

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 6 AUGUST 1884**

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## FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to :—

By the HON. J. M. MACROSSAN—

That the House will, on Thursday, the 7th instant, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Wages Act of 1870.

By Mr. SMYTH—

1. That the Gympie Gas Company (Limited) Bill be referred for the consideration and report of a Select Committee.

2. That such Committee have power to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit during any adjournment of the House, and that it consist of the following members, namely :—Messrs. Bailey, Moreton, Palmer, Ferguson, and the Mover.

By Mr. NORTON—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a statement showing in what way the £15,000 lately voted for distribution to divisional boards in aid of bridges has been distributed.

## ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith), in moving—

That during the remainder of this session, unless otherwise ordered, the House do meet for the despatch of business on Monday in each week at 7 p.m., in addition to the days already appointed for meeting; and that Government business take precedence on that day—

said that, last week—when he moved the adjournment of the House, on Thursday, without fixing any date for the adjournment, the result of which motion, if carried, would be that the House would have met on Friday morning—the hon. leader of the Opposition objected to Friday morning sittings, and it was suggested that very likely Monday evening would be less inconvenient in many respects. Hon. members from the country wished to have as much business as possible despatched during the week. The sittings on Friday morning were always inconvenient, but although inconvenient they had to be resorted to towards the close of a session. He did not consider it desirable that hon. members should be asked to sit on Friday mornings unless it was found to be absolutely necessary, and it might become so in the course of the session, as had been the case in previous sessions. For Ministers it was particularly inconvenient to have to sit on Friday mornings, because the difficulty of conducting departmental business was considerably increased during the sitting of Parliament. He had pointed out that if they sat on Friday mornings non-contentious business could be taken, and that would not require a very full attendance of members. He knew it would probably be inconvenient for some hon. members to meet on Monday evenings, but he believed there would be a sufficient number of members to take such business as might be conveniently done on that day. He had suggested Monday evening because he really thought the whole day on Monday would not be required to get through the work to be done, and he thought the two hours and a-half which would be available from half-past 7 till 10 o'clock might very often be profitably employed. He was not proposing that the motion should supersede the Friday sittings, which might be found necessary some time during the session, but if the motion were carried the Government would not ask the House to meet on Friday mornings except on occasions of great urgency.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that up to a certain point he agreed with the proposition made by the hon. gentleman. He agreed with the opinion expressed the other night, and said that Friday morning—at least, so far as business men were concerned—was the worst morning they could

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 6 August, 1884.

Petition.—Bills of Exchange Bill—third reading.—  
Formal Motions.—Additional Sitting Day.—Defence  
Bill.—Immigration Act of 1882 Amendment Bill—  
second reading.—Succession Act Declaratory Bill.—  
Adjournment.

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

## PETITION.

Mr. BAILEY presented a petition from the Trustees of the land described in the deed of grant No. 17,135, situated in the parish of Maryborough, in the county of March, being the Racecourse Reserve, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to enable them to mortgage or lease the same, and sell or exchange certain portions thereof, and for other purposes; and moved that the petition be received.

The petition was received, and Mr. Bailey presented a Bill in accordance therewith.

## BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL—THIRD READING.

On motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

select for a sitting, because on that day the main southern and northern mails came in, and they had to be answered. But when it was suggested that they should sit on Monday it was certainly never intended that they should sit on Friday also. It was intended that the Monday sitting should supersede the sitting on Friday mornings. That was the distinct arrangement made. Hon. members were always quite willing, when a necessity had arisen towards the termination of a session, to sit on Friday morning, but he did not think the House should make itself liable to be called upon to meet on Friday morning in addition to Monday evening. He thought the Premier should in the meantime amend his motion so as to supersede the sitting on Friday morning.

The PREMIER: I said I would not ask the House to sit on Friday morning except in cases of urgent necessity.

Mr. NORTON said it would be convenient if the House understood from the Premier whether he proposed to at once take the Monday sittings; because so long as he had been in the House, although they had Friday sittings at the close of the session, the ordinary sittings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday had been found sufficient until the close of the session, when they sat on Monday evenings and on Friday mornings.

The PREMIER said the Government were most desirous to consult the convenience of hon. members as far as possible. He had given hon. members the assurance just now, and he thought his hon. friend would have accepted it, that the Government would not ask the House to sit on Friday unless under circumstances of urgent necessity, which he did not then contemplate. He did not think it necessary to rescind the order for the Friday morning sittings, as circumstances might arise when it would be convenient for them to sit on a Friday morning, if for only half-an-hour. He really considered that they wanted more than two evenings a week for Government business; and that was especially the case now, as it was quite clear that during the remainder of the present session two evenings would be taken up with business of the very greatest importance. He would repeat the assurance he had given, as to not sitting on Friday morning except on occasions of necessity. As to sitting on Monday next, he could not at present say whether that would be necessary; they could not tell that until to-morrow. The Government wished to expedite the despatch of business for the convenience of country members.

Mr. ARCHER said he would like to know from the hon. gentleman whether they would be called upon to sit next Monday. It would be exceedingly inconvenient, he knew, for some hon. members to do so. The hon. gentleman had given notice that the House, at its rising, adjourn till 7 o'clock to-morrow. Was the present motion to make up for that lost time?

The PREMIER: Certainly not; it has nothing to do with it.

Mr. ARCHER said he thought reasonable notice ought to be given when the change was to begin. Was it intended that the House should meet next Monday?

The PREMIER: I do not know. I hope not; but I may be able to say definitely before the adjournment this evening.

Mr. ARCHER said he hoped the hon. gentleman would make up his mind on the subject. It would be very easy to do so.

The PREMIER: That depends upon what business we do to-night.

Mr. ARCHER said he himself made it a rule never to be absent from the House; but he had made an engagement for next Monday evening,

which he would not have made had he known it was intended that the House should meet. He thought, therefore, the Premier should give them some assurance whether they were to meet on Monday next, or to break their engagements. A good many members, of course, could not be present on Monday.

The PREMIER said he did not think the fact that the hon. gentleman had made engagements was any reason why the House should not sit on Monday, although he would be glad to oblige the hon. gentleman.

Mr. ARCHER: It is not for myself alone.

The PREMIER: I understood the hon. gentleman to speak entirely for himself.

Mr. ARCHER: No.

The PREMIER said it might be that the business would not require them to sit on Monday next; but he could not at present say. He hoped they would get on so far with the business that evening that there would be no necessity to meet next Monday. The hon. gentleman could rest assured that nothing would be done to cause inconvenience.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Only business of a non-contentious character will be taken on Monday, I suppose.

The PREMIER: Yes; and I would take no business that any member desired to discuss who could not be present.

Question put and passed.

#### DEFENCE BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was affirmed in Committee of the Whole that it was desirable that a Bill be introduced to make better provision for the defence of Queensland.

The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1882 AMENDMENT BILL—SECOND READING.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—This Bill, which is entitled a Bill to amend the Immigration Act of 1882, deals principally with the subject of indentured labour from Europe. It recites that it is desirable to amend the provisions in the Immigration Act of 1882 with respect to nominated and indentured immigrants, and to encourage the introduction of indentured labourers from Europe. Now, sir, I do not think it necessary to go at length into the Labour question in moving the second reading of this Bill. I think if one thing was more distinctly enunciated than any other by the voice of the people during the general election last year, it was this: that they intended to look to Europe and not Asia as a source of supply of labour for this colony. Whether Asia would be a better source is a question upon which differences of opinion exist. As to my own opinion, I have not hesitated to state explicitly that we should look to Europe and not Asia for the supply of our labour; and I believe in Europe we can find all the labour that is necessary for the development of this country. It may, perhaps, take a little longer to develop some portions of it. It may even take a good deal longer; but the advantages of developing this country with white labour, as compared with the disadvantages of developing its resources by the introduction of hordes of Indians and Asiatics, I think so immensely predominate, that no other course ought to be considered as feasible at the present time, or I hope ever. We—I speak for the party that now occupies these benches, and which, I believe, is the largest party in the country—have no desire to see repeated in Queensland the history of some of the other colonies of the British Crown. We do not

desire to see in this country the kind of civilisation that prevails in the West Indian Islands or in Mauritius, and which is fast superseding the civilisation originally intended to prevail in the colony of Natal. At the present time there is undoubtedly an insufficient supply of labour for the development of the agricultural resources of this colony; and having arrived at the conclusion—which I think the colony has arrived at—that we should not look to Asia for a supply, the question arises, where then are we to look for it? In Asia there may be said to be three possible sources of supply that have been mentioned from time to time. First, British India, from which, no doubt, we can procure an enormous number of coolies. That, sir, I trust, is at an end for all practical purposes at the present time. That, I suppose, everybody will admit. The source of supply from China, I think, is closed, and fortunately so. I do not think there is any probability of anybody attempting to recur to that source; and as to the third source, that we were told is always available, and would be made use of—the supply from the Malay Archipelago and Peninsula—I think the persons who have tried that experiment have already become so heartily sick of the result of it that we need not anticipate any serious attempt to renew it. Therefore we are left—and I hope we shall always be left—to Europe as the source of our supply. The principal argument against the introduction of European labour—the argument that has always been brought against it—is that its introduction will lower the average rate of wages. We used to be told that the introduction of Asiatics would increase the number of white labourers that would be required, but I think nobody seriously believes that now. Very few people do, at any rate. Of course it would increase the number of mechanics while the erection of mills, machinery, and fencing was going on; but no one who has read the history of other colonies will believe that that state of things would continue, or that the history of agriculture in Queensland will differ in the slightest degree from the history of agriculture in other places. It is very well known that, so far from the employment of black labour increasing the number of white labourers, the result will be to effectually drive white labour out of the field. That that would be repeated in Queensland I think nobody will seriously dispute. It may take five or seven years or longer, but it would certainly be the result before any appreciable period had passed over our heads. Then we are told, as against this argument, and as an attempt to frighten the white labourers of this colony, that the introduction of labour from Europe will reduce the rate of wages. Well, supposing it did, which would be the better: that the rate of wages should be diminished to a small extent, or that the white labour should be driven out of the field, as it certainly would be? Undoubtedly the introduction of black labour would in one sense prevent the decrease of European labourers' wages in the field, because no European labourers would be employed there at all. Talking of protecting the wages of the white labourer by introducing black labour reminds me of what I once saw in a boat in mid-ocean, where one of the passengers pulled out the cork in the bottom of the boat to let the water run out. I think the prescription for keeping up the rate of wages by introducing black labour is about as good as the action of that man. I do not propose at any great length to controvert the argument, because I think the people to whom it is addressed are sufficiently sensible to see that they have much more to fear from competition with inferior races than with their equals. What we desire, I apprehend, in this

colony, is this: not to see the aggregation of wealth or the aggregation of great estates in the hands of a few, but a general diffusion of wealth and prosperity; and especially a diffusion of that wealth and prosperity amongst agricultural settlers. The men we desire to introduce to develop our agricultural lands—I speak for the party I have the honour to represent, and I hope I speak also for the great majority of the people of the colony—are men who will make Queensland their home, who will mix with us and not be an alien race amongst us, and who will not introduce that element of degeneration which we have seen whenever the black and the white races have endeavoured to mix. Those are the objects which, at any rate, we have in view; they are definite ends which I believe are worth struggling for, and which it is worth our while putting forth all our efforts to attain. And I believe that the man who succeeds in attaining those objects will deserve more of the future population of Queensland—of the whole of Australia—than any man who succeeded in enabling a few persons to make large fortunes by the aid of alien labour, at the expense of the future prosperity and civilisation of the Australian continent. Before passing, I should say a word about the South Sea Islands, which have for some considerable period been a source of part of our labour supply—a source which it is quite certain is not inexhaustible, which appears to be diminishing, and which the restrictions recently imposed on the introduction of labourers from those islands will not have the effect of increasing. I have never had the opportunity of answering any attack made upon the regulations that have recently been introduced, dealing with that subject. The only complaint that has been made arose out of some mistake made by a clerk in the office, which was never brought to my notice. I should be very glad indeed to hear any hon. member—if one will venture—get up and complain of the undue severity of those restrictions. The only conclusion I have been able to come to since they have been in force is, that if they err in any direction it is in the direction of not being sufficiently stringent. Every day almost brings fresh evidence of the irregularities that have been existing in that trade before the last attempt was made to suppress them. The Bill that I propose to introduce takes up the matter from the point of view I have already indicated—that it is to Europe that we should look for labour. I recognise, at the same time, that persons who are engaged in agricultural pursuits are entitled to a great deal of consideration from the Government and from the Parliament. We have already provided for the introduction of immigrants from Europe, but satisfactory arrangements do not exist for the introduction of agricultural labourers. There is often a difficulty in getting them, I know; and there is no matter that requires more careful supervision in the Agent-General's office in London than the engagement of agricultural labourers. The instructions to send agricultural labourers are obeyed as far as they can be; but all sorts of abuses are practised, and many men find persons of nominal respectability to certify that they are of that class, and who, when they arrive here, show by their white hands that if they had previously engaged in any industry—of course I do not speak of clerks—it has not been an honest one. Arrangements, however, will shortly be made by which we hope to be able to secure a very largely increased supply of agricultural labourers from Great Britain. They form one of the most valuable classes of men we can introduce into the colony; and, as men who labour with their hands, they are probably the most valuable, because they are the men whom we

really most require. Even lately, when labour accumulated in towns, consequent on the large increase of immigration, there was never any difficulty in finding employment for any number of labourers of that kind. We propose to make arrangements immediately for selecting and forwarding agricultural labourers to Queensland, but I do not think that England alone is the only country in Europe to which we ought to look for such labour. We ourselves, although we have been a separate nation for many years, must remember the stock from which we came. We have in our veins the blood of many countries besides England; Germany and Scandinavia are both countries related to us in blood, and the people of both these countries have shown that they make admirable colonists, not only in Australia, but in the United States and the Dominion of Canada. I should be glad to welcome any number of men from either of those countries. They will coalesce with our own race, and form one united people. There is an ample supply of labour of that kind to be procured; and I believe that if people requiring agricultural labour will recognise as an existing fact that this country does not intend to give them labour from Asia—which they cannot get unless Parliament gives it to them, and Parliament does not intend to do so; and it is just as well to understand what lines we are going on—if they will recognise that fact, they will receive, I am sure, all the assistance from the Government and from the Parliament that can possibly be given them. There is no desire, I am sure, on the part of any people of this colony to injure any industry, but we are not prepared to allow any particular industry to obtain a temporary advantage at the expense of the prosperity of the whole community; but they may rely upon every assistance of the Government in gaining the end which I have stated, and which is the only one we are justified in pursuing. The present Immigration Act deals with indented labourers, but its provisions are quite unsatisfactory—certainly with regard to the scale of payments by introducing employers. Those provisions are contained in the 12th and 13th sections of the Act. The 12th section provides that—

"Any employer in the colony wishing to engage and secure the services of any mechanic, labourer, or servant in Europe, and to bring such mechanic, labourer, or servant to the colony, may apply to the Immigration Agent in Brisbane, or to the Agent-General, or to the agent on the Continent of Europe, as the case may be, in the form of Schedule E hereto, or to the like effect; and on the conditions hereinafter mentioned being complied with, a passage to the colony shall be provided for such mechanic, labourer, or servant, who is approved of by the Agent-General."

And section 13, after providing that a deposit in respect of the immigrants' passage money shall be paid by the intending employer at the scale fixed in the schedule, states:—

"And such employer, or the duly authorised agent of such employer, shall sign an agreement with such mechanic, labourer, or servant, whereby such mechanic, labourer, or servant shall agree to serve such employer as aforesaid, for any term not less than twelve calendar months, at such rate of wages as may be agreed upon; and every such agreement shall be delivered to the Agent-General, or the agent on the continent of Europe, as the case may be."

The next section provides that those agreements shall be valid in the colony. Now the schedule is a schedule intended to relate to nominated passengers, and it is unsuitable to the case of indented labourers, because it includes families; but it will be observed—so far as I can understand the 12th clause—that the only passages that may be paid by the Government are the passages of labourers themselves. There is no provision for the payment of the passages of their wives and children. The rates are:—Children, between one and

twelve, £1—of course there will be no children indented between one and twelve; between twelve and forty, males £2, females £1; above forty and under forty-five, males and females, £4; above fifty-five, males and females, £10. That scale was evidently framed for the case of nominated passengers, the only part which could relate to indented passengers being the provision concerning immigrants between the ages of twelve and fifty-five. In order that it may be practically worked it is necessary to amend the law, and this Bill deals with that subject. It also incidentally deals with the subject of nominated passengers. The 2nd section provides that—

"The Governor in Council may direct that persons of any specified age shall not be eligible to be nominated for a passage warrant under the provisions of the 9th section of the principal Act."

The privilege has been a good deal abused. Persons who are old, infirm, and sickly have been brought out to become a burden on the country almost as soon as they arrive, and there should be some power to prevent that. The main provision in this Bill is that contained in the 3rd section—

"The scale of amounts payable by an intending employer in respect of the passage to the colony of labourers or servants, to be engaged by him in the United Kingdom or on the Continent of Europe under the provisions of the 12th section of the principal Act, shall be that set forth in Schedule F."

The word "mechanics" is left out, because I do not think there is any necessity to introduce indented mechanics. There is a large supply of mechanics in the colony; too many, in fact, have been coming out lately, and I have so instructed the Agent-General by telegraph. The scale substituted for that in the principal Act, which I have already pointed out is inapplicable to the case of indented labourers, is as follows:—

"For males between the ages of twelve and forty years, £1 each;

"For females between those ages, whether the wives of indented labourers or themselves indented, £1 each;

"For children of an indented labourer under the age of twelve years, 10s. each;

"For all above the age of forty years, the full amount of passage money."

We do not desire to introduce old men as indented labourers. The scale is framed with a view to the introduction of men who will become used to the climate, and to the soil, and will become useful labourers and permanent residents and colonists, and take a part in our affairs. We offer no encouragement to old men, but only to young men capable of work; and we wish them to bring their wives and families with them. Those are the provisions of the Bill, and I believe that if they are carried out honestly, with a desire to assist in settling the colony, the money expended will be very well expended; and that after the system has been in operation long enough to be compared with the rival system which may be seen in operation in the other colonies I have already referred to, the colony will never regret the day when it adopted this course of action rather than the other. Another section contained in the Bill is—

"Every agreement for the employment of a labourer or servant made under the provisions of the thirteenth section of the principal Act shall contain a stipulation that the employer shall provide sufficient and proper accommodation for such labourer or servant and his family during the term of the agreement."

That is a very important provision. I believe that it is as much the interest as the duty of employers to provide proper accommodation for their servants and families. There are some classes of labourers who do not require much in the way of accommodation—they will submit to anything—but I think it should be part of the agreements made in Europe, so that unless proper accommodation

is provided by the employer, the agreements will be broken. I do not propose to go at large into the question of the suitability of white labour for sugar-growing; but I will say that I have never yet heard any arguments to convince me that Europeans are unfit for it. I quite believe that there are many kinds of work—such, for instance, as that done by timber-getters in the North, which new arrivals from Europe would be quite unfit for; but they are quite capable of doing any ordinary agricultural work. I should like to know what work is to be done in agriculture which would compare with that done by the cedar-getters or miners in the North. But that is a question upon which, I suppose, we shall not agree until the experiment has been tried. I do not believe you will ever find European agricultural labourers agree to work in the canefields in gangs; I admit they will not do it; not because they cannot, but because they will not. I do not think it would be a very great loss to the community if that system of agriculture were discontinued, and for it were substituted a system of individual agriculture, where the workmen are themselves interested in the product of their labour. I do not wish it for a moment to be supposed that I think the introduction of European labour will be a substitute for the gangs of coloured labour employed in many of the sugar-growing plantations; but I have yet to learn that there is anything so peculiar about sugar-growing that it must be necessarily worked by gangs of servile labour. It is not found necessary in New South Wales; and it is not found necessary in many parts of Queensland where the experiment of doing without it has been tried. Perhaps I may be told that in the Sandwich Islands the experiment has been tried and proved a failure. Now, I have recently received a pamphlet, which I am sorry I have not here with me, written by one of the officers of State of that country, giving a report on the Scandinavian immigrants introduced there and the causes of their alleged failure as agricultural labourers. The reason was that they were not agricultural labourers at all; they were men entirely unused to agriculture; they were badly treated, and they declined to work in the fields. If they were willing to work they did not know the way. A small minority who were agricultural labourers were able to do the work with perfect ease, and no difficulty arose with them, though that is a country much hotter than Queensland. However, it is perhaps not necessary to go into this question. I think we should start on the assumption that the colony has pronounced its verdict—that if there is to be any labour introduced here, as there must be, we are to look to Europe for it, and not to Asia. With that view this Bill has been introduced. It offers every inducement to agricultural labourers; they may be hired in Europe, and their wives and families may come with them. Of course, if this becomes law necessary provision will be made for the selection and engagement of labourers. If any agriculturists of one class or another deliberately set themselves up against the rest of the community; if they defy them and endeavour to render a scheme of this kind unworkable, they have only themselves to blame for any evil that may result from it. If, for instance, any class in the community deliberately attempts to lower wages, merely for the purpose of lowering them, and for the purpose of preventing the success of any endeavour made by the Parliament to supply them with labour, let the consequences be upon their own heads. The system I propose will undoubtedly work well, if it is desired to work well.

If a measure of this kind passes it will be administered with a desire to make it work well. If others will not take advantage of the opportunities that are offered to them they will have to thank themselves for any loss that they may sustain. I believe, in the present state of public opinion—which, I hope will always continue, for I believe we are on the right track in that respect—that this is the proper way of dealing with the Labour question. I therefore commend the Bill with great confidence to this Parliament and to the country. I move that it be now read a second time.

Question put.

Mr. BLACK said it would appear from the speech of the hon. the Premier that if failure resulted from the experiment contained in the Bill the planters were to be blamed for it; whereas, should it possibly result in success, the Government would take the credit for it. Last session, when speaking on the Pacific Island Labourers Bill, the Premier said:—

“I believe the Bill to be the best temporary solution of the difficulty that is practicable. I hope that next session the Government will be in a position to announce that satisfactory arrangements have been made for the introduction into the colony of labour which will obviate the cries which are constantly being made for what is called sometimes servile labour, and sometimes reliable labour. At present the Government are not in a position to bring forward a complete scheme.”

That was said last session, and it was holding out hopes to the agricultural industry of the North, that this session something of a permanent nature would be laid before Parliament which would solve this very difficult question of labour required in the northern portion of the colony as opposed to what might reasonably be expected to serve for the South. Then the hon. Premier said, with reference to the reason why the late able and efficient Agent-General was superseded:—

“At the present time we hope to see some distinct action taken to introduce immigrants from Europe, and it is desirable that we should have a colleague in perfect accord with us, to whom we need not give minute instructions.”

And then, in the Opening Speech to the House, His Excellency, in expressing the views, he supposed, of the Government said:—

“The subject of immigration, and of the supply of labour for the numerous and increasing industries of the colony, has received the anxious attention of my advisers. Improved arrangements will shortly be completed for the selection of suitable immigrants in Great Britain and the Continent of Europe, and for their conveyance on arrival to the places where their labour is most required; and a Bill will be laid before you to amend the provisions of the Immigration Act relating to the engagement and introduction of indentured labourers from Europe. I trust that by these means, and by offering liberal inducements to settle upon the public lands, a constant stream of immigrants of all classes may be steadily maintained without an undue burden being laid upon the Treasury, and that the dangers attendant upon the introduction of large numbers of Asiatics into the community may be successfully avoided.”

