition. I can see the smug face of the hon. member for Kennedy: he is another example. If there is one quality for which that hon. member is celebrated it is his length of tongue. No one could give him credit for judgment. But his tongue has qualifications which come prominently before the colony. That man used to preach the Gospel of Christ, and was paid many thousands to do so by a church, and one of the best churches, too, in the colony. One must respect the church, at any rate. One would think that the hon. member, having preached concerning the ninth commandment and explained it in all its details, would never dream of telling a falsehood as against his neighbour. He went up to the Kennedy and told the people there that if I was not a member of the transcontinental syndicate I would be as soon as I got it through.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: It is true.

The PREMIER: I say it is one of the most barefaced lies that was ever uttered. I say it is a barefaced falsehood. I say there was never the slightest intimation that might have come to that gentleman's knowledge; there was never any fact that might have come to his knowledge that might have led him to believe that I had ever anything to do with that company. I will challenge him to prove it. If the hon. member is satisfied in repeating to me that it is true, I hope he will be prepared to come forward and show that he has reasonable grounds for considering it was so. That is the least to be said, because, when the ninth commandment says "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," it does not mean that you are to act in this way—on the principle the hon. member acted upon. He received information, perhaps, from the proprietor of the *Telegraph*, that I was connected with the syndicate—

Mr. RUTLEDGE: I said you would be; not that you were.

The PREMIER: Immediately the hon. member rushes off and tells the people, "I have it on authority that the Premier is a member of the syndicate, or if not he will be," while the information he goes on is that of the lying scoundrel who invented it. Now, who is the worst, the man who invented the scandal or the cowardly scoundrel who went about promulgating it? That is what the hon. member did. He ran about rampant; he trod under foot and tore to tatters the ninth commandment all the time he was running about canvassing the Kennedy. He is too good a man to go and drink strong spirits, but men of that sort get drunker on soda-water than another man would on any amount of spirits.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: He doesn't break the seventh very often.

The PREMIER: That man has occupied the position of a Christian teacher, has gone into the pulpit to tell people what they should and what they should not do, and drawn distinctions between all the different ways in which the ninth commandment could be broken; and yet he went up, and on his own mere fancy invented the most diabolical lies against his opponents. I here give the challenge to him, as I do to his leader and hon. members opposite. They think they are going to discover an immense amount of secrets; but the Government have done nothing that they are not quite prepared to acknowledge and defend in the House. They fancy they are going to find out a great deal about the falsehoods that have been promulgated by lying scoundrels in the northern portions of the colony, and in the southern districts too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And the western too.

The PREMIER: The Government are going out perfectly satisfied that they have done right. There has not been a transaction with which they have been connected that they have not been willing and anxious to give every information upon to the House. There is no matter with which they have been connected that they do not leave behind the fullest information on; and if there is the slightest feeling of gentlemanly conduct and honour in the Government who will succeed us, they will have to acknowledge that they have used vile means to traduce their opponents before they had actually given up their seats. I know quite well that the Government are likely to be defeated on this motion. I know also that there is a design in so doing, and that is that the Opposition are by this means preventing the Government from putting their views before the country. I have therefore, before sitting down, to state my reasons, and I will do so in a very short time, why we have met the House and why we did not resign. I have been satisfied for the last month that we have been defeated. Although I did not know what kind of Government would follow us, or how long it was likely to last, I felt perfectly satisfied that we were doomed. But it was another thing altogether to tender our immediate resignation. I intimated to the House, sir, when I asked for £500,000, that I would meet Parliament early in November: I said, in fact, that it would be about the middle of November. It was my intention all through to meet the House on the 13th November, but for reasons connected with the arrival of the Governor we met on the 7th. We could not possibly have met it sooner and kept faith with the members who were standing in our interests. It would have been a vile breach of faith with them. I could never have

said one word in defence of meeting before the 30th October, when the Cook election was to be decided. Why, we should have been running away and leaving men to fight the battle of the Ministry. It would be like a general retreating from the field and leaving his soldiers behind him. I do not care what hon. members opposite may say, I would never have done it. I stuck to my office until I saw members were either victorious or defeated; and then, when the last election came off, I was prepared to meet the House at the earliest possible moment. I have lost no time; and, so far from there being any desire on the part of the Government to retain office, they would like to have been out of it months ago. But I am prepared to give my services to the country yet, and I have not the slightest doubt, from the weakness betrayed by the leader of the Opposition up to the present time, that I will have the opportunity again; and our career while in Opposition will not be characterised by obstruction. It will be characterised by keen criticism of what the Government do, and by assisting them in their work when we consider it is for the advantage of the colony. I think obstruction is about the coarsest weapon we could possibly use, and I have never been an advocate, but always an opponent of it. I do not think the next Government will be troubled very much with that, but they will have the assistance of the Opposition whenever we consider their measures tend to good government. But I have to warn the hon. gentleman from the effects of his policy in carrying out the elections. I have to guard him against some men who have been elected on his side, and who I am sure are to be suspected. They are men who have been traitors to us and will be traitors to him. If those men are at all in his Ministry or in his party there will be dishonesty in the Government. That I know from facts that have actually occurred. If he manages to get rid of this dishonest element he may be able to carry on, but in the meantime we know very little of what he intends to do. His extraordinary gyrations on the Land question have excited surprise not only in Queensland but also in the other colonies. Commencing by trying to turn out the Government on the Transcontinental Railway by means of the sympathy of the squatters, he would not admit of the land being taken from them. Then he gradually went on, and the next phase of it was that he would give them permanent leases; but when we got the details it came to be quite a different thing—he would make one man pay increased rent and let the squatter remain on the same terms as before. Then he made another effort, and now I am in as great a fog as to what he means as he is himself. I will not pursue that subject further. I am perfectly satisfied that he has not the slightest idea himself of what he intends to propose. At all events, I am satisfied that he will get very generous aid from this side in enabling him to make up his mind. We will not grudge him the time, as long as he shows something of modesty. We have no intention of prolonging the debate, and it is evidently the intention of the Opposition to shelve a discussion on the matters put before us. Our policy—which I have no doubt will, to a great extent, be acted upon by our successors—will come on for discussion at a future time. There is one matter, however, that must be attended to before long, and that is the gross blunder perpetrated by that hon. member who is so jubilant to-day, the hon. member for Moreton. When the Stock Inscription Act was passed last year, a proviso was inserted in it by that hon. member limiting our power to make an agreement with a bank for more than three years. I pointed out at the time that a proviso of that kind would prevent our putting the Inscription of Stock in the hands of the Bank of

England. However, I was at the mercy of the House at that time, and the proviso was inserted. The result came out exactly as I foretold. The Bank of England were masters of the situation, and they said, "We will take the inscription of your stock, but we insist on the payment of £1,000 per £1,000,000 for the transfer of the stock at the end of three years." We were completely at their mercy, and we had actually, therefore, to concede the point and agree to their terms. After that the bondholders themselves said, "No, we will not consent to the inscription of stock which is liable to be removed from the Bank of England; we will not consent to those terms, and the proviso must be repealed." That is the intimation given to us by the bondholders in England. Whatever the House does, therefore, it will have to pass an Act rescinding that proviso; and accordingly a Bill to that effect has been proposed and will be duly laid before the House. I have nothing more to say on this occasion. I think it would have redounded more to the credit of the hon. member if he had seen his way to allow his followers to express their opinions on the questions that have been put before them by the Government at the present time. It would have been far better to have allowed the Government to bring forward their measures in the usual way, and then to have put them out on a vote of want of confidence.

