

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 1884

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FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were passed :—

By Mr. BAILEY—

That there be laid upon the table of this House a return showing—

1. The Deeds of Grant of Country Lands issued during the year 1883, specifying names of grantees, areas and locality, also section of Act under which the lands were granted.

2. Showing also, in detail, the price per acre received for each lot, date of application for each lot, and the date when the Administrator of the Government affixed his signature; also, the date when each grant was delivered to the purchaser or his agent.

By Mr. MACROSSAN—

That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be laid upon the table of this House a copy of the Depositions in the case of George Dobson, committed for rape at Ipswich.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said: I intimated on Friday that, before proceeding with anything but formal business to-day, I would make a statement as to the present position of business in the House. When I last referred to the position of the Government business, particularly to the Bills on the paper, I intimated that it was not intended to go on with the Railway Reserves Act Further Amendment Bill; therefore, I need say nothing more about that. The other Bills on the paper are the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 Amendment Bill, the Agent-General Bill, and the Bills of Exchange Bill. Since that time the House has affirmed by a large majority the principle contained in the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 Amendment Bill—namely, the suspension of the purchase of pre-emptions during the present year; and, as no pre-emptions can be granted without the assent of the Government, we are quite content to take that expression of opinion on the part of the House, and the Government intend to act upon it. It is not worth while, therefore, to press that measure any further at the present moment; the Government will act, as they are perfectly at liberty to do, in precisely the same way as if the Bill had been assented to by both Houses of Parliament. With respect to the Agent-General Bill, the Government do not propose to press it this session. I need not give any particular reason for that, beyond saying that it is not so urgent that it must be proceeded with just now. With respect to the Bills of Exchange Bill, that is one of very considerable importance, and, although I believe both sides are willing to give it full consideration, I am of opinion that even a little longer consideration will be more advantageous. The Bill has been introduced into the House three times, and as it requires even more consideration I do not propose to proceed with it any further during the present session. Unless any emergency arises—which I see no likelihood of at present—there is no other Bill which the Government intend to proceed with. Of course, the Bills which have already left this House and gone to another place will, I trust, become law. Upon the notice-paper to-day are also two notices of motion by myself, and two by my hon. colleague the Minister for Works, with reference to railways. With reference to the two notices given by myself, it certainly was desirable that they should be placed on the paper this session; but, as I shall have to move the first one immediately, it will be more convenient to say what I have to say about them when the motion is called. The notices of motion given by the Minister for Works have reference to the extension of the Brisbane Valley Branch Railway, and the extension of the Southern Railway from Stanthorpe to the border. Those notices of

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 26 February, 1884.

Standing Orders Committee.—Questions.—Formal Motions.—Ministerial Statement.—The late Inter-colonial Convention.—Federal Council of Australasia.—Brisbane Valley Branch Railway.—Railway from Stanthorpe to the border.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Wickham Terrace Presbyterian Church Bill.—Adjournment.

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

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Mr. FRASER, on behalf of the Speaker, as Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, laid upon the table of the House certain correspondence relative to the duties and claims of Mr. L. J. Byrne, Shorthand Writer in charge of Select Committees, and moved that the papers be printed.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. BUCKLAND asked the Minister for Lands—

1. Is he aware that a place of worship has been lately erected on part of section 23, North Brisbane, on land granted by the Government for other purposes?

2. Would he state for what purpose the land was originally granted?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) replied—

1. On inquiry, I find that a small building has been erected on allotment 8 of section 23, parish of North Brisbane, which is used for religious services by the inmates of the Female Refuge.

2. For a Female Refuge.

motion have been given because the plans are in a tolerably forward state, and they are lines that must absolutely be made. The New South Wales line is fast approaching Tenterfield, and it is desirable, as I have often pointed out in the House, that we should be at the border as soon as the New South Wales Government are. As to the Brisbane Valley Railway, it is at present in the position of a railway leading to nowhere in particular, and it cannot begin to pay until the extension is accomplished. There is another reason why it was considered desirable to give notice of those railways during this session, and that is, the considerable number of persons in the colony who are not employed. Though not nearly so many as is attempted to be made out, still there are a good many, and as there is a large number of immigrants now afloat for the colony, it is desirable, I think, to proceed with these works as quickly as possible. I understand an objection has been made by the other side to those lines being proceeded with, on the ground that they were not mentioned in the conversation that took place between myself and the hon. the leader of the Opposition with reference to the business that the Government intended to proceed with. It is quite true that the subject of these railways was not in contemplation by either of us at the time, and if the hon. gentleman thinks I am bound by the understanding that he arrived at from what I said, not to proceed with them, I shall feel bound to adopt that course. That is the only statement I have to make; and the result is practically that, besides the Convention resolutions, which I hope will be disposed of in the course of the afternoon, no business on the paper will be proceeded with except the granting of Supply, which I hope will not occupy more than a few days.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Mr. Speaker,—Referring to the remarks that have fallen from the hon. the Premier—in the first place, with respect to the suspension of the pre-emptive right, which exists, I hold, under the Act of 1869, he stated that the House having indicated by a large majority that they approved of the principle laid down in that measure, the Government intended to act upon that expression of opinion; and almost in the same breath he said that at the present time the law allowed the Government to refuse their assent to any pre-emptions. The hon. gentleman seems to be on the horns of a dilemma. In the first place, I maintain that no Government has a right, upon the mere passing of the second reading of a Bill in one Chamber, to treat that second reading as making law of that measure. In the second place, the other horn of the dilemma is, that if the Government have the power—which the hon. gentleman assumes, but which I deny—why did he introduce the measure at all? With regard to the resolutions standing in the name of the Minister for Works, the hon. the Premier has rightly stated that they were utterly outside any arrangement entered into between the two sides of the House with reference to the conduct of business during the remainder of the session, and I distinctly object to proceeding with them. Hon. members on this side of the House have been kept here a long time—much longer than they expected; many of them live at a distance from Brisbane and are desirous of getting away, and it was with that object they agreed to the arrangement entered into between the hon. the Premier and myself. If the hon. gentleman is desirous, as I believe he is, of giving employment to the men he referred to—about whom I think there has been a great deal more clamour than necessary;—I don't believe there is such a large amount of labour unemployed as is represented, at any rate deserving labour; there may be a

number of loafers unemployed, but I believe the number of real labouring men out of employment is very small;—however, if the hon. gentleman is desirous of giving them immediate employment he has ample means at his disposal in the way of public works, by which he could employ all this labour even in the city of Brisbane. There is a sum of £100,000 voted for public offices; the plans have been in for a considerable time, and if those works are set on foot at once ample employment will be provided for all working men desirous of obtaining it. No good or sufficient reasons have been shown why the railways in question should be proceeded with. If railways are to be made, I think there are others that have special claims for consideration. There is the Springsure railway, which the hon. the Minister for Lands especially promised to see carried through. The hon. gentleman having made that special promise—let us hope not solely forelectioneering purposes, but under which he induced his opponent to withdraw from the field—I am sure that when his hon. colleague the Minister for Works considers the position he has placed himself in by that promise, he will see his way, at an early date, to call for tenders for the Springsure railway; and as the plans, specifications, and so forth, have been approved by both Houses of Parliament, I cannot see how any difficulty arises in the way of a large number of men being employed upon those works. I need hardly say—it goes without saying almost—that we have no intention of doing anything to oppose the Estimates; and if an Appropriation Bill should be required in the meantime we will be most happy to assist in passing it.

THE LATE INTERCOLONIAL CONVENTION.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Last week I gave notice of two resolutions, which I am sure the House will pardon me for referring to together: the first approving of the resolutions adopted at the Intercolonial Convention held in Sydney in November and December last year, referring to the relationship of Australasia to the islands of the Pacific—the general relations of the British dominions in the Southern Seas to those islands; and the second, a resolution to the effect that an address be presented to Her Majesty praying that a Bill may be introduced into the Imperial Parliament for the purpose of constituting a Federal Council, on the basis of the Draft Bill adopted by the Convention. I now rise to move the first resolution, asking the House to record its approval of the resolutions adopted by the Convention, with respect to what is sometimes called the immediate foreign relations of Australasia. I do not propose to address the House at any great length on the subject, nor do I think it necessary; but I must make a few observations by way of introduction. I need not refer at length to the correspondence which gave rise to the calling together of the Convention—or, as I should much prefer to call it, the Conference. It may be said to have originated from the action of the late Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, in despatching Mr. Chester to New Guinea for the purpose of annexing the eastern portion of the island to the British dominions. That action was, as might have been expected, disallowed by the Imperial Government, but it had the effect of calling attention to the position of New Guinea, and also had aroused some of the neighbouring colonies to a state of enthusiasm with respect to some of the islands in the Pacific, which would otherwise not have been so soon aroused. I give Sir Thomas McIlwraith all credit for that. Whether I agreed with his action or not at the time, I am bound to admit that the result, so far as it has gone, has been good and satisfactory.

We are in a better position now in regard to the relationship between Great Britain and the islands in the Southern Seas than we were twelve months ago. I am not going to give an elaborate account of what the Convention did. It will be seen from the report of the proceedings that there was not at first unanimity of opinion. A draft resolution was laid upon the table by Mr. Service, Premier of Victoria, on the second day. It will be found on page 5 of the proceedings of the Convention :—

- "1. That it is essential to the future well-being of Australasia that Eastern New Guinea, and the Western Pacific Islands from the equator to the New Hebrides, should not fall into the hands of any foreign power.
- "2. That, in order to preclude the possibility of so disastrous an event, it is desirable to urge on the Imperial Government the necessity of at once either annexing such of those lands in respect to which no understanding exists with any other power, or of establishing such a protectorate over them as will secure them from foreign occupation.
- "3. That the colonies represented at this Convention are willing to bear such share of the cost entailed on the mother-country by such annexation or protectorate as may be deemed fair and reasonable.
- "4. That, on behalf of our respective colonies, we protest in the strongest manner against the proposal of the French nation to pour out on any of these Pacific Islands the offscourings of their own people; and we appeal to the Imperial Government and to our countrymen at home to save this portion of the Empire from so dire a calamity.
- "5. That, in view of the foregoing resolutions, and of the many subjects of pressing importance on which the colonies, though of one mind, are unable to obtain united action owing to the absence of some common authority, the time has now arrived for drawing closer the ties which bind the colonies to each other by the establishment of a Federal Union in regard to such matters as this Convention shall specifically determine."

On the same day I laid upon the table draft resolutions which embodied the views not only of myself and my colleague, but of other members of the Convention. I gave notice of two resolutions which will be found immediately following those I have read, and a comparison of the two sets of resolutions will sufficiently show the extent of divergence of opinion at the commencement of the proceedings. My own resolutions were as follows :—

- "I.
- "1. That in the opinion of this Conference it is essential to the safety and welfare of the British Dominions in Australasia that no portion of the neighbouring islands, and especially that no portion of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, should fall into the hands of any foreign power.
- "2. That the rapid extension of Australasian enterprise and trade, and the attention which has for some time past been drawn to New Guinea, render it certain that that island will shortly be inhabited by many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, whose relations with the native tribes, in the absence of any provisions for the maintenance of law and order and the protection of life and property, cannot fail to give rise to serious difficulty and embarrassment.
- "3. That, having regard to these considerations, and considering further that the provisions of the Foreign Jurisdiction Acts and the Orders in Council for the government of British subjects in the Western Pacific are wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of existing circumstances, this Conference, while fully recognising that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the Empire belongs to the Imperial Government, resolves that it is urgently necessary, as well for the security of the Australasian portion of Her Majesty's Dominions as for the prevention of otherwise inevitable evils, that such measures should at once be adopted as will most conveniently and effectively secure the ultimate incorporation with the British Empire of that portion of the island of New Guinea which is not claimed by any civilised power, and further that immediate provision should be made for the exercise of such British jurisdiction within the island as will secure the attainment of these objects.

"4. That the Australasian Colonies, represented at this Conference, will cheerfully defray by contribution, in proportion to their population, the reasonable expenses incurred in giving effect to their wishes.

"5. That these resolutions be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to be submitted for Her Majesty's Royal consideration, and for such action as she may think proper to direct, with a view to giving effect to the earnest desire of her loyal subjects in Australia.

"II.

"1. That it is desirable that a Federal Australasian Council should be created for the purpose of dealing with the following matters—

- (1) The Marine Defences of Australasia, beyond territorial limits.
- (2) Matters affecting the relations of Australasia with the Islands of the Pacific.
- (3) The prevention of the influx of Criminals.
- (4) The regulation of Quarantine.
- (5) Such other matters of general Australasian interest as may be referred to it by Her Majesty or by any of the Australasian Legislatures.

"2. That a Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the best mode of constituting the Council, and the definition of its functions and authority."

It will be seen that to some extent the two sets of resolutions run upon similar lines, though there is also a considerable divergence. After long discussion and careful revision of the language used, the Convention unanimously adopted the resolutions set out in the notice of motion upon the table to-day :—

- "1. That any further acquisition of dominion by any foreign power in any of the islands of the Western Pacific would be highly detrimental to the future safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia, as well as injurious to the interests of the whole Empire.
- "2. That having regard to the geographical position of the island of New Guinea, the rapid extension of British trade and enterprise in Torres Straits, the certainty that the island will shortly be inhabited by many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, and the inadequacy of any existing laws for regulating their relations with the native tribes, this Convention, while fully recognising that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the Empire belongs to the Imperial Government, is emphatically of opinion that such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation with the British Empire of so much of New Guinea as is not claimed by the Government of Holland.
- "3. That although the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France, recognising the independence of the New Hebrides, precludes this Convention from making any recommendation with respect to those islands, the Convention urges upon Her Majesty's Government the extreme desirability that such understanding should be embodied in some definite and permanent engagement, which shall secure them against falling under any foreign dominion; at the same time the Convention trusts that Her Majesty's Government will avail itself of any opportunity that may arise for negotiating with the Government of France, with the object of securing the control of those islands in the interests of Australasia.
- "4. That the Governments represented at this Convention undertake to submit and recommend to their respective Parliaments such measures as may be necessary for defraying, in proportion to their population, such share of the cost incurred in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions as Her Majesty's Government may require.
- "5. That the Convention protests in the strongest manner against the declared intention of the Government of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific, and urges Her Majesty's Government to use every means in its power to prevent the adoption of a course so disastrous to the interests of Australasia.
- "6. That the Convention expresses a confident hope that no penal settlement for the reception of European criminals will long continue to exist in the Pacific; and invites Her Majesty's Government to make to the Government of France such serious representations on this subject as may be deemed expedient.

"7. That these resolutions be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to be submitted for Her Majesty's Royal consideration, and for such action as she may think proper to direct, with a view to giving effect to the earnest desire of her loyal subjects in Australasia."

Those are the resolutions upon what is sometimes called the annexation branch of the subject, and I will say one or two words before passing from them. The propositions adopted by the Convention were, in short, these: That it was highly undesirable that there should be any further acquisition of territory in New Guinea or in the Pacific by Foreign Powers. We anticipated that Australasia was going to become a large British dominion, and we unanimously came to the conclusion—including the Crown colonies—that it was highly undesirable that any foreign power should acquire any further dominion in the Pacific than they had already obtained. We did not consider it desirable, as some persons apparently have done, to attempt to dictate or suggest to the Imperial Government how to carry that object into effect; that certainly was a matter for the exercise of the functions of the Imperial Power. For the same reason, whilst we placed on record a strong opinion with regard to New Guinea, we merely urged upon the Imperial Government the desirability of taking steps to secure the incorporation of that island with the British Dominions, and that it was highly necessary that it should not belong to any other power than Great Britain. With respect to the New Hebrides, it was impossible for the Convention to do more than urge such action as was consistent with the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France respecting the independence of those islands. They could not recommend any action in violation of treaty obligations, but trusted that the Imperial Government would avail themselves of any opportunity to secure the control of those islands. They further urged that steps should be taken to prevent the use of the Pacific as a rubbish-heap for criminals. The representatives of the Governments present also undertook to submit to their respective Legislatures measures of permanent appropriation of money in proportion to the population of the colonies to meet the expenditure incurred. I think there can be no difference of opinion about that action. We are especially interested in any foreign acquisition of territory in New Guinea, and we may fairly bear a proportion of the expenditure which might be incurred in giving effect to our wishes. Those resolutions are those which were agreed to at the Conference, and are those which I now submit to the House, and ask the House to express its approval of. They were adopted unanimously by the members of the Conference, after very careful consideration and full discussion. Another question which was considered at the Convention was that of the establishment of a Federal Council. That is the subject of another motion which succeeds on the notice-paper the one on which I have been speaking, and it is a subject upon which I now wish to say a few words. I may observe, and hon. members will not have forgotten, that a committee was appointed by the Conference to draft a Bill to constitute a Federal Council for Australasia. A Bill was drawn up by the committee and was very carefully revised—not only in committee, but afterwards by the whole Conference at two or three different sittings. Most of the members had very great skill in drafting, and very great care was taken with the Bill; so that even matters which might be pointed to as omissions, were in every instance determined upon after the very fullest consideration. After the Bill was adopted and finally agreed to, I submitted the following resolution, which appears on page 17, and which was also adopted:—

"That this Convention, recognising that the time has not yet arrived at which a complete Federal Union of the Australasian Colonies can be attained, but considering that there are many matters of general interest with respect to which united action would be advantageous, adopts the accompanying draft Bill for the constitution of a Federal Council, as defining the matters upon which in its opinion such united action is both desirable and practicable at the present time, and as embodying the provisions best adapted to secure that object, so far as it is now capable of attainment."