Those were the promises that had been held out—that the Government had it under their serious consideration to introduce a complete scheme by which planters, and especially the planters of the North, were to be shown how they would be able to work their estates to a successful issue. He did not suppose that any hon. gentleman believed that it would be for the welfare of the colony to force a system upon the planters of the North which would necessarily result in the ruin of them individually and of the industry; but what had they got? They had got a Bill containing five clauses, which he ventured to say was the biggest sham, as containing a solution of that difficult question, that any Government had ever brought before the House.

There was nothing in the Bill beyond a slight alteration in the details of the present Act. There was nothing in it that was not in the Immigration Act of 1882. The only difference he could see in it was that labour that was procurable for £2 per head was to be reduced to £1. That was the whole of the Bill—that whereas planters did not indent labour from Europe at £2, they were now told that if they would only yield their convictions they should have labour introduced for £1. It was not a question of £1 or £2 that was in the way of the introduction of that system into the colony. The planter at present paid £25 for the introduction of a kanaka. It was not a matter of sentiment with them. They did not prefer a black man because he had a black face; they undoubtedly would prefer men of their own race, if those men were able to do the work. They preferred coloured men because the experience of ages had proved that those men were able to do a description of work which a European was unwilling, and, in many cases, unable to do. It was not a question of low wages at all. It was a question of getting a description of labour which was sufficiently reliable to carry on an industry which had proved itself up to the present time to have done no harm to the colony, but, on the contrary, to have been one of undoubted magnitude, and one which had brought the colony as an agricultural country into prominence before the whole world. He was not going to enter into any long dissertation on the sugar industry. He was going to accept the position as it was forced upon the colony and upon the planters by the present Government—as they said, in accordance with the views expressed at the last general election. He differed from those views. He said that the opinion, at all events in the northern part of the colony, during the last election was not that there should be no coloured labour, but that that labour should be controlled and confined to certain portions of the agricultural industry. And, he believed, at the present time, if the vote of the country could be taken, the result would be the same; because people were now awake to the fact that, without the employment of a certain proportion of black labour, it was impossible to get employment for Europeans. What was the result of the administration of the present Government since they came into office? From the New South Wales border to Cape York was there a single new plantation being started? The present Act was in force, and the planter could get labour for £2, if he thought it was suitable. Why was it that there was such an extraordinary depression in the industry; had they found that there had been any additional employment for Europeans? Never since the sugar industry was initiated had there been such distress amongst the European portion of the population. The planters were compelled to curtail their operations; and what was the result? The Europeans were thrown out of employment. Ask any of the engineering firms in Brisbane to compare the present state of affairs with what it was two or three years ago. They had no orders. Ask any shipping firms. They, too, complained in the same way. The whole progress of the North was being checked, and checked to such an extent that there would be such a feeling of irritation, unless better counsels prevailed, that there would be one unanimous cry for separation throughout the whole of the North. That was a question he had never encouraged, and one which he had on previous occasions much deprecated. He would far rather see federation than separation; but when he saw such determined attempts made to ignore the difference of climate between the North and South, he said that the

present Queen-street Ministry had not the slightest consideration for anything north of Rockhampton. He said that advisedly; and that if they persisted in legislation for the benefit of the South without taking into consideration the requirements of the North, the cry for separation would be unanimously supported in the North; and he saw no reason why the time should not arrive when that cry would be carried out. The North would have nothing to lose by separation, and on the contrary the South would have everything to lose and nothing to gain by it. They had no progressive industries down here, except the Gympie mining industry, and that he admitted was a grand industry. The agricultural industry down here was in a languishing state. The only profitable agricultural industry Queensland had got was tropical agriculture, and now a blow was being struck at it which threatened to annihilate it before very long. The hon. gentleman had spoken of hordes of Indians being introduced to compete with white labourers. That was a very exaggerated way of putting it. To begin with, hordes of Indians were not going to be introduced; hordes of kanakas had not been introduced; and he would say that whatever coloured labour had been brought into the colony had been the means of providing employment for Europeans who would have had no employment without it; and under proper regulations, for which he had always held out, they could be confined to field-work. The hon. gentleman had admitted just now, and it was the first time he had heard him admit it, that their own people would not do field-work.

The PREMIER: I did nothing of the kind. You cannot quote correctly.

Mr. BLACK said the hon. gentleman admitted that they would not work in gangs.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLACK asked what more admission could the hon. gentleman make? How on earth was field-work on a plantation to be carried on but in gangs? If men had to work by contract they must work in gangs. If the European labourer would not work in gangs, the rate of wages he would get would compel him to break his engagement, and they would have their gangs full of low-class European labour. The hon. member had said nothing about where the men were to come from or what rate of wages they were to get. He had shown the House nothing of the complete scheme which he had promised to bring in. From the planters' point of view he (Mr. Black) admitted the pressure which was being brought to bear upon them—they were unable to get the labour which they thought necessary. They had made the experiment and done their best. They had established an industry which was certainly the third in magnitude in the colony—an industry worth a million sterling a year to the country. They had followed the example of other countries and might have been wrong, but there was the result! That was what they had done on those lines. They would like to extend and continue the prosperity of the industry they had brought about, but the Government stepped in and said, "Everything you have been doing is on a wrong line; you starve your men; you do this and that;" and they got up a public anti-coolie cry, and the result was they had succeeded in so far as to nearly ruin that industry. He believed there was £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 *bonâ fide* invested in Queensland on the faith of the previous Government inviting those men to undertake that occupation, as they certainly did when they passed the Polynesian Act and allowed the Coolie Act to remain on the Statute-book.

Those men were led into that position by the action of the previous Government, and now the present Government turned round and said—"Everything you have done—the lines upon which you have started this industry, though it might have done good for the country—are all wrong. We shall therefore deprive you of the labour you consider essential, and which was guaranteed to you when you started, and we will give you a system of labour which your planters say is unsuitable, but which we the Government, in our wisdom, consider is adapted to your purpose." Why did not the hon. gentleman tell them where the labour was to be brought from? Were they to have Germans or Maltese? It seemed strange that no provision for that appeared in that complete scheme. They might go on for another year or two years before the Government would put the Act in force. Where were those men to come from? The planters were willing to take those men, and would give them as high wages as the industry could afford to pay; but he would point out to that House what would be the result of that Bill. It would lower the rate of wages of all the working men in the colony. He could explain why that would be the result. In order to supersede coloured labour they would be required in very large numbers. He knew that an application, if not already handed in, would be handed in very shortly to the Government for three thousand immigrants to be brought out this year under the Bill. They would be treated well—and he might just say that that clause in the Bill about treating them well was perfectly unnecessary, and was put in evidently for padding. There would be an application for three thousand of those men, and he hoped the Government had something more than that sheet of paper in connection with the Bill—he hoped they were organising some scheme at home in connection with it. He was sure those men would be well received and well treated when they landed here, but he could assure the House that whatever rate of wages they would be engaged at would establish the rate of wages for the district in which they were engaged. They could not have a low-paid and a high-paid class of white men working side by side. Those men would be in a majority. They would take the place of coloured men, and the inevitable result would be that the rate of wages would be lowered all over the colony. Those men would not stop on, and the first thing they would do would be to break their agreements on the first opportunity and spread all over the colony. He could well understand that if the Government had been really anxious to carry out that scheme they might have offered such inducements to those men as would have led to their undertaking to faithfully perform the work expected of them. If those European labourers were informed that if they faithfully carried out their agreement for two or three years they would have a piece of land granted to them, that would be an inducement to them to fulfil their agreements. But the Minister for Lands told them on the previous day that the whole of the homestead clauses were to be swept away. Therefore, the chief inducement which labourers from Europe would have to come to Queensland—namely, the acquirement of a bit of land—was to be swept away by the policy of the Government.

The PREMIER: Not at all.

Mr. BLACK: What chance had a man who came out here and worked probably at 12s. a week—which he assumed hon. members would admit was a fair rate of wages for men of that class—of getting land? He was no advocate for

8s. or 10s. a week; he believed that 12s. would be the rate of wages. What chances, he again asked, had men, working at that rate, after they had fulfilled their agreements, of having sufficient money to comply with the conditions of the Land Bill now before the House? Why, a man could not touch a bit of land without fencing it in. The inducement for men to come out was to be swept away, and they would therefore be brought out under false pretences. They would come here; they would swarm all over the country; and the general rate of wages would be lowered all round. Black labour had not, up to the present time, been introduced to compete with white labour. The more black labour was introduced the more employment was provided for the European. It was singular that since the sugar industry started there had not been a single instance of anyone holding views against black labour having gone to the North and put them to the test of practice. It was all very well for hon. gentlemen to sit in that House and lay down the law as to how a man was to carry on his business, and tell the planter in the North that he was working on wrong lines; that was very easy indeed. But was it not singular that not one of the hon. gentlemen holding those views had tried to give them practical effect? There was not a single plantation in the North worked exclusively by white labour. There might be one or two in the South; and he admitted that where a labour market such as Brisbane was near, and where men could be got at 12s. a week, it was possible to do it. He had inquired that day as to the ruling rate of wages for men of that class in Brisbane, and found it to be 12s. What he wished particularly to point out was that whereas the planter did not avail himself of the Act when he could indent labourers at £2 a head, he was not likely to do it when he could get them for £1. The difference between the two sums, as contained in the miserable little Bill before the House, would certainly not encourage the planter to avail himself of the Act. But the Government having taken steps to strangle the industry by the stoppage of coloured labour, he admitted that the planters must try white labour. But he wished it to be distinctly understood that it was not the planters who brought in this cheap white labour; it was the Government who were inducing that class to come out here; they paid their passages, and they hoped that they were not going to compete with the working men that were here now. In looking over the speeches on immigration made last year in that House, he found that the junior member for North Brisbane spoke of the absurdity of agreements made on the Continent. The hon. gentleman would find that in vol. 37, page 111. Now, what chance would there be of those men adhering to their agreements when they came out? They could not be bound to their agreements; it would be unfair to expect it. They would be engaged in Europe with an entirely wrong idea of the work they were to be put to, and the result would be that they would not only break their engagements but probably leave Queensland. The rate of wages would be lowered so much that they would not remain here, and Queensland would be simply providing immigrants for New South Wales.

The PREMIER: What page did you say?

Mr. BLACK: Page 111; on the absurdity of agreements made on the Continent!

Mr. BROOKES: I never said anything of the kind.

Mr. BLACK: He would like to point out to that House that the question of coloured labour from the planters' point of view was not one of cheapness. It was generally admitted that the



kanaka, which was the only reliable coloured labour they had at present, was not cheap labour. There was no saving in money in employing kanakas, provided the planters could get Europeans who were willing and able to do the work. If the Government could only bring out a description of labour which they said was so suitable and reliable, the planters were willing to take it. But what he complained of was, that in the Bill now before the House there was no provision for dealing with a very important point in connection with the subject. Indenting a kanaka—with his wages divided over three years—cost £20 10s. a year; that was what he cost, exclusive of his rations; and the rations the kanaka got were the same as those the European got; let that be understood. There was no question of starving kanakas or starving Europeans when they got them; the planters knew too much for that. The cost of a European at 12s. a week would be £30 a year—£30 a year against £20 10s. for a kanaka. But hon. gentlemen must bear in mind that the mortality amongst the kanakas was very great, and that the loss from death was generally during the first year of their introduction. So that hon. members would understand him when he said that the actual cost of the kanaka per head came up to £30—the same as the European labourer could be got for. Therefore there must be something beyond the mere sentimental view of the case which induced planters to pay at present as much for the kanaka as for the European labourer. The planter believed that in the coloured man he had got a description of labour which was able and willing to do the work; but he very much doubted whether the European labourer could ever be made to do work which was undoubtedly distasteful to him. He had got now the speech of the junior member for North Brisbane. The hon. member said—

"He objected that anybody should be empowered to make agreements with ignorant people in England, Ireland, or the Continent, and that the agreements which these people signed thinking they were doing well for themselves—that those agreements should be valid and binding as though they had been made in the colony. \* \* \* He would consider that the agreement was not honest, that this in reality was not a free colony, and that he had been asked to sign his consent to a rate of wages lower than that which he could have got had he come out without an agreement."

That was substantially what he (Mr. Black) had said—that the European labourer who was employed at home would consider that he had been defrauded when he came out here, and that he would refuse to carry out his agreement when he found that men of the same race and nationality were working alongside of him at a higher rate of wages. The consequence would be, not that the cheap labourer would have his wages raised so much as that the higher paid men would have theirs reduced. He considered that, on the whole, the Bill was the biggest sham that could be ever laid upon the table of the House. There was nothing new in it, and he had no doubt it would pass; but he trusted the Government would give them some idea as to the steps they were going to take to put the Act in force—whether we were to get Germans, or Maltese, or Scandinavians, or where the labour was to come from which was to supply the most important industry of the colony with what it required.

After a pause—

Mr. HAMILTON moved the adjournment of the House.

Mr. BLACK said he really was astonished to think that the Government, with the large following they had at their backs, would not say

a single word, or get one of their supporters to say a word, on this important question. He was sure there was no matter which could be brought before the House or the country which was of more vital importance to the working men of the country. The Government and their supporters had given expression to their views on this Labour question—they had led the country to believe that large numbers of cheap European labourers were going to be introduced, and the question, he believed, was taken more interest in by the country than even the Land question. They had had a speech from the Premier—a very good speech, no doubt—but he (Mr. Black) had referred to several points in the measure which he thought were deserving of some reply—as to where the labourers were to come from, and how the Government were going to get them, and various matters of detail. He had sat down for some few minutes, and not one single member of the Government or their supporters got up to say a single word. Were they afraid to justify a measure which they knew was fraught with great danger to the colony? He was glad the adjournment of the debate had been moved, and he hoped it would be carried.

Mr. BROOKES said the reason he had sat still was that there was nothing in the hon. member's speech which called very seriously for a reply; but seeing that the hon. gentleman would be very uneasy unless his arguments—which no doubt he considered irrefutable—were not replied to, he (Mr. Brookes) would say a few words on the subject. It might be well that he should state that the hon. member began by misrepresenting the Premier, and finished by misrepresenting him (Mr. Brookes), and he was very sorry to say a tendency to misunderstand fair argument was a feature in the hon. member's speeches. The hon. member complained that the Premier did not say where the labourers were to come from. The Premier, as he (Mr. Brookes) understood him, did say where they were to come from, and positively mentioned Germany and Scandinavia. Now, what more did the hon. member for Mackay want? The Premier did not lay down any hard-and-fast rule, and did not say that these labourers might not be Italians, or Maltese, or South Russians; and yet the hon. member for Mackay must know very well that it was not to disparage the people he (Mr. Brookes) had mentioned that he said that Germans and Scandinavians were better than they were. When he thought about the qualities of immigrants he was inclined to imagine that hon. gentlemen opposite really did not know as much as ordinarily well-informed persons. It certainly did not appear from what they said. Did not everyone know that the German element had contributed more than any other to the prosperity of the United States? In the German element he included the Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian; and if the Premier only mentioned those he mentioned quite enough. What was the use of going to Malta for labourers? They knew what those men were. God forbid that he should underrate anybody, but there was no comparison between the immigrants they could get from Germany and those who could by any possibility come from Malta. It went against his grain to institute comparisons of that kind, but they knew very well that neither Italians, nor Maltese, nor Spaniards, if they could get them, would in any wise compare with the Germans as suitable colonists for Queensland. The hon. member for Mackay had misrepresented him, but he would tell the House again what he meant. It was this: that if the Government or private persons entered into engagements with Germans at a rate of

wages greatly below the current rate in the colonies, and even if those engagements were entered into again here, the first effect would be that they would all run away. As soon as ever Germans on sugar plantations found that they had been engaged for less wages than they could obtain elsewhere, they would leave the plantations. The hon. member for Mackay hinted at what would be the consequence—the gaols would be full of them; but did anybody suppose for a moment that it would be possible to put three thousand Germans in gaol in Queensland for running away from their work? It was a complete reduction to absurdity, and the hon. member's argument was absurd. Unless the planters were prepared to pay fair wages they would not get Germans or anybody else; and if the industry could not afford to pay a fair rate of wages, the sooner it perished the better. They did not want low wages in Queensland. The hon. member for Mackay seemed to think he made a point, as against those who represented large constituencies in the House, when he said that those absconding labourers would flow over all the colony and reduce the wages of everybody else. He could assure the hon. member that nothing of the kind would take place. The Premier's idea of the sugar industry was one which, as well as his speech, would commend itself to the judgment of everybody—namely, the cultivation of sugar by persons who were of their own race, who had wives and families comfortably located, who were making a comfortable living, and who were justified in hoping that when they had made a little money they would be able to have a little sugar plantation of their own. It was not quite fair, although it might be considered so from a partisan point of view, for the hon. member for Mackay to make such a point on the apparent abolition of the homestead clauses. The hon. member made a great deal too much of it, for both he and the colony might rest quite assured that the homestead clauses were not going to be abolished. They were not abolished in the Bill. The error of the planters from the beginning had been, that they had instituted the sugar industry on a rotten basis—on a basis which was not consistent with the safety and welfare of the colony. He did not say that they had not been encouraged and led on to do what they had done. Indeed, he was sorry to have to admit that, through the negligence of past Governments, the planters had got themselves into a position into which they could say they had to some extent been induced by the Legislature. But they would extricate themselves from that position more easily if they at once accepted the position. Large estates would never do in Queensland—God forbid they ever should!—and it would be a black day for the colony if ever that system of agriculture should prevail. Such a system would lower wages and degrade the British working men all over the colony, and the worst of it would be that there would be no remedy for it. It would be simply incurable. It would affect everything—our social condition, our politics, our morals, everything that went to make up the community. The Bill was, therefore, a very good one, and showed that the Government had taken a much wider view of the question than was taken by the Government which passed the Immigration Act, when he (Mr. Brookes) made those remarks to which the hon. member for Mackay had referred. He had always said that that Bill was not framed in the interests of the working men, but in the interests of employers; and the hon. member for Blackall (Mr. Archer) might remember that he alluded to him personally and pointedly when he said that there were some gentlemen in the House who had never got over the old squatting idea, that

the only people who ought to be sent for as immigrants were persons who had no money, and who would be obliged to work for wages when they came out—a pauper immigration, in fact. But the time had now come when they thought they could get something better than a pauper immigration; when they thought they could get intelligent people, with their wives and families. The Government were prepared to offer to planters those inducements, and it would be for the planters themselves to decide whether they would accept them or not. The hon. member for Mackay said they had no alternative, and he (Mr. Brookes) was glad to hear it, and hoped the hon. member would advise the planters to accept them. How should he refer to the way in which the hon. member for Mackay spoke of separation—about the North separating from the South? Did they not all know that the North had not a shilling to bless itself with? They were as poor as crows—the whole lot of them.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I think the Premier has some land outside of Townsville, which will bring him in a lot of money.

Mr. BROOKES said the House knew very well what he meant; and he asserted that the North had not the materials out of which they could be separated. They had neither money nor brains—that was worse still. What did an argument like that amount to? Open discord between the north and south of the colony, and for what? He would not mind their quarrelling if there was anything to be got by it; but suppose separation did take place, where would they be in the North? He could only consider such inflammatory language, as had been used by the hon. member, as showing the poverty of his arguments, and the nakedness and incurable badness of the case which he supported.

Mr. ARCHER: I am not going to speak, sir, to the main question now particularly; but I would like to make a few remarks regarding the sugar industry. We have just been told that if the sugar industry cannot be worked without gangs, let it perish. Well, I know several industries that could be worked without gangs. I know that in this country we could get our supplies of everything we wanted—ironmongery, for instance—if instead of having one big ironmongery shop we had a dozen small ones. But a big ironmongery shop is worked by a gang, and can supply our wants better and more cheaply than a dozen small ones. What is the use of talking about gangs? A "gang" simply means a lot of people that are engaged together in one employment instead of being scattered about; and why should sugar be grown by individual cultivators more than ironmongery sold by every man for himself? The thing is the greatest rubbish I ever heard. All the luxuries we enjoy are entirely brought about by the employment of gangs. We could not have the British-India steamers unless there was a great gang of engineers employed; no blacksmith could build a steamer in his shop. Why should a line be drawn between trading—which has made many hon. gentlemen in this House wealthy and enabled them to retire from business—and sugar-growing, which is just as much a trade as that carried on in a foundry or an ironmonger's shop? If hon. members will consider, they will see that the same rule applies to everything; all successful and big operations are worked by gangs. It is absolute nonsense to talk about confining agriculture to small individual proprietors, just as it would be to pass a law preventing a shopman from keeping more than one man employed. If a person has a large capital he will not consent to open a shop to be

kept by himself alone, where his capital could not be used; and where a person with a large capital is going into a business like sugar-growing he will not consent to enter into it unless he can find occupation for his capital. There are a great many people in this House, and I hope all through the colony, who will not see the sugar industry perishing for want of someone to do the work. There is no talk about the sugar-planters not being able to pay for the labour they require; what they want is labour that will not run away and leave them in the lurch. It appears that there are a great many people in this House who look upon the sugar industry as something apart from and different from any other industry in the world.

The PREMIER: That is exactly what we complain of—that you treat it as if it were different from anything else.

Mr. ARCHER: We do not do anything of the kind. When those on this side have tried to put the sugar industry on another footing years ago—Sir Thomas McIlwraith for one, and the hon. member for Townsville (Mr. Macrossan) for another—they have always been fought by the side which is now trying to throw obstacles in the way of the sugar industry. What we complain of with regard to the sugar-planters is that they have been led on to invest enormous capitals in the industry, and are then told, "Let the sugar industry perish." Years ago, my hon. friend the member for Townsville proposed that a certain time should be appointed after which the introduction of kanakas should cease; I know that Sir Thomas McIlwraith did the same; and at that time the gentlemen now sitting on the other side were the Government of the country. They took no notice of it, they slurred it over; they allowed people to believe that a constant supply of labour would be introduced for the sugar plantations; and when they have got people to invest their money they try to destroy the industry; and in this course they appear to have the full concurrence of those sitting on the other side. I do not hear them saying anything about letting every other large industry perish, simply because they are worked by gangs.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he thought that the hon. gentleman hardly apprehended what the Premier meant when he spoke about the employment of gangs. What he understood by the remark was that there was a difference of intelligence in the labourers, and that there would be no necessity for white labourers to work in gangs, since they could be instructed by the proprietor to work in any particular part of the field without requiring someone to stand over them all the time. He was sorry to hear the junior member for North Brisbane express himself with reference to the North in the way he did. He thought there were men in the North with brains, and he had always supposed there was more money in the North than in the South. He had often been advised to go north to make money, but, after the hon. member's assertion, perhaps it was just as well he had not accepted the advice. In referring to the Bill, one hon. member had spoken of it in a contemptuous way, as "a miserable little Bill." If he had looked at the heading of the Bill he would see that it was simply an amendment to another Bill; and in such cases a very large Bill was not expected. It simply amended the Act in one or two particulars. One or two clauses were all that was required, and they were embodied in such a way as to do all that was necessary to make the Bill workable on behalf of the plantations. The hon. member for Mackay had also asked, where could they get white labour from?