Mr. GARRICK: I do not know that we have heard the last dying speech from Sir Thomas McLlwraith. No doubt we shall have two or three more from the hon. member. I should not perhaps have risen on this occasion but for his reference to the Stock Inscription Act. When that measure was before the House last session, if there was one thing more prominent than another it was that the Government themselves did not understand the principles of the Bill they were introducing. That, I think, became clear during the discussion upon it. That Bill sought to allow the Government to hand over the whole of the banking business of the colony to any bank that they might think fit that carried on business in England, for any length of time. When the Bill was before the House an objection was taken to it that, from our experience of what the Government were capable of doing, that was an extremely dangerous power to entrust to them. We knew what they had done already with the Government bank, and knew from other matters what they were capable of doing. We were, therefore, unwilling to entrust them with so large a power. So discredited were the Government at that time in the House and in the colony that we insisted that unless they mentioned in the Bill the Bank of England, or a bank such as the London and Westminster, we would not give them the power to make such an agreement as was proposed. I am extremely glad that that proviso was inserted. I am glad of it because we have now got an agreement with the Bank of England; and all that the Bank of England wants is that the agreement shall extend to the year 1915—in other words, during all the currency of the debentures put on the market in May last. How dangerous it would have been to have entrusted the Government to make such an agreement with their present bank—the Bank of Queensland—extending to 1915! The Bill included more than the inscription of stock. If it had only included that there would not have been so much in it; but it included the general banking business in London, and it gave the Government the power to give that to their own bank for the period named. I am extremely glad, I say, that that proviso was made, and that we have driven the Government to make an

agreement with the Bank of England. However afraid we might have been of some banks, we have at all events got a bank with which it is safe to make an agreement extending to the year 1915. The bank has never made any objection. I have read the correspondence most carefully, and they are quite willing to inscribe the stock; and when the three years have expired there is nothing to prevent the agreement from being renewed without any extra payment; and the Treasurer knows that perfectly well. Under this proviso we can renew an agreement with the Bank of England from time to time for periods of three years, without being put to one shilling additional expense. The Premier's own party, last session, were afraid to entrust him with the power proposed to be given to him by that Bill, and they determined that a limit should be put to the period of the agreement. The Premier now takes credit to himself for foresight. As I have said before in this House, the Premier is able to look at things in different lights. If he has a certain scheme on hand, everything can be as dark as possible. If, on the other hand, that scheme is not to be worked, but some other scheme, then everything is as bright as day. What was his course of action when he wanted to force upon us the land-grant system of railways, including the Transcontinental Railway? What was the whole object and purpose of his financial discussions in the House at that time? To show how hard up we were, and that we should be unable to get the money required for the construction of our railways and must lose our land. That was the session before last; but we are no longer on this volcano; we are now safe. It suited the Premier eighteen months ago, during the discussion of the Transcontinental Bill. Then he said—Beware! Now everything is bright again, and it is—Look what our Government has done! He would make out that even the seasons have been in his hands. When we left office in 1879 the country, as the Premier very well knows, had suffered several seasons of most unexampled drought, and, as the Premier also very well knows, money had been dear. What did the Government do? They got so alarmed because a few immigrants were coming in that Sir Arthur Palmer, then Colonial Secretary, instantly stopped all immigration to this colony. What has made the colony? Not the Premier, but propitious seasons and cheap money. Both these things have enabled the country to progress as New South Wales has progressed to this time. Now the Premier says that this colony and the adjoining colonies are alarmed lest the incoming Government should interfere with the stable interests of the country. Does the hon. member remember what he tried to do last year and this year, and what he fled from when he went before the country? He tried to upset the most stable interest this country has. So far from the factors of change being found amongst us, it was the Premier himself who, if he could have induced his own following and the country to support him, was ready and willing to cause the greatest disturbance in the very largest industry we possess. Now the Premier says—Look at our balances!—on June 30th last we had £300,000, and now we have £691,000! I should like to remind him that he has received the September rents, which constitute a very large portion of the revenue for this half of the year, and also whether he knows that he has two-thirds of the half-year's interest on the debt to pay. I should like to know whether in his Financial Statement the Treasurer has taken into consideration those two matters in arriving at his surplus. I sincerely trust he has, because, if so, the result will afford a complete answer to the former propo-

ositions of the Premier when he assured us that we were hard up and could not find money for our railways. I think the Premier will be sorry to-morrow for the speech he has delivered to-day. Part of the speech was worthy of him; part of it he might have handed over to a brigade of larrikins, I might say. There was a part which was worthy of him, and there was a part which he himself will come to the conclusion was perfectly unworthy of him. However, I am not going to be induced into a long discussion of this matter. We are ready to give the Premier his finishing stroke as it were; we are not anxious, and he does not himself display any anxiety for a happy despatch. It is not now a question of days, but of hours, and I think it would be much more dignified if the Premier were to recognise his position and recognise the fact that with regard to the questions upon which he promised to go to the country he has failed to do so, and that he ran away from the two great questions. Throughout this colony whether rightly or wrongly, there exists beyond all doubt a feeling of strong distrust in reference to the present Ministry; and I say that, seeing this, the Premier ought to act in a constitutional manner and surrender his position to the majority in the country and to the majority of representatives of the country who are now in the House.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (the Hon. A. Archer): It is quite delightful to have the hon. member, who has just spoken in that large manner which he usually practises, come before us and read us such a nice lecture. I wonder whether he, standing up to address the House, does not feel thoroughly ashamed of some of the things he has said since last session. If not, he is a more callous man than I ever knew him to be. I have generally given the hon. gentleman credit for being a good-natured, easy-going man, quite capable of taking his part in debate, and speaking severely enough, but never stepping beyond the limits which a gentleman would lay down for himself when discussing his political friends or enemies. Therefore, I say that, during the time since we last met here, he has disgraced himself by the statements which he has made, not in addressing an electorate, but at convivial meetings where it might be supposed that, even if his own sense and gentlemanly feeling were not enough, he might be warmed somewhat by the liquors he had imbibed. I declare that no more disgraceful thing has taken place during the whole election than what fell from the hon. member for Moreton at Rockhampton. He said there deliberately—not in the excitement of debate in replying to someone who had annoyed him, but at a convivial meeting—that it was a well-known fact that every man who had left the present Ministry had retired wealthy.

The PREMIER: Through corruption.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: A greater falsehood was never told in any part of the world. He knows it is not true.

Mr. GARRICK: Perhaps the Colonial Treasurer will allow me—

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am in possession of the chair. What I state was not spoken in the House; I am repeating what was published in the Rockhampton Press, and I don't suppose the Press would publish it unless it was said. I know there was not one word of truth in the statement, and I know further that the hon. gentleman is aware it is not true. I am perfectly certain that he knows my hon. friend, Mr. Macrossan, is not a wealthy man, and that he knows that every man who has left the Ministry has left it as poor as when he entered it—if he was poor when

he entered it. For a gentleman who takes a position in this House as a man of honour to speak of political enemies in that way is to degrade himself to an extent to which I did not think the hon. member could descend. I believe the hon. gentleman is thoroughly ashamed of it.

Mr. GARRICK: Indeed he is not.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I believe he is thoroughly.

