Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 28 AUGUST 1884

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ERRATA.

August 21.—Page 396, column 1, line 27, in Mr. Jordan's speech, for the words "a million" *read* "three millions."

August 21.—Page 398, column 1, line 9, in Mr. Jordan's speech, for the word "two" *read* "five."

August 28.—Page 473, column 2, lines 7 and 8, in Mr. Horwitz' speech, for the words "when cleared is worth up to £3 an acre," *read* "cost up to £3 an acre to clear."

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 28 *August*, 1884.

Questions without Notice.—Question.—Formal Motion.—Probate Bill—second reading.—Jury Bill—second reading.—Succession Act Declaratory Bill—committee.—Wages Bill—committee.—Native Birds Protection Act Amendment Bill.—Claim of Dr. Hobbs.—Crown Lands Bill—second reading.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. NORTON said he wished to ask the Minister for Works a question, without notice, with reference to Surveyor Amos. He saw that that gentleman had finished his survey of the Herberton to Port Douglas line, and he would like to know if he was to be sent back to Gladstone?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) replied: Surveyor Amos has not yet had instructions to go back, but I expect to be able to give instructions within the next few days. He has finished the work he has had to do.

Mr. NORTON: He is the man who will be sent back?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. GOVETT asked the Minister for Works, without notice, if it is the intention of the Government to shortly call for tenders for that section of the Central Railway between Jericho and Barcaldine?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think the hon. gentleman had better give notice in the usual way. It is not always convenient to answer questions without previous notice being given.

Mr. GOVETT: I will give notice.

QUESTION.

Mr. BLACK asked the Colonial Treasurer—

When he will be prepared to accept tender for extension of embankment of Pioneer River, Mackay?

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson) replied—

The embankment is being extended 360 feet to the mouth of Saltwater Creek; and as soon as the plans for harbour improvements are completed, the work will be proceeded with beyond above point, in accordance with such scheme of improvements.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: I wish to give notice that I will ask the Colonial Secretary the following questions; but if the hon. gentleman will answer them without notice I need not do so:—1. Have the Government purchased any land at Kangaroo Point from Mr. Robert Douglas? 2. If so, what price is to be paid for it? 3. To what purpose is it intended to be devoted? 4. From what fund is the purchase money to be derived?

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith): I have no objection to answer the hon. gentleman's questions without notice. The Government have concluded a contract for the purchase of about six acres of land at Kangaroo Point from Mr. Robert Douglas, at a cost of £14,000. The purpose to which it is intended to be put at present is as a site for the erection of a new immigration barracks. I anticipate that a good deal of the land will be available after that work has been completed. The purchase money is proposed to be derived to the extent of £10,000 from the amount already voted for a new immigration barracks at Brisbane, and for the remaining £4,000 parliamentary sanction will be asked.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to:—

By Mr. STEVENS—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, copy of all Correspondence connected with an extension of time given to James Ferguson to remove certain felled timber from the Upper Nerang or Numinbah Reserve.

PROBATE BILL—SECOND READING.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—This Bill is introduced for the purpose of improving the administration of the law with regard to probates. The principle of the Bill is already in force in four of the Australian colonies. Tasmania was the first to introduce it in 1878, and they were subsequently followed in 1879 by New Zealand, South Australia, and Western Australia. Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland have not yet adopted this principle. I may say that the Bill is founded upon the model of the Act in Tasmania, but it does not go so far as that Act, inasmuch as it does not deal with the estates of intestates. It may, perhaps, be better if I read from the "Australasian Colonies—Administration of Estates," the provisions of the Acts quoted. In New Zealand, "The Intercolonial Probate Act of 1879" provides:—

"Whenever any probate or letters of administration granted by the Supreme Court of any of the other Australasian colonies, including Fiji (whether before or after the passing of the Act), shall be produced to, and a copy thereof deposited with, the Registrar of the Supreme Court of New Zealand, such probate or letters of administration shall (after payment of such duties and fees as would have been payable if probate or letters of administration had been originally granted in New Zealand) be sealed with the seal of the Supreme Court of New Zealand and have the same effect as if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted by the Supreme Court of New Zealand."

That is the law in New Zealand. In South Australia the statute is called by the same name —"The Intercolonial Probate Act"—and provides:—

"When any probate or letters of administration, or any exemplification or other formal document purporting to be under the seal of a court of competent jurisdiction, which shall in the opinion of a judge of the Supreme Court be deemed sufficient evidence of a probate or letters of administration, shall be produced to, and a copy thereof deposited with, the Registrar of the Supreme Court, and all such duties, as would have been payable if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted in South Australia, shall have been paid, such probate, letters of administration, exemplification, or other document shall be sealed with the seal of the Supreme Court, and shall have the same effect and operation in South Australia; and every executor and administrator thereunder shall perform the same duties and be subject to the same liabilities as if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted by the Supreme Court."

In Western Australia the "Foreign Probate Act," passed in the same year, 1879, provides:—

"When any probate or letters of administration, granted by a court of competent jurisdiction in any part of Her Majesty's dominions, shall be produced to and a copy thereof deposited with the Registrar of the the Supreme Court of Western Australia, such probate or letters of administration shall be sealed with the seal of the Supreme Court, and shall have the like force and effect in the colony; and every executor and administrator thereunder shall have the same powers and be subject to the same liabilities as if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted by the Supreme Court."