He hoped a good deal would come from Scotland—the land to which the hon. gentleman belonged. A good number might also come from England, Ireland, and Germany, and other places. There was room enough for all the labour they could get from Great Britain and Europe. Therefore he did not think it needful, in introducing the Bill, to state more explicitly where the labour would be got from. Reference had also been made to the lowering of wages of white men if they entered into agreements at home and came out to the colony. But he saw no reason why the wages should be so very much reduced. Certain men were required to do certain work, and it was said that the workmen when they came out here would not work if they found other men were paid higher wages. He did not think that a tenable argument at all. There were numbers of working men in the colony quite satisfied with wages ranging from 20s. to £3 per week, but they did not complain of each other. Various kinds of labour were paid various rates of wages, and workmen were generally content with the position in which they were placed. If English labourers were engaged at £30 a year, which he understood the hon. member for Mackay to say was all that could be offered, with accommodation and provisions, they would get plenty of men who would be quite willing to work for two or three years at that rate, and at the end of that time they would be able to take up a piece of land of their own—not as a homestead, but under the new Bill which had been introduced, and which was quite as liberal. Under those circumstances, those men would be perfectly satisfied to work for two years. He had no fear of the prisons of Mackay or any other town being flooded with men who had broken their engagements. He had every confidence that they would faithfully perform what they engaged to do. He had had a great deal to do with Germans, and had always found them faithful to their agreements, payment, and in every other way. He looked upon them as the very class that they ought to encourage to come to the colony, and they could not have too many of them. The Bill would offer facilities to the planters up north to work their plantations in a way perhaps more profitable to themselves than they had ever been able to do in the past. For those reasons he had very much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and should vote for its second reading.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Mr. Speaker,—It is quite evident that there can be no great objection to this amending Bill as proposed by the hon. the Premier. It is also quite evident that the hon. gentleman simply used the measure as a peg to hang a speech upon—an electioneering speech. There is no doubt about that. He took the opportunity of attacking, and, I believe, has succeeded in injuring more than ever he has done before, one of the greatest industries of the colony. He knows as well as you do, sir—and you have only lately returned from the North—that it is utterly impossible for a European to do the work in the cane-field as it is at present done by coloured labour. The hon. gentleman, in stating to-night that he intends to amend the difficulty by bringing out low-waged European labour, knows very well that he is playing with the question—that he is simply dangling it before the electors of the colony, under the old cry which he raised at the late election—"This is the country for the white man." I am in favour of this colony for the white man; there is no man in the colony who holds that view more strongly than I do; but at the same time I say that where the white man cannot be used to the same advantage, or cannot be used at all as compared with the black

man, we should employ black labour. The hon. Premier further ignored the fact that the relative condition of the tropical countries where sugar is produced, and of this colony, are quite different and distinct. The great sugar-producing countries of the world—tropical ones, of course—there are great quantities of sugar produced in France and Germany from beet-root, but I am speaking of the tropical countries where it is produced—the conditions are these: that the whole of those countries are tropical countries, and there is almost no other industry except tropical agriculture. Here we have a very different condition of affairs; we have a fringe of sugar lands on our coast, and outside of that we have a country which any white man can work in without any danger to his health, and as well as in any other part of the world. This is a very serious matter, and one which did not escape the late Government, nor, I think, a large number of people of this colony, nor certainly a large number of members of this House; and that was what led the late Government to advocate the introduction, under strict regulations, of coolies into the colony, because those men would be bound by the agreement or the arrangement which was entered into between the Indian Government and the Government of Queensland for the time being. They were to be bound for three years to do their work on the plantations and nowhere else, and then were to be sent back to the country from which they came. The conditions would have been agreed to by the Indian Government; as a matter of fact, they were agreed to. The hon. gentleman may laugh, but it was only on these conditions that the late Government consented that coolies should come down here—conditions which absolutely prevented the merging of the black races with the white population of the colony—a thing which we all deprecated and took every step to prevent. What happens now, if this idea of the Government is carried into effect? We bring out here a large number of low-waged Europeans, who will not keep to their agreements—who will be bound down to a lower rate of wages than is ruling at the time—an arrangement which the junior member for North Brisbane has described as being dishonest, and in which I quite agree with him. I hold that if the arrangement is made in England, or in any portion of Europe, with any labourer to come to this colony, and it is not fully represented to him what the ruling rate of wages is, and he is induced, either by misrepresentation or no representation, to sign an agreement, a fraud has been perpetrated. Therefore, I cannot see—if the Government are going to be honest—if they are going to inform the immigrants what the rate of wages they are to receive is—that they have any intention of bringing out these labourers to the colony at all. However, they tell us they are going to do so; but if they bring out these low-waged labourers to the northern part of the colony;—I will not be disturbed, sir, by the Minister for Mines; I am not a deputation; I am here in this House to hold my own; I am neither warden nor deputation;—I maintain that if this low-priced labour is brought out and placed upon plantations, or indentured by the planters, that these engagements will be broken. What happens then? They will go into the interior of the country, more particularly to mining centres, and it will have the effect of reducing the wages in Charters Towers and Maytown and all the mining centres of the North. There is no doubt that labourers' work there will be more highly paid than sugar labourers'. The Premier does not intend to bring out these low-priced labourers from Great Britain and Ireland—at least, not to any considerable extent. He intends to go further afield; where does he propose to go?

He has told us we are going to get those races whose blood runs in our veins. That is a very high-sounding and high-falutin way of putting it; but it is only another way of telling us that he is going to increase the number of Germans in this colony. Well, as a taxpayer I distinctly object to that. I have said over and over again in this House that I object to being taxed to bring out any alien races until the British Islands are exhausted. The hon. gentleman, in the frank straightforward way in which he stated the matter to the House, should have told us—what he must know well—what every man who reads the papers published in Great Britain must know—that there are tens of thousands of people in Great Britain who are anxious to come out here. I have in my possession letters from the late Premier—more than one—stating that the depression of trade is so great at home at the present time that he holds it to be the duty of this and of all English-speaking colonies to bring out those people and place them in a position to earn a living for themselves. Until we have exhausted every means of inducing our own people to come out here, I hold we should not go further afield. I maintain, and that against the dictum of the hon. Premier, that the Germans do not assimilate with English-speaking populations. I have proved to this House, and will prove it again, if necessary, that the state of affairs in America is not as described by the hon. gentleman. I will prove it by the state of affairs existing in this colony already. When a section of the people combines as one vote, no matter whether English, Irish, or Scotch, that vote becomes an element to be considered at all elections. During an election that element becomes a danger; and I maintain that the German vote is now looked upon as a fixed factor in politics in this colony. It is looked upon as a solid vote; and because it is a solid vote it may be a very good thing for the junior member for Toowoomba. It may be a very good thing or a very bad thing; no doubt if it went against the hon. member he would be prepared to consider it a very bad thing. But I look at it in a different light even from that. Here we have men coming from the most despotic country in the world, and though they enjoy all the privileges of our liberal institutions they only blindly bind themselves together and become a dangerous political factor; and I say it is time to look about us, and consider seriously whether we should assist, by taxing the people of the colony, to bring these people out here. This is a very serious matter, and has become a matter for very serious consideration in the United States. I told the House some time ago that there were large communities, consisting of thousands of people, in America—and forming German settlements where the English language is not allowed to be taught in the schools—where the English language is unknown. What has occurred there will occur here: in fact, only a few years ago we had an instance of it down at Beenleigh, where a German pastor refused to allow English to be spoken in his school. I say, that when we see the Germans taking such a decided part in politics we should be very chary before we increase that element. I do not care on what side they vote. I do not care whether they vote on this side or on the opposite side; it is a dangerous element. Further, we know when we introduce our own countrymen we are bringing men out here who are subject in all material points to the same laws and the same institutions which we are under here; but if you introduce a German immigrant you introduce an immigrant who has been groaning under the greatest despotism which exists in the world to-day.

Mr. ISAMBERT: That is not true.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. member for Rosewood says that is not true, but the hon. member knows perfectly well that what I say is true, or why did he not stop in Germany? There is not the least doubt in my mind—or in the minds of most hon. gentlemen in this House—that the reason so many Germans are leaving their country is because of the grinding military despotism which exists there, and which has led to the development, probably, of socialism; and will probably lead, before many years are over, to such a disruption in that empire as the world has never yet seen. The hon. gentleman is proposing to introduce these men, when I maintain we can have as many immigrants from our own country, with its noble and grand institutions, as this colony can absorb. When it has been proved that the stream of immigration from the United Kingdom is not sufficient to meet our requirements, then, and not till then, should we go beyond the British Isles. I would not have made these remarks—and I may say I am not at all afraid of having made them, and I am glad to have had an opportunity of making them, in some ways—had not the hon. gentleman taken advantage of the opportunity of the second reading of this miserable rag of an amending Bill, which I suppose, he will amend still further before it gets through committee—had he not taken the opportunity to make a speech which was not, I maintain, altogether relative to the Bill. He made a speech, primarily, I take it, to damage the sugar industry, and secondly, to pander to the German contingent by which he has been so well supported.

Mr. KATES said he thought it was time they came to an understanding with respect to the German colonists. If the House decided that Germans should not be introduced into the colony, as well as people from the United Kingdom, well and good; but he protested against the continual slanders made against his countrymen. There was no necessity for it. The hon. member who had just sat down had just let the secret out. It was the German vote to which the hon. member objected. He could tell the hon. gentleman that there was no such thing as a German vote in the colony. The Germans would just as soon vote against the present Government, if they found they were bad or vicious, as they did against the McIlwraith Government, when they were not according to their liking. There was no such thing either as low-waged labour here. They knew that new chums could not certainly expect as high wages as persons who had been longer here. They were satisfied with lower wages for a time, and when they had been in the country some time they very soon went to their masters and said they wanted higher wages; and sometimes they asked higher wages than those who had been here longer than themselves. A white man would not work for low wages when he found he could do the same work as an old hand did. He was sorry to hear last week one hon. member on the other side of the House—he thought it was the hon. member for Blackall, who was the last man he should have expected to hear it from—say that the Germans were low and servile. Now, if they looked at the long line of statesmen, from the time of Frederick the Great to Prince Bismarck, he thought hon. members would admit that it was hardly possible for a low and servile race to produce such men.

Mr. ARCHER: I rise to make an explanation. The hon. member has placed words in my mouth which I deny I ever used. What I said was that people from certain parts of Germany were of a different civilisation from our own.

That I am prepared to stand by. I never mentioned that the Germans were low, and certainly I never called them servile.

Mr. KATES said he accepted the hon. member's explanation; but he still believed, if he was not mistaken, the hon. gentleman used the word "low." The hon. gentleman now qualified his statement by saying he alluded to "certain parts of Germany." Another hon. gentleman, however, called them "servile." He (Mr. Kates) said that the German race had produced great statesmen, philosophers, and astronomers, and the greatest musicians and poets. In the colonies, the greatest botanists—Baron Mueller and Dr. Schomburgk—were Germans; and he was sure that in Queensland there was great admiration for Leichhardt, the great explorer, who came here and perished in the attempt to serve the colonies. Nobody, either inside or outside the House, would say that the Germans were not making good colonists—as good as any that came here. They had only to go to the Rosewood Scrub, and near to Warwick—where the Germans had reclaimed the wilderness and subdued the scrub, turning them into fertile and productive areas—to see evidence of that. It was true that when they first came to the colony the Germans were awkward, and were not acquainted with the customs here; but he maintained that in time Germans would assimilate with other colonists and become very useful. A Bill had been introduced providing for the defence of Queensland, and he thought the Germans, who were trained soldiers, would be useful if they were required by Colonel French to defend the colony. He did not think that the stagnation in the sugar industry arose from the scarcity of labour, but from the enormous competition springing up by the production of beet-sugar in Germany and France. He had ascertained that no less than 950,000 tons of beet-root sugar was produced in Germany last year, and 300,000 tons in France; and he was told that sugar in England was sold for as low as 1d. per lb. It was his intention to support the second reading of the Bill; but there was one thing he should like to point out to the Premier. The schedule fixing the scale of payments for indented passages said that for children of an indented labourer under the age of twelve years the amount was to be 10s. each; and for all persons above the age of forty years, the full amount of passage money. He thought that was going a little too far. If a parent was forty-one years old, he did not see why he or she should be called upon to pay the full passage money. It would be better if persons between forty to fifty-five years were to pay £2, and above fifty-five the full passage money. It very often happened that whole families came out, and if the father was forty-one years of age why should he be asked to pay the passage money for himself? He (Mr. Kates) should not like to see it go abroad that Germans were to be introduced as a substitute for kanakas, because he was sure that German colonists, against whom nobody could say anything, would be acknowledged to be as good as any in the country.

Mr. PALMER said he had noticed that when the Premier wished to introduce any Bill into that House he introduced it in a manner that there was no taking exception to; and when he did not wish to infuse the views of his party into it, he did it in an equally acceptable manner. He (Mr. Palmer) did not like the Bill before them. He had taken the trouble to read the Immigration Act of 1882; and he did not see how so small a change as reducing the amount from £2 to £1, which was the difference between the present Act and the Bill, was going to effect such important results in the

sugar industry as those promised by the Premier. If the labour which it was proposed to introduce could be got for £1 a head, he did not see why it could not have been got for £2. He could not see how the alteration was going to mend matters in any way—how it was going to bring thousands of immigrants that were necessary for the cultivation of sugar-cane. The debate had drifted a good deal on to the Germans. When he was a boy he saw a great many Germans introduced into New South Wales, and he could say that they made the best of colonists: no colonists took to agriculture better. Whether it was from their special bringing up or not, he knew that they became permanent settlers, better even than Britons. He knew of places in New South Wales where the Germans had settled down and gone in for vine-growing; and he believed the good qualities of the Germans recommended themselves to these colonies on account of the habit which they had of choosing a particular spot, adapting themselves to it, and confining themselves to agricultural pursuits. The principal strength of all the countries of the world was included in what they called the peasant proprietorship or the small occupying ownership of the soil, and he knew that Dr. Lang, who was instrumental in causing the separation of this colony from New South Wales, was particularly well inclined towards the Germans as immigrants, and he was instrumental in introducing a great number of them into this colony, as well as many Scotch immigrants. The Germans were not so very far removed from the British race, and he believed they might well be looked upon as our first cousins. They were not an alien race, and the differences in the two languages even was not so great but that an Englishman might learn the German language very easily. A remark had been made by the hon. member for Darling Downs with reference to the defences of the colony, and it was suggested by that hon. member that the foreign element might possibly be found in our future defence force; but he (Mr. Palmer) did not think that a German would take to fighting unless no other occupation could be found, and he thought other modes of living could very readily be found in Queensland. That, however, was neither here or there with regard to the Immigration question. That question should be a national one, and recommend itself to all classes of the country alike—to workmen as well as employers—because he knew that wages were higher now than when he was a boy, and the tendency of wages was to increase in proportion to the population introduced into the colony. The more people who were introduced the more employment was made. He could recollect when 12s. a week was considered good wages for a working man; and even in Queensland, in 1860, it was no uncommon thing to see shepherds at £36 a year—men who were quite willing to serve yearly—and if £40 a year was given they could be got to serve as hutkeeper and shepherd. He believed the tendency of wages would be to increase, and the more people there were brought into the colony the more employment would be made for those who were likely to follow. He could look at this question free from all prejudice, class, or country; and, while admitting the good qualities of the Germans as colonists, he knew that in the second generation of the Germans they became as Australian as Australians themselves, and the foreign element did not descend. They became as much British colonists as if their fathers had been here from time immemorial. Of course, while bearing testimony to their good qualities, he could not shut his eyes to the fact that in the country,

where his fathers were—in that country where the “grass grows green”—people were shouldering each other about, standing on tip-toe and looking towards this land with longing eyes as a place for their future residence, and he believed they were beginning to appreciate the qualities of these colonies both political and natural. If the colony opened wide its doors to them, they would no doubt be glad to avail themselves of the invitation. One hon. member had said that the Germans laboured under such disadvantages in their own country that it would be a matter of great importance to them to have even the chance of coming out to Queensland; and he supposed that having the chance they would avail themselves of it. He, as an Australian, was prepared to welcome all nations of their own colour who would settle down and become good colonists. The Premier, in his speech, seemed to leave the Bill in the background, and wander off to the old subject of Asiatic labour, saying that the question was, whether the labour of Queensland should be done by Asiatic hordes or by European labourers. He (Mr. Palmer) scarcely thought that was the view of the question taken by the late Government, else why was their immigration policy conducted on so liberal a scale that it was considered they were introducing people into the country too fast? The introduction of white labour on the scale adopted by the late Government was the very thing to check the employment of Asiatic hordes. He also thought the Premier's conclusion was wrong—that black labour would crush out white labour. That was asserting an inferiority in the white race, which he did not think any Englishman or German would admit. The black race would never injure the white race—at all events in Queensland; and there was no instance on record, he believed, of the two races intermingling. The white race had always remained superior, if circumstances would permit them. He was glad to hear that they were going to have increased immigration regulations; and he was rather surprised there was nothing about them in that less than a one-horse Bill. The Premier also stated that mechanics were not in sufficient demand to induce them to come out to the colony. He (Mr. Palmer), on the contrary, believed there would be employment for every mechanic likely to come out, for many years, judging from the buildings and improvements going on in Brisbane and the towns along the coast. Mechanics' wages were even now at an almost prohibitive rate. He would conclude by saying that, with the Bill now introduced, the sugar industry might be considered at an end. That was the heaviest blow that had yet been dealt at it, although why the Immigration question should have been mixed up with it he was at a loss to conceive; and when the Premier asserted that that was the proper way to deal with the sugar question, he (Mr. Palmer) certainly could not agree with him.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson): From the opening remarks of the last speaker I took him to be a warm supporter of the Bill, but his concluding words were somewhat disparaging, leading me to think that he blows hot and cold in the same breath. I agree with the hon. member to this extent, that the question of immigration is one of the most vital importance to the true interests of the colony, and will be so for many years to come, because upon it the progress and development of the colony materially hinge. I have always held that a full stream of immigration is desirable, in the true interests of the colony, and it is so regarded by all who wish to see the colony expand into a large and important nation. Some hon. members have attempted to show that the action of the

Government will have a tendency to affect the labour market, and that legislation in the shape proposed by the Government is done with the view of introducing into the colony a large stream of cheap labour. That argument was made use of by the hon. member for Mackay; but I do not think it will have any weight with that large section of the community, the working and industrial classes, whom it is more directly intended to affect. An increase of population does not necessarily mean a reduction of wages. An increase of population means an increase of the producing power of the colony, which will result in a large development of our material wealth and steady progress; and whereby wages will be maintained, not depreciated. I was glad to hear the refutation by the hon. member for Burke of the idea that the Bill had any tendency to reduce the rate of wages. On the contrary, the rate of wages will be maintained by the gradual progress, development, and prosperity of the country, which a continuous and steady stream of immigration must tend largely to encourage. In that view of the case, I maintain that the present Bill, small as it is in itself, is one of the most important measures which the Government have brought in this session. They have brought it on in fulfilment of their promise to introduce a larger stream of immigration into the colony than has hitherto been the case. The object of the Bill is to encourage indented immigrants—such indented immigrants to be accompanied by their wives and families, so that they will settle in the country into which they are imported, coming out first as employes, and developing ultimately, I trust, into the position of employers. I am fully convinced that the working men of the colony recognise that the introduction of labour in the shape proposed is not intended to swamp them, or to reduce the current rate of wages. The working men are quite equal in intelligence to any other section of the community, and they recognise the fact that such immigration as is proposed will increase the demand for employment, and, by developing the resources of the colony, increase the remuneration of labour. I regret to see that the hon. member for Mackay, whom I have always regarded as a representative member of this House—representing the important sugar industry to which I assign a very prominent position in contributing to the wealth and development of this country—does not in that capacity endeavour to meet the difficulty under which the sugar industry is at the present time labouring. It seems to me that the planters at Mackay, instead of aiding the Government in their endeavour to remove the difficulties connected with the decrease in the supply of labour, are pursuing a policy of exasperation. It is reported that they have decreased the rate of wages to those Europeans who are employed on their plantations. I think this policy is unwise, and if it be intended to force the hand of the Government, with a view to the introduction of coolie or coloured labour, I am sure it will entirely fail to effect its object. Meanwhile it shows clearly what the planters would do if the sugar industry were permanently established, and coloured labour introduced. It shows distinctly that they would cease to employ white labour, or at any rate largely curtail the remuneration paid for such labour. Instead of pursuing what I consider to be a policy of exasperation, I think it would be a great deal wiser for the planters to endeavour to aid the Government in surmounting the labour difficulty, and to try whether the supply of white labour from the continent of Europe would not of itself meet the difficulty which, they allege, exists at the present time. The hon. member for Mackay stated that the action of the Govern-

ment has paralysed all sugar industry—that it has prevented the erection of mills and checked the extension of enterprise. I think he is not altogether putting the saddle on the right horse in this case, for there are many causes which have contributed to what I hope will be only a temporary depression of the industry—notably the very large production of beet-root sugar on the continent of Europe, which has flooded the European market, and to some extent clouded the prospects of the sale of the Queensland product. Apart from that, I think that if the sugar-planters were to address themselves more to the present condition of matters, and assist the Government in furnishing a supply of labour from Europe, even if only as a tentative measure, to see how it would work, they would place themselves in a far better position than by standing forth as determined to accept nothing else than coloured labour. Coloured labour, I think, has been condemned by the voice of the country; and I do not think it has been authoritatively asserted that sugar cannot be produced without such coloured labour. The term “gang” has been referred to in the course of this debate; possibly the term is somewhat a depreciatory one, but it was chiefly used to-night in connection with gangs of coloured labour. It was mentioned by the Premier, that white labour would not work in gangs in the canefields to the same extent that servile labour would; and I believe the statement was perfectly correct. It does not follow that, because there are no gangs of servile labour in field-work, there will not be co-operation in field work. I believe even white men may work in a gregarious manner for a time, and, I hope, gain the means of becoming workers on their own account thereby. I am not going to enter into the large question of coloured labour in connection with the canefield, which has been imported into the discussion on this Bill, and naturally imported into it, because, undoubtedly, the present Bill is intended to fulfil the representations made by the Government, that they intended to supply the colony with an increased source of labour, whereby the difficulties of the sugar-planters might be, to a certain extent, overcome. I should be glad to see the sugar-planters themselves recognise the intention of the Government, and aid them by their advice and assistance in encouraging European immigration; for I believe that all of us who have made this colony our home, and whose descendants hope to remain here, must look to the foundations of the colony being laid and supported by men of European extraction. I do not think it is at all desirable that large fortunes should be made through the instrumentality of coloured labour, if that coloured labour is to become an essential part of the population of the colony. I know the hon. member for Balonne, in his previous utterances, has always declaimed against German settlement here.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No. I must put myself right again. I say we will not go a-field until we have exhausted the British Islands; whether we take Germans then, is a matter to be decided afterwards. I have always said, let the German or Dane or any other European come here at his own expense at the present time if he comes at all; until we have exhausted the British Islands we should not go for them, as far as the taxpayer is concerned.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The hon. gentleman says, “until we have exhausted the British Islands.” That is a very ambiguous term; I hardly know how he is to exhaust the British Islands. We must look to the British Islands for a continuous and steady stream of immigration, and I am sure not a member of