Mr. GARRICK: Don't make such a mistake.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Of course he won't admit it, but if he is not he is a great deal more callous than I believed him to be. It is surprising to find that an hon. member of this House, who could make statements of that kind at a convivial meeting, should come here and adopt this lecturing tone to us, commiserating a great deal that has taken place. The fact is that the Inscription of Stock Bill, when carried through the House, would have been very well supported by the party, but we, seeing the prospect of an exceedingly lengthy debate at the end of the session, complied with the suggestion of the hon member that the time should be limited, though we knew at the time that the alteration was a great mistake. My hon. friend the Premier stated that no man in England would accept of the trouble of inscribing the stock if it was to be done in the way proposed. The hon. member opposite (Mr. Garrick) has got his mind into such a state that he is beginning to believe the political evils he is propagating. If the hon. member will assure me that he believed what he said at Rockhampton when he uttered the words, I should look upon it as more honourable than if he uttered them believing them not to be true. He made a remark as to the surplus. Now the surplus is going on increasing, and before the end of the year it will be a great deal larger than it is now. The interest is not a six months', but a quarter's interest.

Mr. GARRICK: The quarter is to be deducted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It will be time enough to deduct it in December. I am not telling stories, but the truth. At that time the accumulation will be a great deal larger than it is now. There is not the slightest attempt to impose on the country or the House, as this surplus money is now available in the Treasury. The hon. gentleman stated that there was such a sense of distrust in regard to the Government that they would not be permitted to have their own way in the matter of inscribing stock. We are perfectly well aware of the attacks made on the Government. Some of them, from men in this House, are not worth noticing. I only notice that remark of the hon. member for Moreton because he is a distinguished member of the House. These attacks have become so habitual that these gentlemen have brought themselves to believe that they are true. They are going into our offices. They are going to take the management of the affairs of the colony into their own hands, and I promise them that if they do not prove—I won't say one-half or one-quarter—but a single one of their assertions to be most abominable detractions from character;—if they do not find out that everything that has been done can be defended without shame and with honour, then I am prepared never to face them again in this House. The battle has not been fought on political principles at all. From the leader of the Opposition down to the very lowest link of his tail, with some honourable exceptions, there have been detraction and personal attacks on every member of the Government, who have been spoken of as if they were rogues and scoundrels. I know this: the words that fell from the mouth of

the hon. member for Moreton, at Rockhampton, formed a most disgraceful attack. And most of these men are not ashamed of what they said—they glory in it; but I believe the hon. member for Moreton and also the hon. member for Enoggera are ashamed of themselves. I say that the whole of the battle was fought by detraction, and by trying to ruin the character of political opponents; and if those gentlemen can bring one fact to prove their assertions they will most awfully astonish everyone sitting on this side of the House.

Mr. GARRICK: I rise to a matter of personal explanation. I desire to state what I did say on the occasion the hon. gentleman has referred to. What I said was that, as a general rule, men from that side of the House who formed the Government left office richer than when they joined; and that as a general rule men on this side of the House who formed the Government left office poorer than when they joined.

The PREMIER: I have just as much right to make a personal explanation as the hon. member. That is not what he said. The meaning of his speech was that he knew that of every Minister who had retired from the Government over which I have presided there was not one of them but had left rich from corruption.

Mr. GARRICK: I said nothing of the kind.

The PREMIER: That is the meaning of what the hon. member said.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And there was a good deal not reported.

Mr. GARRICK: I distinctly deny that I said any such thing as the Premier has stated. What I said I had in my own thoughts. I stated what I did say exactly, and it can be borne out by those who were present, if need be.

The PREMIER: Then you were foully misrepresented, and by your own paper.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The leader of the Opposition, not having had the courage to propose a vote of want of confidence—

Mr. GRIFFITH: If you will let me I will do so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is a lawyer's trick—endeavouring to get the Government out by a side-issue of this kind. But I have nothing to say to that; it is quite in keeping with the hon. gentleman's conduct for years past. I thought him an honest man—an honourable, truth-telling man—for a period of two years in this House; but then I began to discover that on divers occasions he had told falsehoods. I heard of it in the refreshment-room and on the floor of this House, and I had clear evidence of it myself, as I had the unpleasant duty of being the principal in convicting him of that crime. There was a time—during the years 1879 and 1880—when, if anyone had accused the leader of the Opposition of telling a falsehood, I would have been the first to deny it; but now I have no more doubt that he does so than I have with regard to a few more individuals in this House with whom you must be very well acquainted. He has been convicted on the floor of the House of uttering falsehoods, time after time. To those accusations he has made no defence. He went to the country and raised false cries—sectarian cries and alarms of all sorts; and after finding that a speech that he made in one place was unpalatable, contradicted it in another—saying he did not intend to introduce Chinese, or to bring out 40,000 immigrants, but something else. He kept on lying wholesale, lying all the time.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: It is not true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say wholesale lying. I do not use any other word because

no other word can convey the meaning I intend to convey when I say that the leader of the Opposition was the founder of lies and slandering during the time of the general election.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: It is not true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: After being in power five years, and endeavouring to look after the affairs of the country from one end to the other, it would be strange if there were not many disaffected and dissatisfied. They had been impartial instead of governing for the benefit of a lot of hungry Queen-street professional hunger-mongers—lawyers, doctors, and other scouts—who had by accident or design been pitched to the front. The leader of the Opposition, aided by relations under the cloak of the Gospel, and those who have shaken off the sacred gown, and those who were very near the Lord at one time, by imposition, fraud, and deceit, by largesses in the way of great advertisements to a section of the Press, has managed to get a majority; and we saw the crowning part of that business yesterday. I shall have an opportunity another time to express my opinion on yesterday's proceedings. I do not like kicking the bag of shavings till there is not another kick left, but I will have another kick yet before it is removed to another place. When the leader of the Opposition, who pretends to view with abhorrence all rascality, immorality, illegality, and mendacity, can transfer his ideas as he did yesterday, there is very little morality about him. The only idea in front of him is to get into office. No doubt he is a good judge of morality, seeing that he has demoralised a few of the squatters that were on this side of the House—at all events, got them to vote with him on a very important division. I object to the leader of the Opposition preaching morality when he is at the same time the fountain of falsehood disseminated to the country through his relations, his friends, the Press that supports him, and through persons who, if they had not the control of those papers, would have no position in society; his ability ought to be sufficient to put him into a prominent position without recourse to falsehood. Now we find him associating himself with those whom he denounced five years ago. I say on the floor of this house—and I never run away from my statements—an attempt is being made to rob this country. From 1866 to 1876 an attempt was made on the part of Ipswich, or on the part of a syndicate here known as Cribb and Foote, to rob all the other electorates of the colony. Something like a system of fair play has been in operation during the past five years. The revenue has been distributed equitably in the electorates according to the proportion contributed, though the territory to be covered is so great that inequalities must occur sometimes. Now, however, the Ipswich syndicate of Cribb and Foote have returned their bunch, and they say they will govern the country. Let the new members take stock of the situation and realise the frauds perpetrated by the Ipswich bunch, and contrast that state of things with what has been done during the past five years. The Ipswich syndicate have had enough out of this country already. There are two railways going out of that town at the present time—one to Fassifern, and the other along the Brisbane Valley; and there are the railway workshops, about which I will not express an opinion. It is high time they were burst up. There are respectable, honest men in Ipswich, but there are a lot of loafers there also; and anyone who meets with a misfortune is immediately ordered over to the workshop. I say that it is unfair to professional artisans, carpenter, blacksmiths, carriage-builders, and others, that men who have been

unfortunate at any other occupation should be sent to the workshops. They encroach on the ground that should be occupied by the skilled artisan, and hence the difficulty in getting work done in the colony. I believe there is a contract out now in Sydney for 200 carriages. The hon. member for Stanley (Mr. Kellett) was instrumental in bursting up that state of things five years ago. He recommended and indicated certain men that should be discharged. They were not all discharged—I believe only 103 of them. The proper thing would have been to have turned them all out, and to have re-employed a certain number. I have had frequent conversations with Mr. Hornblow on the subject, and I am satisfied that if the workshops are made a political institution, the sooner they are swept away the better. As to what the hon. member for Moreton has said about the Inscribed Stock Bill, we know that it does not matter whether it was right or not: he would oppose it. He persisted and insisted upon that clause being inserted in the Bill at the time, and for the sake of expediency it was agreed to, though the results that would follow were plainly pointed out to him. He knew it, and quite regardless of it the clause was inserted, and the directors of the Bank of England, instructed by their lawyers, refused to inscribe stock upon those terms. They must have an unlimited period. It is not my business to look into the matter, but of the Treasurer, whose duty it was to deal with those things. Among other matters that were referred to at the election was one that the leader of the Opposition is now trying to run away from, namely, Chinese immigration. He advocated the introduction of Chinese.