That indicates precisely the object with which the Bill was framed. It recognises that it is in some measure practicable to apply federation to the Australian Colonies, but it also recognises that the time has not yet arrived for a complete federation; but unfortunately this resolution was telegraphed to England with the words "not yet" left out, so that in most of the English papers in which notices have appeared of the matter the resolution reads:—"That this Convention, recognising that the time has arrived." This is an extraordinary mistake which has not been sufficiently accounted for, and I am afraid that it has given rise to an error which has pervaded the minds of a great many people in Great Britain, and has given rise to the very unsatisfactory position in which the matter seems to be in London. I received, two or three days ago, a communication from Mr. Service, in which he informed me of an interview between the Agent-General for the colony of Victoria and the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which the latter gentleman stated that Her Majesty's Government would do nothing with a view to the annexation of New Guinea until Australia was federated. There is no necessary connection, to my mind, between the resolutions which I now submit to the House, and of which I now ask the House to approve, and that dealing with the constitution of a Federal Council. It was no part of the scheme of the Convention to undertake the annexation of the islands—it was no part of the scheme adopted by it, although I am bound to say that some of the members were highly favourable to the notion. I cannot help thinking that in England at the present time there is some misunderstanding as to what the opinion of the Convention was and also as to what the public opinion of Australasia is upon these two questions. I believe the resolutions I now submit can be affirmed by this House without any difference of opinion; but the other one, that referring to the Federal Council, will, I think, probably require more careful consideration. I do not think that the argument that nothing can be done with regard to New Guinea until Australia is federated can be urged as a reason why the Government should this session press on the question of a Federal Council. To my mind it seems to operate in an opposite direction, and if there is any misunderstanding on the point, I think the House should be fully in possession of the views of the Secretary of State upon it before they adopt the measure. That is my opinion, and I refer to these matters because I am in frequent communication with the other colonies upon the subject, and because I wish the views of the Government to be fully understood here as well as in the other colonies. It is a matter which applies to us all, and one in which we are all working in conjunction. I shall not, therefore, press on the resolution which stands next on the paper, and ask the House to agree to an address being presented to Her Majesty praying that a measure may be submitted to the Imperial Parliament upon the basis of the draft Bill adopted by the Convention. I have no doubt that this House will meet again before the session of the Imperial Parliament has terminated, or nearly terminated, and I trust the negotiations will then have taken such a form that we shall have some definite grounds to go on. From the information of

which I am at present in possession, it seems that we have made little progress in making ourselves intelligible to the Secretary of State, beyond the position we occupied in October or November last. I will not now occupy the time of the House further, but ask hon. members to agree to the resolutions of which I have given notice, and which I will now read to the House. I beg to move—

1. That this House, having had under consideration the following resolutions adopted at the Intercolonial Convention held in Sydney in November and December, 1883, namely—

- "1. That further acquisition of dominion in the Pacific, south of the Equator, by any foreign power, would be highly detrimental to the safety and well-being of the British possessions in Australasia, and injurious to the interests of the Empire;
- "2. That this Convention refrains from suggesting the action by which effect can best be given to the foregoing resolution, in the confident belief that the Imperial Government will promptly adopt the wisest and most effectual measures for securing the safety and contentment of this portion of Her Majesty's Dominions;
- "3. That having regard to the geographical position of the island of New Guinea, the rapid extension of British trade and enterprise in Torres Straits, the certainty that the island will shortly be the resort of many adventurous subjects of Great Britain and other nations, and the absence or inadequacy of any existing laws for regulating their relations with the native tribes, this Convention, while fully recognising that the responsibility of extending the boundaries of the Empire belongs to the Imperial Government, is emphatically of opinion that such steps should be immediately taken as will most conveniently and effectively secure the incorporation with the British Empire of so much of New Guinea, and the small islands adjacent thereto, as is not claimed by the Government of the Netherlands;
- "4. That, although the understanding arrived at in 1878 between Great Britain and France, recognising the independence of the New Hebrides, appears to preclude this Convention from making any recommendation inconsistent with that understanding, the Convention urges upon Her Majesty's Government that it is extremely desirable that such understanding should give place to some more definite engagement, which shall secure those islands from falling under any foreign dominion; at the same time the Convention trusts that Her Majesty's Government will avail itself of any opportunity that may arise for negotiating with the Government of France, with the object of obtaining the control of those islands in the interests of Australasia;
- "5. That the Governments represented at this Convention undertake to submit and recommend to their respective Legislatures measures of permanent Appropriation for defraying, in proportion to population, such share of the cost incurred in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions as Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the relative importance of Imperial and Australasian interests, may deem fair and reasonable;
- "6. That the Convention protests in the strongest manner against the declared intention of the Government of France to transport large numbers of relapsed criminals to the French possessions in the Pacific, and urges Her Majesty's Government to use every means in its power to prevent the adoption of a course so disastrous to the interests of Australasia and the Pacific Islands;
- "7. That the Convention expresses a confident hope that no penal settlement for the reception of European criminals will long continue to exist in the Pacific, and invites Her Majesty's Government to make to the Government of France such serious representations on this subject as may be deemed expedient;"

records its entire approval of the said resolutions.

2. That an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor informing him of the foregoing resolution.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: I need hardly say that, so far as this side of the House is concerned, we have not the slightest intention of in any way opposing the motion of the hon. gentleman. On

the other hand, we heartily concur in every word of the resolutions he has moved; and we do this with a most hearty feeling of gratification, because the action which precipitated the calling together of this Conference was the action of the leader of this party in the House, though he is now absent from it. Without the prompt and proper action of Sir Thomas McIlwraith, in taking possession of New Guinea in the name of the Queen, although that action was afterwards disallowed, these resolutions would never have been brought forward at all. A higher compliment to the statesmanship of Sir Thomas McIlwraith could not be paid than that its outcome should be this Conference between the leading statesmen of the colonies, gathered together to discuss the question to which he had given rise. In my opinion the colony received but scant justice from the heads of the Colonial Office when the Secretary for State disallowed the action of Sir Thomas McIlwraith; and that this opinion was shared by the other colonies is shown by these resolutions. There can be no doubt that the action taken by Sir Thomas McIlwraith was taken as much in Imperial as in Australian interests. He looked upon Australia as a part of the British Empire, and his action was as much that of a British citizen as a Queenslander. He saw perfectly well, as the Conference saw, the great danger ahead if these islands did not very soon come under the sway of the British Crown, and seeing that, he acted shortly, sharply, and decisively, and by so doing he brought more prominently to the front the strength of the great Australian people. I quite agree with the Premier that this is not the time to attempt to pass the Federal Council Bill. It is too big a thing; it is too large a measure to be attempted at the rag-end of a scratch session. We cannot deal with it now; nor does it appear to me that there is any great desire on the part of the southern colonies to deal with the question. New South Wales has been quite silent, and all the other colonies except South Australia, which made some movement in it a few days ago. I think, therefore, with the Premier that the Federal Council Bill can be better dealt with next session. I hold that if these resolutions are passed—and they ought to be passed—unanimously, I have not the slightest doubt that if representations are made through the proper channels to the Imperial authorities at home they will see that the demands made by the colonies of Australasia are based upon justice, and must receive recognition at their hands. I beg to second the motion.

Question put and passed.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIA BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the following motion was postponed until Tuesday, March 4th:—

That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty may be graciously pleased to cause a measure to be submitted to the Imperial Parliament for the purpose of constituting a Federal Council of Australasia, upon the basis of the Draft Bill adopted by the Convention held in Sydney in months of November and December, 1883.

BRISBANE VALLEY BRANCH RAILWAY.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS, in reference to the following motion standing in his name—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension, section 2, of the Brisbane Valley Branch Railway, as laid upon the table of the House, 21st February, 1884.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

—said he had put the motion on the paper to endeavour to prevent the men now employed on

the line being thrown out of employment. There was a large number of people about the city out of work; and when the first section of the Brisbane Valley Branch Railway was completed a further number would be out of employment. He regretted very much that the leader of the Opposition did not see his way to allow the motion to pass without opposition, as it would not take up much time; but as the hon. member had refused he (the Minister for Works) would be compelled to postpone it till that day week.

RAILWAY FROM STANTHORPE TO THE BORDER.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS, in reference to the motion standing in his name—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed Southern Extension from Stanthorpe to the Border, as laid upon the table of the House, 22nd February, 1884.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

—said that that was a much more important motion than the one he had just alluded to, because there was in the Railway yards some £14,000 worth of material for the extension of the railway from Stanthorpe to the border, and it was lying there useless. He did not know how long it had been there; but at all events it would have been much better had the money been in the bank at interest instead of lying in the shape of fish-plates and rails. However, it did not suit the Opposition to let the motion go on, and he had no option but to postpone it until that day week.

Mr. MACROSSAN said the rails and fish-plates could be made serviceable on other lines; it was simply a matter of transit.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are heavier rails.

Mr. MACROSSAN said they could be used on the Maryborough line.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I won't take such advice as that.

Mr. MACROSSAN: You are very particular.

SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER—that the Speaker leave the chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply—

Mr. NORTON said he wished to say a few words with regard to what fell from the Premier on Friday in connection with the Commission of the Peace. He drew attention to a small matter with regard to a Mr. Skyring, and said—

The SPEAKER: It is necessary to call the attention of the House to the question that it is contrary to the rules of Parliament to refer to a previous debate. The Premier was quite right, on Friday morning last, in drawing attention to the fact that that discussion had been irregularly introduced in the same way.

Mr. NORTON said he would direct attention to the 85th Standing Order.

The SPEAKER: I will read the Standing Order:—

"No member shall allude to any debate of the same session, upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion, except by the indulgence of the House for personal explanation."

Hon. members will perceive that that is the very point upon which I rule; and to show that it is quite in accordance with parliamentary practice, I will quote from "May," page 327:—

"It is a wholesome restraint upon members to prevent them from reviving a debate already concluded; for otherwise a debate might be interminable, and there would be little use in preventing the same question or Bill from being offered twice in the same session, if, without being offered, its merits might be discussed again and again."

The authority referred to by May was in reference to what transpired in the House of Commons on the 28th February, 1845, which I will read to the House:—

"Mr. B. B. ROCHE said that he had a question to ask of the hon. and learned member for Bath, for the purpose of asking which he had come expressly from Ireland. As this was a question referring to a matter in which he felt that his character as a member of that House and a gentleman was concerned, he trusted he was not asking too much of the House in begging to be allowed to make a few preliminary remarks by way of explanation of the grounds on which he asked it. A very short time since he saw with considerable astonishment a speech attributed to the hon. gentleman in the *Times* newspaper."

"Mr. SPEAKER said that the hon. member was irregular in referring to a newspaper for what was said in that House in a previous debate."

"Mr. ROCHE: Well, then, I heard of a speech which has been attributed to the hon. and learned gentleman, in which I find the following words, in alluding to a large body of Irish members:—

"They have run away from their posts."

"Mr. SPEAKER: It is quite evident from the hon. gentleman's observations that he is referring to a speech made by the hon. and learned member for Bath in a former debate; and I must inform the hon. member that it is quite irregular for any hon. gentleman to allude to a previous debate."

"Mr. ROCHE: I may be permitted, at any rate, to ask this question: Certain observations, I understand, were made—supposing that they were made—

"Mr. SPEAKER said he was sure the House would feel that it was quite impossible that the hon. member could be allowed to refer to any words spoken by another hon. member in a previous debate."

I may also add that Mr. Speaker Barton, of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, has recently given a decision on a similar question under the following circumstances:—Mr. McElhone had made a statement to the House that the manager of the Bank of New South Wales, Mr. Sheppard Smith, had forced the Government to float their loan through his bank when the Government had decided to float it through the Bank of England. To that statement the Postmaster-General (Mr. Trickett) stated "It is a lie." On the following day Mr. McElhone came to the House, armed with a letter to substantiate the truth of his allegation, and was about to read it, when the Speaker interrupted him as follows:—

"Mr. SPEAKER said it was not in order to make any reference to a former debate, and nothing said outside the House with reference to the debates in Parliament could be admitted to influence the House."

Reference was here again made to Mr. Trickett's expressions.

"Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Paddington states that what he described to be a lie was a statement made to the hon. member, and not the statement of the hon. member himself. It is not within my power to go outside the law of Parliament, and any letter which has even any inferred reference to a debate in the House cannot be read, for the reason that the House is the sole debating authority here."

"Mr. McELHONE: I say if I am not allowed to read the letter in the House I will have it printed in the Press, and let the whole country know of it."

"Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. gentleman inform me if the letter was written before the debate?"

"Mr. McELHONE: No. I went to Mr. Ewan this morning and got it from him."

"Mr. SPEAKER: If it were written after the debate, I am afraid it will be difficult to show that it was not written with reference to the debate. Will the hon. gentleman permit me to read the letter? [The letter was handed to Mr. Speaker, who read it.] It appears to me, if I am correctly informed, that at a previous debate there was a statement made by the hon. member, with reference to which the hon. member for Paddington used the words, 'It is a lie,' referring either to the statement made by Mr. McElhone or to him in person, but the Postmaster-General now says it referred to the statement made by him. The letter referred to begins by a distinct reference to the conversation with Mr. Trickett, and contains words referring to what occurred in a previous debate. I must lay it down that as the body of the letter—its substance—is written on account of a debate, or words used in a debate, in the House, the reading of the letter will not be admissible."

" Mr. McELHON continued to refer to the matter.

" Mr. SPEAKER said that whilst the rule prohibited him from reading the letter, it equally prohibited him from stating its purport. It might be an inconvenience, and sometimes might be an injustice, that one hon. gentleman should not have an opportunity of replying to another hon. member in the way desired, still such were the rules of the House, and he was compelled to enforce them."

The House will thus perceive that all authorities are in conformity with the Standing Order I have read, and that it is decidedly contrary to the law of Parliament to refer to a previous debate.

Mr. NORTON said he would draw attention to the fact that the question was not a new one. It was still the same question which had been brought forward at the last meeting of the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will permit me to say that the motion that the Speaker leave the chair was at the last meeting decided in the affirmative at the close of the debate, and that the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply and voted several sums of money.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he thought that the Speaker was quite correct in his ruling that no member should refer to what had taken place in a previous debate, except with the concurrence of the House. If such a thing were allowed there would be no finality. He could point out a way in which the hon. member for Port Curtis could say what he wished to say without infringing any rule of the House. In going into Committee of Supply, a member could ventilate any grievance of his or of his constituents, and therefore, if the hon. member for Port Curtis thought that any of his constituents had been aggrieved through any omissions from the Commission of the Peace, or from any particular person being put on the Commission of the Peace, he could bring it up, and refrain from referring to what took place on a former debate.

Mr. SCOTT said if the question that the House go into Committee of Supply was different from any other question which came before the House, it was a question that so long as the session lasted was never fairly ended until Supply was granted. The ruling given by the Speaker was perfectly clear with regard to any question which had been determined. So long as a question was open, it could be referred to again. He had stated that as his opinion, that so long as the question was not definitely settled it could be referred to at any time. The question of going into Committee of Supply was never definitely settled until Supply was granted. It appeared to him, therefore, that the question was in the same position as a motion that had been adjourned.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he hoped the Speaker would suspend his ruling and allow the hon. member (Mr. Norton) to proceed with what he had to say. They were losing far more time in discussing the question than they would by allowing the hon. member to proceed.

Mr. NORTON said that, according to his reading of the Standing Order, it was merely a continuation of the discussion that was begun the other night. On that occasion he purposely postponed what he had to say, because the Premier said he was prepared to give him the information he asked for, in order that he might refer to the promised reply later on.

The SPEAKER: The question on the occasion referred to was that the Speaker do leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply. The House having, after debate, gone into Committee of Supply, it must be assumed, consequently, that the debate on the question was closed. The hon. member can refer to any subject he pleases on the motion that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply, so long as no reference is made to a previous debate.

Mr. NORTON said he should not object to any ruling from the Chair, although in his opinion it was wrong, but under the circumstances he would ask permission of the House to say a few words on the answer given by the Premier to a question put to him during the previous debate. According to *Hansard*, the following was what took place on the occasion:—

"He (Mr. Norton) wished to know whether the Premier was prepared to give him any information on the subject now, or, if he did not wish to make the information public, if he would mention it to him privately?"

"The PREMIER: I am quite prepared to give you the information."

Later on, after he (Mr. Norton) had left the House, the Premier said:—

"Mr. Skyring was left off in consequence of information having reached the Government showing that he was not a fit man to sit on the bench."

It was only fair to Mr. Skyring that something should be said in connection with that matter, for the Premier's statement was worse than anything that had been said before. What the hon. gentleman had previously said was that it was not the practice to give the information asked for, and that was far better than making such a statement as that of which he (Mr. Norton) complained. He would point out that Mr. Skyring and his brother were the owners of a considerable sheep station in the Port Curtis district. Mr. Skyring, moreover, was an officer of the Customs Department, and up to the end of the year was the only magistrate in the neighbourhood. There was a boiling-down establishment there, and a sawmill, and a large number of people were settling on the place. There was no other magistrate within thirty miles of the spot, and he knew of no one else there who was likely to be appointed a magistrate in place of Mr. Skyring, if his name was still to be omitted from the Commission of the Peace; and everyone requiring the services of a magistrate would have to travel thirty miles before he could find one. The removal was injurious not only to Mr. Skyring, but to the people of the neighbourhood, and it would have been only fair to Mr. Skyring to have given the reasons which rendered him unfit to sit on the bench. He (Mr. Norton) had never heard a word which would lead him to suppose that there was any justification for such a statement. Mr. Skyring was not only well known in the Port Curtis district, but also in Brisbane, and there were many gentlemen in Brisbane who could bear out what he had said of him. Mr. Skyring was also a member and chairman of a divisional board, and as such was entitled to act as a magistrate within the district; so that, although his name was omitted from the Commission of the Peace, he was still a magistrate in the district as long as he remained the chairman of the divisional board. It seemed rather peculiar that Mr. Skyring's name should be struck off when other names were put on in places where there were already enough magistrates. The appointments in the town of Gladstone were certainly not wanted, or, if they were, there were other men better qualified to fill the position than those appointed. He would not say one word against the respectability of the men who were appointed, but he would say that they were not so fit to occupy the position of magistrates as others were. Whatever might be said in justification of the omission and appointments, almost every resident in the district, and a great many others outside it, would come to the conclusion with Mr. Skyring that they had been made for political reasons, and for no other reason whatever. He regretted extremely that the Premier, in referring to the subject, had

given so vague an answer—indeed, he might characterise it as a cowardly answer, and one which, unless there was some very strong case against Mr. Skyring, appeared to be a slander. He did not believe there was any justification for it; but, whatever there was, it would be far better to state it plainly than to allow Mr. Skyring to lie under the slur which the Premier's answer cast upon him.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought the Premier should give some explanation with reference to Mr. Skyring. That gentleman was well known in Brisbane, where he resided for many years, and he himself had known him for a considerable time, and he had never heard one word against him. He thought the Premier ought not to be allowed, solely by virtue of his position in the House, to blast the reputation of Mr. Skyring or anyone else; but that he should have told the House plainly what offence Mr. Skyring was guilty of which made him unfit to sit on the bench. He had never heard anything against Mr. Skyring; he was held in high respect in the district—so high, that he had been made chairman of the divisional board, a position of great responsibility, and he (Mr. Morehead) again asked the Premier for a full explanation as to why he was removed from the Commission of the Peace. He knew him personally, and believed him to be a highly respectable man, well qualified to fill the position.