this House will dissent from the proposition, that a great portion of the population should come from the British Islands. I hope we shall obtain as large numbers as possible; but we shall have very great competition to contend with from the United States and the Dominion of Canada. The United States of America in particular—that is private enterprise in the United States—offer such facilities for immigration to that country, that it is a very difficult matter indeed to divert such a large stream of immigration to Australasian colonies as we all desire to see. I agree with the hon. gentleman, that it is desirable to secure the larger proportion of our population from the British Islands, but I am not at all insensible to the benefits we have derived from the introduction of German immigrants. I think that any hon. member, who visits the agricultural settlements of the colony, must admit the very great amount of perseverance and industry and application displayed by the German settlers who have brought the primeval wilderness into a high state of cultivation, and who have certainly not been surpassed in those qualities by our own countrymen. The German settlers of this colony have done a great deal in furtherance of agriculture, and I think they are to be highly commended for their persistent and persevering efforts in that direction. I must say I am a very strong admirer of the perseverance of these German settlers; and I think it would be very desirable to see their introduction largely increased; though not necessarily to the exclusion of our own countrymen. For I believe that some of those settlers will afford good examples of what can be accomplished by perseverance and steadiness. Even as employes they are faithful, and persevering, and honest, in the discharge of their duties; and I know that when they become employers, or when they become possessed of their own freeholds, no men can surpass them in making their small holdings productive in such a manner as will raise them ultimately to a position of independence, and will also set a good example of what can be done in that way by the rest of the population in this colony. Supposing we were to subtract from the agricultural areas of the colony the areas which are now held by German settlers, there would be a very large diminution indeed in the amount of agricultural settlement; and not only a large diminution in the area which is so profitably occupied by those German settlers, but there would also be a very great discouragement to our own countrymen engaged in agriculture, which forms what I believe to be the true basis of national prosperity—the cultivation of our land. Therefore, I say it is strongly desirable that, without diminishing or restricting the supply of labour from the mother-country, we ought to recognise and encourage by every means a class of settlers who hitherto have fulfilled all expectations that could possibly be formed of their ability to occupy and cultivate land. I have always, when opportunity afforded it, expressed my opinion of them, and my confidence in the ability of the Germans as agriculturists has been in no way shaken by anything that has been said, even although the hon. member for Blackall has asserted that a certain section of the Germans are possessed of a lower civilisation than that of our own countrymen. That lower civilisation certainly has not been exhibited in the cultivation of the small holdings which they have become possessed of in this colony. I think it is time that these disparaging expressions concerning a very hard-working class of men in the colony should cease. In another generation there will be no Germans here, nor Irish, nor Scotch, nor English—they will be all Queenslanders; and the sooner we recognise that fact,

and become imbued with national feelings, and become citizens of this great and fair land of Queensland, the greater will be the chance of our becoming a large and powerful nation. I have already stated that this question of immigration is one which every man—certainly every man who holds a seat in this Chamber—must largely recognise. It is a great factor in our great future development, and so long as we can draw an adequate and good supply of labour from the mother-country, or from the continental States of Europe, I am indifferent as to which part of Europe they come from so long as they fulfil the conditions under which they are imported and add to the progress and wealth of the colony.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: When first I saw this Bill, sir, I intended to have said nothing on the subject. There would have been very little discussion had not one of the members on this side moved the adjournment of the debate for the purpose, I suppose, of provoking discussion. I was surprised that the Premier did not in some way show his disapprobation of what fell from his colleague in the representation of North Brisbane. That gentleman is generally looked upon, and is, in fact, one of the Premier's strongest and most unreasonable supporters—in fact, his henchman; and he seldom gets up to speak but what he is prompted by the hon. the Premier. If the Premier had had the good sense to have found fault with him when he was making the scandalous attack upon the North which he did, he would have shown that he understood the position he occupied in this House much better than he did. He had no right to allow that hon. gentleman to go on uncensured by him, privately—of course, I do not mean that he should have risen in this House to do so—instead of laughing and seemingly applauding what he said. The hon. gentleman has no reason himself to find fault with the North being deficient in money. If any man in the House has any reason to be grateful to the North for having advanced his worldly prosperity, it is the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government. That is a fact that he should not forget, when such a person as the hon. member for North Brisbane, his elder and younger colleague, attacks the North in the way he did to-night. With regard to what was said by the hon. member for Mackay about Separation, I have never been known as an advocate of Separation; I have been well known as an advocate of financial separation, but territorial separation I have always deprecated. I can tell hon. members of this House, now, that I have lately had letters written from the North—from prominent constituents of mine at Townsville, regretting that I have opposed the movement for Separation. That was simply owing to the great depression that exists in Townsville and other parts of the North, through the sugar industry partially being a failure. I am not going to discuss the cause of that failure; but I think the hon. gentlemen who has just sat down did not state the case correctly, and even if he did, it was an argument against himself, when he said that the chief cause of the depression was the great production of beet-root sugar. The great production of beet-root sugar has not affected the sugar market of Queensland very much, whatever it may do in future. But even if it had, this is the most opportune time of all others—if the sugar industry is suffering from any cause outside—for the Government to help it. The hon. gentleman quite overlooked that fact in talking about the depression of the sugar industry not being caused by the deficiency of labour. I know it is a positive fact that capital has ceased to come to the North to be invested in sugar. I know it from capitalists, who have informed me that they would not risk a shilling of



money in sugar in Northern Queensland. They told me their reasons why—they were the present condition of the labour market and the action of the present Government. That is well understood. There is no need for arguing the question here, because any man who is at all acquainted with the people of Sydney, or any other parts of Southern Australia, knows well that the great influx of capital into Northern Queensland was chiefly from the South. I am also told by gentlemen who have had information upon undoubted authority that the same feeling exists in England at present with regard to the investment of money in the sugar industry. The hon. gentleman who had just sat down made a most unfortunate reference to America as offering greater facilities for emigrants than we do. There is no doubt about that. The German immigrant who goes to America or comes to Queensland, and the Irish immigrant, also, leave their countries for the chief purpose of getting possession of a bit of land they can call their own. I am not going to discuss the Land question; I shall do that by-and-by. The Americans give 160 acres to every man who goes to live upon it. We have been doing almost the same thing until now, when it is proposed to abolish it. That is the chief reason why we have to compete so much with America in immigration. There is another reason: of course, it is nearer than we are; but then we reduced that entirely by our free immigration system. The Americans have never spent a single penny upon immigration. Every individual that goes to America either pays his own passage or it is paid by his friends, or paid by some large immigration company—railway companies especially. So that in reality we actually, although the distance is greater, offer greater inducements to immigrants to come here, barring the land. That is the great inducement there, and I am sorry to think that we are going to remove the little inducement we hold out to immigrants of that class to come here. When I come to look at this Bill, I am surprised that so much has been said or could be said upon it; the Bill is so small in itself. Of course I know the whole discussion was initiated by the Premier, and done, I believe, for a purpose. I am quite correct in stating that it is my conviction that the hon. gentleman made the speech he did on this Bill—and which was quite uncalled for—simply to raise the old antagonism on the Labour question. He cannot allow that to lie. Could not this Bill have been introduced without referring to the sugar industry, and saying that sugar-planters did this and did that? I think if I had been introducing the Bill myself I would have done it in about two minutes. I would have said nothing but what was contained in the Bill itself. The hon. gentleman went outside the Bill and even then he did not give a full explanation of it. The hon. member for Mackay called out, "Where are the immigrants to come from?" That the hon. gentleman partly sketched. This Bill provides for indentured labourers being brought out at £1 per head cheaper than they can be introduced under the principal Act. The hon. gentleman showed that, but he did not show how they would be brought out, as I shall show him before I sit down. I may say that I have risen now upon the question of the adjournment of the debate, rather than upon the original motion, for the purpose of giving the Premier an opportunity of explaining what I shall call his attention to. In mentioning the countries from which immigrants were to be brought, the hon. gentleman mentioned Germany and Scandinavia, and claimed, as one great reason why those people should be introduced here free of cost, that the same blood flowed

in our veins, and we were of the same race. He might have gone further back in history, and he would have found that the same blood flows in the veins of the people of India. The hon. gentleman knows that the old Germanic race came from India, and, if we are related to the Germans, the people of India are related to us. That is a mathematical proposition which the hon. gentleman will scarcely deny. But leaving race on one side, the question of those people having the same blood flowing in their veins as ours, about 1,500 or 1,600 years ago, is not worth arguing. The question raised by the hon. member for Balonne is one which has been raised frequently in this House, and is one which I have maintained myself. I have nothing to say against Germans as a race, or as an industrious people. I believe what the hon. member for Darling Downs said about them, that they are a great race and have produced some of the greatest men in the world. But they are not our people: they did not colonise this land; they did not give the people of this colony the land which we own now, and which we sell every day. It was the people of Great Britain, through its Government, who did that; and I say we are bound in duty to our kith and kin, in the first place, to bring them from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, so long as we can get them. When we cannot get them—when we cannot get a sufficient supply of labourers from there—then we can go to Germany, or to the best nation on the continent of Europe, to supply us with labour. But, until that is done, we have no right to neglect our duty to the British people in this colony by going anywhere else. The principal Act, which we are now amending, gives the German people, or any other people starting in this country, a sufficient power of increasing their number by the nomination clause, and I think beyond that we have no right to go. As to the question whether those people can be brought here to work for the sugar-planters or not, I think the hon. gentleman himself can scarcely believe that this amending Bill is one which will supply the planters with labour even from Germany. The hon. member for Mackay clearly pointed out that, if it was a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, the difference of £1 a head for indentured labourers, between this and the principal Act, is a mere trifle. I am thoroughly convinced that this Bill will not supply the planters with labour. And this Bill is the outcome of the comprehensive scheme. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, I believed that the hon. gentleman, when he spoke of it, had some really comprehensive scheme of which none of us had the slightest conception—some scheme by which he would actually supply the whole of the Northern plantations with labour. And what do I find? I find that this Bill—this reduction of £1 per head for indentured labourers—is the great scheme which the hon. gentleman has been concocting for the last few years. But in talking about the Germans there is one thing which we have not yet taken into account—and it is a factor in the discussion which hon. members must take into account—and that is the present ruler of Germany, Prince Bismarck. I am very much inclined to believe that he will not permit his people to come from Germany to Queensland, to take the place of the kanaka. I agree with the hon. member for Darling Downs that the Germans are too great a people to take the place of the kanaka and do the work of the kanaka, and I feel quite confident that, when the German Government come to know the intention and meaning of this Government in fostering German immigration, they will stop it for ever.

MR. KATES: Hear, hear!

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. member for Darling Downs says "Hear, hear." I am very glad he believes as I do, and I say, thank God it is so, in the interest of the working men of this colony. I have no antagonism of race against the Germans, but I confess to a strong feeling for my own countrymen in this colony, in having their wages reduced by one single farthing—not slightly, as some hon. gentlemen opposite have said, but by a single farthing—by any legislation introduced by the Government. What is all this talk about (German immigration)? Why, I say the first act the present Government did was to stop British immigration. They thought the late Government were introducing them too numerous when they were introducing them at the rate of 20,000 a year, and the first thing they did was to stop that immigration, as if it were detrimental to the colony; and now the cry is raised that immigrants are required from Germany to supply the place of the kanaka, or of the coolie, who should have been introduced to supply their place. This is all talk and all froth, because if the hon. gentleman had been willing to try the experiment of getting white labour to work on the plantations, he would never have stopped the introduction of British immigrants as he did. The hon. gentleman also said—speaking in the very sentimental way in which he can speak when he wants to raise close antagonism—he said he hoped the white men would never work in gangs. Well, what is there in that? What is there degrading in working in gangs, except under certain circumstances? Is there anything degrading in working in gangs? Are not all railway works carried on by gangs of men? Are not all the canals, the excavations for docks, and all the great works of the world carried on by gangs? Agricultural labour in England is carried on by gangs, and, if the agriculturalists of England do not think it degrading to work in gangs, why should it be degrading to work in gangs in Queensland? Well, sir, I will tell the House why it is degrading here. Because here the men are to take the place of kanakas. That is where the degradation comes in—not in the fact of working in gangs, but in doing work that in other countries was done by inferior races. The hon. gentleman in introducing the Bill made a long speech, but he did not tell us how those men were to be engaged or selected; in fact, he said nothing about the machinery by which they are to be brought to work on the plantations.

THE PREMIER: Yes I did.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman said nothing of the kind. I was listening very patiently, and I can assure him that he forgot that. In the principal Act it is laid down, what a person in this colony—a natural born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty—has to do who wishes to bring anybody from England, Ireland, or Scotland. I think it is in section 7, or else there is a form in one of the schedules by which application is made. In the Polynesian Labourers Act, if a planter wishes to engage twenty, thirty, or fifty Polynesians, the method by which he is to obtain them is laid down, and he has to make application for a certain number. But how are the planters of Mackay to make application for a certain required number under this Bill? They could not do it in the same way as is done in the Polynesian Labourers Act, nor in the same way as is done in the principal Act under the nomination clause; because they are supposed to know the individuals and tell their names. But how can a planter at Mackay, who wishes to indent labourers in Germany or anywhere else, do so, when he knows

nothing of them? The hon. gentleman must tell us that. If these men are to be engaged to come out to work here and when they arrive are to be assigned to planters, then I think that is just as much white slavery as it is possible to have. I am anxious to know how that is to be done. No hon. member on this side of the House knows, and I do not think any hon. member on that side knows either; and therefore I think the hon. gentleman should tell us how these men are to be engaged, and how they are to be selected. If he says the immigrants are to be assigned to planters when they come to the colony, under this Bill, then the Bill is worse than I thought it was. I hope the hon. gentleman will, the first chance he has of speaking, explain this matter.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said: I should not have risen to speak on this subject had it not been for the remarks which the hon. gentleman who has just sat down made on the Land question. He says the homestead clauses are to disappear under the new Bill, and therefore it will not be possible to settle the people on small tracts of land. And he instanced the case of America. Now I can tell the hon. gentleman that the American Government set aside certain tracts of land called homestead land alongside their railway lines, and in that way they do not allow speculators to come and take up that land in large tracts. They send people on to that land which they can cultivate along the railway lines. Under the homestead clauses of the Act of 1876 in this colony, what did the late Government do to get people on to the lands? Did they not prevent people taking up more than 160 acres; and is it not a fact that the rich lands along the rivers and in the scrubs was snapped up by people who did not make any use of them? Then in districts where there were homestead areas, the exchanged lands on the Downs were valued at £5 per acre. How could they expect people to settle down on 160 acres at £5 per acre? The land was dealt with in such a way as to absolutely exclude settlement. Land that was bought back five or six years ago is not fully occupied yet.

MR. MOREHEAD: If it was bought six years ago it was not by the late Government.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have seen the land dealt with in such a way as to exclude settlement, and the consequence is that not a quarter of it is taken up. It should have been thrown open, and settlement might have been promoted if any attempt had been made to exclude those who did not want to use the lands; but no attempt of that kind was made. The hon. gentleman objected to bringing Germans, and said, that as soon as the German Government found that they were likely to be brought here to be employed on plantations, and to do work which was done now by kanakas—and which, I maintain, any man can do—the Imperial Government would object to them coming. Now, I know the Germans, and they are not such children as to make it necessary to look after them in that way; they are perfectly able to take care of themselves. That is my experience. I have indented Germans and employed them at a low rate of wages for two years, and never had the slightest difficulty with them; they worked during their term of agreement side by side with men who were getting 25s. and 30s. a week. I believe that no men will more honestly and consistently carry out their agreements than Germans. I will say a word with regard to what fell from the leader of the Opposition, that is, in reference to the method of dealing with coolies. In the discussion on the Polynesian Labourers Act the hon. gentleman complained that the kanakas,

after completing their term of service, were excluded from staying here; and said that in fairness that ought not to be done to any men, whether black or white. He made a great parade of that, I remember. Now to-night he says that if you bring out Germans, willing to work at a low rate of wages in the old country, and they find when they come here that wages are very much higher, then that is an absolute fraud. But if you bring coolies, who are also our fellow-subjects, from their own country at a low rate of wages, and expect, after they have completed their term of service that they are not to be allowed to leave, that is reducing them to a condition of absolute slavery. If a man has completed his term of service he is entitled to go where he likes. I feel perfectly certain—without knowing anything of constitutional law—that coolies under a three years' agreement cannot be compelled, after their term of service has expired, to return to their own country; and that we have no more power to compel them to return than we have to turn Englishmen, Irishmen, or Scotchmen from our shores. I cannot imagine the possibility of the Indian Government permitting such agreements to be made, and I am perfectly sure we are powerless to compel them. If they choose to stay here they will stay here whether we like it or not. It would be quite optional with them after their term of service had expired, and they found they could make more than they were getting under their engagement, and more than they could make in their own country, to remain here. If they could make double, or treble, or quadruple, what they had been getting, they would make more in the first year after their term had expired than during their whole engagement; and that they would stay can be proved by the fact that those coolies who came here thirty years ago have stayed here, and some of their descendants are now driving cabs in the city of Brisbane. There are dozens of them here and in New South Wales. One of my neighbours on the Hunter indented a large number of these men many years ago, and when I left, twenty years after, some of them, or their descendants, still remained; and the same thing would happen here, and we could not turn them away. They would be more difficult to control within certain points than rabbits; much more difficult, and there is no wire-mesh fence that I know of that would keep them out. They would spread over the whole country; and properly so, because we have no right, and certainly no power, to control them within any given limits. I was astonished at the bitter animosity displayed towards the Germans by the leader of the Opposition. I should have thought that he would have had a little more tact than to give expression to such opinions, whatever he might have felt. Nobody—I do not care who or what he is—unless he is influenced by bitter prejudice, can deny that we have got no people here who are better colonists than the Germans are. In industry, frugality, and manly independence of character, the Germans compare well with our own countrymen. I do not know any men who have shown greater manliness and independence of character. They are not led and fooled by any political bunkum, but they are men who exercise their own judgment; and, although they live under a different form of government, they live under a Government which takes care that they are very fairly educated. They are men well able to express their opinions and act up to them.

Mr. STEVENSON said he did not intend to reply to the supplementary Land Bill speech that the House had heard, and what a Scotch friend of his (Mr. Stevenson's) would call the "fighten" speech of the Minister for Lands;

but he would say with regard to the remarks which fell from that gentleman, in referring to the speech of the member for Townsville, that he had not touched the subject at all. The hon. gentleman never really referred to what the hon. member for Townsville had said. The hon. member for Townsville maintained, in reply to remarks which came from the other side about inducing people to come out here, that the only inducement which was offered hitherto had been done away with, or was proposed to be abolished by the Minister for Lands, and that was the homestead area clauses of the Land Act of 1876. The hon. member pointed out that the people of America gave the land for nothing; but the Minister for Lands did not answer that argument at all; and he (Mr. Stevenson) repeated, that the only inducement for people to come out here with their wives and families was to be swept away by the Minister for Lands in his proposed Land Bill, although the House had been assured by the junior member for North Brisbane, that the homestead area clauses were not to be done away with. He supposed that that hon. member was reprimanded by the Premier for letting out State secrets, but they would see by-and-by who was right. He thought the House had rather got into a fog over the Bill, because they had had so many differences of opinion from the other side. They were told by the Premier and the junior member for North Brisbane, and several other members, that the Bill was a measure for the planters—that it was brought in for the purpose of getting over the planters' labour difficulty. The Colonial Treasurer told a very different story. He said it was not brought in for the purpose of bringing cheap labour into Queensland. He said that the Government had not the slightest idea of reducing the rate of wages. The member for Darling Downs clearly admitted that it was being brought in to allow Germans to take the place of kanakas. How was that to be done if what had fallen from the Treasurer was true? Because he had told the House that the Bill was not intended to facilitate the importation of cheap labour. As had been clearly pointed out by the member for Townsville, almost the first act of the present Government was to put a stop to British immigration. The country did not want a lower-waged class than it had at present, and the Government had clearly shown, by their action since they came into power, that there was too much labour here already. The Government knew perfectly well that they had had deputations from the unemployed in Brisbane; and if that was the case it would be as well to employ their own people before thinking of introducing foreigners to work upon the plantations. If it were possible to do so, why not employ those people in the sugar industry? But it had been proved to be impossible, and would be equally so with foreigners. It had been clearly proved that they could not work at that industry, because there were people begging for work at the present time who would not take the place of kanakas. That they all knew; and the Treasurer made rather a mess of it when he told the House that the Bill was not intended to bring in any cheaper labour than was now available. He was satisfied of this: that if cheaper labour was not to be obtained the sugar industry would perish; and hon. members opposite said, let it perish. The Treasurer forgot, when he talked about that labour, that if the sugar industry was not to perish in Queensland reliable labour must be obtained, because this country had to compete with countries where black labour was employed in the production of sugar. It had been proved that white labour could not be employed profitably, and that it was impossible for Queens-

land to compete with those places where black labour was employed. The Premier must admit that he was trying, unless the Bill was a perfect sham, to make white people take the place of kanakas. He remembered reading an account of a speech made by the hon. gentleman at Mackay, after a deputation had interviewed him in regard to the Labour question; and his advice then was to get over the labour difficulty by bringing out cheap labour from Europe. It was evident that that class of labour was intended to supply the place of kanaka labour; and yet, according to the hon. member for Darling Downs, the Germans would certainly not take the place of the kanakas. The Minister for Lands, on the other hand, told the House that he had engaged some of that German cheap labour at a very low price. Of course, unless that hon. gentleman got them to compete with blackfellows, it was not likely that he would employ them at all. The Minister for Lands told them that he had engaged those men for two years at a very low rate of wages, and that they had performed their work satisfactorily. The hon. member for Darling Downs told them that if Germans were brought out at a cheaper rate of wages than was given to other white men they would not stick to their agreements.

Mr. KATES said he never said anything of the kind. What he did say was, that after six or twelve months, when they saw that other colonists were getting higher wages, they also would ask for higher wages.

Mr. STEVENSON said that if the Bill was intended to indent labourers for six months or twelve months it was a useless and deceptive measure, because, unless the men were engaged for two or three years, they would be perfectly useless to the planter. The leader of the Opposition had been accused over and over again, in spite of repeated denials, of having spoken disparagingly of the Germans. What that hon. member did say was, that the people of the colony had no right to be taxed to bring in Germans until the British Islands were exhausted; and he (Mr. Stevenson) agreed with him. As to what was meant by exhaustion of the British Islands, he might tell the Colonial Treasurer that not long ago, in the North of Ireland, he saw men working for 7s. 6d. a week without rations, and keeping a family upon it. So long as such a state of things prevailed at home, it could not be said that the British Islands were exhausted; and it was a very good point for the leader of the Opposition to take up, that until such was the case the taxpayers of the colony ought not to be asked to pay for introducing Germans. That hon. member never accused the Germans of being a low or servile race, and he (Mr. Stevenson) had a great respect for some of them, amongst whom—as amongst the people of every other nation—there were both bad and good. The hon. member for Darling Downs objected to any member of the Opposition calling the Germans a servile race—making particular reference to the hon. member for Blackall, who, by the way, never said anything of the kind. But he would tell the hon. member that one of his own leaders, the present Attorney-General, in the course of a speech during the session of 1882, spoke as follows:—

"If the Government were to introduce European immigrants—Germans and Italians—men who did not require to be acclimatised, and who were capable of developing into the highest condition of humanity—it would be a step in the right direction. After they had passed three or four years in a servile capacity, they would be ready to take their places among the superior classes of the colony, and fitted to be taken up, absorbed into, and amalgamated with our own people."