Mr. RUTLEDGE: He did not.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When he found that that was unpopular, he shifted his pegs, and went for something else. He did not want Chinese. He was taking shelter under a hedge. He did not care to face the coolie or kanaka question. He thought either might be unpopular, and might jeopardise his position in some way. Then he fastened on to the Chinamen. He thought that that would satisfy them; but, having recommended Chinamen, he found that some of his supporters were against them, so he shifted his pegs again. The fact is that the hon. gentleman never makes a positive statement about anything by which you will find him out. In making an accusation he does not go straight, but he will only make an insinuation. In making a denial he will not make a blank denial, but will always qualify it with some conditions. If any hon. members wish to look up the matter, they will find that Mr. Griffith advocated the introduction of Chinese.

Mr. GRIFFITH: No, no!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say that the hon. gentleman, after having looked around the coolie question and the kanaka question, and the sugar industry—being desirous of doing all that he could to secure votes—over the North and South, and the further he went North the looser his tongue wagged, and the more careless he got about it, he shifted his pegs as he went from one town to another. Seeing himself in a difficulty, and wanting to get into office, and seeing that there was no other way, he concluded an unholy alliance with the squatters out west; and on the east coast he tried to make a firm alliance with the white man, and found an excuse for having recommended the introduction of Chinamen.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Nobody believes you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Further on then, one of his out-scouts, out-posts, the hon.

member for Kennedy, recommended that low German, Italian, and other labour should be introduced; that they should be paid 10s. or 15s. per week. There would be no difficulty whatever, as certain persons were to be sent to England and to the Continent to get that labour. Possibly the hon. gentleman (Mr. Rutledge) will deny that. It does not matter about his denial; I am only saying what appeared in public print.

Mr. MILES: You do not read the public print, surely?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not a great deal of it. Later on the leader of the Opposition—and bear in mind, Mr. Speaker and gentlemen, that for the past twelve months we have been questioned as to why we did not introduce more immigrants—the leader of the Opposition urged and alleged boldly that the Government would not introduce immigrants because, instead of bringing white men from the old country, they had a great desire to introduce kanakas or coolies or some element of the black race. I perfectly well remember that, after the present Premier took office, one of the most unpleasant duties was that of dealing with this immigration question. I remember that there were a few hundred of them in the colony at the time: I do not believe there were more in the colony than would land from one ship just now. Nevertheless, extraordinary measures were had recourse to to provide shelter for them and employment on the coast. Some of them were sent to Blackall, and some to other places. Wherever we sent for information the answer we were met with was that there was no employment for them. Later on the leader of the Opposition headed a deputation to the then Colonial Secretary, Sir Arthur Palmer, and the object of that deputation was to stop immigration.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I was not there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am sure that a deputation of the citizens of Brisbane waited upon the Colonial Secretary, and if Mr. Griffith was not there he had promised to be there, and it had received his countenance and encouragement, and the object was to stop immigration.

Mr. GRIFFITH: It never happened at all. It is a dream.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. gentleman denies it. Perhaps he will deny something else. The hon. gentleman did not ask the Government to stop railway making?

Mr. GRIFFITH: No.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Did not the hon. gentleman, to show the estimate in which he held the affairs of the colony at the time, send an order home to make the rails for the Maryborough and Gympie line 30-lb. instead of 41½-lb.? To show the estimate in which he held the affairs of the colony at that time, he sent an order home to make the rails for the Maryborough and Gympie Railway 30-lb. instead of 41½-lb.; and he did the same with regard to the Charters Towers line. Those were the toy railways he would have; and it shows what opinion he had of the colony, and what he expected of it looking into the future. Our railways now are only little better than toy railways with 41½-lb. rails, as any member can satisfy himself who will take the trouble to notice the way the carriages run between Murphy's Creek and Toowoomba with 60-lb. rails. I like to hear the hon. gentleman talking about the public works of the colony in the face of that! What has been the consequence of his action? That the Maryborough and Gympie line is actually dangerous

at the present time. The present Government did not come into office in time to countermand the order he had given for rails for that line, but they were in time to countermand the order for the Townsville and Charters Towers line. I only invite your attention to these things to show the absurdity of the hon. gentleman. No matter what his abilities may be—no matter how much he may read through books, or how dry his facts may be about law—the moment he dabbles in matters of work and business he is bound to make a mistake. He elected himself Minister for Works at that time. He has often alluded to it since in a flattering way to himself. Of course, he was the Ministry then altogether; he did what he liked. He found that it was not pleasant to be always prosecuting people as Attorney-General, as there was not much hanging to that; so in addition to being Attorney-General he became Minister for Works, and the result is that the people of Maryborough and Gympie are saddled with 30-lb. rails instead of those of the usual standard—41½ lbs. That will give you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. gentlemen, some indication of what the hon. gentleman was prepared to carry out at that time, and what his expectations were with regard to the affairs of the colony. I think my hon. colleague the Premier has sufficiently explained matters as to how it was proposed to disburse the surplus revenue before the 30th of June. That any objection should be taken to that is a matter of surprise to me. To a man who is in the habit every day of promoting morality and talking of honesty, I certainly fail to understand it. I do not see how any man can be dishonest out of this House, and honest in it; and I fail to see how the leader of the Opposition can explain away to any reasonable or honest-minded man why it is that the Premier should not have an opportunity of putting before the country the way in which he proposes to expend the surplus savings that have accumulated during his régime of office. There may be a trick in it—a lawyer's trick, I have no doubt. The hon. gentleman opposite may have an admiring crowd around him; but I will venture to say that when those hon. members who passed a certain vote yesterday have an opportunity of quietly surveying the situation—when they reflect upon what they have done, and the consequential damages or evils that rise out of it come upon them—when they go home, and at their firesides, or at the firesides of friends, discuss the matter and come to see really what they have done, they will not be thankful or obliged to the leader of the Opposition for it. As for himself, he will have to answer for his own share of the business. It is on a par with a great many more things he has done. He has put in motion in this country machinery that was never known or heard of before. He has by divers contrivances, while pretending to be a peaceful and honourable man, tried to divide the community and set every man at his neighbour's throat. He has tried to make him look upon his neighbour as a blackguard and a pickpocket—to despise him, and to guard his house and batten his windows against him. If that is the way of carrying on an election, when I go electioneering again I certainly will not employ those tactics. He has done everything he possibly could to disturb the peace of society and to make men hate each other; and even to hate well sometimes, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is altogether unjustifiable. I say all these elements have been brought into play by the leader of the Opposition. Of course, he stands aside altogether; he is hidden behind a haystack or a hedge.