The PREMIER said he did not know whether the hon. members had asked the questions with any sinister object, but it looked very much like it. He did not think that he should, on any other occasion, depart from the usual rule and give no explanation—no reasons. That was the best rule; but hon. members opposite had pressed him so earnestly for reasons that he violated the rule, and he was inclined to think he had made a mistake in doing so. The reason he had given was that, according to information in the possession of the Government, Mr. Skyring was not a suitable person to be on the Commission of the Peace. He could give no further information.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Will you produce the papers if they are called for?

The PREMIER: Of course not. All communications with respect to magistrates, unless official, are understood to be confidential.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Star Chamber.

The PREMIER: That was always understood. He did not believe the papers were even kept in the office; and, with regard to Mr. Skyring's case, he could not say whether they were or not, or what they were, or whether there were any.

Mr. STEVENSON said the explanation of the Premier was not at all satisfactory. There must be very little against Mr. Skyring if the hon. the Premier could not remember what it was. He did not wish to dwell upon that case. He knew Mr. Skyring a little, and had never heard anything against him. What he wished more particularly to know was the reason why Mr. Darack, of Thylungra, had been struck off the Commission of the Peace. He had been on it for years; was held in high estimation in the district, where magistrates were much needed, and he had never heard a single word uttered against him. He did not know whether that gentleman supported the present or the late Government, but he knew that he was held in high estimation; he had done well for himself, was a very good resident, and he (Mr. Stevenson) thought some very good reason should be given for striking his name off the Commission of the Peace. He merely mentioned the matter now, and would take another opportunity of referring to it and other matters unless they got a more satisfactory explanation from the Premier.

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The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he thought it was a great misfortune that the present Commission of the Peace could not be abolished altogether, so that they could commence afresh. It would be a great service to the country if it could be reduced by one-half; and he hoped that the Government would be empowered at the commencement of next year to cancel the whole Commission and commence *de novo*. He was of opinion that about every third name should be knocked off. He knew that some names had been left on that should have been struck off.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Name!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The late hon. member for Stanley was one. He sat as judge and jury in a case where a man was brought up for personating at an election, and did everything he could to get him released, and he (Mr. Miles) thought he should be struck off. He hoped the Premier would be empowered to cancel the whole Commission and commence afresh.

Mr. MACROSSAN thought the statement of the Premier, as to the mode in which the Commission of the Peace was revised—how gentlemen were appointed and knocked off, was very suspicious and dangerous. Anyone had only to go to a Minister and say, "So-and-so is not fit to be on the Commission of the Peace," and he was knocked off.

The PREMIER: No, no!

Mr. MACROSSAN: That was a power that should not be left in the hands of any person. As to Mr. Skyring, perhaps he was one of the diabolical lot referred to by the Premier as unmitigated ruffians. At any rate, he must have done something to earn a bad character, but he (Mr. Macrossan) was inclined to think that it arose from a matter of petty spite on the part of some person who had the Premier's ear. He, for one, was quite willing to agree to the proposition of the hon. the Minister for Works to knock them all off and commence afresh; but he should not leave the matter in the hands of Ministers. Either let it be in the hands of the people themselves by election, as in America, or be left in the hands of the judges.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Worse still.

Mr. MACROSSAN: It would be impossible for it to be worse than it was at the present time. He was certain that judges would not leave off names for purely political reasons. It must be for something in connection with moral character, or the fitness or unfitness of a person for a position on the bench that would guide them. He should prefer it being placed in the hands of the judges, if not in the hands of the people themselves, to being left to any Ministers.

Mr. BLACK said that to some extent he agreed with the hon. the Minister for Works and the hon. member for Townsville, that probably the best way to effectually revise the Commission of the Peace would be to wipe it clean out and start afresh; but, he thought, judging from the manner in which the present Ministry had revised the Commission, and looking not only at the men they had struck off, but also at the men they had put on, it would not be a judicious thing for the House to leave the power in their hands. From the debates they had heard on the subject any unprejudiced person could come to no other conclusion than that the present Ministry had exercised their power in, to say the least of it, a very injudicious way. They had certainly struck off, as far as they possibly could, those who they considered as politically opposed to them.

The PREMIER: Nothing of the kind,

Mr. BLACK said, so far as he could see, that was all that was considered by the Government. All whom they considered opposed to them were knocked off, and all who were their supporters were put on, and without any reference to their merits. The Premier himself had stated that the magistracy was composed, in many instances, of some of the most unmitigated ruffians in the colony. He had pointed out on a previous occasion that the hon. gentleman, in his anxiety to wipe out that disgrace to the magistracy, had undoubtedly committed the same offence himself. He had anxiously waited to see if the hon. gentleman would take any steps in the matter; but he had refrained from doing so, and he now repeated that some of the names put on the Commission of the Peace were placed there purely from political motives, without any reference to the merits of the persons themselves. If that sort of thing were to be continued, those men would eventually be honoured in the colony who did not belong to the Commission of the Peace.

Mr. FOOTE said there had been a great waste of time that session over the appointments to the magistracy. If the same thing had taken place under the late Administration, it would not have been wonderful. If the present Ministry had done anything wrong in the matter, they had simply followed the example of their predecessors in office. When the last Government had issued their list of the Commission of the Peace, there was not a fishmonger in the place who had supported them who was not to be found on the new list of magistrates. Yet when another Ministry were in power, and exercised their right to leave off many persons who ought never to have been put on, and placed on the Commission—and rightly, too—a number of gentlemen whom the previous Ministry had rejected, and whose only offence was that they had acted justly, uprightly, and honestly in a revision court—it was looked upon as a reward for political services rendered. The Opposition were, he thought, inclined to judge the Ministry by themselves, and the idea was prevalent amongst them that because they did so-and-so, the present Ministry must have done the same. As far as his knowledge went, at any rate, he could rebut the statement of the hon. member for Mackay, that the Government had knocked off all who were politically opposed to them; and, so far as he knew, none but respectable men were put on the Commission of the Peace in any district of which he had any knowledge. He could not, of course, speak of the North or other districts, but he believed the Ministry had been actuated by a desire to purge the list to a considerable extent. He was quite willing to follow the suggestion that the old list should be destroyed and an entirely new one commenced, and possibly that would have a beneficial effect. He, at all events, had nothing to complain of, nor was he going to follow the Minister for Works in reference to the remark he made concerning a certain person. A magistrate might go out of the way a little, but he did not know that it should be considered a reason why he should be discharged from the Commission of the Peace. Magistrates who acted from conscientious motives should not be removed without good reason.

Mr. ARCHER said it was quite delightful to hear the utterances of the hon. member who had just sat down. They were getting quite aristocratic in that House, and the hon. member objected to fishmongers being on the Commission of the Peace. He supposed a Government should draw the line somewhere, but he should certainly not draw it at fishmongers, who might be quite as fit to be on the Commission of the Peace as many of those on it already. It did not depend upon a man's station in life, but upon the

qualities he possessed whether a man should be appointed to the Commission of the Peace or not. However, the hon. member stood upon his dignity, and would not associate with fishmongers, because he thought they were a cut below him. The thing was absurd. He was not going to defend the list made by any Government, who might have made wrong appointments. It was quite right that the present Government should strike off all such names as were not wanted on the list of magistrates; but when the Premier began by saying that the last Government put a lot of "unmitigated ruffians" on the list, and he was going to strike them off, everyone came to the conclusion that he would strike off none but unmitigated ruffians. He had proved to the House that the hon. gentleman had struck off men who were as respectable as himself, and if not for political reasons, the action had such a gross appearance of being done for political reasons, that observers could see no other cause for it; further, it had been proved by other hon. members and by the hon. member for Mackay that the hon. gentleman had put "unmitigated ruffians" on the bench, and refused to take any steps to remove them. He did not think he (Mr. Archer) had recommended more than half-a-dozen names for the honour—if it could be so called—of the magistracy, but he certainly would not recommend anyone who was not fit for the position. Therefore, what they complained of was, not that the Government had struck off names of persons who were unfit for the position, but that the Premier, when speaking of those whom he would knock off the Commission of the Peace, referred to them collectively as "unmitigated ruffians."

The PREMIER: I did not.

Mr. ARCHER said the hon. gentleman spoke of them collectively as "a lot of unmitigated ruffians," and individually as men who were not fit for the place when he was asked for special information; and yet he had replaced them by men of lower character than the men he had struck off. That could be proved, not only by what had been said in the House, but by the police court records.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. W. Griffith), moved, that there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1883-4 a sum not exceeding £3,340 for the Legislative Council—salaries and contingencies.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, that a sum of £3,545 be voted for the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he believed every member of the House would agree with him when he said that he hoped that the Government would have regard to the claims of the Clerk of the Assembly to an increase of salary. He had occupied the position for many years—since Separation—and the increase would be justified, not only by his high office, but by the proficiency with which he performed his duties. An increase of £100 would certainly receive his (Mr. Morehead's) support, and he might mention that it was in the contemplation of the late Government to give that increase. Why it was struck off he did not know. It might be in regard to the salary of the Clerk in another place; but he did not see why Mr. Bernays should suffer for that. He hoped that the increase would appear on the next year's Estimates, if not on the Supplementary Estimates for this year. They had no more courteous officer, and there was no one they cared more to refer to for valuable advice at any time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the matter should receive the careful consideration of the Government during the recess.

Mr. ALAND said he would also invite the Government during the recess to take into consideration the salaries of the messengers of the House. The matter was spoken of when the last Estimates were under discussion, and was promised consideration. He himself and, he believed, every member of the Committee would endorse every word that had been said in reference to Mr. Bernays; and he also believed every member would agree with him when he said that he would like to see the messengers' salaries raised, for they were most courteous in showing attention to hon. members.

Mr. STEVENSON said he also remembered the matter being brought forward last year, when a promise was given that some notice should be taken of the discussion. It was very generally admitted that something should be done.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum of £8,434 be voted for Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly—joint estimates. He said there was what might be called a verbal mistake here. Four *Hansard* cadets were put down at £300 each. They were called "cadets," but they had served their time as cadets and become reporters. They had, in fact, been promoted.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked if the sum of £500, put down for petty repairs, etc., would be sufficient? A larger sum was proposed by the late Government. He would point out that the state of the building and the gardens outside was principally owing to the care of Mr. Bernays.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Government thought that sum would be sufficient till the end of June.

Mr. FOOTE said he should like to refer to the furniture in the establishment, as really a lot of the chairs were not safe to sit down upon. There was not very often room for members to sit comfortably in the House. That might be owing to their large majority, but he thought that the necessities of hon. members, whatever they might be, ought to be met.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not think the country ought to be put to extra expense for chairs on account of the weight of the hon. member. The chairs provided now would sustain an ordinary weight, and that was all that the Committee had a right to see to. The hon. member should bring his own chair with him.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the hon. Premier had referred to the salaries of the cadets, and he thought the explanation pretty satisfactory. At the same time, he saw that there were two shorthand writers also at £300 each, and he did not see why the cadets, who were only just out of their time, should be placed on the same level with the reporters who had to do the hard work of the gallery. He thought the increase for the cadets was rather much for lads just out of their time. He rose more particularly, however, to ask for information with regard to the item, "Shorthand Writer in charge of Select Committees of both Houses, £550," and as to the amount of work that officer was required to do, and also whether he had at any time applied for any assistance in it. He believed that the office was one which might be very well dispensed with, as they had so many cadets and reporters on the staff. That would be a saving of £550. He had no knowledge of the gentleman occupying the position.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Oh! Don't you.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER on the Opposition Benches: He is a Roman Catholic.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he had never spoken against the Roman Catholics, as the hon. member knew. He did not know who he was, but he thought they were entitled to some information as to the amount of work the sum was voted for.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, with respect to the cadets, it was a part of the bargain when they were engaged as cadets that as soon as they were competent they should receive the full salary of £300 a year. With respect to the functions of the gentleman in charge of select committees, he was not in a position to give very much information. The idea was to establish a separate branch to report the proceedings of select committees; but, as the reporters of select committees were the same as those who reported for *Hansard*, it appeared that there were two heads to the one staff, and that did not work very satisfactorily. Some circumstances that had recently come under the attention of the Government showed that there had been friction, and some more satisfactory arrangements might be adopted by which the whole staff would be placed under one head.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he trusted it was not the intention of the Government to get rid of the services of Mr. Byrne. He had some considerable experience with regard to that gentleman, and he looked upon him as the best reporter there was on the staff of that House. He could hardly conceive it possible that the Premier intended to do away with the services of Mr. Byrne, a gentleman who had earned the respect of everyone both inside and outside of the House, and both in his official and his private capacity. He therefore took exception to the remarks of the Premier, because they would lead Mr. Byrne to think that he was to be deprived of the position that he had so well earned, or threatened with something worse.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had not said anything to indicate anything of the kind. What he had said was that there had been friction between the two heads, and that that must be altered in some way.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It must have come into play since you came into power.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had expressed the opinion that generally it was a mistake to have two heads to one staff. Of course there was such a thing as two heads working amicably together; he saw no reason why they should not work amicably; and he hoped there would be no necessity for any action.

Mr. BLACK said he noticed that in the column "1883-4" the Shorthand Writer in charge of Select Committees was left off. Did that show an intention to get rid of his services when the vote was expended? If it was a clerical error, it was rather ominous after the remarks that had fallen from the Premier. When the Committees of Elections and Qualifications sat he noticed that the officer in question was absent, and he put it to the official presiding how it was that a gentleman specially appointed to the shorthand reporting of select committees was not there. He (Mr. Black) had been on previous committees, and he could say that that gentleman had single-handed done the whole of the work of those committees, while at the Elections and Qualifications Committee it took a fresh reporter every ten or fifteen minutes. That gentleman's qualifications were known to every member of the House. Any gentleman who had any business on committees would endorse his opinion, that a more efficient reporter did not exist in the colony.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he had known Mr. Byrne during his ten years' experience

in that House, and he was the best reporter in the whole establishment; he said that without fear of contradiction. They had reporters in the gallery, but not one of them was equal to Mr. Byrne. He was one of the oldest reporters in the establishment. There were not two heads, as the Premier had said; there was only one head; and he thought Mr. Byrne recognised that there was only one head. Mr. Byrne first had charge of the reporting in the other House; but there was some disagreement about that, and he was put in charge of the select committee branch, but still responsible to Mr. Jones. Certainly Mr. Jones was not so old an officer in the Service as Mr. Byrne by a long way. Mr. Byrne's qualifications as a reporter were so well recognised by those who understood them that he was selected to go home as a special reporter with Sir Thomas McIlwraith to the Steel Rails Inquiry. He could say the same thing as the hon. member for Mackay: he had known Mr. Byrne to do the work of two or three reporters. He thought, if the hon. gentleman recalled to mind one special committee which Mr. Byrne had charge of, he would remember that that gentleman did the whole of the work. Whatever might be the intentions of the Government, they had no right to say anything that might cause the slightest uneasiness to Mr. Byrne in the position he occupied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no intention of causing the officer in question any uneasiness. Hon. gentlemen opposite might see something superlative in Mr. Byrne's abilities as a reporter. He (the Colonial Secretary) had nothing to say against him, but he was not aware of his great superiority to other members of the staff. He remembered Mr. Byrne in London on the occasion referred to, and as a matter of fact he did no reporting whatever then; reporters were engaged in the ordinary way. The hon. member for Mackay said he had noticed Mr. Byrne working all day, but all committees did not sit every day. The hon. member ought to know that no reporter could report all day when a committee sat every day; it took a certain amount of time to write out the notes, to print, and to go through proofs, and that could not be done by one man if a Committee sat continuously. He had not the least intention of saying anything against Mr. Byrne as a reporter, but he did not see why all the other reporters should be disparaged.

Mr. FOOTE said he had nothing to say against Mr. Byrne. He remembered when Mr. Byrne was reporting in the Assembly, and before he went to the other House, and he also had been on committees which Mr. Byrne was reporting. The hon. member for Mackay made reference to a committee the other day, and said that although Mr. Byrne was appointed as shorthand writer he was not there. The hon. gentleman might as well have explained why he was not there. The reason was that the Elections and Qualifications Committee had always been in charge of the Clerk of the House; consequently they had not departed from the rule. He had had a good bit of experience with reference to Mr. Byrne, and had always been well pleased with his work. At the same time he was not prepared to depreciate the work of the other shorthand writers who had been engaged. Upon several occasions he had noticed that Mr. Byrne had a great deal of time at his disposal, which evidently was not the case with the reporters engaged in that House from week to week. Therefore, if there was to be an alteration, as the Premier had suggested, he thought that there should not be two heads to one department at one time. They could not work amicably together.

Mr. ALAND said he thought that the charge levelled against the hon. member for Ipswich—that he had spoken against Mr. Byrne on account of his being a Roman Catholic—was a pity, and it was also a pity that another hon. gentleman should say that it was because he went home with the late Premier to report the Steel Rails Committee. He objected to Mr. Byrne for the reason that he did not think he had enough to do. That was the only objection he had. If the records of Parliament were gone over, it would be proved that that gentleman had had about thirty-six days' work to do during the whole time he had had the appointment. That was a sufficient reason.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Where did you get the figures?

Mr. ALAND said he had not made them up; but if the Committee would postpone the vote he would look them up.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he hoped that the hon. gentleman did not insinuate that he made any reference to the Steel Rails Committee. He (Mr. Macrossan) was the only member who mentioned it.

Mr. ALAND: It was interjected by the hon. member for Cook.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he might correct a small error that he made when he was speaking before. He said that Mr. Byrne was subordinate to Mr. Jones. He believed such was not the case. He was in charge of the reporting in the other House, and went home on the Steel Rails Commission. When he returned, Mr. Jones was in charge of the staff; and he was given to understand that the late Speaker and the President put Mr. Byrne in charge of select committees, and left him entirely untrammelled, or only responsible, of course, to the Speaker and President, so that he did not think there could be any friction between Mr. Jones and Mr. Byrne, seeing that Mr. Byrne was responsible to the President and Speaker only. There must be something else which the Premier was not aware of, and it might be as well for him before he made up his mind in the matter to make inquiry. The Premier would do justice to Mr. Byrne. He was perfectly satisfied with that gentleman, and in saying so was not deprecating the value of any other reporter. A man might be a good reporter, and still have a superior.