Such was the opinion of the Attorney-General, who did not think Germans would be fit to associate with other white people until they had

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been in a servile position for four years. He (Mr. Stevenson) believed, with the hon. member for Darling Downs, that the Germans were too good for the position they were intended by the Bill to take; and the hon. member ought, when he heard that the Bill was being prepared, to have informed the Premier of the fact. It had never yet been found that Germans were willing to do the work that kanakas were now doing on the northern sugar plantations. The Premier, however, had not yet told them who were the men he intended to bring in, although it had been hinted at by some of the other speakers; but the hon. member for Darling Downs had said that the Germans were not likely to take the place of the kanakas. He did not think the Bill was one that was required, and he was satisfied that if the Premier was sincere in his proposed desire to provide labour for the sugar planters, instead of the labour they had now, he would have brought in a very different Bill from the one now under discussion.

Mr. LISSNER said he did not rise exactly to take the part of the Germans. A good deal had been said about the Germans; but, so far as he knew, they were quite capable of taking their own part. He hoped that in future speeches hon. members would not lump all Germans together. There were a good many varieties of Germans; and for the sake of such men as Prince Bismarck, the late Prince Consort, Schiller, Goethe, himself, and others, he hoped hon. members would make a distinction somehow. The reason he rose was to announce to that honourable House that he had much pleasure in opposing the Bill. It was well known to the House that he represented one of the most important—if not the most important—mining constituency in the colony, and he knew the feeling of his constituents on the proposal of the Government to bring in representatives of coolies and kanakas, in the shape of cheap Europeans of some kind. The mining population had warned him against voting for that measure. He had pledged himself on the platform to vote against black slaves, and he had also pledged himself to vote against white slaves. As that Bill was not a solution of the Labour question in any shape or form, and would not benefit the sugar industry, he would oppose it as a mining representative. He did not know whether the Germans whom it was proposed to introduce would come to Queensland. He had it on good authority, that Prince Bismarck could put them to better use than letting them loose on sugar plantations; he was going in for colonising himself, and could make good use of them under his own flag, or to feed his guns as soldiers. It was not very certain, should the recruiting agents be sent to Germany, that they would be successful in getting labourers, and if they did get them, he did not think any policemen or soldiers would be able to keep them on the plantations if they did not like their position there, as slaves. Those Germans, who had been put down by someone as Darwin's missing link, were not such born fools as to stay; they would leave the sugar fields at the earliest possible opportunity, and interfere with the prosperity of his constituents, the miners. He would not say anything more about the matter. *Hansard* was full of it. He would vote against the Bill.

Mr. GRIMES said he thought it was a pity that a discussion of that kind should be allowed to lapse into a discussion on black *versus* white labour. Whenever anything was said about immigration, they were sure to get something about black labour from members opposite. He was surprised at the hon. member for Mackay, who dragged in the Black Labour question neck and crop, and gave them his periodical speech

on it—he might say there were different volumes of *Hansard* taken up with the same speech as the hon. gentleman had delivered that evening—saying he wondered why no member of the Government had replied to his remarks. They had replied to those remarks—they were only remarks and not arguments—time after time. *Hansard* was full of replies to the arguments brought forward in favour of black labour. He really thought it would be a saving to the country if the Government gave instructions to have the hon. member for Mackay's speech on that subject stereotyped, so that it might be copied into *Hansard* whenever the hon. gentleman spoke on that question. The hon. member had stated that the action of the Government on the Labour question had ruined the sugar industry. He (Mr. Grimes) failed to see it. Possibly it might have checked speculators from the South; but he did not regret that, as he thought the country was getting very little advantage from those southern capitalists. He was told by several residents near a plantation owned by a Melbourne firm that they got no advantage from the plantation, as a large number of Chinese were employed there, and they traded with the Chinese storekeepers in the neighbourhood; while the necessities of life for a large number of Cingalese employed on the plantation were brought from the South; and the sugar and molasses, and the products of the estate generally, were shipped down South. So that, although that was one of the largest plantations in the North, the country got very little advantage from it. The foreign capitalists reaped the profits, and left a burden on the country in the shape of paupers, or crippled or sickly kanakas, who were a burden to the State by having to be kept in hospitals, or supported in lunatic asylums and benevolent institutions. The hon. gentleman had also again made use of the argument, that in no other place in the world was sugar grown without black labour. That argument amounted to nothing; if they could do better than other places, why should they not do so? The fact remained, that sugar was grown in this colony and grown profitably without black labour. All the growling about the low price of sugar came from the North, where also the complaint was made that the harassing conditions, as the new regulations for the kanaka labour trade were called, was ruining the industry. The difference in price of the cane was only about a shilling a ton, so that the fears with reference to the failure of the sugar industry were not well grounded. At all events he did not anticipate that they would be realised this season. The hon. member for Mackay had asked how sugar was to be grown without black labour. He (Mr. Grimes) thought there was an answer to that question: Let them import intelligent labourers, and put implements in their hands, with two or three horses, and planters would find that, with intelligent Germans or intelligent agricultural labourers from England, Ireland, and Scotland, they could work their plantations cheaper than they were doing at the present time with black labour. The impression that black labour was cheap was a curse to the planters of the North. From what he had seen on a visit to the North, he thought that the idea of cheap labour was ruining the planters and ruining the owners. He had seen from fifteen to twenty men doing no more work than could be done by a European agricultural labourer, with a team of two or three horses and a roller. When men had the idea that kanaka labour, used in that way, was cheap, he thought it was a curse to them. As long as they got kanakas to do the work in the North, people would never invent better

modes of working the plantations. It was well known that the abolition of the slave trade in America stimulated the inventive talent, and gave rise to the production of new implements of husbandry by which plantations were worked more cheaply. He was confident that under those circumstances, the work could be done much cheaper than by kanaka labour. It was said that the more black labour there was, the more work there would be for the European; but he need only mention the fact that the European labour was cheapest where most kanakas were employed. The Government of the day issued invitations to the planters in the North and elsewhere who needed labour, to apply to the Immigration Office, stating the kind of work to be done and the rate of wages they were willing to give, and informing them that the Immigration Agent would forward the men. The lowest rate of wages offered came from the districts where kanakas were employed—Mackay and Bundaberg. The rate the employers were willing to pay was 12s. a week. But they did not wish the labourer to work for 12s. a week. There was no fear that the indented European labourer would lower the rate of wages all over the colony. As long as they offered by the land laws facilities for the agricultural labourer to settle on the ground, the wages would not fall below a certain average. If a man could rent forty acres at 3d. per acre per annum, as soon as wages got below a certain limit, he would work on his land, and make far more than 12s. a week. They wished to see European labourers coming to the colony—men who would work for a time on the plantations or on the farms, and afterwards settle down and become farmers themselves. He was pleased to support the Bill because it would effect that object, and would, in conjunction with the Land Bill, be the means of settling a large population of agriculturists on the land. The hon. member for Kennedy need not fear that the German agricultural labourers would compete with the miners. They did not like mining, but preferred agriculture. They preferred above-ground work to under-ground work. It had been stated that the Germans would not take the place of kanakas. But they did not want them to take the place of kanakas; they wanted them to take up a more intelligent position. It was intended that they should have the management of steam and other implements; and by that means lessen the cost of production, and thus raise the rate of wages. He had confidence in the sugar industry, and did not believe that because they could not import the coolie or the kanaka that the industry was to be squashed. The supply of kanakas might fail, but if the Government held out proper inducements to the planters, and if the planters would take advantage of their privileges and indent European labour, they would find the plan work well. That system would push the colony ahead far better than two or three dozen Southern capitalists investing their money in sugar lands, and working them with kanaka labour. With reference to the Bill, he thought the 4th clause was a very wise provision. It should be incumbent on the master to find suitable accommodation for the immigrants when they arrived. It was a great complaint among European labourers that they were not well housed; and that was where the planters failed to make them reliable. Plantations were mostly in the hands of companies, the shareholders of which expected large and quick dividends, and grumbled at a large preliminary expenditure. They objected to putting up comfortable two or three-roomed cottages for Europeans, but would rather put up huts which would hold three or four kanakas

each. If comfortable quarters were provided, the European labour would be found more reliable. There was no difficulty with regard to the climate. The hon. member for Mackay charged the Government with ignoring the difference of climate between North and South. He (Mr. Grimes) had met scores of workmen engaged in about every kind of outdoor work in the North, and not one of them ever told him that it was too hot to work there. Several of those men had worked in the neighbourhood of Brisbane, and they said that the climate in the North was quite as favourable to outdoor work as that of Brisbane. But he had other ways of satisfying himself on the point. It was well known that European labourers were able to follow the plough as long as horses were able to pull it, and, in the North, horses had succumbed to the heat before the drivers. And in the North nearly every planter obtained from half-an-hour to an hour more work per day out of his horses in the summer than farmers were able to do in the South. Instead of being satisfied with ploughing half-an-acre a day in the North, they did not think less than three-quarters of an acre was a fair day's work; but in the South, taking the year through, the average was not more than half-an-acre a day. It was often said that there was a smothering sort of heat in the cane-brakes which made it impossible for Europeans to work there; but there was no necessity for any work to be done in a cane-brake after the horses had done their work. The last work in a cane-brake previous to cutting was done on a properly managed plantation by a team of horses, and if the horses could manage to stand the heat he had no fear but that a European could follow them. He was sorry there was to be an alteration made in the schedule to the scale as it stood in the original Act. He thought the payment of the full amount of passage-money to be demanded from a man over forty years was excessive. There was plenty of work in an English agricultural labourer forty years of age; he was in the prime of life; he had experience, and he was a man who was likely to settle down to his work. He thought the limit of age might be extended to fifty; and, even then, he thought the amount was excessive. The most reliable men got out here were those that came out in families. If they got a man between forty and fifty or fifty-five, with four or five sons ranging from twenty-four or twenty-five to fifteen, they generally settled down on the farms, and were steadier at their work than single men. It would be a pity to prevent the father of a family coming out. They liked to see fatherly affection, and a son that would leave the old man at home to starve or go into the union was not likely to prove a very good colonist. He was afraid they would deprive the colony of a very suitable class of young men if they adhered to this provision; and he hoped that in the case of a parent coming out with his family there would be some provision made for his being brought out at a much lower rate than his full passage. He thought that the way the immigration was managed came very hard upon the agricultural labourer. At home a man of this class had generally no savings; it took him all his time to provide for his family; and there were great complaints amongst them that, after having the approval of the Agent-General, a man had to wait such a long time before he was permitted to embark. If he had any savings at all, they were frequently all spent in providing lodgings during the interval. An hon. member reminded him that this was dealt with by a former Bill, but that was not the case. Two pounds might be allowed him for expenses to the port of embarkation, but nothing

was allowed him for the cost of living in lodgings after leaving his situation. The mode of choosing the immigrants, too, was not a very good one. It was easy to tell pretty well what a man was by looking at his face; and, as for testimonials, a rogue could often get them for the sake of getting him out of the country. He thought it would be well if two or three good lecturers, who had the confidence of the Government, were given authority to say at once whether a man would be accepted, and then allow him to be shipped off without any further delay. He had much pleasure in supporting the second reading, but hoped that the schedule would be altered.

Mr. ALAND said he always felt pleased when he thought that they had a sugar-grower on their side of the House as well as on the other; because they would certainly have altogether the worst of the argument if they had not someone of experience just to put the hon. member for Mackay right now and again. Very great stress had been laid by hon. members on the other side of the House upon the fact that the present Government, not very long after they came into power, had eased off immigration; they had even been accused of stopping immigration. They were free to admit that the Government had eased it off, and he believed the colony, as a whole, thought they did what was perfectly right. They found an exhausted Treasury, as far as the immigration vote was concerned; they found that their predecessors had to a very large extent overdrawn the immigration vote, and they would have acted legitimately if they had even stopped immigration altogether until they obtained means for carrying it on. It was to be remembered that, at the time they eased it off, complaints were being showered upon them that there was no employment for the immigrants coming out. A very unsuitable class of immigrants was being introduced at that time. There were men nominated by gentlemen on the other side of the House who, when they arrived, were sent up the country as tradesmen at low rates of wages; and if that was not competing with white tradesmen, he would like to know what was. What was the action of the previous Government with reference to immigration? They stopped immigration directly they came into power, and very likely they had a good reason for doing so; but they increased Polynesian immigration at the same time. They said they would not have the people from Great Britain and Ireland and Germany, but they would have them from the South Sea Islands; and permits were given to many of their friends to import those labourers for the interior. The leader of the Opposition had made a great deal of fuss about the solidity of the German vote. He was not going to admit that the German vote was any more solid than any other vote. They had heard at times a great deal about the Roman Catholic vote, and the Irish vote, and he had even heard of the Presbyterian vote. He remembered when an election was going on in the colony, that one of the candidates claimed that he would get all the Presbyterian vote. There was nothing whatever in such cries as those. But if there was anything at all in the cry of the German vote, the leader of the Opposition had himself to blame very much for it. They all knew what his utterances were in a previous Parliament, when he was met by the hon. member—the "Sacred Ibis"—the then hon. member for Rosewood, who, of course, felt bound to stand up on behalf of his constituents; and he stood up very well indeed for them. He was very glad to find that the Germans had a large number of friends in the House who were willing and able to stand up for

them. He regretted that he was not in a position to say whether white men could work on sugar plantations or not. Whenever he had been asked his opinion upon the question, he had always candidly said he did not know. He had as much faith in the hon. member for Oxley as he had in the hon. member for Mackay. The hon. member for Oxley said that all necessary plantation work could be done by white men; and, such being the case, they should have white men and not black men to do it. He would not like to say, as some hon. members had said, that if they could not work their plantations with white labour, then let the sugar industry perish. It was worth their consideration—considering all that was implied by the introduction of coloured labour into the colony—to see if even the sugar industry could not be done without. It was the hon. member for Blackall who stated that the late Premier was in favour of the introduction of Polynesian labourers after a certain time.

Mr. ARCHER: What I said was that the late Premier at one time proposed in the House that there should be a certain year fixed when the importation of Polynesians should terminate; but that was refused by the House.

Mr. ALAND said of course he must accept the statement of the hon. member for Blackall; but his impression was that the then hon. member for Stanley, Mr. O'Sullivan, brought forward a resolution stating a time when the importation of kanaka labour should cease. When that went to a division Sir Thomas McLlwraith voted against it. Of course he might be wrong, but that was his impression. He was willing to give Sir Thomas McLlwraith every credit for his great abilities, but still he did not see that they should give him credit for even so small a matter as that if he was not deserving of it. In reference to this German immigration, he thought it was a point which was worthy of consideration. The Germans at the present time numbered a very considerable portion of the population of the community. They were here; he did not know how they got here, but he supposed they came like the rest. However, they were here, and were an important factor in our midst. They were voters with the others, and were taxpayers, and had the same rights; and seeing that they contributed to the revenue, therefore they had a right to say something on the Immigration question, for which they had provided some of the funds. They had a right to see that certain of their fellow-countrymen were imported into the colony. There was another remark which the hon. member for Blackall took exception to, which was made use of by his friend, Mr. Brookes, and he most sincerely deprecated what he considered a very unwise remark made by that gentleman. He looked upon Mr. Brookes as a wise man; but he said unwise things sometimes, and that remark was an unwise one for him to make, when he said there was neither brains nor money in the North. It was one of those "high-falutin'" sayings which went for nothing. The hon. member for Blackall took great exception to the hon. gentleman for saying, "Perish the sugar industry if it is to be worked by gangs." That was not all the hon. gentleman said: he said, "Perish the sugar industry, if it is to be worked by gangs of men who are not paid a sufficient sum for their labour." All hon. members had been very loud in their cries that all labourers should receive fair pay for their labour. He believed that, even if they had thousands of persons coming into the colony every year through the means of the Bill, it would have no lowering effect upon the wages of the persons in the colony; but, on the contrary, he believed the introduction of labour

would cause a necessity for more and yet more labour still; and so the thing would go on.

Mr. JORDAN said that he had listened to the remarks of the hon. member for Mackay with the great amount of pleasure that he usually felt in hearing that hon. gentleman speak. He was the representative of the planters in the North, and one whom they had every reason to be proud of. If all the planters had as much brains as their representative, they would have quite as much brains as any person in the South. The hon. member said that the planters of the North were content to accept the situation, and try the experiment of European labour. He proceeded, however, to say that he thought the House would consider it a fair thing if the planters, in the engagement of indented labourers from Europe, made an engagement with them at 12s. a week. It would be remembered by hon. gentlemen in that House, that some time ago, before the present Parliament was formed, one of the candidates for election said that a large number of British labourers would be quite willing to make an agreement to some of the planters at 15s. a week with the addition of rations. The remark was taken hold of by the Press representing the Opposition and the sugar-planters, and attempts of the most ridiculous description were made to pour contempt upon that suggestion. It was said by the Press, and by members of that House, that they did not want to degrade European labourers by offering them only 15s. a week. Nothing was said about rations in the Press, though that was spoken of at the same time; but it was said that 15s. a week, without rations, was that gentleman's proposal. He had to take occasion to contradict those statements in that House, and he read the full report of the words he had himself uttered, as reported in one of the leading papers of the city. After pouring ridicule upon the suggestion of an engagement for 15s. a week and rations, the hon. member for Mackay deliberately proposed that it would be a fair thing to make engagements with European labourers for the sugar-planters in the North, at 12s. a week. He (Mr. Jordan) had never expected or suggested a low rate of wages in the North for labourers. He never believed that men coming from England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, or Norway, should be ground down to anything like 12s. a week. He had always understood that what the planters desired was not cheap, but reliable labour. His contention was simply that, from what he knew of immigration, he could say that a large number of a most respectable class of British labourers would be perfectly content and only too happy to engage at home for one or two years at 15s. a week, with the addition of rations. The indented labour provision was a very important aspect of the Immigration question, especially in view of the verdict recently pronounced by the country at large on the question of black labour. The public were determined not to have coolie labour. Kanaka labour was evidently doomed, and it was evident that the planters of the North would be dependent very much now upon indented labour from Europe. He was at a loss to understand whence the idea could have got abroad that the colony was to be inundated with Italians and Maltese. He saw no mention of them in the Bill. Germans and Scandinavians they knew, and the people of Denmark; they had been tried, and they had proved to be good citizens and successful settlers on the land. It would be very different with Italians and Maltese. They should beware, as the hon. member for Townsville had cautioned them, of introducing low-class labour. Even if it should be European



labour, he felt confident it would be strongly opposed by the public generally. Hitherto they had had no popular feeling against immigration in this colony, but it had been otherwise in the other colonies. In Victoria, some years since, steps were taken to introduce something similar to the provisions of the Bill introduced here in 1860, but it was so strongly opposed, popularly, that the Government did not venture to bring it before Parliament. Symptoms of the same kind were manifested here after the passing of the Immigration Act of 1860. Some hon. members would, no doubt, distinctly remember a mass meeting which was held in Brisbane—just before the Commissioner for Immigration went to England—at that time, by the working men. They went in force and strongly opposed the proposed immigration from England. They were afraid it would bring down the rate of wages. It was explained that the intention was to attract small capitalists, who would themselves be employers of labour, as well as to attract labourers. That explanation was perfectly satisfactory to that great meeting, and there had been no such symptoms of opposition to immigration manifested here since. In 1882, an Immigration Bill was brought in by Sir Thomas McIlwraith. That was a very good Bill, and was so good that the Bill now brought in to amend it did not need to contain more than a few clauses. It was a much better Immigration Bill than the one brought in by the previous Government in 1872, even as amended by the Amending Act of 1875; but it should be remembered that the best part of it—the principal Act in the present case—was introduced at the instance of the present Premier of the colony. That was contained in the 17th clause of the Act, which provided for a class of immigrants of a superior kind. It was found, twenty years ago, that the best of the labouring classes would not receive their passage from any Government. Many of them were thinking of emigrating for years, but they would not come out as paupers. It was because of that that the officer administering their immigration at home, in 1861, recommended to the Government that £8 should be received from those persons who were suitable immigrants and who could satisfy the commissioner that they were in every respect eligible. The 17th clause of the principal Act was very much better than that. It had been so successful that during the first year the commissioner received £17,000 and more, on account of assisted passages. During the three subsequent years, he received £52,000 from assisted passages, which proved sufficient to cover all the expenses of his commission for six years and leave a surplus of £3,000 a year. The bonus system at present was very much better. Now, the Agent-General advertised passages for Queensland at American rates, and persons could come out as passengers, not as mere immigrants. That was an experiment, but it had proved a great success. It was ridiculed in the House when brought forward, except by members on the Liberal side; but it had brought out a very much better class, and in such numbers, that it was considered they would supply almost all the demand for labour in the colony. He believed that under the 17th section of the Act the colony could get a sufficient supply of labour from Great Britain alone—a class who had British manly independence, and who did not come as paupers. As to the German vote, the leader of the Opposition knew perfectly well all about it. The hon. gentleman had made a skilful use of the point; he could always make a bad case appear a good one, because he had a pleasant way of talking; but his idea, as now expressed, was absurd. The German vote was perfectly simple. The Germans were intelligent people, and they soon knew well enough which

of the two political parties was favourable to settling the people on the land. That was the whole secret of it. They did not vote for a man who called himself “an independent man”; they knew very well what they were about; and that he was a Conservative to the backbone, and not a friend of the people. They knew that men like him wanted to get the land and keep it as long as they could; that they were in favour of the aggregation of large estates, and the employment of the lowest class of labour; and that they had done their utmost for twenty-three years to prevent the colonisation of Queensland by the settling of the farming class on the land. The Germans knew all that well enough, and they had sense enough not to vote for the “independent man,” but for the Liberal. If anyone could conceive the possibility of the leader of the Opposition becoming a Liberal, heart and soul, the Germans would vote for him to a man, in spite of the unkind things he had said about them. He (Mr. Jordan) wanted to say something about what he conceived the desirability of such an amendment of the Act as would have the direct effect of bringing capital into the colony. They had been charged by hon. gentlemen on the Opposition side with keeping capital out of the colony. If that were true they had committed a crime against the commonwealth, and somebody ought to suffer for it. They had rejected a grand colossal scheme of land grant railways, under which railways were to be built—a large number of persons were to be introduced—and the fortunes of almost everybody were to be made. No doubt that scheme would have brought a great deal of capital into the colony to complete the railways, and a lot of individuals would have been rolling in wealth. But it would have been at the expense of the million—of the working men especially. Not only they, but some of the most influential and richest squatters, were opposed to it, and the voice of the colony condemned it. But what were they to substitute? They must have money to build their railways. They were going in for a great railway system. There were three great trunk lines to be extended hundreds of miles, and a number of other railways to be made. For that, six millions were to be borrowed. It was a grand scheme, and just what the colony wanted. The colony must have a great population. They had now got a grand land scheme, which was to unlock millions of acres of land.

Mr. NORTON: I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman is not speaking to the question before the House.

The SPEAKER: I think the hon. gentleman is slightly wandering from the question.

Mr. GRIMES: The question is the adjournment of the debate. We are not on the main question at all.