Mr. GRIFFITH: No, no. It is your countrymen do that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course the public do not see him; but by-and-by, when the fog is lifted and they see him in clear daylight, and know what his intentions have been—when the people of this colony are walking about looking for employment in all parts of the colony except about Brisbane, by the policy that will be encouraged and initiated by those gentlemen—then will they come to a real sense of the situation, and find that they have been victims of deceit and misplaced confidence. That time will come. I believe it would be like beating the air to continue this discussion. I should like to ask you, before proceeding further, what is the motion before the House?

The SPEAKER: That this debate be now adjourned.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I object to the aspect and complexion of the debate this evening. I expected that a vote of want of confidence would have been brought against the Ministry for those crimes and misdemeanors that they are alleged to have been guilty of. That is the proper thing to do, and not to go flitting about from post to pillar, making statements and withdrawing them, and contradicting them from time to time as the leader of the Opposition has done. Any short cut to get into office. He has had a little experience of office before, and I do not know what sweets he found there. I can tell him that I have not found many sweets in it, and that, while I have every desire to adhere to the party that I have been associated with—that is, the party that has assisted materially to promote the welfare and prosperity of every man, woman, and child in the colony—release from office will not cause me a very great amount of regret. I see that we are not going to be met with a vote of want of confidence.

Mr. GRIFFITH: We will move one if you will give us the chance.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is a quibble worthy of a lawyer, and it has been done to prevent the Government from refuting on the floor of the House those false statements and vile scandals which the hon. member and those associated with him have been sowing broadcast over the land. The hon. member has been associated with what is known as the "yellow pamphlet," and with a great many more pamphlets pitching into the Ministry individually and collectively. There is nothing alleged against myself or any one of my hon. colleagues. He is afraid to do that. He prefers to speak on the stump at some country meeting, and by the time he gets back to Brisbane his memory is so defective that he has forgotten three-fourths of what he said. That is the system on which he has worked. I say this for the information of hon. members who have lately found their way into this House to do their duty to the country and their constituents. They will only require the experience of one session to teach them a lesson which they will not forget. I wish also to remind you, sir, and the other side of the House that, although taking no part in what occurred yesterday—because we have lived in the same parish, I regret to say, for some years—I shall conform to the rules of this House so long as convenient to me; and as I know that the Standing Orders are of no force, I shall expand or contract them in my own way. I shall observe them whenever it suits me; but although I took no part yesterday, out of deference to you or some inclination or feeling, I shall not be slow to express my feeling or say that you have no right to occupy the chair.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Order!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The best proof of that is your having the power to nominate the Elections and Qualifications Committee. You have, in the newspaper of which you are the ostensible owner at Toowoomba, slandered me, judged me, prejudged me, and found me guilty before the event and after it. What right, then, have you to occupy that position to appoint my judges, and find whether I am guilty of a misdemeanor or not?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Order!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That's the position you occupy at the present time.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I rise to a point of order. I don't think the hon. member has any right to address the chair in that way.

The PREMIER: What is the point of order? We don't want a sermon from the hon. member for Ipswich out of place.

Mr. MACFARLANE: The point of order is whether the hon. member has a right to address such language to the chair.

The SPEAKER: I do not wish to interfere with the hon. member in his remarks to the House, because, if I were to be strict in the matter, my action would be put down to wrong motives, although I think that the rules of debate have been violated this afternoon.

The PREMIER: Where?

The SPEAKER: I will not say where. If the hon. member chooses, he may use such observations; but at the same time I would ask him and the House generally to respect the chair of this House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would respect the occupant of the chair if he had been elected on fair grounds—if it had not been a bargain and sale.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Order!

Mr. GRIFFITH: Oh! let him go on; give him rope enough.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have paid respect and deference to past decisions more perhaps than any other hon. member, and have not been guilty of causing any trouble. I say this to warn you and the other side that I shall not be at all delicate in asserting my rights or opinions as to the means by which you got there. It would be impossible for you to give an impartial opinion—it would be a departure from your line of life; you would require a new code altogether; you could not do such violence to your nature. I shall protest against those nominations you have made to the Committee of Elections and Qualifications to the utmost. I shall let the country know it, and I believe I have every thinking man in the country with me; and the leader of the Opposition never made a greater mistake than when he engaged in the bargain and sale business of putting you into that chair. You are not fit to be my judge or the judge of any other member whose seat is contested or disputed by any person whatever. I intended to say a good deal about some of the older members opposite—not the new members who have come in lately; but for the sake of expediency and to let other business come forward, I will content myself and allow some other hon. members to have their say.

Mr. MACROSSAN: I am sorry that the debate on the motion moved by the leader of the Opposition has gone into the groove it has, and I think the sooner the business of the House is proceeded with the better. I am quite willing to admit that the leader of the Opposition was

within his right—his legitimate right—in moving the amendment on the motion of the Premier; but I ask him seriously what had he to fear in what he called the advertisement of the intentions of the Government? He could not, even by carrying his amendment, stop the advice from being given, so that really his action has been futile, and it has led to this, I may say, incoherent debate—a debate which should have taken place on the Address. I have in my hand a copy of the surplus revenue appropriations which the hon. member seems to be afraid to allow to go before the country. Of course I know it will be within your province, if the amendment is carried, as indeed it will be, to prevent this getting into *Hansard*.

The PREMIER: Not in the slightest.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Whether or not, there is no power in this House to prevent it getting into the public Press. Have not Ministers a perfect right to lay this paper on the table of the House and circulate it? I say they have. They are dealing in it simply with the surplus revenue accrued to the end of June last, during the whole of the financial year then finished; and during the whole of that year they had the responsibility of advising the Government of the country, and they certainly had the right to appropriate that surplus revenue. And yet it is the appropriation of this surplus revenue which the hon. gentleman objects to having published to the country. It does not deal with the £691,000 which is now surplus revenue; it does not deal with one penny of surplus revenue accrued during this financial year. As to the surplus revenue, the Premier has explained exactly what it is intended to do with it, and I shall not go over the same ground. There is £50,000 for repairing bridges, and £150,000 for new bridges in various parts of the colony. Then there is £50,000 for the removal of the railway workshops. It is also proposed to assist harbour trusts, and I think every hon. member who believes in local self-government will agree with me in saying that this is a move in the right direction; the sum to be devoted to that purpose is £60,000. I know very well that there are a good many members on the other side of the House who will object to the £50,000 for the removal of the workshops to Woollongabba. I do not think any Government will have the audacity—will have the moral courage—to do what some of the members there, I know, believe should be done, and which, after four years' experience in the Works Office, I would do if I had the power. The workshops, in my opinion, should be in Brisbane, the largest centre we have, thus lessening the political power which a small community of men has in such a small township as Ipswich. I don't care what side in politics these men take—they may be on some other side some day—but I say that the power possessed by 300 or 400 men in the workshops in Ipswich is sufficient, when exercised as members on that side know how it can be exercised occasionally, to demoralise the whole country. The workshops should be in the largest centre, where the least political power can be exercised. That power on the part of these men would be almost lost in a place like South Brisbane; at all events, it would be used in such a way as not to exercise the influence it does now. I think it is a very good thing that the Premier has undertaken to do what was an omission in the initiation of the Divisional Boards Act—that is, help to keep bridges in repair and erect new ones. I felt myself, when I had the administration of the Works Department, that the divisions had not sufficient revenue to repair bridges, and that they would be obliged to be assisted by this Government or their suc-

cessors; therefore no money can be better appropriated for that purpose than this from the surplus revenue. A good deal has been said this evening about the manner in which the election campaign was conducted. It was fought on personal grounds, and I think it ought to have been conducted on political grounds only. It is demoralising—not only to the Government, but to the country—to fight such an important battle on purely personal grounds, as elections were fought in many districts. Another thing is that it has become the habit to make assertions which are well received by the audiences to which they are addressed, but when the persons making them are called to account for these assertions they qualify them. That sort of thing is much too common. That was the case with the leader of the Opposition when he stated that we could absorb 40,000 immigrants a year: he denied it when it was called into question, although he did make the statement, and it is in print in the newspapers.