Mr. MIDDLEY said he was not acquainted with the gentleman whose name had been mentioned, and therefore could have no personal or sectarian, or anti-McIlwraithian feeling against him. He did not know how he should vote if the matter were under discussion; but it was not under discussion. He wanted to draw attention to the increase in the cost of reporting the proceedings of the House. There was a very heavy increase, and he very much regretted that any cause should have led to that result. It was quite possible for the country to pay too much for a good thing, even if it was only carrying out a bargain with the cadets. The cost of reporting the proceedings of the Assembly and Council had become a very serious matter, and if they added to the cost of reporting the cost of printing and other sundry matters, the cost of *Hansard* would be found to run into £10,000 a year. They ought to bear in mind, in making future arrangements with those gentlemen, although it was a responsible and useful calling, that they were only on duty for half the year, and only three or four nights in the week. Those matters ought to be taken into consideration when deciding the remuneration given for professional service of that kind. He regretted that increase of £550. There was another matter he should like to call

attention to, and that was that the salaries of the officers mentioned in the vote ought to be more clearly and plainly stated than they were under the present arrangement. In the New South Wales Estimates there was a statement given very plainly and distinctly before the reader at one glance, showing what was the officer's position. The system they had in Queensland of showing only the man's position and salary was a highly objectionable one, and in a future session it might be as well to give no increase of salary unless they had placed before them in some schedule a statement giving more information.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the matter complained of by the hon. member had frequently engaged his attention, and he was desirous so to frame the Estimates that the amount of salary received by each officer could be easily traced. He had been considering the propriety of following the plan adopted in the New South Wales Estimates; and, without pledging himself to any promise, he hoped that next session an improvement would be perceptible. That would necessitate their being made more voluminous, but that would be compensated for by their increased clearness. In the meantime he had endeavoured to supply all information by foot-notes, which had been carefully revised, and if hon. members would take the trouble to follow them they would see clearly what each officer was receiving. However, he was giving his attention to the matter, and would endeavour next session to give all the information possible in the Estimates.

Mr. BLACK said he was glad to hear that such was the intention of the Colonial Treasurer, because it was a matter that had been referred to session after session. The Speaker himself took special exception to the way in which the Estimates were prepared on the last occasion they went through committee, and the present Colonial Treasurer went so far as to say that all fees which police magistrates and clerks of petty sessions were at present enjoying ought to be paid into the Treasury, so that hon. members might ascertain what the actual emoluments of each officer were. Not so much additional space would be required as the hon. gentleman indicated, because they really did not want to descend into minute details, and in the index to the Blue Book there was plenty of room opposite each Government servant's name to place the actual emoluments which he had received during the previous years. When they came to the judicial salaries, it would be seen that the foot-notes were very misleading. The Colonial Treasurer took credit to himself that the foot-notes had been carefully revised, but he scarcely thought hon. members would accord him the credit he assumed on that point. On referring to page 14, it would be found that fees were represented by the letters B, F, S, U, and X; whereas on the very next page, dealing with the same subject, fees were represented by the letters B, C, and H. The same thing occurred with reference to fees for visiting, which on page 14 were indicated by the letters D, H, and J, and on page 15 by the letters G, H, J, and Z.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: But the references are quite correct.

Mr. BLACK said that might be so, but any man having any business capacity would adhere to the same letters when referring to the same items. But when they came to those pages, he would take the opportunity of referring to the question a little more at length.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that the sum of £5,135 be granted for salaries and contingences, Colonial Secretary's Department,

said there was an additional clerk at a salary of £300, whose salary was on the Supplementary Estimates for last year, and there was also an addition of £25 to the salary of the accountant.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was very natural that the hon. gentleman had slipped over the item of £1,500 for advertising. Considering that that was more than double the appropriation for 1883, he should like to have some explanation. Was it intended as a bribe to certain newspapers, to keep them sweet towards the Government? It looked very much like it. The late Government proposed, on the Estimates which the hon. gentleman had seen, £1,000 for that purpose during the present year, and they were said to be the most corrupt Government that ever ruled the colony. He had been told that the present Government had taken their advertisements from every newspaper that did not defend them, and the item under notice certainly gave them great bribing power over the mercenary Press which supported them. Was not the present Government so just and upright, so good and great and wise, that its own merits would support it without subsidising the Press of the colony in that hollow way? It was the most monstrous piece of corruption he had seen for a long time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that one of the first things he had to do, on assuming office, was to get some money to go on with the advertising, for the amount for the year had all been spent. He believed the late Government set apart on some draft estimates the amount of £1,000; but it was all spent, and the present Government found that there was nothing to carry them on to the end of the financial year. In fact, it had been spent before the first six months were over. He had made it his business to inquire what standing instructions there were in the office with regard to advertising. The only instruction he found was one to the effect that all advertisements inserted in any Brisbane newspaper were also to be inserted in two other newspapers. Should he name them?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Yes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the names of those newspapers were *Figaro* and *Funch*. That instruction had been a standing instruction, and had absorbed a considerable portion of the money; but it was no longer a standing instruction in the department.

Mr. MIDGLEY said there were four clerks down in the Colonial Secretary's Office, and the increase was the amount between £670 and £1,025. There was one additional clerk at £125; and he should like to know if there was any additions to the salaries of other clerks, and what was the necessity for them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already explained, but perhaps he did not speak loud enough, that there was one additional clerk at £300, who was appointed nearly twelve months ago. There were other small increases recommended by the officers of the department which he had seen no reason to object to.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving £14,420 for salaries and contingencies in the Registrar-General's Department, said the salaries had been very much changed during the year. When the late Registrar-General, the hon. member for South Brisbane, resigned it was followed by several promotions and alterations in the office. These changes had been made before the present Government came into office, and they left them as they found them. The Deputy Registrar-General, however, did not

receive the same salary as his predecessor; and, in the case of subordinate officers who were promoted, they did not always get the same salaries as their predecessors. The expenses connected with contingencies, unfortunately, could not be kept down.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, if he understood the hon. gentleman correctly, the position was this: The resignation of the late Registrar-General led to promotions in the office, but the promotion did not in all cases carry the same salary as was paid to the previous occupant of the office.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving £122,582 for salaries and contingencies, Police Department, said there was an increase of £75 in the Commissioner's Office, which was made up by small increases to the clerks in the office. With reference to the executive branch, the expenses were kept down as much as they could be; but there were some increases in the number of officers which, owing to increasing settlement throughout the colony, it was impossible to keep down. Efforts were made to do so, but it was a very difficult matter indeed. He hoped that if hon. members thought that different localities were not sufficiently protected by police, they would bear in mind that increased protection involved very considerably increased expenditure. Contingencies were put down as nearly as the Government could estimate what would be required. No more money would be spent than was absolutely necessary, and if anything was left of course it would be so much saved.

Mr. BLACK thought that every individual who had the interests of the colony at heart would endorse what the hon. the Premier had said about unnecessary police expenditure being deprecated; but, at the same time, with rapidly increasing population and new centres being formed all over the colony, he thought sufficient attention had not in all cases been paid to the requirements of certain districts. In the district he had the honour to represent they had been loud in their complaints for some time past about the inadequacy of the police stationed there. He believed that one or two additional troopers had been placed there lately, but still there was insufficient police protection. He could refer to one or two cases which certainly did not reflect credit upon the administration of the Police Department. He would go back to one case which he knew was within the hon. the Premier's knowledge, where a brutal murder was committed the Christmas before last on one of the main roads of the district, but owing to the inadequacy of the police they had been utterly unable to obtain any clue to the murderers, so that that crime, as far as he knew, remained undetected and most certainly unpunished. Another case was that the Custom-house at Mackay was robbed some time ago of a considerable sum of money, and again, owing to the want of sufficient police protection, the crime has not been sheeted home to the perpetrators. Then there was the case that occurred on the racecourse last Christmas, when a disturbance took place between a number of kanakas and Europeans. Had there been a sufficient number of police in the district such a case as that would certainly have been put down at the first outbreak. But owing to the almost entire absence of police—he believed there was only one constable on the ground during the whole time—the disturbance became serious, some kanakas were killed, others were seriously injured, and also several Europeans. The case assumed a serious aspect for the whole district; and he hoped that the Premier would, at all events, do what he could to see that a district like that, with

a large mixed population, should have adequate police protection. He did not believe in having too many police in a district, but he thought that a place where there was a mixed population required more police protection than the more quiet districts in the South. He also thought that they should have a sub-inspector of police stationed there, and he had made application for one. A large district such as that, with a large proportion of people of a coloured race, ought to have an inspector of police on the spot, upon whom should devolve the responsibility of taking immediate action when any disturbance occurred. At the present time he believed the police had to report to Townsville, and occasionally considerable delay took place before they could take action, owing to the want of a sub-inspector.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no recollection of having received an application for a sub-inspector at Mackay, but it had occurred to him as a desirable thing. As to the question of the police protection, he could only say he should do all he could in every case that came under his notice, with the means at his disposal. He could assure hon. members that the requirements of the different districts of the colony would not be sacrificed through economy.

Mr. BAILEY said that before the vote was passed he wished to draw the attention of the Government to the necessity for some inquiry during the recess into the conduct of the Police Department. He remembered some years ago, when Mr. Walter Scott was member for Mulgrave, that he vainly attempted to get at the secrets of that department. He tried over and over again, but was always baffled, and was still as convinced after he was baffled as before he began, that there was something wrong in the conduct of the department. It was notorious that the Police Department was not an efficient department, and especially the detective branch of it. Whether they had sufficient police protection in different districts was a matter of opinion, but they knew very well that robberies were committed and murders were perpetrated in different parts of the colony, and the detective force was utterly incompetent to discover the criminals. But it was no longer a matter of wonder when they looked at the Estimates, and found that first-class detectives were placed at a salary of £180 a year. Any man of common sense knew that those men had extraordinary expenses, they were paid a little above labourer's wages. It was impossible that they could do their duty to themselves and to the country under such circumstances. It was of the greatest consequence that they should have a proper detective force, if they were to have any at all, and to ensure that the men should be liberally paid for their work; they also should be put above the temptation of taking bribes from thieves and worse characters while taking Government pay at the same time. Those men were subjected to very great temptations and to extraordinary expenses, and yet only received £120 or £140 a year. During the last few months he had heard of many cases of robberies, where the detectives were not able, or professed to be unable, to discover the culprits, and citizens had in consequence suffered losses much heavier than what the amount of largely increased salaries to those officers would amount to. It was time the Government put the department upon a sounder footing, paid the men better pay for proper work, and had a better state of things than they had at present. He could give the details of

several cases in point, but he thought it would be wrong on his part to do so. He hoped the Government would institute an inquiry into the management of that department.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Police Department was a very large one, and required very careful management. He had not had any opportunity hitherto of making any detailed inquiry into the manner in which it was organised or managed, but he had no reason at present to be dissatisfied with it. He would give attention to the statements of hon. members, and hoped, if it was his lot to bring forward Estimates in the House again, he would be in a better position to give information on various subjects than he was at the present time.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought it was rather unfair of the hon. member for Wide Bay to make an attack upon the Police Department in the way he had done. If what the hon. member said was true, he should have taken an earlier opportunity to call attention to any improprieties existing, and have asked earlier in the session for an inquiry into the conduct of the department if he thought such an inquiry necessary. The hon. member had made serious charges, but would not give details because he said he did not like to do so. It was a serious charge to level against the department; and, if rightly made, the hon. member must have been in possession of his facts some time ago, and failed in his duty as a member of the House in not pressing for an inquiry at once and entering fully into details, whether of *laches* or improprieties committed by the police. He did not think that the end of the session was the time to make sweeping charges against a whole department, or to ask the Premier to inquire into statements, the particulars of which were not in any way specified.

The Hon. B. B. MORETON said he agreed with the member for the Balonne, that remarks such as those of the member for Wide Bay ought not to be made at the present time. So far as his knowledge went, the police of the colony were a credit to it, considering the large area they had to travel over to detect crime. Those who lived in the back districts knew best that the police did their duty very well indeed.

Mr. BLACK said he did not think the force was a credit to the colony at all, unless it lay in the concentration of the whole force in Brisbane and leaving the outside districts neglected. It might hardly be fair to make the Colonial Secretary liable for the department now, but the present was certainly the time for hon. members to give expression to their feelings as to the way in which it was conducted. He was glad the Colonial Secretary was going to take the matter into his consideration during the recess.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had a somewhat intimate knowledge of the way in which the Police Force worked in the outside districts, and he fully endorsed every word which had fallen from the hon. member for the Burnett. He had never found any difficulty in regard to the police when occasion arose for him to go to them, and he maintained that the police system of the colony was a good one, and that it had been very well conducted so far as the outlying districts were concerned. Whether there were too many police in Brisbane or Mackay he was not going to say.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was not going to follow the same line of argument as that of the hon. member for Wide Bay, because he differed altogether from that hon. gentleman. His own experience did not extend to the outside districts, but it extended to the populous districts where he had opportunities of observing the conduct of the police, and he must say he had never

seen a better system in any of the other colonies, or a better class of men than they had in Brisbane. He had many opportunities in his capacity of a justice of the peace of observing the Detective Police Force, and he certainly thought their pay was too little, as nearly all the cases brought before the police court were brought by those officers. They had to work day and night, and yet they only got £140 a year, whilst their travelling expenses were very small indeed. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would inquire into that matter, as he would then find that they deserved very much more than they at present received.

Mr. HAMILTON said he did not think the hon. member for Wide Bay intended to cast any reflection on the Police Force, but rather to state that there were certain members of the force who were not properly paid, and that it was impossible to get men to do the work efficiently under such conditions. He knew that detectives were required to be possessed of skill and finesse. It was necessary that they should be honest men and be placed above temptation; but that was not done when they received what was only a bare subsistence.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he was glad to have the opportunity which the debate afforded him of mentioning a matter which many people in Brisbane had remarked upon from time to time. He did not mean his remarks to be a general reflection upon the Police Force; but he knew that there were men in the force who were guilty of unwarrantable brutality towards drunken men. He had seen instances of that character which had made his blood boil. He did not think it was any part of a policeman's duty to irritate a drunken man, or to speak to him in such a way as to make him bandy words with him in return. In such cases the policeman was usually the first to lose his temper, and then he resorted to acts of brutality. He saw more than one instance of this when he was in business in Elizabeth street, opposite the police court; and he remembered one case in particular where a man in a cab would neither get out of it nor pay his fare, and when a policeman was called and spoke to him in a sharp way he replied in a similar tone. He was completely drunk, and therefore to that extent irresponsible, yet directly the policeman got the reply he dragged him out of the cab on to the pavement and kicked him. He (Mr. Midgley) had no sympathy with drunkards as drunkards, but he did not think policemen should be guilty of that kind of treatment. He complained to one official about it, but the reply was—"Do you know what the law does? It gives the policeman a staff or baton, and it tells him that if anyone makes any resistance at all he is to knock him down." Still he (Mr. Midgley) maintained that a policeman was expected to exercise tact and judgment just as much as any other man was entitled to do so. There was another matter to which he wished to call attention, because it was one that was frequently mentioned among the public; he alluded to the almost exclusive Irish nationality of the Queensland Police Force. He had mentioned the matter outside, and the only reply he had got was that Englishmen and Scotchmen would not enter the force. He did not know whether it was something in the constitution of the force, or the way in which it was managed, or the kind of treatment policemen received that caused this disinclination; but the fact remained as he had stated, and if it could be remedied it ought to be done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that of course he could not notice all the complaints of individual misconduct on the part of policemen; but when any case was brought under his notice he would inquire into it. With respect to the nationality of the police, he did not know whether

it was as the hon. member stated; but if so he could not account for it. He did not personally select policemen, and if he did, he did not know that he should be actuated by any feeling as to nationality.

Mr. BAILEY said his remarks had been more immediately directed to the detective force; he should like to see that branch made separate, put under a proper head, the detectives adequately paid, and made to attend properly to their duties. He hoped the Government would inquire into the constitution of the whole force.

Mr. FOXTON said he had had some experience of the police, both in Brisbane and the country districts, and he could say that as a body the Irish policemen were among the best. The smartest policeman he ever met was an Australian, and next to him he should class an Irishman.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he could easily explain the Irish nationality of the Police Force. That force in Queensland, as in other colonies, was a semi-military body; and it was a well-known fact that the Irish character was inclined to military discipline. Wherever they served as soldiers they were pre-eminent, and they made the best policemen.

Mr. GRIMES said he noticed that in connection with the native troopers there was a reduction of something like £5,500; and lower down there was a fresh item altogether—£7,300 for rations to native troopers and trackers. He wished to know whether there was to be a different system of paying and managing the native troopers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was a change that was recommended by the Commissioner of Police in the mode of payment; it was not proposed to increase the numbers of the native police. The items were separated—one for pay and the other for rations.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £28,135 be granted for salaries of Police Magistrates and Clerks of Petty Sessions. There were some changes, and the amount was gradually increasing, year by year; but the changes were not large, and he did not propose to enumerate them unless attention was called to them.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he noticed an increase of £100 to the salary of the Police Magistrate at Gympie.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the gentleman in question was one of the oldest officers in the Government Service. He was formerly Under Secretary for Mines in Brisbane; but when the Works and Mines departments were consolidated, the Under Secretary for Works was made Under Secretary of both departments. He thought, considering his length of service, and the work he had to do, that the remuneration put down for the police officer in question was not at all too large.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he quite agreed with some other hon. members, that the foot-notes in the Estimates might be better arranged; because, unless hon. members went carefully through them, they would not observe that the Police Magistrate at Gympie got £700 a year. That was a large salary for a police magistrate; and he thought Mr. Lukin was paid very well at £600; and with the view of testing the matter, he would move that the item be reduced by £100.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I would infer, from the remarks of the hon. gentleman, that the foot-notes are erroneous.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No; but difficult to get at.