The SPEAKER: It has always been the practice of the House of Commons, on a motion for the adjournment of a debate, to confine attention solely to that question; no other matter is allowed to be discussed. In this House, it has unfortunately been the practice for some years to allow great latitude on a motion for an adjournment of a debate, but it is quite contrary to parliamentary practice that such should take place. The motion is the adjournment of the debate, and upon that I hardly think that the general question of the land policy and railway policy can be discussed, when the debate is on the second reading of the Immigration Bill.

Mr. JORDAN said he would conclude his remarks and not detain the House any longer. It was difficult for him when speaking on this question not to connect it with the land question, because he thought they were essentially connected. He had prefaced his remarks about the land by saying that he had intended that



there should be an amendment in the Bill by way of giving greater encouragement to persons with capital; and he was going to show that without a large population our railways would not get traffic enough to support them. As he had been ruled out of order, he would now conclude, as he would have an opportunity of speaking on the subject at some future time.

Mr. NORTON: I am almost sorry I called your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the way in which the hon. member was speaking, because there has been a great deal of latitude allowed to-night in the debate which has taken place; but when the hon. member told us he was not going to say anything further and then wandered off into the railway scheme, the land scheme, and who knows how many other schemes, it looked as if he was going on for ever. The points that have been discussed previously have been closely connected with the question before the House. There was one remark which fell from the hon. member who has just sat down which I would like to say a few words about, and that is with reference to the bounty system. The hon. member pointed out that, although the gentlemen who sit on the same side of the House as the members of the present Government supported that scheme, it was to a certain extent ridiculed by members on this side.

The PREMIER: Strenuously opposed.

Mr. NORTON: I do not think that is quite a proper expression to use. It was opposed by this side, and I admit that I opposed it, but the system has since been tried and found to work well; but I still have no hesitation in saying that at that time I was opposed to it. We have not only evidence in fact of its success, but also the evidence of reports from the gentlemen at home, who reported to the authorities that there were so many applicants to come out under that bounty system that they did not know how to find ships enough to send them out. The senior member for Toowoomba, when speaking of the action of the Government in having limited the number of immigrants who were coming to the colony at the time they assumed the reins of government, said that the reason for limiting immigration was on account of the immigration vote having been largely overdrawn. Well, I believe it was, but I do not know that that was the reason for limiting immigration, because we had evidence that the bounty system was acting favourably, and we had the evidence of the agents in addition, who said that there were so many people waiting to come here that there was no means of sending them, and they asked to be allowed to put on extra ships to meet the demand. I think the whole of the evidence shows that it might have been carried on as largely as ever, simply by this one system. I think that points to the fact, as the hon. member Mr. Jordan has shown, that this Bill is scarcely necessary. The hon. member stated—and his experience entitles him to much consideration—that he believed all the immigrants required for this colony can be obtained in the British Islands; and I, for one, quite agree with him, and think there is no occasion to indent labourers from Europe. This colony is the only one of the group, on the mainland at all events, in which the people generally have not raised their voice against Government immigration. They have protested strongly in New South Wales against the Government voting large sums of money to bring out immigrants, and they have protested very continuously and very strongly in Victoria and South Australia. Is the same sort of thing to be brought about here? Up to the present time there has been no opposition to it on the part of the people generally; but will there not be after the passing of a measure like

this? Already there are indications of that opposition, and the hon. member for Kennedy, in his speech, indicated to us that the action of his own constituents was directly in support of the statement I make. The opposition which has been raised there will, I believe, be raised in other towns, and it will be raised, I believe, with very good reason; because, if we can get immigrants to come out here under the bounty system at a cost of £10 each, why should we go to the larger expense of £14 or £15, which will be the cost of immigrants under this system? The person who indents a labourer pays £1, and the country pays the remainder, which comes out of the pocket of the taxpayer. Is there any reason, if we can get immigrants from Great Britain for £10, why we should pay £14? I have no intention of entering upon the subject of white and black labour, and the dispute which exists in regard to the two classes of labour. I wish, however, to say a very few words in regard to what fell, in connection with that subject, from the member for Oxley. That hon. gentleman complained that the hon. member for Mackay always made the same speech—that it was a stereotyped speech, and that, for all useful purposes, it would be as well were the speech kept in type at the printing office. I wonder if the hon. member ever thinks of his own speeches on the same subject. I would ask the hon. member if he does not think that remark applies quite as much to his own speeches as it does to those of the hon. member for Mackay? I think, under the circumstances, he did not place himself in a good position by making that remark. However, the hon. member does not occupy the same position as a sugar-grower in the North does. From his position here he is able to command a supply of labour whenever he wants it. He is near the Brisbane market, where there is always a large floating supply of labour, and when he wants additional hands he can get them. Now, there is no similar condition of things up north where we can get twenty or thirty hands when required. The men there must be engaged for a length of time or not at all. Besides that, the hon. member grows sugar here and does not sell it to the large buyer, but retails it himself.

Mr. GRIMES: No; the sugar is put on the Melbourne market.

Mr. NORTON: I heard the hon. member did so, and I thought he did. The hon. member, in speaking of the labour difficulty, said that if the planters would yoke their horses on to their implements and try if they would not do the work, they would be able to do without kanakas. But have they tried it? Does the hon. member know whether any of them has tried it or not? When I was in the North, not very long ago, I was on a large sugar plantation, the manager of which I knew took a great interest in the subject to which the hon. member for Oxley referred. He knew perfectly well, as all who have had anything to do with agriculture know, that a great deal can be done by machinery to lessen the cost of production. He had carefully studied those matters, and was well informed as to all new implements that had been introduced. This gentleman set apart a plot of considerable size, some acres—I forget the exact number—in extent, which he pointed out to me as his experimental farm. The kanakas were entirely kept off it, and it was cultivated by means of machinery and white labour. He told me at the time that he thought the result would be a failure. I have not seen him since, but I have heard on reliable authority that the result was not satisfactory. That was a gentleman who has been a long while connected with the business; a thoroughly practical man, who went into

that experiment because he believed that black labour would shortly cease in Queensland; and he wished to know how far the use of implements instead of black labour would be successful. The hon. member for Townsville, in the course of his remarks, referred to the low price of sugar in England which had been brought about by the large cultivation of beet on the Continent; but he made a mistake in saying that the price of beet sugar had not affected the price of sugar grown in Australia. I know that that is one of the greatest mistakes possible. It has made a difference of no less than £5 a ton. It is no use saying that the low price of sugar arises from a local cause. It is the price in the London market which has affected the price at Mackay. It has affected it in this way:—Whereas the large sugar company at Sydney, which has so many mills of its own, buys up such an immense quantity of sugar—which has, in fact, been the buyer of the greater part of the produce of the Mackay plantations for a number of years past, since the price of sugar has fallen so low in the English market—producers elsewhere than Mackay, who had been in the habit of sending their sugar to England, find they can sell it here more profitably; and instead of sugar grown in Java and other places going to England or the Continent, a great quantity of it is bought up by the sugar company at a very low price; and they cannot afford to give the same price to the Mackay planters which the latter have been in the habit of receiving. That is how the price of sugar in the English market affects the price here, and anyone who will take the trouble to read up what has been written in the English papers on the subject will see that what I have stated is correct. It is no use pretending to look upon that fall in the English market as merely a temporary fall. It is a permanent one, and the best writers on the subject there refer to it as a fall which must continue for some years; the reason given being that the large production of beet sugar on the Continent had more than supplied the markets which it had been in the habit of supplying before, and therefore the growers could afford to send the surplus to England and sell it at a lower price. Not only is the production of beet sugar largely increasing year by year in Germany and France, but, in order to give a greater impetus to the industry, the Governments are giving a bounty on the sugar exported from those countries, and so enabling them to compete with the sugar grown on the southern side of the world. Sugar is also produced in largely increasing quantities in Egypt and India; and everything goes to show that instead of the fall being merely a temporary affair, there is every reason to suppose that the fall will be a permanent one in the London market, and that it will create a permanently lower price here. Reference has been made, both outside and inside the Chamber, to the fact of Victorian and other southern capitalists investing their capital in sugar plantations in Queensland, and drawing their profits out of the country. Have we any great reason to complain of this? Have they not also done a great deal of good by employing an immense amount of labour in the colony which would not otherwise have been employed? Surely we have no great right to complain of any comparatively small transactions of that nature, when we are content to mortgage the whole of our railways and public works to English capitalists, and to give to them not only the net returns we get from those railways and public works, but in addition to that, many hundreds of thousands of pounds out of the pockets of the ratepayers to make up the interest we have to pay on those loans. What is the difference? What does it matter to us

whether the money we have to pay interest for comes from England, or from Victoria and New South Wales; or whether the amount we have to pay, and which goes out of the country, is received in the shape of profits instead of interest on loans? The two arguments do not fit in well together. If we are justified in sending money out of the country as interest on loans, we may, on the same grounds, justify the investment of large sums of money on the part of private individuals, who circulate a vast amount in working the plantations and then take the net profits out of the country. I have just one word to say with regard to what has fallen from the hon. member for Oxley respecting the climate of the North. I would ask any man who understands anything about vegetable life, if he could go to the North and see the luxuriant growth of tropical plants there, and say that the climate is not more exhausting to human nature than it is down here. Anyone who knows anything about the matter must know that the climate is much hotter and much more moist than the climate of the southern portion of the colony, and consequently much more difficult for Europeans to work in. I do not think I have said many words at any time about the introduction of Germans and foreigners under that Bill. I do not hold with a great deal that has been said about them on both sides of the House. I have employed a good many Germans at different times before I came to Queensland, and have employed one or two since I came here. I have had two in my service for many years, and a pair of honest or more faithful workmen could not be found anywhere. Not only could I leave the work entirely in their hands, when once they knew what they had to do, but there was no necessity to inspect it after it was done, as I was perfectly satisfied that it would be done correctly. As to the other Germans I have employed, they were as a rule as good as the average of British workmen. I am not going to say a word against Germans as Germans. Taking them as a class they are good agriculturists, and if placed on land of their own, work very hard; the women working as well as the men. No doubt they have done a great deal towards settling the country in many places. In Rosewood, they have done a great deal of work. I would not say anything against them. But I do say that blood is thicker than water, and if we are going to introduce immigrants, we ought to get them from our own people. I do not think there is any objection to German labourers being nominated; but if the taxpayers of the colony are to provide the funds for immigration, the immigrants should be from the country to which the people of the colony belong. I think that for many years to come we will be able to get as many immigrants as we require from Great Britain. I do not mean to say that we would be able to take the place of kanakas. For my own part I look upon the proposal to provide labour for the sugar plantations with indented Europeans, with misgivings. From what I have seen—and I speak as an observer anxious to find out whether the proposal will answer, and not as one interested—I believe as far as I have been able to judge that it will not answer to work plantations in the North with Europeans. The planters are not to blame for having tried to benefit themselves. I think there are not many persons in that House who have cried out against them who would not have tried equally to benefit themselves whenever they had the opportunity. They have no doubt tried to do so, and, though not in the same, yet in other ways, equally selfish. But I think the country owes the planters so much that the hon.

members ought to give them every consideration in their power. I repeat that I will watch the proposed experiment with misgivings, as I do not believe, from what I have seen, that there is the slightest chance of its being successful. It will have the effect of lowering wages all over the colony. It is perfectly impossible to bring men here who will work for any time at the comparatively low wages planters will give. Planters to whom I have spoken on the subject have told me that they could not afford to give high wages. Therefore, if we bring out large numbers of immigrants at the expense of the taxpayers, the labouring men, who are the taxpayers, will suffer, as sooner or later they will materially lower the price of labour all over the colony. Hon. members on the other side say such will not be the case, but I do not see how they can sustain that argument, and for the reasons I have given I will oppose the Bill.

Mr. ISAMBERT said in America, at the Salt Lake City, certain individuals were found who were known by the name of the "Latter-day Saints." In the northern part of this colony there were found certain individuals—not the "Latter-day Saints," but the "latter-day aristocrats"; and whenever a question or measure came before that House in which their rights, or their supposed rights, or their arrogated privileges, were in the slightest degree interfered with, the House was treated to—was inundated with—an amount of special and specious pleading that was perfectly astonishing; but for the most special and specious pleading commend them to the hon. member for Mackay. It had been his (Mr. Isambert's) misfortune before in that House, when speaking from the other side, to have to refute the assertions of that hon. member that immigration from the Continent of Europe was lowering the wages of the white man. When those "latter-day aristocrats" were taking up the cause of the white man he always calculated that there was something behind it. No worse advocates for the cause could be found in the world than the "latter-day aristocrats." If the importation of immigrants from the Continent or from England lowered wages, to what depths must wages have been lowered in America? The solution of the problem was to be found in the fact that the immigrants, after working for a year or two for masters, became employers themselves, and made room for other labourers. The more immigrants they got in a new country the more prosperous that country would become. That was proved by experience—experience which showed the fallacy of the arguments used by hon. gentlemen opposite. It was truly bewildering to find out the real drift of their arguments against immigration, and to know why those "latter-day aristocrats" were taking up the cause of the working man. Why was it that they had such a down on the German and the Scandinavian immigrants? For the true reason they must go back to between 200 and 300 years, to the time when England was dotted over its whole length and breadth with those people whom the Liberal party considered such desirable people to have in the colony—the tillers of the soil, the yeomanry of England. Every true Englishman still referred with justifiable pride to that honourable class as the backbone of the country; and there was no darker spot in the history of England than the means by which that yeomanry was wiped off the face of the land, divorced from the soil and made strangers in the land of their birth. People on the Continent were not allowed to sleep like the people in England, but had to fight for their liberties, and for that reason they valued them more. In consequence of their position,

Englishmen had lost their traditional love for their homes, and had become, as it were, Jews, traders, traffickers in a nation—

Mr. MOREHEAD: Of shopkeepers.

Mr. ISAMBERT: Yes; they were shopkeepers, and the hon. gentleman was the agent of shopkeepers. The hon. member for Balonne and the hon. member for Blackall spoke in disparagement of the German population. He had known the hon. member for Blackall for many years in Rockhampton; and the leader of the Opposition was too good-natured, and had too keen an appreciation of wit and sarcasm, to mean what he said. If the hon. member could not swagger at anybody else, he swaggered at himself. If there was a sarcastic remark to be made, his appreciation of wit and sarcasm was such that he would rather revile himself than let the opportunity pass. The only fault the hon. gentleman was labouring under was that he had not got a proper schooling.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I cannot speak German. I admit that at once.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the hon. gentleman's lot was most blessed. He was the leader of the party opposite, he had great abilities, and had received good schooling when he was young; but the very thing that ought to be a blessing to him might prove the reverse. Unless the untamed colt were properly controlled it would never become the horse that would carry him to fame. Now about that "leetle German vote." He would tell the whole mystery in a very few words. About two years ago he met the Rev. Mr. Griffith in Queen street, who said to him, "I have been to Rosewood." "Yes," he replied. The reverend gentleman said, "I met a chum of yours who said, 'Ah! you are Mr. Griffith.'" "Yes," was the reply. "Ah! then you are the father of the man that is fighting the battle of the people." That explained the whole mystery of the "leetle German vote." Several hon. members on both sides of the House admitted that the Germans were intelligent people, and there was no doubt that they realised who were the real friends of the country. Having grown up in the duty of fighting for their country at home, the foundation of their patriotism was laid, and they transferred that patriotism to their adopted home. By virtue of that transferred patriotism, they were ready when called upon to throw everything else aside and lay down their lives for the country that offered them shelter and home. It implanted a great sense of responsibility in these people, and when they came here they knew very well that if they gave a wrong vote they or their children would have to wipe out that wrong with their blood. They realised that, perhaps, more than people who, by long occupation in trafficking—buying in the cheapest market, and selling in the dearest—had lost that sense of duty. The true key to the animosity against the German immigrants was to be found in that aristocratic spirit that had wiped away from England the yeomanry of small landed proprietors, which in France had proved the salvation of the country in the time of its greatest disaster. A man was to a great extent the result of his education; and the agricultural population owning their own little homes was not the creation of a day. It took the perpetration of the darkest social crime to wipe it out from England, and before it could be re-established England would have to undergo a tremendous struggle, which would shake it to its very foundation. The violation of that principle had caused the revolution in France. The people were there divorced, as the people of England were now divorced, from the soil, and in order to get their own again they had to go through a revolution, and he very

much doubted whether England would be let off so easily for the sins she had perpetrated against herself. In Germany, they had these people yet. The love for home had been born and bred in them, and when they came here they transferred it to their adopted country. Just as good agricultural settlers as were to be found in Germany and the neighbouring countries to-day, were formerly in England, and were there still, but not in such numbers. It was the inherent abhorrence of these "latter-day aristocrats" towards the free tillers of the soil that was the true explanation of their abhorrence of German immigrants. If the same class of English immigrants came out they would be just as much disliked. They encouraged the introduction of English immigrants, who had never been tillers of the soil. Then they said, "They are not fit for sugar cultivation; we shall have coolies." That was the burden of the whole song, "Give us coolies, we do not want free labour." What the sugar-planters were afraid of was, not that the sugar industry would go down, but that it would arise on a new and a surer basis, built up by the free labour of the tiller of his own property. They all knew that speculative agriculture on a large scale, such as these "latter-day aristocrats" were so fond of, could not be prosecuted except by slave labour or semi-slave labour, and this was the reason they so much opposed this Bill. The sugar industry had certainly been in a flourishing state during the last few years, but its prosperity was not resting on a sure foundation; and now that it was going through its trial it would not fall to the ground if it could be carried on profitably, but would rise on a surer foundation. He hoped hon. members on both sides of the House, but particularly on the Opposition side, would avail themselves of the opportunity of going the following day to the Rosewood Show, where they might witness with their own eyes the results which agriculturists, working on their own small holdings, could achieve. Hon. members were welcome to go up and see what these men could do in their own small way, and perhaps, by-and-by several of them would go up north, and see what those hon. members could do in their big way.

Mr. HAMILTON said it appeared to him—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member, having moved the adjournment of the debate, is precluded from speaking on the original motion.

Mr. WHITE said he failed to see what good would result from the discussion of the wages that new-chums ought to have. They would very soon find their level. The hon. leader of the Opposition objected to immigration from Germany until the surplus population of England and Ireland were cleared out from there and brought here. It was not above a week or two since he (Mr. White) went down to the depôt to look for a labourer. About thirty young fellows gathered around him, and if they were an average sample of what they were getting regularly from England and Ireland, the conclusion that he came to was that if they were worth 10s. a week a promiscuous selection from the German immigrants would be worth 15s. a week. The best labourer he had had in Queensland came from Germany; he worked six months for 10s. a week; afterwards he (Mr. White) had to pay him 9s. a day for a short spell; and when he was nine months in the country he took up a farm of eighty acres. The farm was let now for some £30 or £40 a year, and the man was in business in Brisbane at the present time. German settlers were not to be despised. They were amongst the best agricultural classes that were coming to the colony; and if they could not get a better class

from England or Ireland than was coming now they had better apply to Germany.

Mr. J. CAMPBELL said he felt rather nervous in rising for the first time in the House, and he should not have risen then had it not been for the turn the debate had taken. Before speaking he conceived it his duty to ask the indulgence of the House for any inaccuracies or want of attention to the forms of the House. He was delighted when the hon. Premier rose and made that able speech; but it occurred to him that he did not go far enough. He expected a better solution of the difficulty which surrounded the Labour question; but it was possible that it might be one of those matters that he did not quite understand. He did not understand the hon. gentleman's party lines, and it might possibly be owing to one of these that he did not explain himself more thoroughly upon the question. He took it that the object of the Bill would be, so far as German immigration was concerned, to lay on ships direct from Germany to the colony, instead of going the roundabout way in which they had hitherto been brought out, *via* England; which would be a benefit to the colony. The German question had been pretty well trashed out, but he felt that it was his duty to say something upon it. He was pained to hear that venerable far-seeing politician, the hon. member for Blackall, speak in the disparaging terms of those people that he did. He stigmatised them as the lowest in the social scale amongst the civilised races of the world.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He said nothing of the sort. In the absence of the hon. member for Blackall—

The PREMIER: The hon. member is out of order.

Mr. J. CAMPBELL said that was the interpretation he put upon it, and he did not think anyone else could put any other. Those might not have been the exact words of the hon. gentleman. He had had considerable experience amongst Germans for something like thirty years, and claimed for them that they were an industrious and law-abiding class. They did not find those people around Public Works offices seeking to push themselves into the Government employment; nor did they find them hanging on to the coat-tails of their members to use their influence to get them something to do; or buttonholing anyone who might have influence. They went forth and subdued the inferior lands which other people had rejected, and brought them into utility and benefit to themselves and the State. There was one little matter in the speech of the hon. member for Mackay which he would refer to. He complained of the present Government bringing the present stagnation upon the sugar industry, and of passing the law that prevented kanakas coming into the country. He took it that the Government framed no laws to prevent them coming in; they simply put in force the law that was in existence. If the previous Government had winked at the actions of the traders and their agents, he commended this Government for taking notice of them, and bringing them to book. He exceedingly regretted what he had had to say with reference to the hon. member for Blackall. He had always looked upon him as almost without exception the leading politician in the House. It must have been a mistake that the hon. gentleman had made. There was another matter he would mention. The Germans had been spoken of very harshly in reference to the manner in which they voted. He might tell the hon. leader of the Opposition that if they had opposed him at election times he was the cause of it. It was the manner in which

he had spoken of them as a people which had caused them to club together and vote against the party he represented.

Mr. HORWITZ said he would not detain the House very long. He could not claim that he had any German vote at all in Warwick; he represented English, Scotch, and Irish, and trusted to be able to speak on behalf of all. If it was advisable to have immigrants from Germany, he should be only too glad to see them come out and make good colonists; but if a majority of the House considered it was not desirable to have them, he would not say a word either in favour of or against it. That was all he wished to say.

Mr. FERGUSON said the discussion had altogether drifted away from the question before the House. They had only a short Bill, which was an amendment upon the Immigration Bill of 1882. He remembered well the discussion which took place at that time on the very question they were amending now, and he took a prominent part in trying to reduce the cost of procuring labour from England. It was first proposed that the amount should be £3, and there were some in favour of making it £1. The matter was eventually compromised, and made £2. He was one who wanted it to be made £1, and therefore he intended to support the Bill, and did not think that any member of the House would oppose it. He had no doubt the speech of the Premier that night would do a great deal of harm, and would have a great effect upon the sugar industry in the North. He was quite satisfied the resolution proposed by the hon. gentleman would not carry out what it was intended to do. It would certainly fail so far as the sugar industry was concerned. The introduction of a large number of European labourers into the colony, at a low rate of wages, would undoubtedly affect the wages of the working men at present in the colony. If it was the intention of the Government to introduce a class of immigrants to carry on the sugar industry on a different system to the present, it would be a different thing altogether. If he would introduce a class to settle upon and cultivate smaller areas, it would have quite another effect; but he was quite satisfied the present proposal would not answer for the sugar industry as at present carried on. If it would have the effect of settling a large population on the land in small areas it would be of far more benefit to the colony than the present system. He believed that they should have a system of small holders of land, with a central mill. Capitalists would then have an opportunity to invest in mills. They should have a number of small holders to cultivate the land, and sell their cane; or get the mill-owners to crush the cane; or buy it according to density, as they did at Bundaberg at the present time. He could not see why they could not get on as well in that way as the small farmers in the South, where capitalists erected mills and ground their wheat or bought it from them. It might require somewhat larger capital in the far North; but in the central district where he lived himself he might say he held some land in connection with others, which was capable of growing sugar, and it was their intention to erect a mill there, and let out the land in small areas, at a very small rent to families who would settle upon it; and then they would either purchase their cane or crush it for them. If that was carried out, he believed it would be of benefit to the colony. He could not sit down without referring to a remark made by the junior member for North Brisbane, when he told the House that they had neither money nor brains in the North. The North had been a very good milch cow to the

South up the present time. It was very unbecoming for any hon. member to make use of such an expression, and he could only come to the conclusion that any man who could use such an expression must have lost his brains himself. He would support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HAMILTON said that if the House would allow him he would withdraw his motion for the adjournment of the debate.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member may withdraw his motion, if the House consents to his doing so.