Mr. GRIFFITH: What I said is in print; not what you say now.

Mr. MACROSSAN: I will read what the hon. member did say. The hon. gentleman was reported in the daily newspapers, and there is very little variation in the reports. I know that it has been the practice for the last two years to make assertions and then deny them. I know the hon. gentleman made an assertion at Cooktown about the Chinese which he has denied. What the hon. gentleman did say about the immigrants is this, as reported in the *Daily Observer* of August 11:—He commenced the subject of immigration by pointing out that when our debt stood at £50 per head of population no one thought it too heavy. Then he said—

“He thought 40,000 immigrants a year was not more than we might absorb if we would only try.”

That is 40,000 plain enough. Then in the *Telegraph* he is reported:—

“The colony could absorb 40,000 immigrants a year, and that would represent a borrowing power of £2,000,000 per annum.”

Mr. GRIFFITH: Why don't you read the previous sentences to show the connection?

Mr. MACROSSAN: I will read as many sentences as the hon. gentleman likes.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The same old game.

Mr. MACROSSAN: The previous three or four sentences are of the same kind, but I will read them for the hon. gentleman if he pleases:—

“A proposal introduced into Parliament last year to set apart areas of lands for immigrants was ridiculed and rejected by the Government. But what a change comes over the spirit of their dream when the great General Feilding comes on the scene! The great man of the Transcontinental Railway syndicate writes a letter suggesting that that would be a good scheme. It is no longer to be scoffed at, but the Minister for Lands is instructed to set apart land for the immigrants General Feilding would send out; and then General Feilding is asked—‘What laws would you like us to make, if you please. (Laughter and applause.) We do not, I trust, live here to make laws to suit General Feilding or any of his associates. (Applause.) The colony could absorb 40,000 immigrants a year, and that would represent a borrowing power of £2,000,000 per annum.’”

This practice of modifying and denying assertions has been, I say, carried on for years. The hon. member for Moreton has done it. I was told what the hon. gentleman said at that convivial meeting at Rockhampton; but I did not read the report until this evening, and it is altogether different from what he has told us to-night. Now, he must have known of the report in the newspaper. It is not a Government organ; I think it is an Opposition paper. The reporter of that paper gave in his report, and the hon. member allowed it to remain without contradiction, knowing that every member

of the present Ministry was suffering under the imputation. Is it honest for the hon. gentleman two months afterwards to make the explanation he has made? He should have made it on the morning after the paper was published. I can tell that hon. gentleman, as one of the members of the Ministry to whom he alluded, that as far as I am concerned his statement was utterly untrue. I was as poor on leaving the Ministry as when I entered. No man can get rich on the official salary of a Minister, and any other means a Minister may have of enriching himself are probably better known to the hon. member for Moreton than to me. The only members of the Ministry I know who left the Ministry and bettered their position were gentlemen of the same profession with the hon. gentleman. They left to become judges—left £1,000 a year to get £2,000 a year for life. The only other member is Mr. Buzacott, and he was as poor when he left as when he joined the Ministry. The hon. member is reported to have said:—

“ Their adversaries were always firm, for they had interests which bound them shoulder to shoulder.”

I would like to know what there was to bind me shoulder to shoulder with the Ministry in order to better my position.

“ He was sure that when the Liberal party got in power they would sink their own private interests, but on the other side he knew of no person who had not left the Ministry a wealthy man.”

Those are the words reported to have been said by the hon. member for Moreton, and if he did not speak those words he should have denied them the day he knew they had been reported. It has been said that the Ministry ran from the question on which they went to the country. I was not a member of the Ministry when they went to the country, but I defy any man to say that I ever ran away from any position I occupied in this House. I never, during the whole period of the election, flinched from advocating the Transcontinental line, and I still advocate it. With all our surplus we have borrowed too much money, and will not be able to borrow a great deal more. I contrasted the Transcontinental scheme with the system suggested or shadowed out by the leader of the Opposition, the guarantee system. I contrasted them as fairly as I could, with the knowledge I had of the guarantee system. Anyhow, I never flinched during the whole of the election from the position I occupied on the Coolie question, and in the face of the miners of Herberton I used stronger language than ever I used in this House—and my sentiments were endorsed at Herberton by a majority. Few in this House, if any, had a larger majority over their opponents than I, and if every member had done the same as I did on those questions, and had educated the people to the true importance of those questions, a different result would have been the case in more electorates than one. The hon. member has a task before him in assuming office which I, for one, will compel him to perform; that is, to settle the question of coloured labour—how the sugar interest is to be supplied with labour for carrying on the industry. He has taken up a position from which he cannot recede, and from which I, for one, will not allow him to recede. It is a question that must be settled, because, if allowed to remain unsettled, the industry must suffer. I shall give him every assistance in my power to settle it. If he can settle it by the introduction of white labour there is no man who will give him more hearty support than I. But I believe at the same time he will not be able to do so. I ask him, as I asked my constituents—How will he be able to prevent the Malays coming from Singapore and the Straits Settlements, with no regulations to prevent them?

They are British subjects. Can we pass a law to prevent British subjects coming into the colony? I think we cannot, and that is a question the hon. gentleman will have to decide as Premier of the colony. Perhaps with his legal wisdom he may devise means to stop them, but at the present time they are coming in and there is no law to prevent them. The repeal of the Indian Immigration Labourers Act will not prevent them. They are coming in hundreds. They are coming all over the North without regulations, free and untrammelled; and the moment their term of service expires they are free to wander about and come into competition with the white man in every walk of industry. Many of these men are highly educated. Among the men who came to Townsville to go to the Herbert River were men fit to take their places as accountants in the merchants' counting-houses, and they went to work on the plantations as blacksmiths, carpenters, and engineers. There is where the difficulty arises, and where they become dangerous to the working men of the colony. They are not dangerous to the ordinary field labourer, but to the tradesman; and unless the hon. gentleman, when he comes to power, can stop these men coming, they will be ten thousand times worse than coolies under strict regulations as the Government intended. If the coolies were confined by regulations to the plantations they could do no injury; but unless these Malays are stopped from coming they will be a permanent injury to the country. He will not be allowed by me, at least, to pass one session without settling the matter. The Government of which he was a member allowed two sessions to pass before attempting to deal with the Chinese question, and the result was that Queensland was overrun with Chinamen, and has been suffering from them ever since. I believe there are members on this side who will back me up in compelling him to deal with the question. He will also be compelled to settle the question of railways and that of land in connection with them; he will not be allowed to go on with the ordinary business of legislation and shirk those great political questions. The Premier said something about obstruction being a coarse weapon frequently used by the other side of the House—in fact, it was their only weapon; and the hon. gentleman, in my opinion, went too far in disclaiming the use of that weapon. I, for one, will not disclaim its use. I believe it is a good weapon when used judiciously. It is a coarse weapon, as the Premier said, when used injudiciously and indiscriminately. I am giving the hon. gentleman fair warning. He will get fair play from me—as fair as any leader ever got from any follower; he will get my support in those measures I have indicated, more especially the labour question, if he attempts to deal with it in a straightforward, business-like way. But he will receive the severest criticism and strongest opposition in everything else. I think, as I said at the beginning, it is better that the debate should terminate than to go on as we have been going on this evening. It will be far better—at least, if hon. members will just address themselves to the real business, and they might do so. I think, however, it would be best to terminate at once. But that is a matter for the Government to decide. I am quite prepared for either way—now or some other time.