Mr. BLACK said the vote, owing to the foot-notes, was a most confusing thing. It

took him about an hour to unravel the salaries that the gentlemen included in it were getting. Very few hon. members of the Committee knew what they were voting, and it was a great pity that more accurate information was not given. It was a matter that was referred to last time the Estimates were going through. Hon. gentlemen might think, when they were looking down the list, that they saw at once what a police magistrate was getting, but they got no information except the letters P, B, etc. Coming to Charleville, there was put down for the Police Magistrate £350. That did not represent the salary he was getting, as the gentleman who occupied that position was getting £500 a year and fees. Fees formed an item he was in doubt about. He was not objecting to the salaries, and he knew nothing about the work police magistrates had to perform, and, except in a few cases, he did not know the men. The sooner the Committee knew the actual emolument that every Civil servant received the better it would be for the country. The Police Magistrate at Charters Towers was put down at £350, whereas £700 was the actual salary. Then they came to Clermont. The salary put down was £400, but it actually came to £560. There was also a clerk of petty sessions down at £220, but who really got £350. With regard to the Clermont vote, what struck him as being singular was that the Police Magistrate received £50 for visiting. It was a pretty well settled district, and there was no reason why the Police Magistrate should not be able to visit by himself if necessity required him to go to Copperfield, which, he supposed, was the place he visited. Was it necessary that he should be accompanied by a clerk of petty sessions who also received £50 a year? At Georgetown there was a salary of £50 for the Police Magistrate, who really received £590; and the Clerk of Petty Sessions, who was down for £50, received £370. Gympie had already been referred to—£150, whereas he really got £700. At Herberton the Police Magistrate was down for £100, while he really got £670; Isisford £350, whereas it was in reality £500. All that ought to be shown in one schedule, so that they could know at once exactly what they were voting. He did not think hon. gentlemen would object to take the view he took in the matter. They had no way of comparing the work done by a police magistrate in one portion of the colony with that done by another. The Treasurer was one who objected last year to the Estimates being prepared as they were, and he thought that, having got into office, he would have been one of the first to see that that want was complied with. Maytown was put down at £50, whereas the salary was £550. For the Clerk of Petty Sessions at Maryborough there was £430 put down, but really he got only £200, £230 being paid away. That was misleading the other way; it was not a proper way of preparing Estimates. Ravenswood was down for £50, whereas the officer was getting £450. There was the Police Magistrate and Clerk of Petty Sessions at Springsure. In the former capacity he received £400, while he was really drawing £635; and it appeared that the work was so light that he did not require even a clerk of petty sessions. If the work was at all arduous a clerk of petty sessions would be required. Stanthorpe was down for £450, whereas the real salary was £575; St. George £300—really it was £425; Surat £300—really it was £415; Taroom £300, but really £450; and the actual salaries he had quoted were exclusive of fees, of which they had no knowledge whatever. He hoped that, having referred somewhat in detail to the matter, it would be the last time the Estimates were brought before the Committee in that unsatisfactory state. There was another matter to

which he would call the attention of the Colonial Secretary, and that was, who was the Police Magistrate at Boulia, for whom six months' salary was voted?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is none.

Mr. BLACK: I understood that a gentleman was gazetted to that office: a Mr. Gibson. Is he not gazetted?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. The appointment was rescinded.

Mr. MOREHEAD: By *Gazette* notice?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think so.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Are you certain?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: By Executive Council minute. He said he had himself often had occasion to complain of the unsatisfactory way in which the police magistrates' estimates were arranged; and it was only owing to the extremely short time which elapsed between the Treasurer assuming office—the 31st December—and the tabling of the Estimates, that they appeared once more in that condition. He could promise hon. members that, as far as the Government were concerned, it would be the last time. With regard to the question about the Police Magistrate at Boulia, he would answer it after he had looked at the *Gazette*.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could not but believe that the increase of £100 to the salary of the Police Magistrate at Gympie was given as a reward to Mr. George Lukin. As to the complicated foot-notes, he did not blame the present Government for that; they were simply following the old practice, and he was glad to hear that it was about to be altered. He noticed that the Police Magistrate at Surat was put down as drawing £50 in lieu of quarters, and £65 as land commissioner. He was under the impression, which he believed to be correct, that that gentleman also drew a sum of money as postmaster. If so, the salary paid him was not shown in the Estimates. That gentleman's position was an anomalous one, and had he remained in office as Postmaster-General he would certainly have altered it. Mr. Taylor had enough offices without having that of postmaster added, and the latter might very well be given to the telegraph station-master, whoever he might be. There was also an increase of £80 to the Clerk of Petty Sessions at Ipswich. Ipswich was a very queer place, and whenever he saw an increase for any Civil servant there he wished to have a full explanation of it. By the foot-note he noticed that £150 of the £430 was paid to an assistant clerk, and that would reduce the amount to £280, which was not so very much after all. But it showed how misleading the foot-notes were, and he wanted to know who got the £80 increase?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, with regard to the Police Magistrate at Boulia, a gentleman was appointed to that office by the late Government, but as there was no money voted for it, and as the appointment was made under remarkable circumstances, his appointment was rescinded. By some means or other, with which he was unacquainted, that rescission did not appear in the *Gazette*, as it ought to have done. With regard to the increase at Ipswich, the work was very heavy, and a man had been performing the duties of assistant clerk of petty sessions for a long time, and he did not see why he should not receive the same remuneration as other assistant clerks of petty sessions. The increase of £80 was to the salary of the assistant clerk. With respect to the Police Magistrate at Gympie, his salary was only equal to that of the Police Magistrate at Charters Towers.

Mr. HAMILTON said that Mr. Gibson was appointed Police Magistrate at Boulia by the late Government, on the representation of the member for the district, Mr. McWhannell, and others, that there was a necessity for a magistrate in that district. The present Government had dispensed with Mr. Gibson's services on the plea that there was no salary available. It now appeared that there was a salary available for six months, so that that could not be the reason. Was not the real reason that Mr. Gibson was a strong supporter of the present Opposition? Mr. Gibson was editor of a newspaper, and, when appointed to Boulia, left his paper and came down to Brisbane at a very serious pecuniary loss to himself. Mr. Lunley Hill had stated publicly that he prevailed upon the Premier to dismiss Mr. Gibson, and he also stated he was sorry the Premier did not let Mr. Gibson go to the expense of getting to Boulia before he dismissed him. Mr. Hill stated that he was the cause of the dismissal of that gentleman, because he was a strong opponent of his during the late election. Another reason given why this gentleman had been dismissed was because it was to make room for a supporter of the present Government, Mr. Eglinton. He did not know Mr. Eglinton, but simply made the statement as he had heard it on the same authority.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, with regard to Mr. Eglinton, he had never seen him to his knowledge, but he knew that the same letter that recommended the appointment of a police magistrate at Boulia recommended the appointment of Mr. Eglinton.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: For political services.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said hon. members opposite would probably not laugh so heartily when they heard the facts. Mr. Eglinton was recommended by Mr. McWhannell. He did not know whether Mr. Eglinton had rendered Mr. McWhannell any political service, but he was at present an officer in the Police Department, and he had not made any particular inquiries about him. The hon. member said that there was a salary available for Boulia. If the vote under discussion were passed there would be a salary available for the current six months, but there was none available for the last six months of last year.

Mr. SMYTH said the appointment to Boulia was one of the most barefaced political appointments ever made. It was a well-known fact that Mr. Gibson took part in the Gympie election, and thought it worth while to make a speech from the platform to advocate the cause of the late Government. It was a well-known fact that he sold out his paper when the Palmer Gold Fields were becoming deserted—when the banks and business people were leaving. It was a barefaced political appointment to make the editor of a paper a police magistrate, when there were plenty of men in the Service—clerks of petty sessions and others—who ought to have been promoted to such a position, if it were required.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked the Colonial Secretary if Mr. Gibson had waited upon him; if he had seen him or knew that the appointment was rescinded?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the appointment was rescinded by the same authority that made it—the Executive Council—and Mr. Gibson was informed of the fact immediately it was rescinded—before he left Cooktown to go to his appointment.

Mr. HAMILTON said the member for Gympie showed excessively bad taste in taking advantage of his position to refer to Mr. Gibson as he

did, because that gentleman, when on a visit to Gympie, had presumed at a public meeting to express himself in his (Mr. Hamilton's) favour. His statement also that Mr. Gibson's paper was not paying when he got the appointment, and that the field was so poor that it was becoming rapidly deserted, was utterly false. Mr. Gibson was duly gazetted by the late Government, and the present Government then informed him that no salary was available. Now that a sum was on the Estimates for that place that pretext did not hold good, and he therefore wanted to know what other reason would be given.

The PREMIER said he was one of those who held that no Government had any right to spend public money without the sanction of Parliament, except in cases of urgency. That was a fundamental principle of their Constitution; and he would never recognise the right of any Government, two or three days before going out of office, to create new billets to give to their supporters or anybody else, unless they were urgently necessary. He considered that all appointments made under those circumstances ought not to be recognised. Those were his views, in which the other members of the Government agreed, and upon which they had acted. This appointment was not urgently necessary; it had not the authority of Parliament, and was made by the late Government two or three days before they left office.

Mr. ARCHER said the hon. gentleman had stated the constitutional law correctly, but in practice it was often found necessary to depart from it. He had continued to make appointments, not at all corruptly, of pilots and other officers which were absolutely necessary, up to the time he left office. After interviewing the Port Officer, he made such appointments when he thought they were necessary to prevent disaster, and he was not at all afraid of being able to justify his action. Now, was not Boulia one of those places that absolutely demanded a police magistrate? It was a rising township, so far removed from all points of civilization that it was time there was a police magistrate appointed to look after it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Mr. Gibson was gazetted on the 3rd November, 1883.

Mr. BLACK asked if the hon. gentleman could give the date of the *Gazette* when the appointment was rescinded?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not find it in the *Gazette*. If it had not been gazetted it was a departmental error, because it ought to have been gazetted.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he clearly understood the hon. gentleman to say that Mr. Gibson was informed that the appointment was rescinded before he left Cooktown.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; at the earliest possible moment. He was put to no unnecessary expense, or hardship, or inconvenience.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving £1,215 for Water Police, said the vote was the same as last year.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving the item of £27,010, salaries and contingencies, Government Printing Department, said there was an increase of £50 to the overseer, who had been in the department about seventeen years, and who had had no increase for a very long time. There was also an increase to the accountant, and several small increases to the officers in the printing, bookbinding, and machinery departments. The largest increase was in the contingencies—£500 for wages, £1,500 for paper,

machines, types, and incidentals, and £1,600 for additional steam-printing and binding machines. These were necessary, owing to the increased work of the department.

Mr. MACFARLANE said there appeared to him to be a wonderful uniformity in the salaries of officers in this department. He found that the foreman bookbinder, reader, machinist, publisher, engineer and stereotyper were all paid the same salary, and were all increased £25 this year. He did not think all those men were equally entitled to the increased salary. He would take the first, the foreman bookbinder—that gentleman had been over twenty-one years in the Service, and he believed every member of the Committee would agree, not only that that gentleman's work had very much increased, but also that it was done well. That person, he believed, had no increase in his salary for the last nineteen years, and his work had been more than doubled during that time. Looking at the salaries already voted that afternoon to other men, and at the salaries voted to the "cadets" for reporting, £285 he thought was a miserable salary for men like those he referred to, after serving twenty years. The "cadets," after serving only three years, actually got higher salaries than those men who had to be continually at work whilst the "cadets" were only working three or four months in the year. That did not look at all like fair play. Some of those men were entitled to more money, and he hoped their claims would receive consideration.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was evident that the hon. member had been got at by the foreman bookbinder, and the foreman bookbinder ought to get a reprimand from the head of his department. He (Mr. Morehead) knew none of those men to whom the hon. member referred, though he noticed that five of them were receiving the same salary. He did not hold at all with the hon. member that a comparison could be instituted between those gentlemen and the "cadets," who, as had been stated, were so termed in error, and who were practically reporters of that House and not "cadets" at all. If the foreman bookbinder had been receiving £260 for the last nineteen years he thought he had done remarkably well. He was quite prepared to put his faith in the Premier so far that he was certain those advances had been properly considered and justly due to those gentlemen, and to all equally, and not that the foreman bookbinder should be specially selected.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he found, upon inquiry, that those increases had been recommended, and he knew that in one or two instances the increases were fair; but he found that all had been on the same footing for a great many years. No complaint had been made against any of them, and he thought it would appear invidious to give an increase in one case and not in the others. He therefore acceded to all the recommendations.

Mr. ALAND said he wished to refer to the item "Printing and publishing A. C. Gregory's work on Exploration," and asked how it was that the work had not been published in the ordinary way by booksellers instead of by the Government. He had not seen the book yet, and would like to know when it would be issued.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was, he found, a work authorised by the late Government, and was not yet ready to be issued; though it would be ready shortly. He had not yet seen the work himself, but he had found that the expenditure had been incurred, and he had nothing to do but ask the Committee to sanction it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that so far as he knew the work was one of great interest. Records of Australian explorations were practi-

cally out of print, he believed, and he thought it would be a benefit to the colony if the work was printed. It would involve a very small cost, which would, he thought, be recouped by the sale of the work, which would be found to be very interesting.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £3,050 be granted for Salaries, etc., for the Agent-General for the colony. The amount was the same as last year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that the present was perhaps not an inopportune time to ask the Premier what arrangements he had made or intended to make with regard to the Agent-General's Office; whether he intended to dismiss the present Agent-General or not, and if he did, who he intended to appoint in his place?

The PREMIER said the Government had not had the matter under their consideration since the temporary appointment of Mr. Hemmant to act during the absence of Mr. Archer. They had not received any communication from England from either of those gentlemen subsequent to the receipt of the telegrams from here notifying them of the temporary arrangement. He expected to receive some communication every day, and when they received information the Government would deal with the matter.

Mr. BLACK said he took it that at present the country paid double expenditure in connection with the office of Agent-General at home. Mr. Archer was drawing his salary during his three months' leave of absence, and he presumed Mr. Hemmant was also getting some salary. The Premier had just given as a reason why he did not appoint a police magistrate at Boulia that there was no provision for such an officer on the Estimates, but he assumed that in a matter of so much importance as this it was not necessary to wait until the money was actually voted for it. If it was the intention of the present Government to make the Agent-General's Office a political one, some provision would have to be made on the Estimates for compensation to the gentleman filling the position, as it could hardly be expected that a gentleman would go to the expense which was involved in the acceptance of that office if he was liable to be ousted by every successive Ministry that came into power. He assumed the additional expenses connected with the Agent-General's Office would appear on the Supplementary Estimates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the salary of an acting officer was never placed on the Estimates-in-Chief, but upon the Supplementary Estimates. He did not agree with the hon. member for Mackay that if the Agent-General's Office was made a political office they would have to provide for compensation for the gentleman accepting the position; but he thought they would have to provide for travelling expenses.

Mr. MACROSSAN said that, without entering into the question whether the office of Agent-General was to become a political one or not, he could scarcely give credence to the statement of the hon. gentleman that the position of Agent-General had not been reconsidered. It was now about three months since the Agent-General received forcible leave of absence that would expire—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will expire, I think, about the 11th April, as I do not think the telegram reached him until the 11th January. I have received a letter from Mr. Archer dated the 11th January.

Mr. MACROSSAN said the Premier made his statement when the House met on the 10th

January. He could scarcely understand any Government being in such a position without considering the necessity, if they intended to do it at all, as that of filling up such an important office within six weeks' time. Hon. members were entitled to better and fuller information than the hon. gentleman had given them. They wanted to know the position the colony occupied in regard to the present Agent-General and the Acting Agent-General. How long was Mr. Archer's leave of absence to be continued, and how long was Mr. Hemmant to be continued in his office? The Government must have considered the question, or else they were worse business men than he considered them to be.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that on the 10th January he explained to the House the circumstances under which the Government had acted with regard to the Agent-General, and they were in possession of not much information since then as to the conduct of business in the London office. He had only received two or three letters with regard to insurance—one he had received that day—so that the Government had not practically much fuller information now than they had in January. They expected soon to have more information, and then the whole matter would be considered. He could not help it if hon. gentlemen opposite were not satisfied with his explanation. The matter had not been under consideration, because the Government had no further information yet.

Mr. MACROSSAN said that the Government must have known its own mind when they gave Mr. Archer leave of absence. They must have known why that leave of absence was given. That, he thought, the hon. Colonial Secretary would not deny. What information did the hon. gentleman want upon the subject? Did he expect Mr. Hemmant to furnish him with information which would justify him in not reinstating Mr. Archer? What had insurance letters to do with the position. The Committee wanted to know whether the Government intended to reinstate Mr. Archer in his position or not, or, at any rate, he (Mr. Macrossan) wanted to know that, or whether they were to wait for incriminatory evidence to be given by Mr. Hemmant, which would be put before the House as the reason for not reinstating Mr. Archer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already stated to the House why the Government relieved Mr. Archer for three months. Some information which had been received since then had been laid on the table of the House, and any further information which was received while the House sat would be laid upon the table in due course. At the present time they had very little more information than they had in January. When the Government ascertained how the business was being conducted in the London office, they would be in a better position to decide. No conclusion had been arrived at yet, nor had the matter received the further consideration of the Government.

Mr. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman had stated that he was waiting to ascertain how the business in the Agent-General's Office was being carried on. Was it simply to ascertain that, that Mr. Archer was suspended, or had the Government not something more substantial in their minds when they suspended him? Did the present Government suspend other officers to see how their business was being carried on? For instance, did they suspend a police magistrate out west? Surely it was a very unusual thing to suspend an officer without any substantial reason for doing so. It was not sufficient for the hon. member to tell the Committee that he was waiting for information which might never arrive. It

seemed to him that the suspension of Mr. Archer was done for no reason whatever; and now they were waiting for a reason to justify them for their action.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Mr. Archer might well exclaim "Save me from my friends!" The hon. member for Townsville insisted that Mr. Archer was suspended, whereas he had only received leave of absence. Every-one, he thought, would agree with him that the immigration system of the colony was being conducted very unsatisfactorily when the present Government took office, and it was necessary to make immediate arrangements to rectify it. Therefore the Government thought it better to have the office administered by some one who was in sympathy with them. He gave a full explanation on that subject on the first day the House met.