The PREMIER: Before the motion is withdrawn I take the opportunity of saying a few words, as I believe it is expected I should do, by way of reply to some of the speeches made, and as I have been asked either to reply to the arguments used or to give further information. I refer particularly to the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan. Before adverting to his speech, I wish to express my surprise at the turn the debate has taken. In moving the second reading of the Bill, I explained the provisions of it and showed the necessity for a change in the present law; particularly in this respect, that under the existing law there is no provision for bringing out the wives and families of indentured labourers. The only labourers who can be brought out in that way, under the present law, are bachelors. That, I pointed out as a necessity for amending the existing law. I also pointed out the use which it is intended should be taken of the provisions of the existing Act, as it is proposed to be amended by the Government, for the purpose of supplying agricultural labour in the colony, which is now very deficient. I also pointed out that at the present time it is very difficult to get agricultural labourers from England, and that it has been found almost impossible to get a sufficient supply. I said all this before, but a great many of the speeches which have been made since, have been complaints of want of information on these points. If hon. gentlemen had paid me the compliment of listening when I was speaking first they would have heard all these things and the reasons for the course which the Government now propose to take. Some hon. gentlemen, in speaking, insist upon putting words into my mouth which I never uttered, and which they must have known I never uttered nor thought. One of the great arguments used was, that the Bill was a scheme for bringing out low-waged foreigners, or low-waged Germans. That has been said frequently to-night. Let every man in this colony know those are the words of hon. members opposite. They are not the words of the members of the Government, nor do they indicate the thoughts of the members of the Government. This scheme of putting words into your opponents' mouths which they have not uttered is one which does not long last of any use. It is a very broken reed to lean upon, and a reed which, when it splits, if it hurts anybody, it is the hand that holds it.

Mr. STEVENSON: It is this Bill.

The PREMIER: The hon. member says it is this Bill. Sir, the hon. member seems incapable of understanding anything that comes from the present Government, whether it comes from his particular friend, the Minister for Lands, or from any other member of the Government. Another question which has been asked is, how it is proposed that these men shall be engaged and brought out to the colony? I pointed out in my speech in the second reading how the Government propose this should be done. They propose to appoint agents, who will supervise and select the men to be engaged, and see that they

are fit men for the Government to pay their passages, because they should not pay the passages of unfit men. As to the mode of engagement, that is provided for in detail in the two clauses of the principal Act, which I read, and which provide for the agreement to be made in the presence of the agent of the Government, and to be entered into between the intending labourer and the agent, in Europe, of the intending employer. I pointed all that out on the second reading of the Bill. As to the arrangements made for bringing them to the colony, I did not explain that, because it is at present unsettled. There are at present negotiations pending for the establishment of a line of German steamships—I am now answering the question so far as it relates to the Continent—trading to Australia. There can be no possible objection to immigrants being brought out by them if that line of steamships is established, only in that case we should not pay the passage money until they arrived in Queensland. If that is not done, arrangements will have to be made for bringing them direct from the Continent here. Those are the principal questions asked during the course of the debate, and upon which hon. members stated they wanted explanation. Of course it is the intention of the Government to give further information about the administration of the scheme, when proposing the necessary vote in the Estimates, without which it cannot be carried into operation. The hon. member for Townsville adverted to a remark made by my hon. colleague, Mr. Brookes, as to the North having neither money nor brains. Well, I confess I do not understand what my hon. friend meant. I understood, certainly, that he was speaking in parables, as he himself interjected, "Mr. Speaker, you will understand what I mean, and it is no use affecting to misunderstand it." I do not myself understand quite what he did mean. If he meant that there was neither money nor brains in the North he could not have been in earnest, because everyone who has visited the North, as he has, knows that there is a great amount of material wealth there and also some remarkably shrewd men. The hon. member for Townsville said that by this Bill the Government were giving another blow to the sugar industry; at least, that is as far as I could understand him—as far as I could catch the words he used. What he meant by that statement I have not the vaguest idea. How the Government, by proposing to assist the planter in introducing labour, is aiming a blow at the sugar industry, I confess I do not understand; I cannot even conjecture what the meaning is. I requested, on the second reading, that hon. members would say exactly what they did mean. How can the Government, by assisting any class to get labour, be aiming a blow at them? What do they want? Do they want labour, or do they not want it? I do not know whether they want it or not. The hon. gentleman went on to say that capital was excluded from coming to the North in consequence of the uncertainty of the labour market and of the action of the present Government. What is the action of the present Government he refers to? That is what I want to know, and I only wish the hon. gentleman would tell us what he means. What is the action of the present Government that is causing this severe blow to the labour trade? What is this severe blow? I want to know. Is it this—that the Government have not proposed to import labour from India? If it is so, why do not hon. members say so? It would be plainer, more definite, and we should have an idea what they meant. The Government have declined to take any such steps; and

any other Government in the present Parliament would have to do precisely the same thing, because this Parliament will not allow the introduction of labour from India. If that is the blow that is meant, it was dealt by the electors at the late general election: let that be distinctly understood. I thought I had made it clear in moving the second reading that this Bill is an attempt to give a definite expression to the will of the people as indicated at the general election; and as such the hon. member for Mackay accepted it. If that is not the blow, what is? What else have the Government done? I wish some hon. members would tell us. Do they mean to say that a blow was struck at the sugar industry by preventing kidnapping in the South Seas? Is that the blow, I should like to know? I should like to hear some hon. member get up and tell us that the blow to the industry was the prevention of kidnapping, if any hon. member is rash enough to make such a statement. The accusation I am referring to must mean one of those two things, otherwise it has no foundation. Is it that the Government have held their hands with respect to coolies, and have not held their hands with respect to kidnapping in the South Seas? Let us know exactly what we are talking about. I endeavoured to put the matter as clearly as I could this evening. Now we want to know what we are doing. Then we were told by the hon. member for Townsville that the Government, by their Land Bill, were taking away one of the best inducements to men to settle on the land—that the present inducements were to be withdrawn. I am not going to discuss the Land Bill now, but I assert this: that the inducements to settle held out by that Bill are infinitely greater than in any other Bill that was ever introduced into the Parliament of this colony—infinitely greater—homestead clauses included. And, referring to these homestead clauses as an inducement to immigration, I should be glad to hear him say how many have settled on the land under those clauses within three years, after their service in the colony. I only desired, when I rose, to take the opportunity of answering some of the statements that have been made before the Bill is read a second time.

Motion for adjournment withdrawn.

Mr. HAMILTON rose to speak.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has spoken.

The SPEAKER: The House having given the hon. member permission to withdraw his motion for the adjournment of the debate, the hon. member can now speak on the question. On the 31st July, 1873, a precisely similar course was taken in the House of Commons before Mr. Speaker Brand, as is now taken. An hon. member was allowed to withdraw a motion for the adjournment of a debate, and the hon. member was then allowed to speak on the main question.

Mr. HAMILTON said it appeared to him that the Bill was intended to have the effect of lowering wages and swamping the vote of the British-born electors. At the last general election it was painfully demonstrated how this was done. At Maryborough, although the late Speaker had a very large majority of British-born electors, the Germans said they would not have him, and consequently he was rejected. In the Wide Bay district, too, the German vote had the effect of nullifying the vote of the majority of the British-born electors, and throughout the colony the German vote had been manipulated for that purpose. It was useless to deny that fact; and the measure before the House was intended to increase

that vote by introducing thousands of Germans. It was perfectly ludicrous to see the manner in which the Germans were "battered" and "plastered"; whenever the name was mentioned in the House half-a-dozen hon. members on the Government benches would spring up and bespatter them with all kinds of praises. It was pitiful to see them seeking to put men of an alien race in front of them as they were continually doing. He believed that the Premier recognised that the planters, in order to compete with planters in other parts of the world, must produce sugar at as low a rate, because at present more sugar was grown here than was required for consumption in the colony; and that it was impossible to compete with other planters, who had the use of black labour, unless cheap labour could be got here, whether black or white. He could not pass over the statement made by the hon. member for Toowoomba in accusing Sir Thomas Mellwraith of inconsistency, in voting against the poll-tax which was proposed by Mr. O'Sullivan. Sir Thomas Mellwraith, many years before that time, and before a large number of kanakas came into the colony, stated that it would be only fair to the sugar-planters to let them know what kind of labour they were to have. As it was a moot point whether it was desirable to introduce black labour or not, before that industry was on a firm basis, he advised the exclusion of the kanaka. That was not agreed to by the Government of the day. Several years subsequently, when the sugar industry had a solid footing in the country, and when the sugar-planters were induced to believe that they would have black labour, it was proposed by Mr. O'Sullivan to put a poll-tax upon kanakas. Sir Thomas Mellwraith voted against that, and the present Premier voted for it. See the inconsistency. Two years after, when the present Premier was in power, he (Mr. Hamilton) proposed, in the very same words used by Mr. O'Sullivan, that the poll-tax should be put upon kanakas. Then the present leader of the Government voted against it. When he was in opposition, and knew he could not carry the poll-tax, he voted for it, in order to convey the impression that he was against black labour, but when he knew that his vote in favour of that tax would carry it two years later, he voted against it, and stated that "the prohibition of the introduction of black labour should be concurrent with the introduction of some other scheme to take its place." This was the scheme—to bring in Germans and Scandinavian labourers to take the place of kanakas. What would be the result of this measure? They knew very well that cheap continental labour could be got for 5s. or 6s. a week, and it was not likely that planters—if they could get such labour at that rate—would pay more. The consequence would be that if they took advantage of this Bill, they would have thousands of Germans and Scandinavians coming into the country. They would be engaged at 5s. or 6s. a week. At present, miners were paid 50s. to 60s., and under these circumstances was it reasonable to suppose that those men would remain at work when their fellow-labourers were earning ten times as much as themselves. No agreement could possibly keep them to their work, and as an hon. member on the other side had said, all the galls in the country could not hold those Germans if they refused to stand by their agreements. What that hon. gentleman said was perfectly correct. Those indented labourers would, as a matter of course, break their agreements, and would come to the mines of the colony. The consequence would be that wages would be lowered in every industry in Queensland. He did not object to introducing our own country-

men, but the idea of introducing a foreign race, and taxing the working men of the colony to introduce them to compete with themselves, was most suicidal. The junior member for North Brisbane, in speaking of the North, expressed certain views upon that portion of the colony, which appeared to be held by the majority of members on the other side.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: No, no!

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member's remark was that there was neither money or brains in the North. He should not retaliate by saying that any person who made use of such an expression would be deficient of brains; and as he did not believe the hon. gentleman would make a statement which he considered untrue, he could only attribute that statement to want of that information which every member in the House should possess of that very important portion of the colony. He should simply confute that statement by comparing one or two goldfields in the North with one of the principal districts in Southern Queensland—that district which the people of Brisbane considered was turning out such a fabulous amount of gold—he referred to Gympie. Charters Towers was discovered many years after Gympie, and had turned out 135,000 ozs. more gold; and the Palmer, which was discovered seven years after Gympie, had turned out 33,700 ozs. more gold. The leader of the Government had intimated that agents for Europe were going to be appointed. He had already sent an immigration agent to England, but not to Scotland. The gentleman who held that position had been given his *congé*. No doubt the experience the Premier had had of Sir Thomas Mellwraith as leader of the Opposition had led him to think that there were enough Scotchmen in the colony already. He (Mr. Hamilton) considered Germans neither better or worse than anyone else; but he considered that they should give their own countrymen the first show. He had been told by mechanics in Brisbane, that, in Manchester and Birmingham, foreigners came over from the Continent and lowered the rates of wages. They would not join in any of the trades unions with the Britishers; they were, no doubt, justified in getting work if they could. The member for Rosewood had made a very pathetic speech, and he imagined it must have been prepared and committed to memory. It was characterised by a remarkable absence of argument and common sense. He actually charged the English people with being traitors to the land of their birth. Well, if any man was worthy of that term, the member for Rosewood was. When Sir Thomas Mellwraith annexed New Guinea, there was not one dissentient voice, and all politicians agreed as to the desirableness of annexing it, although they might not have agreed as to the mode of doing it. The only member who objected was the hon. member for Rosewood, and he wrote a long letter to the *Telegraph*, protesting against it. The arguments used by the hon. member for Rosewood were the very strongest arguments against the introduction of European immigrants. So long as they could get their own countrymen, those were the immigrants to introduce; and that they could get them was proved by the fact that the present Government had stopped immigration from Great Britain as soon as they came into office. The member for Rosewood, referring to the hon. members for Blackall and Balonne, said those gentlemen had done very great harm by their disparaging remarks. Well, a man who insisted upon losing sight of the political side of a question, and who was simply guided by his own likes



and dislikes, was a very dangerous element in the community. Therefore, the hon. member for Rosewood, in giving that as a reason why the Germans voted against the party, gave a reason why they should not be allowed to exercise the franchise.

Mr. BROOKES said his remarks would partake somewhat of the nature of a personal explanation. A remark which he had made in the heat of talking appeared to have been misunderstood. That remark was, that the North had neither money nor brains. In January last year, he travelled up north with the Attorney-General, and had an opportunity of seeing all the principal towns, and he desired to acknowledge the kindness and hospitality with which they both were received. He desired also to speak of the intelligence and wealth he saw everywhere; so that clearly, *prima facie*, he could not say that the North had neither money nor brains.

Mr. MOREHEAD: But you did say it.

Mr. BROOKES said he would explain what he meant. The hon. member for Mackay used the term "the North," and he (Mr. Brookes) used it in exactly the same sense that that hon. member used it in, and in no other sense.

Mr. ARCHER: Is this a personal explanation, or a speech?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is entitled to speak on the main question.

Mr. BROOKES said he was not aware that the hon. member (Mr. Black) was the member for the North; he was the member for Mackay, and Mackay was merely a contemptible village in the North; and when the hon. member said the North would do this, and the North would do that, and the North would insist on separation if such and such things were not done, what did he mean? Although the hon. member used the term "the North," and had let him (Mr. Brookes) into that trouble, he only meant the sugar-planters. And who were the sugar-planters? A mere handful of people, always making a clamour, and trying to persuade the world that Queensland would come to a standstill unless they had everything they wanted. He (Mr. Brookes) did not wish to be misunderstood by the House or by the country. When he said the North had neither money nor brains, he used the term in the sense in which it was always used by the hon. member for Mackay—so far as it applied to the sugar-planters; and he thought he was able to say that if the sugar-planters were represented there by the hon. member for Mackay, and if that hon. member properly represented their ambitions, objects, aims, and present condition, he might repeat the remark—that they had neither money nor brains.

Mr. DONALDSON said that since he had had the honour of a seat in the House he had refrained from addressing the Speaker, for the simple reason that the speeches of the leaders on each side generally disposed of all questions that were brought forward. On the present occasion he would depart from his usual rule, on account of special prominence having been given to the German question. He had had experience of German settlers in two colonies—had lived in districts where they were very plentiful—and felt bound to say that they made good colonists; as agriculturists they took the lead, and made good livings and good homes in circumstances where, he was sorry to say, our own countrymen could not compete with them. He had always had a great respect for the Germans, and believed they were a class of colonists who should be encouraged by every means to settle in the country, and in time they would become gradually iden-

tified with the predominant race, and he no longer Germans but Australians. While he should like to see Germans settling in the colony, he must say there was a great deal of force in what hon. members on that side had said—that they ought not to be settled in the country to the exclusion of our own people. He agreed with those hon. members so far, that they should first of all exhaust their native country. The people of Great Britain should be given the first opportunity of coming to the colony, if they could supply the class of labour that was required; but, failing them, by all means introduce a people who they knew would make good colonists, and extend to them a cordial welcome. A good deal had been said about the "little German vote," as it was called. There were probably many reasons which had led to that vote being clubbed to give a majority to the other side, and probably on another occasion it might shift to the side now in opposition. If it was an evil it would work its own cure. Wherever what was known as an Irish vote was given in the other colonies, there was always a combination formed to put the party down at the next election; and the same thing might occur in Queensland. He was sorry that so much prominence had been given to that view of the question, and he trusted that in future they would hear no more about it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, while agreeing to a great extent with what had fallen from the hon. member (Mr. Donaldson), he had made a political error in not giving consideration to the existence of the German vote as a fixed political factor. Such a fixed and unreasoning political factor was a danger to the State. Years ago he had warned the House as to what would be the result of the German vote. A large number of the Germans were highly intelligent men. Another large number of them, while educated in their own language, were unacquainted with the English language, and were naturally led by the representations of the interpreting medium, who was necessarily a German. With regard to the remarks of the junior member for North Brisbane, his explanation was rather an extraordinary one. He said he would apologise and withdraw the words he had made use of in reference to the people of the North having no money, and that the words had fallen from him in the heat of debate, and he regretted it, because he had been very well entertained in the North. He (Mr. Morehead) must say that he did not think they could have had much brains when they entertained the hon. member. With regard to the speech of the hon. member for Rosewood, he must admit that the music was very good though he did not understand the words; the tune was very nice, but the words were to a certain extent inaudible or incomprehensible. That hon. gentleman had said, in reply to some statements he had made, that the English were a nation of shopkeepers. A greater man even than the hon. member for Rosewood had said that, but he was not a German—he was a gentleman who had taught the Germans a very good lesson, a lesson which, perhaps, they needed at a later period of their history. Now the hon. member, purporting as a member of that House to be an Englishman, took upon himself to insult the English race. He had seen the hon. gentleman in very bad company—at least what, in his (Mr. Morehead) lights, was bad company—in the company of a gentleman who had once occupied the position of Speaker in that House. He was perfectly certain that if the hon. gentleman took the advice of his friend he would put his foot in it, and he had done so; and probably that was the intention of the gentleman who gave him the advice. There was a matter he (Mr. Morehead) had to deal with, and he was sorry he had to



allude to it, because it was a blot on the maiden speech of the hon. member for Aubigny. That hon. gentleman, while expressing the greatest respect and admiration for the hon. member for Blackall, proceeded to misquote a statement his hon. friend had made. He (Mr. Morehead) took it upon himself to contradict the hon. gentleman in strong terms; stronger, he fancied, than the rules of the House admitted. For having spoken so strongly he must express his regret; but, at the same time, he thought the hon. member for Aubigny, especially as he was a young member, should be careful not to attack a gentleman like the hon. member for Blackall, who was a much older member than he, and had held a high position in that House. The Premier, in replying to remarks made from that side of the House, said it was not the intention of that measure to introduce cheap labour for the plantations in the North. If the Bill meant anything at all, it purported to give relief to the depressed sugar industry—to substitute for coloured labourers cheap Europeans. It was brought in in accordance with promises given by the hon. gentleman in his election speeches, and in accordance with a promise in the Speech from the Throne, and now he told them that it was not the intention of the Government to indent labour at a low rate of wages. If the Bill did not mean that what did it mean! The hon. gentleman seemed to be blown about by every breeze. The hon. member for Rosewood went back to the year 1500—he (Mr. Morehead) thought his dates were wrong—and said the yeomanry of England was then swept off the face of the country. He (Mr. Morehead) denied that that statement was correct, historically or otherwise. He also said that since then Englishmen and Germans were very anxious to come out here to get what they could not get in their own country—namely, freeholds. At the same time the hon. gentleman sat behind a Minister who said they should not own the soil until they had been twelve years on it. The hon. gentleman had no idea whatever of the purport of this Bill, which ran side by side with the Land Bill. He (Mr. Morehead) thought the Premier had landed himself on the horns of a very considerable dilemma. He had told them, in his election speeches and in the Governor's speech, that the sugar question was to be settled by providing European labour, and when he found that did not suit he took the opportunity—in speaking on the adjournment of the House, after he had felt the pulse of the House—to say that that was not what he meant at all.

The PREMIER: I never said so.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they were used to the changes made by the hon. gentleman. They knew that one day he blew hot and another cold. With regard to the German question the hon. gentleman had tried to make political capital out of that. He (Mr. Morehead) neither withdrew nor retracted nor qualified any one expression that he had made use of in reference to German immigration. He had asserted from the time he first spoke on the question till now, that he would allow Germans to come here at their own expense under existing regulations, which were very fair, and he should be very happy to see them in the colony, but he objected to any preference being given them over British people. They were told that a line of steamers was to be laid on direct, and that it would be of great advantage in bringing out Germans.

The PREMIER: I said negotiations were going on. I saw by the papers.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Did the hon. gentleman mean to say he knew nothing beyond that?

The PREMIER: No. I know it is a fact; but I am not a party to the negotiations.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. gentleman must know something beyond what appeared in the papers. He admitted that he knew for a fact that the line of steamers was to be laid on.

The PREMIER: I did not say they would be laid on.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman need not quibble; he knew that it was so.

The PREMIER: I hope they will be laid on.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was perfectly satisfied with the expression of that hope. The Premier hoped he would be able to bring into the country an alien race, when he could without trouble fill twice as many immigrant ships as came to the colony, with their own flesh and blood. As one hon. member said, they need not go back 1,500 or 1,600 years on the question. They had the same blood running in their veins which was in the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and they should bring them to the colony first. Afterwards they might bring out immigrants from Germany, Italy, Malta, France, Russia, or Turkey, if they liked.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We do not want them!

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman's *forte* seemed to lie in objecting to everything. He seemed to imagine that his roughness of speech and absolute insolence would pass muster for honesty; but there might be an end to all that some day. He maintained that the Bill was primarily brought in with no other intention than that of relieving the great depression existing in the sugar industry; but to-night they had been told by the junior member for North Brisbane, who he supposed was in the confidence of the Premier, that the sugar industry might perish. So long as that hon. member could give effect to his views on the Labour question, he did not care how many thousands were put out of employment, how many thousands of people were ruined, or how many millions of money were lost. They had been misled by the Government. The whole scope of the Bill had been altered; and, whether it went beyond its second reading or not, damage had been done by the speeches of hon. members on the other side. Serious and material damage had been done, not only to one industry, but to every industry of the colony, because few capitalists would be anxious to invest money in a colony where the Government could go in for such repudiation.

Mr. J. CAMPBELL said it was due to him to say that, when he spoke before, it did not occur to him that the hon. member for Blackall was absent from the House.

Mr. JORDAN said he believed he was out of order in previously referring to the Land question while debating the Immigration Bill. He would now read an opinion expressed in 1882 by Sir Thomas McLlwraith on the Immigration question:—

"He thought a good idea had been thrown out by the hon. member for Port Curtis. He knew that great evils had resulted in the colony through the system of land orders, but if it were decided by the committee—and he thought that in fairness they could not avoid a decision of that kind—that people who chose to come out on their own account, and pay their own passages, should be rewarded in some way, he had no objection. If a man had £200 or £300, spent a portion of it in coming out here, and lived in the colony for twelve months, he had no objection whatever to a clause by which he and each of his family would be entitled to a land order of the value of £20."