Mr. KATES: I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without making a few remarks. It must be gratifying to every member of this House to hear that there is such a large sum as £700,000 surplus; but at the same time it is gratifying to know that the Premier will not have the opportunity of expending that money in the

way he proposes to do. It must be remembered that every part of the colony has been contributing to that surplus; but, from what I can see, the principal portion of the money is to be expended in the coastal districts. A large sum will be spent in Bundaberg, which is the Premier's constituency; a large amount will be expended at Mackay, which is represented by a Government member; and a sum will be spent at Townsville, which is also represented on the Government side. I am sure, if the hon. the Premier had been acquainted with the real wants of the colony, he would have expended every penny of that surplus money in the conservation and storage of water and in irrigation purposes. He must know that last week the Legislature in Victoria passed a Bill introduced by Mr. McColl, for irrigation purposes. What would California have been without irrigation works, or China, or India? We have a grand soil, but our seasons are most unreliable, and I shall use my strongest influence to have the greatest part of that money spent for irrigation purposes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why don't you dry up?

Mr. KATES: The colony will be dried up. We have lost any amount of stock for want of irrigation. The hon. member may laugh, but he knows it as well as I do. The hon. member knows as well as I do that he could do no better than spend a considerable amount of that money upon the conservation of water.

The PREMIER; If we did propose it you would be the first to say it was a swindle.

Mr. KATES: With regard to immigration, it was only last week that twenty-seven persons left Warwick for Stanthorpe on their way to New South Wales.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No wonder they left Warwick if you were there.

Mr. KATES: They cost the colony £16 per head, and New South Wales is making us a convenience for getting immigrants. A great deal has been said about the elections being carried out unfairly. If they had been carried out fairly, there would not have been more than ten members on the Government side.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put.

The House divided:—

AYES, 29.

Messrs. Griffith, Miles, Garrick, Brookes, Smyth, Mellor, Jordan, Foxton, Salkeld, Isambert, White, Sheridan, Dutton, Beattie, Grimes, Higson, Macfarlane, Aland, Fraser, Bale, Buckland, Rutledge, Moreton, Hurley, Midgley, Horwitz, Kates, Bailey, and Foote.

NOES, 20.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Macrossan, Morehead, Norton, Perkins, Cooper, Chubb, Jessop, Hamilton, Lator, Stevenson, Donaldson, Govett, Black, Palmer, Lissner, McWhannell, Ferguson, and Stevens.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I move that the resumption of the debate stand an order of the day for this day week.

The PREMIER: In commencing the proceedings to-night it had been intimated to me that there was little probability that the debate would extend beyond the dinner hour. I did not understand exactly how it was meant to close it; but I believe it was meant to be closed by the other side refusing to discuss the Address in Reply. We have had demonstration, I think, of that in the way in which we have been met. I put the ordinary Estimates for the year on the table; I could not possibly, in courtesy to the House, have refused to do otherwise. They supply most useful information to our successors; but instead of being met properly, I can see quite well that the whole thing

had been arranged, because I was met with a proposition that shelved the consideration of the Estimates—by moving that they be not printed. There was no reason for bringing forward a proposition of that kind when I was introducing the Estimates-in-Chief, because they were prepared as much in the interests of any succeeding Ministry as of ourselves. When the next matter came on I admit that there was room for discussion, and was quite prepared for it; but those facts satisfied me that a general discussion on the Speech was not wanted or desired by the other side of the House. The Government have been defeated three times before the debate on the Speech came on; and, considering the circumstances, sir, I have now to intimate to this House that we will take the position of the Government into consideration, and at the earliest possible moment to which we adjourn the House I will intimate what has been done in the meantime.

Mr. GRIFFITH: With the permission of the House I should like to say a few words. Having moved the resumption of the debate, I am not entitled to do so without permission.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Go on.

Mr. GRIFFITH: When the House met this afternoon, and the message from His Excellency the Governor came down, it appeared to both myself and my friends on this side of the House to be a very unusual course for a Government in the position of the present Government to move that the document be printed and form part of the records of the House, and we felt justified in placing on record our disapproval of their conduct. That is what we intended to do; but we had not the slightest idea when doing so of forestalling the debate upon the Address in Reply, because we conceive that it would be a very extraordinary departure from Parliamentary practice on an occasion like this to decline to proceed with the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech. There is this circumstance that makes the present occasion different from others. His Excellency has just arrived in the colony, and I think both sides of the House should endeavour to see their way to unite in congratulating him on assuming the reins of Government. The Opposition have not been favoured with a copy of the Address in Reply—supposing it was intended to propose one, as I hope it will be still—but I presume that we may all join in congratulating His Excellency on his arrival in the colony. The intention of the Opposition was to move an amendment to the Address in Reply, conveying to His Excellency a statement that they did not repose confidence in His Excellency's present advisers. In moving the two motions I did I said very little. I did not in any way refer to the conduct of the Government during the past, or during the interval which has elapsed since the prorogation of Parliament. I intended doing that when moving the amendment on the Address in Reply. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government made a speech on the last motion which I am quite sure must have been intended to have been delivered on the motion by way of amendment to the Address, and which I have had no opportunity of answering, nor do I much care to do so. I only wish to assure the hon. gentleman that he has misconceived the intentions of the Opposition. All we wished to do by these two motions was to express our disapproval of what we—rightly or wrongly—thought to be an improper course. Of course the Government are the custodians of their own honour, but I think it would be very regrettable if the House did not congratulate His Excellency on his accession to the reins of government in this colony. I hope the Government will see their way to that.

The PREMIER: In making the announcement I did, I do not intend to recede from it in the slightest. I do not think it is generous for the hon. gentleman to suggest even that I intended any discourtesy to His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I did not mean anything of the sort.

The PREMIER: I move that this House do now adjourn until 3 o'clock on Monday next.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I would point out to the hon. gentleman that his motion supersedes other messages from His Excellency, and would suggest that he should withdraw his motion until they have been received.

The PREMIER: What are the messages?

Mr. GRIFFITH: The Speaker has just informed me that there is another message from His Excellency, which he has not yet announced to the House.

The PREMIER: If the Speaker had intimated to me that there were other messages from His Excellency, I would not have moved the motion.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The Speaker is quite right. He read one message at a time, and a motion dealing with it must be disposed of before the next is read.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When did they arrive?

Mr. GRIFFITH: They all arrived together.

The SPEAKER: I have had no opportunity of informing the House that there is a further message from His Excellency, because motion after motion has been before the House. The motion of the hon. member for North Brisbane is that the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for this day week. That has been superseded by the motion of the Premier—that the House do now adjourn until 3 o'clock on Monday. If the Premier withdraws his motion, that of the hon. member for North Brisbane may be carried, and then I will read the other message from His Excellency the Governor.

Motions withdrawn by consent.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor, transmitting a Bill to amend the Queensland Stock Inscription Act of 1883.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, consideration of the message was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that the House do now adjourn till Monday, at 3 o'clock. I make this motion, of course, to suit the convenience of all members of the House, and I understand that many of the country members wish to get away. We shall be able to make proper arrangements by that time. If there is any objection to Monday, I am quite prepared to substitute Tuesday.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Make it Tuesday.