Mr. BLACK said he thought the Government must be in possession of more information on the subject than they seemed inclined to give to the Committee. The matter was one which had excited the amazement of the whole of Australia—that a gentleman, occupying such a well-known position, who was universally respected, and to whom no one had paid a higher tribute than the Premier himself at the commencement of the session, when he spoke of Mr. Archer as a gentleman whose integrity and honour was so well known as to entitle him to universal respect, should be so treated by the Government. Yet he stated now that he felt that Mr. Archer could not work in accord with the present Government. That was in his (Mr. Black's) opinion a very poor reflection on the present Government, and he thought the Premier made a very great mistake when he said that a gentleman of such undoubted honour and straightforward character could not work in unison with them.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he assumed that when Mr. Hemmant replied to his appointment by wire, he was aware of the reason why he was so appointed, and he assumed also that if any great discovery had been made Mr. Hemmant would have used the telegraph in communicating with the Colonial Secretary here. They had not been informed of any such discoveries by the Premier, although nearly two months had passed away. Surely such a high-class, or low-class, detective as Mr. Hemmant, with his ferret-like capacity for discovery in all the nooks and crannies of the office, must have found something out before now if there was anything to find out. If he had found it out, he (Mr. Morehead) was perfectly certain he would, in the most rapid way, communicate the information to the Premier, and in the most startling terms. He would ask the hon. gentleman whether he had received any telegrams whatever from Mr. Hemmant dealing with anything contained in the insinuations against either the honour or the capacity of the Agent-General; the Committee, he thought, were fairly entitled to information on that point. The Government had given very insufficient reasons why they had suspended a man who was not only a credit to Queensland, but to the whole of Australia. A more truly representative man did not exist than Mr. Thomas Archer; and it was certainly very gratifying to find that, while the Premier had tried to blacken the reputation of Mr. Archer—the man whom he regarded as a very able man—Her Majesty's Government had decorated him for the services they considered he had done this colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think it necessary, for the purpose of praising one officer, to disparage another. For Mr. Archer he had the highest regard; and so he had for Mr. Hemmant. Mr. Hemmant had

rendered services in the colony far greater than Mr. Archer had ever rendered to the colony in London, and he was just as honourable a man as Mr. Archer. Mr. Hemmant was appointed to act as Agent-General for three months. Hon. members opposite might think that, under these circumstances, the Government would give secret instructions to see if the Agent-General had not done something wrong; but they judged of the Government by themselves, as it never occurred to him to give such instructions. Mr. Hemmant was appointed because he was familiar with the work, having administered the Treasury here, and having also acted as Colonial Secretary during the absence of Mr. Macalister. It never occurred to him (the Colonial Secretary) to inquire of Mr. Hemmant if he could discover anything against Mr. Archer. He had the highest regard for Mr. Archer's character, but he had not the highest regard for his judgment or his business capacity in managing the affairs of the colony when he was brought into contact with sharp business men at home. He had certainly never asked Mr. Hemmant to report on Mr. Archer's delinquencies; he did not believe there were any. He had received several telegrams from Mr. Hemmant in answer to inquiries made as to the future immigration business. On all these matters Mr. Archer was instructed to report himself; and the only information he (the Colonial Secretary) had received had been from letters signed by Mr. Archer. He was bound to say, however, that from the letters he had received, he saw no reason to doubt the wisdom of the course taken by the Government in temporarily placing Mr. Hemmant in the London office.

Mr. MACROSSAN said he did not know Mr. Archer at all; but he knew something of Mr. Hemmant; and he did not think he had distinguished himself in the Treasury; and if that was all the credit that the Government could give him, it was very little indeed. If Mr. Hemmant did not receive any instructions from the hon. gentleman to play the part of detective, it was because he required none. He did not come out of the inquiry he entered into himself with very clean hands, and he would require no instructions to play the part of detective if he had been placed there for that purpose. Whether he had been or not, he (Mr. Macrossan) could not say. It seemed strange that, almost as soon as the Government came into office, Mr. Archer should be considered not to be in sympathy with the Government, and should not be entrusted with instructions. Had he disobeyed any instructions? Did the Government give him an opportunity of carrying out any instructions? Did they give him a chance of showing whether he was in sympathy with the business of the country or not? It was a matter of no importance what Mr. Archer's politics were; that was quite independent of his duty to public business if Mr. Archer had the high character that had been given him. He thought there was something else behind Mr. Archer's suspension and Mr. Hemmant's appointment than that the hon. gentleman had given. There was something that he was afraid to disclose.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member must be judging others by himself. The Government had done everything openly and above-board. If the hon. gentleman thought they were actuated by some base motives, let him hold his opinion; but he had no right to expect that other hon. members should hold the same opinion. He thought it would be a most unfortunate case if, when the Agent-General was relieved of his functions, it should be supposed that any censure was cast upon him. A man might be of the highest character and greatest

ability, but not be a good Agent-General. It was never considered a slur on a foreign ambassador to be relieved of his functions and sent to another place. He thought it ought to be understood that the officer appointed as Agent-General might be relieved of his functions without it being supposed in any degree that censure had been cast upon his character. It might be that the duties of Agent-General at a particular time required a gentleman of special qualities that the actual Agent-General did not possess; such a thing might happen in Queensland, as it had in the neighbouring colonies, and he thought it was unfortunate that the Opposition should endeavour to support their friend—and he should be glad to call him his friend—by abusing Mr. Hemmant.

Mr. MACROSSAN said that Mr. Archer was not his friend at all, nor did he abuse Mr. Hemmant in the slightest degree; but he knew that, in his capacity as Treasurer, Mr. Hemmant got the country into financial difficulties and then ran away. He believed it was quite possible to have honesty and independence in any man in whatever position he occupied, but, as the hon. gentleman had said frequently, actions spoke louder than words, and the hon. gentleman must be judged by his actions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman always tried to have the last word, and used it to make a fresh attack. It was entirely incorrect to say that Mr. Hemmant got the affairs of the colony into confusion and then ran away. Mr. Hemmant left the affairs of the colony in an extremely flourishing condition.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Looking at it from the standpoint of the present occupants of the Treasury Benches, Mr. Hemmant did leave the affairs of the colony in a flourishing state. He left it in the state his party generally did—on the verge of bankruptcy.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman forgets that Mr. Hemmant went away before the dreadful drought came on.

Mr. MACROSSAN said Mr. Hemmant left in 1876 under a cloud, which was dispelled by his successor when he came into office. When Mr. Hemmant left, he and his colleagues were under the impression that the country was on the verge of bankruptcy.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £7080 be voted for salaries and contingencies in connection with Immigration. He might say that he was not at all satisfied with the condition of the department which looked after immigrants on their arrival in the colony. Proper provision had not been made for finding them work, and the Government would devote their immediate attention to the matter, with the view of assisting immigrants to find work, and treating them better when they had arrived.

Mr. BEATTIE said he would ask the Colonial Secretary whether it was the intention of the Government to do anything with the present immigration depôt? It would be very satisfactory if they would give that information. Nothing but demolishing the present building would give satisfaction to any person who knew anything at all about the locality.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the hon. gentleman would find, in the estimate for the expenditure of surplus revenue, that there was £10,000 put down towards building a new depôt. The only thing that could be done with the present building was to pull it down or devote it to some other purpose.

Mr. FERGUSON said he would like to call the attention of the Government to the immigration depôt at Rockhampton, which was

quite as bad as the one at Brisbane, if not worse. He would like to know whether the Colonial Secretary intended to construct another building. There were seven wardsmen on the estimate who were receiving £530 between them. He did not know whether the whole sum was divided equally, or whether one got more than the others. In any case, the amount was so small that it was not fair remuneration at all. The wardsmen at Rockhampton got £80, and his duties were very arduous, and he got 1s. per day for rations; but it was impossible for a man to live in a place like Rockhampton on that salary, if he had a family.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that with respect to the hon. gentleman's question about the immigration depôt at Rockhampton, if he looked at the estimate for the expenditure of surplus revenue, he would find that £5,000 was put down for a new building there. As to the wardsmen, six got £80 each and one £50.

Mr. FERGUSON said he would like to see the salaries of those men increased. They could not keep families on the salaries they were being paid. He was not sure whether the matrons were allowed a certain sum.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They get an allowance for rations and quarters.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary if anything had been done with the old gaol, towards affording accommodation for immigrants. He understood a promise was made that accommodation should be provided.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the old gaol was used to relieve the depôt whenever there was any pressure. It had been used ever since attention was first called to the matter.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he wished to ask the Colonial Secretary if it was a fact that warders and others in the Brisbane depôt were in the habit of making a charge to the immigrants on landing for cooking their food—a demand made at each meal on every member of a family? He had received letters from several immigrants who had landed, saying that directly a meal was prepared, a demand had been made of from 1d. to 2d. per head on the family. It was a most unreasonable and illegal demand, and he should like to know whether it was authorised by any regulations.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had just heard of the matter from his hon. colleague the Minister for Works, who was in charge of the Colonial Secretary's Office while he was away, and who informed him that a charge was made, but that he immediately gave instructions to have it stopped. Such a thing would certainly not be allowed.

Mr. CHUBB said he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary what had been done with reference to the immigration buildings at Bowen, which were severely damaged by the late hurricane?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he received the vouchers for the repairs that morning, and all that remained to be done was to pay them.

Mr. BLACK said he had been through the immigration depôt in Brisbane when it was full, and he must say that it would be utterly impossible for any Government to make alterations sufficient to make it a habitable place. Immigrants, after staying a night or two in the depôt, often took such a disgust to the colony that they adopted almost every means in their power to get out of it as quickly as possible; it was so unlike what they had been led to expect by the immigration lecturers at home. There was a wardsmen at Mackay who had been receiving £60 a year, and the late Government had promised to increase the amount to £80. He

hoped he might take it for granted that that promise would be carried out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the salary of the wardsmen at Mackay was provided at the rate of £80.

Mr. PALMER asked whether any arrangements were likely to be made for landing immigrants at Normanton or at Hughenden? There was a great demand for labour of all sorts there, and wages were perhaps higher than in any other part of Queensland. Passengers landed from the mail steamers at Thursday Island could be conveyed to Normanton within two days afterwards, and work could be guaranteed for a very large number.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Government had not yet had an opportunity of working out the best way of distributing immigrants in the colony. Without going into details, he might say it was their present intention to provide for getting periodical returns from clerks of petty sessions containing information as to persons desiring to engage immigrants, so that the Government would be in a position to know week by week what demand there was for labour in different parts of the colony. On getting that information they would take the best means they could to see that the demand was supplied by sending immigrants thither. To Normanton they would go from Thursday Island, and to Hughenden from Townsville.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that for years past he had advocated the establishment of depôts in the interior, and every Government had promised to do so, but none of them had tackled the question. He knew it was a difficult one, but it might be mastered; and then they would no longer see the spectacle of crowds in Brisbane crying out that they could not get work, when labour was never more scarce and dear in the interior than it was at the present time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they had heard a great deal within the last few days about immigrants seeking employment and not being able to find it. Some of them interviewed him the other day, and he informed them that on making their wants known to the Immigration Agent everything would be done for them that possibly could be in the way of getting them employment. On the following morning about sixty of them went to the Immigration Agent asking for work, and they were informed that they would be provided with passes to Roma or any other town in the interior, and be provided with rations and quarters until they could get work. They were requested to leave their names with the wardsmen. Not a single one left his name with the wardsmen, or showed the slightest desire to get work.

Mr. BUCKLAND asked whether anything had been decided as to the site of the new depôt?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said nothing had been yet decided, but he was of opinion that the site of the old gaol might be made an ornamental square, beneficial to the health of that part of the town, beautiful to look at, and with plenty of accommodation for an immigration depôt within it. The locality would be improved, and the immigrants would get a pleasant instead of an unpleasant idea of the country to which they had come.

Mr. MACROSSAN asked whether it was the intention of the Government, as he had heard, to appoint an Immigration Agent in London, quite apart from the Agent-General, with a large salary, who would have control over the whole of the emigration from Great Britain and Ireland and the Continent, and be directly responsible to the Government?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied, he could not say that the Government had any intentions on the subject. The idea had occurred to himself, and he believed he had mentioned it to one of his colleagues as a thing worth thinking of. Beyond that he had not gone.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £19,783 be granted for Asylums for the Insane, said there was an increase of £1,000 for incidentals, owing unfortunately to the largely increased number of patients. The asylum at Goodna was not exactly full, but it had become so full that it was absolutely necessary that immediate steps should be taken to provide another one, as beyond a certain number of inmates an asylum could not be worked satisfactorily.

Mr. CHUBB said that at present insane persons were maintained at the asylum entirely at the expense of the country, while many of them were possessed of means enough to maintain them at their own charge. In England, persons having means were not chargeable to the country. He knew of a case where an insane person was kept for years in an asylum who had £800 for years lying at fixed deposit in one of the banks in Brisbane—sufficient to have maintained him. He hoped the Government would see their way to introduce a Bill dealing with that matter.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Government would, he hoped, next session introduce a Bill dealing with the insane. A Bill had been drafted a good many years, but it had been drafted in such a manner that they had never been able to get it through. He hoped that before next session it would be put in such a condition that the House would be able to accept it without material amendment. He quite recognised the importance of it, and was sorry that it had been delayed so long.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he remembered the Bill well. They used always to open the Upper House with it. He agreed with the hon. member for Bowen that when erecting a new asylum, which he supposed would be at Toowoomba, as it appeared the most suitable place, proper provision would be made for the accommodation of paying patients, instead of having them herded together with those who were practically paupers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he considered Toowoomba was the best place to erect another asylum. It was easily accessible and convenient; and he did not think it would be advisable to send patients northwards. Land was purchased at Toowoomba for the purpose some years ago.

Mr. NORTON said he would recommend Port Curtis as a site for an asylum. Hon. members might laugh, but there was no more healthy place in the whole of Queensland than Gladstone. Every doctor who had gone there had been starved out; it was a convenient place, especially for people coming from the North; and he hoped the Government would, before finally settling the matter, give his suggestion consideration.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £1,685 be granted for Reception Houses for the Insane, said the amount was the same as last year.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving £24,589 for Colonial Stores, said there had been an increase of one additional clerk, and another clerk got an increase of £25. Two storemen, who had been a great many years in the Service, had also got slight increases. The amount for

contingencies was very large—£23,000, but owing to the increased number of police and inmates of asylums, and other causes, it was practically impossible to keep those expenses down.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not rise to oppose the vote, but to express a hope that when the promised reform in the mode of framing the Estimates was adopted by the hon. the Treasurer next year, or next session, items of contingencies would be subdivided. It seemed monstrous to pass £1,589 under the head of "salaries," and then under the apparently minor head of "contingencies" to be asked to pass £23,000. He saw no reason why "arms, ammunition, and saddlery for police," "stores and clothing for asylums and gaols," "stationery and stores and blankets for aborigines" should not be subdivided and scheduled, so that they could be understood.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the item might be approximately divided, and it would be an advantage to have it done.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £8,699 be granted for Gaols, said there was an increase of two turnkeys at the Brisbane Gaol, and also an allowance for a gaoler and matron at Mackay.

Mr. FERGUSON asked if the hon. gentleman could give some information as to why the new gaol at Rockhampton, which was erected five or six years ago at an expense of £14,000 or £16,000, had never been occupied or put to the use for which it was intended?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said when the hon. member told him the other day that the new gaol at Rockhampton had never been occupied he was perfectly amazed, because he remembered when he was Minister for Works for a short time, or even before that, visiting the institution to see how it was getting on, and he found it nearly finished. He was puzzled to know why it had not been occupied. Perhaps some of the late Government could inform them?

Mr. ARCHER said perhaps the hon. member for Rockhampton could tell the Committee why it had not been occupied?

Mr. FERGUSON said he was not able to give any reason. He only knew that the old gaol, which had to be propped up to keep it from tumbling down, was still used as a gaol, although the new one had been completed for years, and had never been used.

Mr. BLACK said he hoped the Government would give them some information as to whether or not that gaol had been occupied. Was it possible that the Government did not know how many gaols they had? It seemed an extraordinary thing that a building upon which a considerable sum of money had been expended should be actually finished, and yet unoccupied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it did not occur to the present Ministry when they went into office to inquire whether the gaol at Rockhampton was occupied, and a few days ago, when he had been told by the hon. member for Rockhampton that the gaol was unoccupied, he was very much surprised to hear it; perhaps some member of the late Government could tell them about it?

Mr. CHUBB said that, if his recollection served him, the Sheriff told him in October that he would not take the gaol over, as it was not safe.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said immediate inquiries would be made into the matter.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £8,590 be voted for the Penal

Establishment at St. Helena. There was some slight reduction in the vote in the item of the salary of the Superintendent; last year there were two superintendents to be provided for—one on leave and the other acting. There was a salary for a schoolmaster put down at £150, but it was probable that the whole amount would not be expended.

Mr. BUCKLAND asked the Colonial Secretary whether a schoolmaster had been appointed to St. Helena lately?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there had been some difficulty in getting one; but a schoolmaster had lately been appointed, probably about a month ago.

Mr. BLACK said he understood that the prisoners at St. Helena were taught various trades, and that an attempt was made to make the establishment self-supporting. He would like to inquire to what vote the materials used were charged, and what became of the things produced at the establishment?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the materials were charged to the vote for "Stores," and the things made in the institution were sold to different departments—not to the outside public—and the money was treated as an earning, and credited to Revenue.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £2,000 be voted for Reformatories.

Mr. CHUBB said there was one matter in connection with the vote which required consideration. He thought it very undesirable that children of both sexes who were taken up as neglected children, should be compelled to associate with children who were committed to the reformatory as criminals, as was the case in the Toowoomba Reformatory for Girls, which he had visited.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think that could be the case. It was not so, at all events, in Brisbane, where orphans were not sent to the reformatory and treated as criminals, but sent to the orphanage.

Mr. GROOM said he thought the late Attorney-General was right. There was not that distinction made which should be made in the case of the Toowoomba Reformatory for Girls. The cases to which the late Attorney-General referred were those in which children of notorious drunkards were brought before the Police Magistrate and charged as deserted children. Those children were immediately sent to the reformatory for girls at Toowoomba for two or three years, and no distinction was made between them and the children committed to the institution as criminals. There ought to be some classification of those committed to the institution at Toowoomba, and it was sufficiently large to enable that classification to be carried out, if the Colonial Secretary only instructed the proper officers to do it.