The present Premier had introduced certain amendments by which something like the old

land-order system, without the evils of that system, could be introduced in favour of persons paying their own passages to the colony from Great Britain. The speech the hon. gentleman made was unanswerable; and he had already quoted the opinion of Sir Thomas McLlwraith. No Land Act, he might say, however liberal, could of itself attract a large number of persons from the other side of the globe, because the counter attractions were too powerful. The report of the Board of Trade for 1882 showed that 335,020 was the excess of persons who left Great Britain that year over those who came into Great Britain. Nearly half the number went to the United States and Canada. The greater part of those were persons who intended to settle on the land, and they were the best class of immigrants. They were not the refuse of the parishes; they were not feeble, impecunious, unsuccessful persons, but the intelligent, industrious, and thrifty—the very bone and sinew of the country. They took away with them millions of money, and went to America, because they knew more about that country than about the Australian colonies. The United States were very careful to have their agents all over England continually putting this question before the emigrating public. They went to the United States because it was cheaper than to the Australian colonies, and because when they got there they were taken by the hand, supplied with every information, sent free of expense to their destination, and there received a gift of land. In the present Speaker's own remarks made in the House on this question, he had stated that in one ship no less than £100,000 was taken by emigrants going to the United States of America. That was quoted from the *Times*, which the hon. gentleman said he considered sufficient authority. A million of money, it was estimated, was brought into this colony by the full-paying passengers who came out between the years 1861 and 1866. Estimating them at 2,400 families, that million gave an average of £416 13s. 4d. brought to the colony by each family during that period. It had been said that a good Land Bill would bring many people from the other colonies; but they had to remember that in New South Wales a Bill had nearly passed through the Assembly which was as liberal as that now under discussion in this House, and in some respects even more attractive. In South Australia, also, they had under discussion a Bill much more liberal for encouraging pastoral settlement than the Queensland one; so that Victoria was the only Australian colony to which they could look for a large number of persons likely to be attracted by the new Land Bill. He hoped he would be pardoned for speaking of the Land Bill; but he could not altogether dissociate it from this question of immigration. That Bill proposed to throw open 200,000,000 acres for settlement. Half the pastoral land of the colony was 312,500 square miles, and allowing an average of 640 acres to each family, because many families would only take up small pieces, that would give more than one and a-half million people, taking an average of five to each family, supposing half the pastoral districts were settled as proposed by the Bill. Besides that number, there would be the population of the goldfields and of the other half of the colony—the dwellers in all the towns, and persons engaged in all kinds of industry. Could anyone doubt that a colony nearly twelve times as large as England and Wales, with the natural resources Queensland possessed—with 1,300 miles of seaboard—with fine harbours and navigable rivers, and great mineral wealth—in connection with a great national system of railways—

Mr. NORTON rose to order. Had this anything to do with the question before the House? The question before the House had reference to indented labour.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that hon. members opposite were too much accustomed to interfere with hon. gentlemen on that side—rising to points of order, and charging them with wandering from the subject. It was not fair play at all to raise these objections in the case of the hon. member for South Brisbane. It was a great breach of decorum. There was no hon. member of this House more willing to observe the rules of decorum than that hon. gentleman, and he thought it was not in accordance with the rules of decorum to interfere with him.

Mr. NORTON: You may think what you like.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is speaking to the main question. I can only rule that I take it he is using the Land question in illustrating his argument.

Mr. JORDAN said he was coming to the question of immigration at that moment. He would ask if anyone could suppose that this colony could not support millions of people. Twenty-three years ago, a great experiment was tried, as to whether a large number of people from Great Britain, possessing capital, were likely to be attracted here to settle on the land without a bonus of land being given. Mr. Robertson—now Sir John Robertson—brought in in New South Wales his notable scheme of free selection before survey, from which great things were expected. Under that Act, persons were allowed to select any choice spot on the run of a squatter—even in the home paddock, or in the very orchard—throughout the whole of New South Wales at a very small rent indeed. Two of the most able men in New South Wales, Mr. Parke—now Sir Henry Parke—and Mr. Dalley, were sent to England as commissioners, at a large salary and with unlimited allowances for expenses; and they lectured throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, and did their very utmost to attract people to the colony by setting forth this wonderful scheme of free selection before survey. Their labours were entirely barren, and they did not succeed in sending out a single shipload. This colony was also trying an experiment, adopting the American system of land bonuses, and offering persons thirty acres of land if they would come here, paying their own passages. The name of Queensland at that time was not known, even to members of Parliament in England. One man went home at a much smaller salary, tied hand and foot by adverse legislation, and the first year succeeded in sending out 5,325 full-paying passengers, most of them *bonâ fide* farmers. In six years he sent out 30,000 people, of his own selection; 12,000 were full-paying passengers, 12,000 were free passengers, and 6,000 assisted passengers. There were also 6,000 navvies sent out, not selected by our own officer. That was in spite of adverse regulations published every six months and in spite of the fact that the agricultural reserves that were proclaimed under the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1860 were selected generally in places in which the land was worthless, and which Sir Charles Lilley said would not feed a goose. Some land was selected at Cooper's Plains, and they might ride through some miles of broken-down fences and ruined huts, where the first immigrants were placed by the Government to lose their money, and who did not succeed. Then the immigration was further injured, and, in fact, finally upset by an inundation to the colony of the roughest class, which came with the navvies who were not selected under our own system. Then came the Act of

1868. The advocates of that Act said that it would be the means of attracting any number of gentlemen's sons, who were to come from England and settle down on the land. It was a very attractive scheme, and promised an area of 10,000-acre farms to any person, at 5s. per acre, with ten years to pay it in. They were told the result of that yesterday by the Minister for Lands. He was about to propose that they should introduce—in some amendments which had been circulated—something like the land-order system—avoiding those peculiarities that rendered it open to abuse. The agricultural land, as he had before explained, being of no value, the land orders became a drug in the market. When the hon. Premier introduced his amendments in 1882 in connection with the present Immigration Act, he took care to point out that there would be no danger under the system. Although it was called a land-order system, it was very different from the old land-order system. It proposed a remission of rent of land in favour of those who paid their own passages to the colony in full. The objections that were taken to the amendments when the hon. the Premier introduced them, when that Bill was under discussion, were chiefly from Sir Thomas McLlwraith, who said that to give a remission of rent to people who intended to settle on the land only would be unfair to other persons, such, for instance, as mechanics and other persons who came to the colony. But they must remember that the people who went to settle on the land in the United States were of the farming class, and that was the class that they wished to encourage under this system. They got mechanics enough, and too many, although they were warned that they were not wanted.

The SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that it is not in order on the second reading of a Bill to discuss an amendment of which he has given notice of moving in committee. The question before the House is the second reading of a Bill to amend the Immigration Act of 1882. The hon. gentleman has given notice of his intention to move certain amendments when the Bill is in committee, and it is not competent for the hon. member, on the second reading of the Bill, to discuss those amendments.

Mr. JORDAN said he would bow to the Speaker's ruling. The other objection was that it would be unfair to the persons resident in the colony, and who were disposed to settle on the land, to give a remission of rent to those persons who came from the opposite side of the globe. That was a fallacy. If they could get large numbers of persons, with large farming experience, who would bring money, all classes of the community would benefit. Hon. gentlemen would remember what the effect was in Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Maryborough, between the years 1861 and 1866, when there was a great influx of that class into the colony. Business was, of course, very much improved; houses went up in all directions, and there was a great demand for every kind of labour. The townspeople were very greatly benefited as well as others. There was one thing, above all other things, that they wanted in this great country—with its great extent and wealth—for it had all the elements of wealth, if not of empire; that one thing was population. The future of the colony would depend upon what they were doing now. What they sowed they must reap; if they laid the foundations of the colony deep and broad, and got a proper proportion of intelligent people, all would be well; they should rear a fabric which would be fair and enduring. When the famous sculptor, Chantrey, was carving out one of his great works—bringing life out of the stone—

one of his friends, coming into his studio unperceived, tapped him on the shoulder and said to him, "Take care what you do; you work for eternity"; and, in the same way, what they did now would determine the future of what might be—if they were wise—a great nation. They wanted an admixture of labour, capital, and intelligence. If they imported only labour they would soon have a cry raised among the labouring class that immigration must be stopped. There was no regulating principle in a population composed of the labouring class only. He would end by quoting the saying of President Garfield—"Territory, after all, is but the body of the nation. The people who inhabit its hills and its valleys are its soul, its spirit, and its life."

Mr. SMYTH said he thought, as a mining member, he would not be doing his duty if he did not make a few remarks with respect to some of the speeches from the other side of the House. The leader of the Opposition and other members on his side had said that if cheap labour were introduced into the colony they would have the mining districts overrun. He said, as the representative of a mining district, he was not in the least afraid of it. If the Germans were to be the class of cheap labourers they were to have, he could say that his experience of them was that they were not very fond of mining, as a rule; their great ambition was to obtain possession of a piece of land, and settle on it. Some hon. members on the other side had spoken of giving labourers 5s. and 6s. a week. He hoped that no member on his side of the House had any idea of such labour as that. Surely the sugar-planters could afford to pay 15s. a week for labour. They could give a kanaka 15s., and why should they not give a white man 15s.? Was it because the white man would not stand kicking? One hon. member, in speaking of the North, said that Gympie was only the third on the list as a gold-producing district. The deserted Palmer—for it was almost deserted now—was put first, Charters Towers second, and Gympie third. He said the Gympie Gold Field was the premier goldfield of the colony at the present time, and was turning out more gold now than any town in Queensland. But it was well known why that particular member had cast such a slur upon Gympie—because Gympie had refused and rejected him.

Mr. STEVENSON said the hon. Premier had said that evening that hon. members on the Opposition side were not correct in describing the Bill as one to introduce low-waged labour. The hon. Premier had paid him the compliment of saying he could not understand the Bill or any Bill brought in by hon. gentlemen opposite, or by his particular friend the Minister of Lands. He thought he had got a very good idea of the Bill. The hon. Premier might not have much respect for his opinion, and for that matter he had not much respect for the opinion of the Premier, but he thought he understood the Bill sufficiently to be able to say the hon. gentleman was not sincere upon it. He had shifted his ground that night, and he thought the hon. gentleman should alter the title of the Bill and call it "a Bill to introduce Germans into this colony." He had admitted it was not the Bill he intended to bring in, which was intended to supply labour for the sugar-planters and to take the place of the kanakas. It was now simply a Bill to introduce Germans. The hon. gentleman had asked them if their objection to the Bill was not because he had not taken steps to introduce coolie labour. The hon. member knew as well as they did that coolies could be introduced into the country

without any steps being taken by him. Hon. members on that side of the House wanted coolies to be introduced under proper regulations; but the hon. member preferred having them introduced without any regulations at all. He said it was in the interests of the working men of the colony that coolies should be introduced under proper regulations. They could now be introduced without regulations, and they could then compete with white men. The hon. gentleman had also asked them if they meant that he was striking a blow at the sugar industry by preventing kidnapping. Hon. members on that side of the House had always shown a desire to prevent any abuses in regard to the introduction of kanakas; and just as stringent steps were taken by the late Government for that purpose as by the present Government. They on that side said they believed in black labour and considered it the only labour suitable for the sugar industry; and if the sugar industry were destroyed, as it would be unless black labour was employed, many white men would be thrown out of employment they were now making good wages at. A great deal of capital had been made out of the debate, which was an electioneering one on the other side, by electioneering speeches to the working man. He should like to know if that Bill was brought in in the interests of the working man. It would have been far better for the working man if the Premier had proposed to bring in proper labour for the sugar industry in the shape of black labour than to strike a blow at that industry as he was doing by the Bill. Yet he pretended he had introduced it to supply labour for the sugar-planters. The Bill did not only strike a blow at the sugar industry, but it would have the effect of reducing the rate of wages of working men all over the colony. He was sorry the Minister for Lands was not present, and, as he was not there, he would ask the Premier what had the Minister for Lands done to show his appreciation for the working man of the colony? Why, he had not made a speech in that House in which he had not referred to the working man. Whenever anything had been brought forward with regard to the labour question, he had shown that he appreciated black men far more than he did white men. Men who had known the Minister for Lands as long as he had, and appreciated him just about as much,—

The PREMIER: The Minister for Lands is absent.

Mr. STEVENSON: Why is he absent?

The PREMIER: There is nothing that suits some people so well as absent men.

Mr. STEVENSON: If the hon. gentleman was not present, he (Mr. Stevenson) could not help it. A good deal of capital had been made out of that question, and hon. members had talked a good deal about the working man. The Minister for Lands had admitted that he indentured Germans for two years at a very low rate of wages. He (Mr. Stevenson) supposed that at that time the hon. gentleman could not get aborigines to do his work. That did not show that the hon. gentleman had, at any rate, any regard for the working men of the colony. He (Mr. Stevenson) was not going to enter into the Land Bill now; but the Premier having, in reply to the hon. member for Townsville, alluded to the homestead clauses, he (Mr. Stevenson) would say that the Minister for Lands, in doing away with these clauses, was dealing a blow to the working man and the man of small means. However, as the Premier had said he should not talk about the Minister for Lands in his absence, he would not do so any longer; but, to give the Minister for Lands an

opportunity of again speaking on the question he would now move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. HIGSON said he had had no intention of speaking on the second reading of the Bill, as it was so admirably explained by the Premier, but hon. members on the other side of the House had, by the tone of their remarks, conveyed a false impression. He took it that the Bill clearly explained how labour was to be got. By it they were to send to their friends or to their agents to procure labour suitable for the colony. He intended to take advantage of it himself, to get suitable labourers from the part of the country he came from. It had been said that the prosperity of the colony had been brought about by the sugar industry. He said it was a false prosperity, and that in a few years it would fall back and the colony would be worse off than it had been before. The present prosperity was brought about by speculators who brought large sums of money into it. Many of the sugar estates were in their hands, and the benefit that the absentee proprietors received should be received by the colony. The interest from the land, instead of going into the Treasury, was going out of the colony. Nearly all the machinery used was imported, and they employed black labour to carry on the work. As the senior member for Rockhampton had said, if there were small settlements a great deal more benefit would be received from the land, because every man who had a small lot would contribute to the revenue through the Custom House; but at present the large landed proprietors, who lived out of the colony, took a great deal away from it. He was glad to hear the Premier say that the present Government were determined not to have coolies or kanakas. They were laying a sure foundation by so doing. Let the colony import labour from home. He knew there were plenty of farm labourers, who would come out, if only the agents looked out for them; but the fact was, the agents stopped near the large cities and towns, and did not go into many parts where plenty of labourers could be got. The hon. member for Cook had said that hon. members on the Government side of the House wanted to get labourers from 6s. to 7s. per week; but they never wanted to do anything so ridiculous. It was one of the grandest things that could happen that the present Government had come into power and prevented all the lands of the colony falling into the hands of the large capitalists.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That is the man who "had" the Minister for Lands.

Mr. HIGSON said the hon. member better take care that he was not "had." He maintained that the cry against the ruination that was being caused to the sugar industry was a false one; the real reason of the depression being the severe drought which the country had been suffering from for two years past.

Mr. BLACK said a short time ago the Premier asked and actually challenged someone on the opposite side of the House to explain what it was that the planters had to complain about in the action of the Government. He intimated that the Government were simply carrying out the strict letter of the law as laid down in the Polynesian Act, and he (Mr. Black) gave them credit for doing so. He had never in any way complained of the Government having carried out the strict letter of the law. Last session the Government gave the House and the country distinctly to understand, in passing the Polynesian Amendment Act, that they were merely tiding over a temporary difficulty and that it was the best solution that they could find at the time, but they promised the House, they promised the country,

and they promised those who, on the faith of previous Governments, had sunk several millions of money in the industry, that they would, at the earliest opportunity this session, bring down a comprehensive scheme, which would show the planters where they were to look for the labour for the future management of their plantations. He thought he was simply stating facts in what he was saying. He was, at all events, not in any way exaggerating. They held out those promises to those who had been the means of establishing the plantations in Queensland. Again at the opening of the House, the Government came down and in the Governor's Speech intimated that they had prepared and were going to bring in a scheme to carry out the promise they had made last session. There was no question in the Governor's Speech as to whether that was practical or not, but the Premier, as head of the Government, expressed his intention of bringing in a comprehensive scheme of labour, which would obviate the necessity for cheap coloured labour. That was a promise which had been held before the people of the country. That was a promise which had been the means of tiding over a very serious difficulty which had arisen in the tropical agricultural industry owing to the terrible fall in the price of sugar. But what had the Government done? They had brought in an apology of a Bill which, when it came to be pulled to pieces, was simply a Bill to introduce German immigrants into the colony. It did not in any way affect the question which the Government promised to solve last session and the beginning of this session. Therefore he said the Government had broken faith with the planters, and with all those who had invested their money in the industry. That was a plain answer to the Premier. The planters complained of a gross breach of faith on the part of the Government. He did not believe that this was the Bill that the Government intended to bring in. He believed that they were sincere in the matter. They gave a promise to the country of a Bill to introduce European labour to take the place of coloured labour, but they found that the pressure of public opinion was so great that they had brought in the beginning and end of the measure, and left out the inside. There was no necessity to bring in the present Bill, as there was nothing in it of any material importance which was not contained in the Act passed before. The mere fact of reducing the cost of indentured labour from £2 to £1 was not going to bring that labour into use. Hon. gentlemen said that the plantations ought to be cut up into small blocks. That was a matter which concerned those who owned them, but he would like to point out that the man with fifty acres also wanted labour; and the same difficulty which stared the largest planter in the face stared the smaller man also. Then the central mill owner, what would his position be? He could not do without reliable labour. There was one point which he wished particularly to refer to, and that was that when crop-time came round it required an immense amount of additional labour which, in the northern parts of the colony, would never be available. A wheat crop in the South would be considered a very handsome crop if it gave a return of two tons dead weight to the acre. The difficulty even in the South was in getting men to take off the crop; but in the North they had a tropical crop representing thirty or forty tons dead weight to the acre, which had to be removed from the field. No mechanical appliances could be used, and the whole thing had to be done by hand. The cane was cut by hand, loaded by hand, and had to be carted to the mill. If in the South they found such a difficulty in

taking off a comparatively small weight to the acre, how were they to get a surplus farming population in the North to take off that gigantic crop? Assuming that a paternal Government would provide them with 1,000 labourers at Mackay when crop-time came on, what was to become of them after the crop had been taken off? Were they to be discharged, or would the Government find public works to employ them on? The whole scheme was impracticable, and he accused the Government of having broken faith with the planters, and all those who had taken part in the initiation of that great agriculture in Queensland. Sugar was not the only thing that could be grown profitably in the North. There were coffee and spices of different kinds, but for every one of them there was one essential necessary, and that was cheap and reliable labour. Thanks to the Government, Queensland was about to make an experiment in a direction which had proved disastrous wherever it had been attempted before.

Mr. STEVENS said it was almost impossible to separate the question of immigration from that of black labour. He himself had always been a strong advocate for the introduction of coolies for the cultivation of sugar, and he believed that that, under proper regulations and restrictions, would be the best solution of the Labour question. The chief recommendation of the present Bill was that it would enable immigrants to bring out their families. There were many men who would emigrate much more willingly if they could bring their families out on reasonable terms. With regard to the clause which referred to "proper accommodation" for immigrants, there might be some little difficulty in defining what was proper accommodation. In whose hands was the definition to be left? The hon. member, Mr. Jordan, hardly spoke in a fair spirit when he said the Germans regarded an independent member as one who wished to possess large areas of land. An independent member, as well as any other, was entitled to credit for honesty and integrity of purpose. There were many members, besides independent members, who owned large areas of land; and if that was a subject of distress to the Germans they would have refused to return several members who now sat in the House. He was glad there was no idea of dividing on the Bill. The measure was a step in the right direction, especially with the view of inducing immigrants to come out to the colony and bring their wives and families with them.

Mr. JORDAN explained that his remark was not levelled at the hon. member for Logan, but at others he had in his mind, who said they were independent members, but who turned out to be strong partisans.

Question of adjournment put and negatived.

Original question put and passed, and commitment of the Bill made an order for a later hour of the day.

#### SUCCESSION ACT DECLARATORY BILL.

The SPEAKER announced a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that this Bill had been passed by that Chamber, and forwarding it to the Legislative Assembly for their concurrence.

On the motion of Mr. CHUBB, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said that, in pursuance of notice given at an earlier hour of the sitting, he would move that the House do now adjourn until 7 o'clock this evening. A good number of

members would be glad to get away during the afternoon, and there would be ample time during the evening to dispose of all the business on the paper. He might add that the special train for the convenience of members would leave the railway station at twenty minutes past 10, and would be back in Brisbane by 6 o'clock.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, as the day for which notice was given had now elapsed, the motion was out of order and could not be put. All the House could do was to adjourn till the usual hour of meeting.

The PREMIER said that technically speaking the objection of the hon. member was correct, but it had always been the practice for the leader of the House to give notice at the commencement of a sitting that the House adjourn to a certain time. The time he gave notice of was "to-morrow," and that was now "to-day."

Mr. MOREHEAD said the motion could not be put, as the day had passed.

The SPEAKER said: I have no doubt that on strict technical terms the hon. member for Balonne is perfectly right in his objection, but it is a question for the House to decide whether the leader of the House did not intend, in giving notice, that when the House rose he would move the adjournment till 7 o'clock this evening.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, having shown that his side knew a great deal more about the technical rules of the House than the other side, and having induced the Premier to lose his temper, he would withdraw his objection.

Mr. BLACK said he had always opposed adjournments for local shows, and he would not be consistent were he to allow that motion to pass without some protest. It seemed to him that this show was the most frivolous pretext for delaying the business of the country that had yet been submitted to that House. He believed that the object of the adjournment was to make a fitting *finale* to the proceedings of that evening—to enable the Premier who had succeeded in carrying the second reading of a Bill to populate the country with Germans, to go to Rosewood to-morrow, to receive the thanks and demonstrations of the Germans there. He would ask any sensible man in that House whether the whole business of the country should be suspended for the purpose of allowing members to attend the Rosewood Show? They had had adjournments on various occasions for the National Association in Brisbane and for the Toowoomba Show, but never, so far as he was aware, for the Rosewood Show. It was a cruel shame that the time of Northern members and others, who came from a distance and sacrificed time and money to attend that House, should be wasted on such a foolish pretext, and he would oppose the motion.

Mr. BROOKES said he was sure that if the hon. gentleman who had just sat down had known that sugar-cane grown by white men would be exhibited at the show he would not have made such a speech.

Mr. STEVENSON said he opposed the motion for adjournment on principle, because he thought it was unfair to members who came from a long distance, at a great expense and inconvenience. The leader of the Opposition had done perfectly right in conceding the point to the Premier, but he (Mr. Stevenson) would be very glad if there were enough hon. members of his opinion to defeat the motion, and prevent them being deprived of their day for private business.

The PREMIER said he must correct an error into which readers of what had taken place that evening might fall. No delay whatever would be caused by the adjournment, because, to-morrow evening, they could dispose of all the business on the paper. If it were not so, he would not have moved the adjournment.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at half-past 12 o'clock.