The PREMIER: I have no objection, and I amend the motion by moving that the House do now adjourn till Tuesday next at 3 o'clock.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I should like to say a word before the House adjourns. As I intimated before, it was the intention of the Opposition to move an amendment upon the Address to the Governor, and I regret very much that an opportunity has not been afforded us for taking

that more regular and ordinary course. The Government, however, are masters of their own actions. The amendment I had intended to propose is this:—

We beg respectfully to inform Your Excellency that we deem it essential to the satisfactory transaction of public business that Your Excellency's advisers should possess the confidence of this House and the country; and that, having regard to the policy publicly enunciated by Your Excellency's present advisers with respect to the construction of railways by means of land grants, the introduction of Indian labour, and other matters of grave importance, we are unable to repose our confidence in them.

It is unnecessary for me to give reasons now. These are the matters upon which the Government went to the country, and upon which there is, strangely enough, an absence of reference in his Excellency's Speech to-day. I do not remember any previous occasion when His Excellency's Speech was not read in this Chamber. I do not intend to make the speech that I should have made if that had been done. The Premier evidently made a speech which was prepared as a reply to mine. I only wish to say that the Premier's memory was sadly at fault in his speech with reference to myself and my utterances in various places, and with reference to other members on this side. It is unnecessary to go into particulars, because what he and his party have said and done during the last general election is thoroughly well understood by the people of the colony.

Mr. BLACK rose to a point of order.

The SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman is perfectly in order in speaking to the question of the adjournment of the House.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The hon. gentleman cannot object to my saying a few words after the stormy attack made upon me. I have only to say that the country is fully aware of the proceedings of the last two months. They know exactly what happened, and I do not think they will learn much from anything that has been said this evening. On our side we are perfectly content with the verdict of the country. If hon. gentlemen on the other side think we have done wrong, I am sure that if we have our sins will be visited upon our own heads. If we have done right we shall get our reward. I rather regret that I have not had the opportunity of making the short speech that I had intended to deliver.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am very glad indeed that we have now got this wonderful amendment out of the leader of the Opposition, although I must say that it is not at all in accordance with the text he has been preaching during the last electoral campaign. We hear nothing of the corruption, roguery, and villainy that has taken place on this side of the House, more especially amongst those holding office. We are simply told that the House does not believe in land-grant railways and coolie labour. The hon. gentleman was certainly one of the first to advocate the Railways Preliminaries Bill, which included the land-grant system. I have come into the House pledged to the land-grant system. Although I was defeated in the Valley, I still advocate that system, and very recently I have advocated it before my constituents in the Balonne. Therefore I am at issue with the hon. gentleman on that point. With reference to the Coolie question—what does the hon. gentleman, the chameleon legislator, the man who changes his tune in every constituency he goes to—what does he really and finally think about it? Hitherto the hon. gentleman's opinions on that matter have changed from day to day; but perhaps he has been misreported. He is indeed the most unfortunately reported man in Queensland. It is a most astonishing thing that no

reporter can report exactly what the hon. gentleman has said—that is to say, when it does not square with public opinion. If it does, then the reporter is right. But if next day a leading article in a newspaper says, "This won't do: our great leader of the Opposition has made a mistake," he says, "I never said so; it is that wretched reporter." It is an astonishing thing that no man in the colony has been so consistently misreported as the leader of the Opposition. We unfortunate men on this side of the House are consistently properly reported, and we get into trouble for giving honest vent to our opinions. The hon. gentleman has denied to-night, by interjection, that he went in for the 40,000 a-year immigration scheme. It has been clearly proved by the hon. member for Townsville that that statement, at any rate, is corroborated by the whole Press of the colony. I do not wish to say anything that would hurt the valiant member for South Brisbane, but he is an advocate for what are known as "Jordan's lambs." The hon. member for South Brisbane (Mr. Jordan) advocated strongly the introduction of a 15s. a-week class of labour, and he was backed up in that statement by the advocacy of the leader of the Opposition. That also has been denied. Then we come to another and a much more burning question, so far as the elections were concerned—namely, the introduction of Chinese. There we find, according to the Press reports of the best reporters that could be sent from Brisbane, that the leader of the Opposition at Roma most distinctly and certainly said that the Chinese were a lesser evil than any other class of coloured labour could be.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I never was reported to have said that, and I never said it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Of course it was afterwards contradicted.

Mr. GRIFFITH: It was never so reported.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Of course I assume that the report was correct, and, with all due deference to the leader of the Opposition, I may say that I have as much right to believe in the honesty of a reporter—that he would not put down what was not said—as I have to believe the leader of the Opposition. I say it was reported by more than one reporter that the hon. gentleman leaned towards the Chinamen. I don't know how the Chinamen felt, but if I had been a Chinaman I should rather have wished he had not leaned towards me. I believe the hon. gentleman did advocate the introduction of Chinese labour, and I hold that to be the most dangerous kind of labour that could be introduced. It might in the future produce a leader of the Opposition or a Premier, for there is no doubt that in every position of life in which Chinamen have come into competition with Europeans they have been in very many instances successful. It is just as well that the hon. gentleman should know these things have been said of him. I look forward myself to the day when even the people of Queensland, who are supposed to have given such an undoubted majority to the Opposition at the present time, will find that they have been worshipping a brute—Baal; and that, after all, the leader of the Opposition is not such a wonderful being as they thought he was. I rather think that his action yesterday has pretty well shattered their idol. That is an opinion which I do not hold alone. It has found utterance in the columns of the leading journal of this colony in an article which I have no doubt you, sir, have yourself carefully perused. I think perhaps I have an exceptional right to express an opinion in this House, because I not only represent what some hon. members opposite may improperly call a purely squatting constituency,

but I also represent a very large section of Fortitude Valley. In one of the most thickly-populated constituencies in the colony, having the largest number of electors on the roll, I obtained the votes of 656 electors, and I have no hesitation in saying that not six hon. members on the other side of the House can claim to have had that number polled for them. Therefore, I have a right to express the opinion, not only of the Balonne electorate, but also of a large number of the electors of Fortitude Valley—an electorate second to none in intelligence in the colony—an electorate which, whatever injustice it has received from its present representative, will always receive justice at my hands. So far as I am individually concerned, I am very glad there is to be a change of Government. I will tell the leader of the Opposition and those who follow him—follow after his shadow—why I am glad. My reason is that the hon. gentleman has succeeded, by devices best known to himself and to his trusted followers, in raising such a mist of distrust and calumny round the holders of office that it is time the mist was dispelled or the charges made by him proved. It rests with that hon. gentleman, and those with him who are about to take the offices left vacant, either to prove those charges which they have spread so industriously from one end of the colony to the other, or, by not being able to prove them, substantiate what we say—namely, that those statements were baseless, false, and set abroad with the calculation to mislead the country, and enable the Opposition to reach office by trampling over the reputations of those who held office before them. Unless he and his future colleagues can clear themselves, let the fault lie on their heads; and, on the other hand, if wrong has been done by the present Government—if they have done anything of the things charged against them—let the offence be brought home and the guilty punished. A very serious responsibility rests on the head of the leader of the Opposition for having made those charges, and he must substantiate them or cover himself with ignominy. There is no getting out of it. From the time when Sir Thomas Mellraith first led the Treasury benches we have heard one series of charges, not one of which has been substantiated. And now that he is leaving office the leader of the Opposition, instead of basing his amendment on the charges of corruption and abuse of power which he has ventilated so freely during the electoral campaign, shelters himself behind a miserable amendment dealing with questions which he himself will have to settle.

Question—That this House do now adjourn—put and passed.

The House adjourned at seventeen minutes past 8 o'clock until the usual hour on Tuesday next.