Mr. PALMER asked the Colonial Secretary whether children were committed from all parts of the colony to those two reformatories at Lytton and Toowoomba?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; from all parts of the colony.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £23,221 be voted for the Defence Force. He was not in a position to give any lengthy information with respect to the Volunteer Force. They had a new commandant—Colonel French—who was a highly competent officer, and had only recently arrived. He was at present engaged making an inspection of all the various corps in the colony, and he hoped

to get his report shortly. In the meantime the Estimates were prepared on the same basis as last year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they had been playing at soldiers for a very long time, and at a very great cost; and as far as he could judge from what they read in the Press of the comments made by the Commandant—of whom he believed everything the hon. the Premier had said—they had very poor stuff in the Volunteer Force of the colony, so far as Colonel French was capable of telling them. Although he did not intend to oppose the item, he would say this much: that if he had the honour of a seat in the House when the Estimates came on again, and there was not some very material improvement in the Volunteer Force of the colony, he would do all he could, not simply to oppose the estimate, but to have it swept away entirely. He held very strong views upon the Volunteer question. He looked upon it as a perfect humbug, with their lieutenant-colonels at £16 a year and majors at £12 a year. It was simply playing at soldiers. If they were to have a defence force at all let them have a proper one, and not simply a body of men who wanted to display themselves in their uniforms. The place was full of lieutenant-colonels—one actually tumbled up against them in the streets—and it was more than a joke to be asked to vote this enormous sum of money year after year, for the very little satisfaction they got out of it. It might be that the new Commandant would put some life into this dead body, but he could not for the life of him understand how the money was wasted year after year on what was a toy force. He was quite sure that the force would be useless if occasion arose for them to use it, and if an invasion came there would be a large number of resignations and applications to retire on their rank, and possibly those applications would come from some in high positions. If they were to have a defence force, let it be a defence force in reality, even if they had a militia. In his opinion a volunteer force was simply humbug in the colonies.

Mr. FOXTON said he considered he ought to say something on the subject. He confessed that, as a late volunteer, he quite agreed with a great deal that had fallen from the leader of the Opposition. They had been more or less playing at soldiers, though, he believed, they had as good men in Queensland as there were in any part of the world for the making of soldiers. What, however, could they expect for the pay that was given, if the pittance was to be considered as the main inducement to join the force? He was altogether opposed to their present system, and he had had some experience of it; not only of the present system, but also of the land-order system which was in vogue some years ago. The officers' expenses were four or five times as great as their pay, and it would be far better that the position should be an honorary one than that it should remain as it was now. The matter was one upon which he felt strongly; but the whole question was in a transitional state, and he hoped that, with the new Commandant at the head of the force, something better might be looked for. In Victoria they had now a most complete scheme, which was, he believed, working tolerably well; but there they had a department of defence, and proper attention was paid to it. He hoped, if they had a defence force in Queensland in the future, it would not be a laughing-stock, as it was to a certain extent at the present time—not from any fault of the men, but simply because proper means were not taken to secure the best men and give them encouragement.

Mr. GROOM said he believed that, if the whole of the colony were polled to-morrow, the

verdict would be in favour of the opinions held by the leader of the Opposition. He thought, however, that the new Commandant should have every facility afforded him to see if he could make anything out of the material at his command, and if he was unable to do so it had better be wiped out altogether, and then let them have a permanent force, such as they had in Victoria and New South Wales. The hon. and gallant member for Carnarvon had referred to the small salaries which were received by the officers, which were nothing compared with the sums which they were out of pocket in providing themselves with accoutrements, etc. Some volunteers, no doubt, rigged themselves out in uniform simply with a desire to show themselves in fantastical form, but he believed there was also a considerable amount of military spirit amongst them. To inspire this still more it would be a very good thing if cadet classes could be established in every grammar school in the colony, and placed under the control of the officers who had charge of the forces. They had such a class at the Toowoomba Grammar School, but it was not instructed by the general military officer. He thought that it should be so, and that it should not be conducted by the ordinary drill-sergeant, whose salary was paid for by the trustees.

Mr. BLACK said he did not know why, every time the Volunteer vote came before hon. members, the Volunteers should be considered fair game for ridicule. It was a great mistake, for the best way to get a good volunteer force was to encourage the men and not to discourage them in the House. The Volunteer movement had always been ridiculed in its initiatory stages. It was ridiculed in Victoria and New South Wales, and although he was not a volunteer, and did not wish particularly to say anything to the credit or discredit of the force, he believed that if their services were ever required they would come to the front as well as anyone else in the colony, and would form a nucleus around which outsiders could rally. As for the member for Carnarvon, knowing what he knew about the force, it would have been very much better if he had stuck to it. He thought also that boys in State schools should all be drilled; it would lead in years to come to a really efficient body of volunteers, and therefore a sum of money should be voted for drill instructors to State schools. The Volunteer vote was one which should be carefully watched. He believed that the new system of paying volunteers so much a head had had a good result. From his own knowledge he knew that in some parts of the country they had progressed; and he thought that the new Commandant would make some important improvements in a year or two. To do away with the whole vote would be to waste all the money that the colony had spent, and leave it in a peculiar position should it be attacked.

Mr. HAMILTON said he wished to know whether the expense of establishing a corps at Cooktown had been provided for. It was quite true that the Volunteers were generally the subject of ridicule; but America depended upon volunteers, and their success there showed the services they would render when called upon.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the expense of the new corps at Cooktown was sufficiently provided for in the proposed vote.

Mr. FOXTON said he was obliged to the hon. member for Mackay for telling him what it was not creditable for him to do. It came with excellent taste from the hon. member, who had never thrown himself, so to speak, into the breach and become a volunteer in his life. He might tell the hon. member that up to within a week of his (Mr. Foxton's) election he was a

volunteer; but as it was an office of profit under the Crown—the profit being £10—it became necessary for him to resign his commission in view of his election.

Mr. ARCHER said he had a strong opinion on the question. He thought the colony should have a militia force, and that every man should be called upon to defend his country if necessary. But if they could not institute a militia, then they must have volunteers. It was a great mistake to think that “a little learning was a dangerous thing.” It was much better than none at all; and even volunteers, if called upon and properly led, would be more efficient than a body of men that was simply a mob. They must be prepared to defend themselves if ever they were attacked; and if that was not the proper system, then let it be improved. But he hoped there would be no talk of knocking the vote off the Estimates for what might really be made a benefit to the colony.

Mr. PALMER said it could not be a matter of surprise that the Volunteers were subject for ridicule, when they found that they were taken by special train to an encampment a few miles from Brisbane instead of marching there. In New South Wales there was a far better volunteer system. Numbers of young fellows there went out to exercise after office hours, and they were also taught the use of firearms. He agreed with the Speaker about the desirability of drilling boys in State schools.

Mr. FOXTON said it was the first time he had heard that there was a railway to Lytton. He could tell the hon. member that Volunteers did march to the encampments there, though some who could not get away earlier from their callings went down by the steamer.

Mr. PALMER said he was glad to be corrected by the hon. member.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, as one of the tax-paying community, and as representing a district which was not likely to be attacked for some considerable time after Brisbane, he distinctly protested against a monstrous expenditure for what he termed playing at soldiers. Could not the Government give them a nucleus of something like there was in New South Wales, round which the Volunteers could rally? There they had a central body of highly well paid men, and outside that they had the Volunteers. They had simply got a disorganised rabble in the shape of a volunteer force—with the exception of the artillery, who were a well drilled body of men—who, with arms put in their hands, were as likely to misuse them as use them. After the lamentable reports they had heard from Colonel French, he hoped they would get from the Colonial Secretary some scheme which was likely to lead to the embodiment of a number of men, and not a disorderly rabble.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think the Volunteers deserved to be called a disorderly rabble. They had done their best under very adverse circumstances, and under very scant encouragement from the Government of the day for a long time. He should rather approach the subject recognising the services they had rendered under such great difficulties, and do all in his power to organise them. The blame of their condition in no way rested with the present Government. How far it depended upon their predecessors was a matter upon which he would not express an opinion. The hon. gentleman was accusing himself and his late colleagues, who had allowed the present state of things to go on for five years.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I have always had my opinion about the Volunteers.

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The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The force is in a transition state.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It always is in that state.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he trusted that it would get into a satisfactory state soon. They had now a competent commandant, and the men were all willing and anxious to do their best, and the Government were willing to assist them. His present opinion was that there should be a nucleus round which they might form. He never did think much of the present system, which was neither volunteer nor militia, but trusted that, with the assistance of the Commandant, the Government would be able to submit a scheme which would meet with the approval of all.

The Hon. R. B. SHERIDAN said he had had the pleasure of seeing the Volunteers in New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria, and New South Wales, and could assure members of that Committee that the Volunteers of Queensland would bear very favourable comparison with them. They were the very reverse of what the hon. member for Balonne had described them. They were a most creditable body of men, and he could look back with pleasure to the twenty years he served with the Volunteers, and he did not receive a penny. He was very happy to inform them that the old company he had the honour to command was said by Colonel French to be the best drilled in Queensland. He was sure that every man who became a volunteer became a more loyal man, and more to be depended upon. If ever the Queensland Volunteers were called upon they would be able to account for themselves satisfactorily. He was ashamed that they should be called a rabble. They were a highly respectable body of men.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he hoped the hon. gentleman would write an advertisement for St. Jacob's oil.

The Hon. R. B. SHERIDAN: Yes, and rub you well with it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was a very bad thing for an old man to lose his temper; he had better keep it, if he had any to keep. When the hon. gentleman got up and said he had seen all the Volunteers in the Southern Hemisphere, and that those of Queensland would compare favourably with any of them, he was astonished, because he, too, had seen volunteers in the other colonies, and, without saying anything about physique or character, they were better drilled in New South Wales and Victoria than in Queensland. It appeared that Colonel French spoke very highly of the company that the hon. gentleman once commanded. He hoped the hon. gentleman had retired upon his rank, as then they could call him the hon. and gallant member who represented Maryborough. The hon. gentleman's statement was as unique as it was original.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £5,030 be voted for the Benevolent Asylum, Dunwich. There was an increase of £25 for the superintendent.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £2,279 be voted for the Harbour of Refuge, Thursday Island. There was an addition of one water policeman.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £1,804 be voted for the schooner “Pearl.”

Mr. BLACK said the items were going through in a most miraculous manner. Hon. gentlemen, he thought, would like to know how the schooner “Pearl” was employed, and what condition she

was in. They had had no information that session. What had she been doing the last twelve months?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said she was stationed at Thursday Island, and from there she visited the bêche-de-mer stations. It was necessary that the Government should have some vessel there. Sometimes she went to the Gulf, and sometimes to New Guinea. She had just come down to be overhauled.

Mr. ARCHER said he had taken a great deal of interest in what was going on up north, and he quite agreed with the Premier that a vessel was required there; although he did not consider that the "Pearl" was a fit vessel for the purpose, as she was getting old and sluggish. What was wanted was a small, comfortable steamer, to be used in making surveys on the coast, more especially as so many new rivers were being opened up in Queensland. It was worth the while of the Government to consider whether they could not substitute a steamer of that kind for the "Pearl," which probably would not cost much more and would do the work infinitely better. It would also be advisable to visit the various stations oftener, for, from what he heard, some very remarkable orgies were sometimes carried on at some of them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that when the two gunboats were ordered it was understood that one of them would be stationed at Thursday Island, and nothing had since occurred to alter that arrangement. But even if they had a steamer there it would be necessary to have a vessel to work where a steamer could not go. Although the "Pearl" was not particularly adapted for the purpose, she would have to do the work until they got another. The matter was under the careful consideration of the Government.

Mr. BEATTIE pointed out that the "Pearl" was a very expensive vessel. The last time she was overhauled she cost over £600, and now she was to cost £400 more.

Mr. BLACK asked who was the master of the "Pearl," and under whose control was he?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that the master of the "Pearl" was Captain Williams, an officer of considerable experience, and he was under the control of the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. BLACK asked whether Captain Williams took his orders from the Police Magistrate at Thursday Island, or whether he had a general roving commission?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that Captain Williams took his instructions from the Police Magistrate at Thursday Island, who was under the control of the Colonial Secretary.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £2,676 be granted for the steamer "Kate," said that a new steamer had been ordered to replace the "Kate," but some delay had arisen in consequence of the speed stipulated for. The stipulated speed—fifteen knots—could not have been obtained in so small a vessel under an increased expense of about £10,000. The speed now provided for was eleven knots an hour, and the cost would be about £13,000 instead of £10,000, which was the amount voted. She was expected to be delivered in about five months' time, and would steam out.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £35,600 be granted for Charitable Purposes, said the vote was a very large one, but a great part of it was for buildings. There was an increase of nearly £11,000 in the item "Hospitals generally," but that was at the rate of £2 for

every £1 subscribed, so that unless the money was subscribed the expenditure would not be made. The vote for the Children's Hospital, £400, was placed on the Estimates for the first time. There was a very large item for buildings, amounting to over £22,000, and that was where the principal increase came in. For the Brisbane Hospital £7,000 was put down, but it must be remembered that sick people from all parts of the colony went there, and an immense number of the inmates lately had been people from immigrant ships, suffering from fever. The enlargement was absolutely necessary, as at present convalescent patients had to be accommodated in tents. The other items for building were as follows:—Hospital at Cairns, £1,500; at Cunnamulla, £1,000; at Herberton, £2,500; at Ipswich, £1,700; at Rockhampton, £1,000; at Ingham, £1,000; at Warwick, £1,000; at Port Douglas, £500; and for a fever ward at Townsville, £2,500. Those were expenses which would not occur every year. With respect to the amount for relief boards, there was an increase to the extent of £550. That was their pauper vote, and possibly £6,400 was not a very large amount to relieve the destitute population of the whole colony.

Mr. PALMER said he was extremely interested in this vote, because there was no provision made for starting hospitals at either Normanton or Cloncurry, places that had been considered as having a very bad climate for Europeans. This year the people there had taken the matter up, and liberally subscribed a considerable sum for an hospital at Normanton, but there seemed to be no provision to enable them to get a building. He understood that it was usual to give a special grant in such cases for buildings in addition to the usual subsidy of £2 for £1, and he wished to know if the people there would receive that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said when an application was made to establish hospital at Normanton or Cloncurry it would receive the same consideration as other institutions in different parts of the country. If the inhabitants showed that they were in earnest by subscribing, the Government would give them the usual assistance.

Mr. PALMER asked if they would get a grant in addition to the subsidy?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had stated that they would get the usual assistance—such assistance as he was now asking for other hospitals. He did not mean merely the £2 for £1.

Mr. MOREHEAD said this vote was establishing a very dangerous precedent, for which, to a certain extent, he must admit, the late Government were responsible—giving away large sums of money without getting proportionate contributions from the inhabitants of townships or places where there were hospitals, or where they were intended to be established. With reference, in the first place, to the Children's Hospital, he should be one of the very last in that Committee to object to contributing anything to alleviate the sorrows or sufferings of any child; at the same time he held views with reference to the Children's Hospital that were, perhaps, not shared by many hon. members. He held that that institution should be a wing of the General Hospital; and he objected to handing over moneys to the control of an utterly irresponsible body, and more particularly when that body was composed of ladies. Their sympathies were too great, very often—so great as not to control their judgment; and he contended that if the Children's Hospital had been put under the control of the general hospital committee and the staff of hospital surgeons, a great deal more good would be done than was likely to be done under existing circumstances. He did not wish

to detract in any way from the self-denial and goodness shown by the ladies who had undertaken this—he might almost call “amiable hobby”—but still he was satisfied that far greater benefits would have been received by those whom it was intended to benefit if the institution had been made part and parcel of the Brisbane Hospital. He did not intend, however, to oppose the vote. Then they had £7,000 for the Brisbane Hospital. He did not intend to oppose that. He agreed with the hon. the Premier that the Brisbane Hospital was the hospital of the colony—that people from all parts of the country came to it, and therefore it stood in a very different position to similar institutions throughout the colony. But he had objected over and over again, and still objected, that this Government, and every Government, had been too lax in granting money to the Brisbane Hospital; the result being that no proper attempt was made to canvass the people of Brisbane for subscriptions for the support of that institution. People were seldom asked for a subscription, and often when they were asked they refused, because they knew that the Government must keep the hospital going. They knew that no Government in a Christian country could allow people to lie and die in an hospital for want of pecuniary assistance; and in addition to that, there was a great want of energy on the part of those directing the hospital in arranging anything like a systematic attempt to canvass Brisbane for the support of the hospital. He thought that the Government should, if possible, put some pressure on the hospital committee to compel them to exhaust the citizens of Brisbane by getting subscriptions from them, before they voted such large sums of money from time to time. Then they were asked to vote £1,500 for Cairns, £2,500 for Herberton, and £2,500 for a fever ward at Townsville. He thought that the Government were asking too much of the taxpayers of the colony when they called upon them to pay those large sums for that special purpose. If those votes were allowed, why should not every other town in the country that had an hospital come down and make claims for similar or proportionate expenditure? With regard to Herberton, he had been told that it had the finest climate in Queensland, and why, in the first instance, should they be asked to vote an enormous sum for an hospital there? If it was such a rich mining centre, why could not the men who were mining there, and also men in New South Wales, who were making enormous sums of money out of the place, be asked, or made, to contribute to the hospital? The same, in a modified way, might be said of Cairns. There were large sugar-planters outside Cairns who were making thousands of pounds yearly out of their plantations, and why should not they be asked to contribute or assist in the construction of an hospital there? With reference to the Townsville fever ward, the position was somewhat different. Townsville was a central place in the colony, which was frequented by people coming from the North and West; in fact it might be called the Brisbane of the North, and for that reason the vote might be fairly justified by the surrounding circumstances. He thought the Premier, in bringing down this enormous vote, was establishing a very dangerous precedent, and was doing it still more so in the promise he had given to the hon. member for Burke—that was, that his district should be treated in the same way as other portions of the colony. Why should he (Mr. Morehead) not, in the same way, ask for a considerable sum of money for the hospital at St. George? If he did so he should certainly expect to receive the same treatment that had been extended to the hon. member for Burke. In the same way, the

hon. member for Kennedy (Mr. Lissner) and other hon. members might make application for an allowance for hospitals in their districts, and should expect to be similarly treated. The amount asked for was enormous, and would eventually become a very serious danger. If the people were not self-reliant enough now, even in the Burke and other outside districts—if they were not prepared to put their hands in their pockets and help those who were in a worse position than themselves, with the advantage of having also assistance from the State, he maintained that they did not deserve to receive any assistance at all. There had not been a single case brought forward, with the exception of Brisbane, and possibly of Townsville, where the inhabitants should not subscribe for the construction of hospital buildings. The hon. gentleman had not brought forward a single argument to justify the vote. He had no wish to obstruct the passing of the Estimates, or to strike out any particular item; but he wanted a full and fair explanation of why the hon. gentleman had selected the places he had referred to. He might speak for his district, and ask why he should not have £500 for the hospital at St. George, which was a large centre, taking all the traffic from the South-west and a large portion from the Western districts? He was not going to ask for it; he was only pointing out that if the hon. gentleman continued his present course it would have very serious results—that if he sowed the storm he should certainly reap the whirlwind.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman asked him why he selected those items? Brisbane and Townsville were selected because they were so urgent. The others were selected by the late Government.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said promises had been made by the predecessors of the present Government, and, in some instances, the money had been expended, and he had no alternative but to propose them.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Not Cairns or Herberton.

Mr. BLACK said he could not agree altogether with the leader of the Opposition in the view he took of that matter. A reasonable and judicious expenditure of money upon hospitals in the colony was perfectly justifiable, and it was one of the most graceful ways of returning the surplus revenue contributed by the different districts. It was not a new mode of dealing with those votes. He found, on looking over the way in which the Consolidated Revenue of the Colony had been expended up to the present time, that there were any number of precedents for the expenditure of money from the Consolidated Revenue upon hospitals. There was the Brisbane Benevolent Asylum, £8,000—a perfectly justifiable expenditure; Fever Hospital, £5,000; Brisbane General Hospital, £3,000; Lunatic Asylum, £29,000; Brisbane Refuge, £4,000; Bundaberg Hospital, £1,000; Cooktown Hospital, £2,000; Dalby, £1,500; Ipswich Lunatic Asylum, £2,700; Maryborough Lunatic Asylum, £1,000; Port Douglas, £200,—and they were now asked for an additional £500; Rockhampton Benevolent Asylum, £1,500; Rockhampton Hospital, £2,500,—and now an additional £1,000 was asked; Rockhampton Receiving House, £2,500; Lock Hospital, Rockhampton, £1,500; Orphanage, £1,200; Toowoomba Fever Ward, £500; Toowoomba Lunatic Asylum, £10,000; Toowoomba Hospital, £9,500; Toowoomba Receiving House, £1,000—Toowoomba seemed to be a specially favoured locality. The Townsville Hospital, in addition to the £2,500 asked for now, had received

already £4,000, and the Warwick Hospital, in addition to the £1,000 asked for now, had already received £5,000, so that in asking for those votes the Government were simply carrying out a system adopted by previous Governments. He was very glad to hear the Premier assure the hon. member for Burke that any reasonable claim he made should receive attention, as he had also an application to make for an hospital at Mackay. Other towns which had applied to the Government for sums for the building of hospitals had always had their applications favourably entertained, and Mackay was a district which had never received a single sixpence for the erection of an hospital.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he hoped the Premier would put his foot down, after what he had just heard. Of course the present estimate would go, but he hoped that in future he would not allow this imposition to be placed on the taxpayers of the colony. Why should Mackay get money for an hospital any more than any town in the Mitchell? Mackay was one of the richest districts in the colony, and was well able to pay for an hospital itself. Townsville was in a perfectly different position, as it was the centering point of a large number of towns in the North and West; and the same remark applied to Rockhampton. He did not see that Mackay had any more claim than St. George, and should not receive that consideration, unless it was to be made an understanding in the House that they were to sink all their independence, and that every district should come down *in formâ pauperis* and sack the Treasury—loot the Treasury—for money to put up institutions which could easily be put up in all these instances by the subscriptions of the inhabitants, supplemented as they always were by the State. He admitted at once that the late Government had committed an error in giving those large sums of money for the erection of hospitals at Warwick and such places, where the money could well have been contributed by the inhabitants of the district. While having no intention to move the excision of any of the items, he hoped the present Government would not be so pliable as to yield to the wishes of the hon. member for Burke or the hon. member for Mackay, and that they would see that, except in purely exceptional cases, no such demands should be made upon the Public Exchequer.

Mr. HAMILTON said that he could bear out the Premier's statement, that the present Government was not to blame for having put the sums which appeared on the present estimate for the erection of hospitals at Cairns, Port Douglas, and Herberton. The last Government had placed the sums on the Estimates, which now appeared for the erection of those buildings, and he considered they were entitled to credit, not to blame, for having done so. No one who had realised the amount of suffering and distress which had been relieved, and lives saved through money expended in this way, would object to such expenditure. The leader of the Opposition said it was an imposition to erect hospitals in favoured districts from the General Revenue, and that the residents should be asked to contribute. It was a far greater imposition to tax the colony for Queen's Parks, Botanic Gardens, and such places. The North had no money expended in such luxuries, although they were taxed to supply them to others, and if they were to curtail the expenditure of public moneys let them commence in Brisbane on the Queen's Parks and Botanic Gardens, upon which so much money was expended.

Mr. NORTON said there was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question, but if it

was to become general to vote sums of money for hospitals wherever they were asked for he should ask for some for his district, where the contribution from land alone was some £13,000 or £14,000 a year, and the expenditure of Government money was next to nothing. One thing he would point out in connection with the hospitals was that they were very fond of building them in places which were in themselves most unhealthy. In Toowoomba, which had the highest death-rate in the colony, and in Warwick which stood next on the list, large sums of money had been spent in hospital accommodation, whereas it would be very much better to have the hospitals built on the coast where the death-rate was not so high. Gladstone, which was one of the healthiest places in the whole of the colony, was a place where they ought to have an hospital, as there was plenty of vacant land and every facility for having the buildings there. If the sums were granted which had been spoken of that evening, the Government could very well afford to grant a sum for an hospital, either at Gladstone or in its immediate neighbourhood.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum of £4,045 be voted for medical officers. The only increases were for an additional officer at Ingham, and acting medical officers at Brisbane and Rockhampton.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum of £550 be voted for the Central Board of Health.

Mr. ARCHER said he was not going to object to the estimate, but simply to express a wish, or a hope, that the Premier would try and galvanise that body into something like life.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said their laws of health wanted entirely remodelling. That was one of the things which ought to be done as soon as possible, and he hoped to be able to find time to deal with it during the recess.

Mr. GROOM said that, although this was called the Central Board of Health, it was the only Board of Health in the colony, the late Government having declined to extend the provisions of the Health Act to any other town in the colony besides Brisbane. Its jurisdiction, therefore, was confined to Brisbane.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has no jurisdiction at all.

Mr. GROOM said he could not see why they should continue it, and vote the money to pay a secretary if it had no jurisdiction. If the Central Board of Health was such a nonentity, why should they have it at all? Formerly it had jurisdiction over the whole of the colony and could dictate to anybody, but now they were told it had none, so what on earth was the use of it?

Mr. MOREHEAD said it would be better to knock off the item altogether and allow some duly qualified medical man to be appointed by the Government—a man who would have a knowledge of management so far as drainage was concerned. In the city of Brisbane, at present, he was informed there were a larger number of typhoid fever cases than in any other city in Australia, irrespective of population. That was owing to the disgraceful condition of the city under the Board of Health, and he was further told that the typhoid fever was doing more harm than the yellow fever did in Jamaica; and if that was so, it was quite time the Government took some strong measures to crush it out. The board did nothing, and probably never intended to do anything, and as no Colonial Secretary had ever been able to galvanise it into life, it would be better to

sweep it away altogether. The only way to destroy the board was to destroy the fees—when they ceased, the board would cease. They met to wrangle like old women over an earth closet, and then they took their fees and departed, and things were as bad as ever. He thought it would be better to withdraw the estimate, or rather let it go, and let the Central Board of Health go with it. Then let the Government devise some scheme to take its place.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Board of Health had no absolute powers. They could make regulations, but the regulations were of no force until districts were proclaimed under the Act; and at the present time no parts of the colony had been proclaimed. It would be a pity, however, to abolish the board, because it acted as a board of advice to the Minister. It certainly had no active work to do; but it would be a pity to abolish it, which would probably be the result of leaving the item off the Estimates. He thought, at the same time, that much more satisfactory arrangements might be made.

Mr. JORDAN said the services of the board would have been very valuable indeed had its advice been followed years ago. A gentleman who had a seat on the board, and had been a member of that House, had endeavoured years since to impress on the whole colony in the most solemn manner the absolute necessity of some system being adopted for the sanitary improvement of the towns. In 1875 the death-rate in the metropolis was 29 per 1,000. Twenty-five years ago Brisbane was the healthiest town in the world, and the death-rate of the colony at that time was lower than that of any other colony in Australia, but the death-rate had been extremely large of late years. Although Queensland had a healthy climate—dry and salubrious—in fact, a perfect sanatorium—yet during the last ten years the death-rate had increased. That was in consequence of the enormous death-rate in the towns. Take away the towns, and the death-rate was lower than in any part of the world. Even now, including the large towns, but excluding the mortality of Polynesians and Chinese, the death-rate was lower than in any of the Australian colonies. The large expenditure for hospitals was necessary in consequence of the mortality in towns. It was supposed that the large mortality in Brisbane was caused by people arriving from the country districts, but that was not the case. For years it had been ascertained that the great bulk of the people who died in the Brisbane Hospital were from the Brisbane registration district. It was a disgrace to the colony that for so many years, after the subject had been so constantly pressed on the attention of the Government, so little had been done. Now the remedy proposed was the abolition of the Board of Health. There were gentlemen on that board—one gentleman particularly—who had been continually sounding the alarm because of the high death-rate in Brisbane. In the town of Warwick, which ought to be the healthiest in the world, the death-rate was higher than in Brisbane now; that was in consequence of defective drainage. They ought to spend a million of money on a thorough drainage of all the large towns in the colony.

Mr. NORTON said the abominable smells about Brisbane at present were almost beyond conception. He knew places where he dared not breathe as he passed, so foul was the smell; and there were places respecting which complaints had been made over and over again without anything being done. It was only a little while ago that a lady had to come forward and

fight her own battle to prevent herself and her pupils being poisoned by filthy accumulations. He believed there were gentlemen on the board who were very anxious to see something done. He did not know that by abolishing that vote it would lead to the introduction of any better system; but the matter was one of great importance, and the Government ought to do all they could. He thought the blame might be thrown on the corporation; and it was quite possible, if the Board of Health was abolished, that the corporation might then be induced to take steps to introduce a better state of things. If that was a certainty, he would vote against that money being granted.

Mr. BLACK said he wished to know who were the non-official members of the board, and what fees they got. He noticed that the fees to non-official members and contingencies had been reduced from £500 to £300.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The non-official members are Drs. O'Doherty, Bell, Cannan, Thomson, and Marks, and Messrs. Petrie and Finney. The fees are one guinea a sitting.

Mr. FERGUSON said he hoped that was the last time the vote would appear on the Estimates. The Central Board of Health never was any good. Sometimes they took a freak and asked the Government to proclaim certain districts under the Health Act, and they put the municipalities to a great deal of expense. They had to appoint officers at the public expense. The whole machinery was wrong.

Mr. BLACK said he would like some assurance from the Colonial Secretary that the vote would not appear again upon the Estimates. It seemed to have been the almost unanimous expression of opinion of the House that the Board of Health was doing no good, except so far as the unofficial members were concerned, who drew one guinea for each time they attended. When the last Estimates were passed there was a similar discussion, and it was found that a large sum of money was being paid away to the non-official members. The hon. member for South Brisbane (Mr. Jordan) had stated that there was a gentleman on the Board of Health who was sounding an alarm all through the colony; was he one of the official or non-official members of the board? He should feel that any remarks that fell from the hon. Colonial Secretary as chairman of that board would be entitled to the greatest respect. He would like to ask him if the Board of Health was doing any good? If it was doing good, why was Brisbane the only place that required a board of health? He was not aware that the Board of Health was felt outside Brisbane, or even in it. He did not think it would be judicious, but he felt very much inclined to oppose it. He would like to have an assurance from the Colonial Secretary that unless the Central Board of Health did more good than it had hitherto done, that was the last year in which the vote would be passed.

Mr. HAMILTON said he did not know what the powers of the Board of Health were. He had heard that divisional boards almost crippled their powers. Whoever had the sanitary arrangements of Brisbane in hand ought to be prosecuted for manslaughter. A more disgraceful state of things it was impossible to conceive. The most simple steps were not even taken to put a stop to the typhoid fever which was so prevalent. It could be stamped out easily if proper precautions were taken. Many families had been left in mourning in Brisbane through the insufficient action of the Board of Health. Steps should be taken to stamp that board out immediately, and have somebody who could take the matter in hand properly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Central Board of Health could at present simply advise. It had power to make regulations, but the regulations could not be enforced except by proclamation. It was at present merely a consultative board, which would continue to exist until some other arrangement was made. It was often desirable to get the opinion of the Central Board of Health.

Mr. BEATTIE said it was expected by the late Government that the local bodies and municipalities would bring themselves under the Health Act. They would not do so. If the Health Act had been proclaimed in the various towns in the colony, they would have received regulations from the Central Board of Health. He should be sorry to see it done away with. There was some action taken by the late Government in appointing one of the members of that Board of Health as an inspector. He did not know how his salary was paid. He understood that Dr. Prentice took charge of the small-pox hospital at £100 a year.

Mr. GROOM said the hon. member was slightly in error when he said it was understood that the local bodies were compelled to bring themselves under the Health Act. What was done was this: The late Colonial Secretary acceded to the wishes of the Municipal Conference, who represented to him that the Health Act, as applied to the districts to be proclaimed under the control of the Central Board of Health, was perfectly inoperative, and the Municipal Conference decided that the municipalities themselves should pass by-laws for the regulation of their own health, and have it entirely in their own control, considering that they had to pay all the expense, rather than be under the control of the Central Board of Brisbane. That was the reason why it had not been acceptable to the municipalities, because it came to this: that the Central Board of Health could order a municipality to do anything they desired, and pay all expenses. The municipality had no voice in the matter at all. He was glad to say that the Municipal Conference unanimously agreed that it was an unsatisfactory system, and it would be far better to leave the matter of health to the municipalities.

Mr. MOREHEAD said his impression was that unless some strong action was taken they would all be local bodies.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would like to point out that the existence of that body enabled the Government to take those matters out of the hands of local bodies who would not do their duty.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £4,000 be granted in aid of Schools of Art and Mining Schools.

Mr. FORTON said he thought the present was a fitting time to discuss the advisability of extending the grant in the direction of a public library and art gallery for the colony. Queensland had now been established nearly a quarter of a century, and it was high time they followed the lead of the southern colonies in that direction. In Melbourne there was a free public library containing something like 110,000 volumes. That was a standing advertisement to Victoria, to say nothing of more material benefits that must accrue to the people from having such an immense store of books at their free disposal. He did not, of course, intend to suggest that Queensland should commence on so large a scale, but the time had arrived when a beginning should be made, even if only to the extent of a grant of £10,000. The money would be well spent, and a nucleus would be formed of what in after years would become something which they all as

Queenslanders would be proud of. An art gallery ought also to be a portion of the scheme. The benefits to be derived from such institutions were immense. He should like to have an assurance from the Government that they would consider the matter, and would be prepared to put a sum on the Estimates next year towards such an object as he had indicated.

Mr. BAILEY said he felt rather inclined to go the other way. Those schools of art had been subsidised for many years, and they had acquired considerable libraries which were kept wholly and solely for the benefit of the townspeople, who could better afford to pay for the books they read than those who were taxed to pay for books they were not allowed to look at. The country people were taxed in order that wealthy townspeople might have novels to read at home; and he did not see why that system should be continued. A grand public library and art gallery would of course be for the city of Brisbane; but what had the people of Maryborough, Wide Bay, Rockhampton, or Townsville to do with a public library and art gallery in the city of Brisbane? It was only extending the principle, and was simply buying things at the expense of the country for people who could well afford to buy them for themselves.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was strongly disposed to favour the idea of the hon. member for Carnarvon. Such an institution would be of great advantage to all parts of the colony. There was something more in a man's life than eating and drinking, and such an institution as indicated would add to the material welfare of the colony, to put it on no higher grounds.

Mr. BLACK said he agreed with the view taken by the Premier and the hon. member for Carnarvon, and he could not imagine the hon. member for Wide Bay taking so narrow a view of the subject. He wanted some information about the mining schools. Where were they, and what were they doing?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that the mining schools were institutions connected with schools of art. There were only two—at Gympie and at Maytown.

Mr. BAILEY said he was sorry the hon. member for Mackay called his views narrow-minded, but he could well understand that rich planters could afford to drive into town in their buggies and get books from the libraries; but the people who were called upon to pay for those books could not do so. The people in his own district had tried all they could to make terms with the Maryborough School of Arts, and they had always been met with the reply that the use of the library was restricted to the townspeople. The whole principle was false.

Mr. SHERIDAN said that if people chose to live at such a distance from libraries, they must expect to suffer the consequences. With reference to the question before the Committee, he might mention that in Sydney there was an art gallery, a picture gallery, a public lending library, and a public reading library. He mentioned that because the hon. member for Carnarvon seemed to infer that Melbourne was the only city in the colonies which possessed institutions of that kind. He hoped to see the day when Brisbane would be equally advanced.

Mr. NORTON said that if nobody lived in the country he did not know what would become of Queensland. There was much force in what had been said by the hon. member for Wide Bay; at the same time, he should like to see a public library and art gallery established in Queensland. But he should not like to see large sums wasted, as in Sydney, where there were pictures that were

not worth hanging on the walls of a very ordinary house, although the collection, as a whole, was very good indeed. And as for some of the wretched crockery to be seen there, it was not such as could impart any useful information.

Mr. SHERIDAN said that, of course, the criticism of art was not a matter of opinion.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that the sum of £31,370 be granted for Miscellaneous Services, said there was a large increase in the item for expenses of elections and compiling electoral rolls, from £1,700 to £6,000. He believed that that sum would just cover the expense. There was an increase in the amount for agricultural and horticultural societies from £1,000 to £2,000, the amount voted last year having been found insufficient. The only other large item was £10,500 for the purchase of land for extension of the Government Printing Office. The money had already been spent and the land bought. The only other item which he need refer to was £600 for the erection of a drill-shed at Mackay, which had been promised and was necessary, and £100 for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

WICKHAM TERRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BILL.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he had received a message from the Legislative Council returning this Bill without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House adjourned at five minutes to 11 o'clock.