Then, the Act of Tasmania, which forms the model upon which the present Bill is framed, with the differences I have already mentioned, provides —

"When any probate or letters of administration granted by the Supreme Court of any of the colonies of New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, or Western Australia, or an exemplification of such probate or letters of administration, shall be produced to and a copy thereof deposited with the Registrar of the Supreme Court, and all such duties as would have been payable if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted in Tasmania have been paid, and, in the case of letters of administration, such bond has been entered into as would have been required if such letters had been originally granted by the Supreme Court of Tasmania, such probate, letters of administration, or exemplification shall be sealed with the seal of the Supreme Court of Tasmania, and shall have the same effect and operation in Tasmania; and every executor and administrator thereunder shall perform the same duties and be subject to the same liabilities as if such probate or letters of administration had been originally granted by the Supreme Court."

Therefore all these colonies have adopted very much the same phraseology, and the Act of Tasmania, which seems to be the best of them, is the one adopted in framing this Bill. The object of the Bill is this, and I can best illustrate it by giving an extreme case: If a person dies in Victoria or any other of the colonies, at the present time, leaving property in Queensland as well, and his will is proved in Victoria, in order to enable the executors to administer his estate here they must prove the will over again; that is, they must go to the same expense, and, I believe, even more, on the second occasion than they would in the first instance, to get proper authority to act under the probate here. But, by this Bill, it is proposed to remedy that by providing that if the probate or letters of administration, with the will annexed, are granted in any of the other colonies—after the production of the probate or letters of such colony in the Supreme Court here —all that requires to be done is that the seal of the court shall be affixed on payment of the customary duties, and it shall have the same force as if the court here had granted the probate or letters of administration. But for the statutes before mentioned in force in the other colonies, supposing a testator had left property in every colony, his will would have to be proved in each of those colonies. With regard to the technical mode in which this is done, if the will is proved in any of the other colonies, they get what are termed "ancillary" probates, or letters

of administration with the will annexed, which are usually granted to the attorney of the executor, and he has to give security. In the case of large estates in any one colony, probably the executor would go to the place, as the law is at present, and prove the will again, in which case he would avoid giving any security. That appears to be the only difference. It seems to be desirable that we should follow the lead of those other colonies—four of them at present. The Acts have been in force there since 1878 and 1879 and have worked very well, and there is no reason why we should not follow their lead and adopt the same principle here for the sake of convenience and for the saving of expense. It has been said in this House that lawyers always look to their own interests; but all I can say is, that this Bill will not benefit lawyers in the slightest degree, as it will prevent people from having to pay twice over for what might really be done in the simple way I have referred to. I may add this additional argument: that the colonies now appear to be moving towards federation and united action and the assimilation of laws. I believe at one conference—not the last—that this assimilating of the law of probates was referred to. I think I have read in some resolutions which were passed some years ago at a conference that this matter was recommended. It was taken up afterwards by those colonies, who have introduced a statute in conformity with those resolutions. I think it would be a good thing, unless hon. members see some valid objection—some insuperable objection—to the measure, to pass the Bill into law, so that we may be the fifth colony in Australia in union on this point. I therefore beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—The general object of assimilating the law of the Australian colonies to one another is undoubtedly a very good one, but I am afraid that this Bill, like a good many others we see, although it has a good object enough, does not adopt the right means to attain it. I wish to call the attention of the House—it is not a lawyer's question at all, but I wish to call the attention of the House to what the effect of the Bill will be. At the present time, when the probate of a will is desired to be obtained, notice has to be given in the places where it is likely that there will be persons who can give information, so that it may be ascertained whether the will, the probate of which is sought, is really the last will of the person whose will it is said to be. It would be, of course, very undesirable that a will should be proved, if it is not the last will. Therefore the court requires that fourteen days' notice shall be given in this colony. To deal with this part of the question first: Supposing a man having nearly all his property in Queensland dies in Tasmania, where he makes his will, and where it is found, and appoints executors, two of whom are in Queensland, and one in Tasmania. The result of the Bill as it stands will be this: The Tasmanian executor could apply to the Supreme Court there, and obtain probate of the will in his name. That executor, without any notice whatever to those in Queensland who are to assist in the administration of the estate, can go to the Supreme Court here and be appointed executor to the exclusion of the others. That is how the Bill will operate, and I do not think it is a good idea. Of course, it is very desirable that, when the formality of proving the execution of the will has been gone through in one colony, that formality shall not be required in any other colony. Nor is it at the present time; it is not required at all. The same document that is spoken of in the Bill is sufficient proof of that formality. But there is more than that. I pointed out the inexpediency of the person administrating affairs in Queensland being a person who is resident in another part of Australia, while persons in Queensland who are probably appointed by the testator for managing his affairs in this colony are left out in the cold. But there is another serious objection. At the present time the court in this colony—following, I believe, the practice of courts in some other of the Australian colonies—declines to authorise any man to administer personal property in Queensland unless he is here, so that they may have some control over him. The court here has determined, after solemn consideration, that they will not grant administration of personal property in Queensland to any man who is not resident within their jurisdiction, because otherwise great inconvenience might arise. A man residing in Western Australia might appoint an agent here. All the money might be collected here and sent there, and there would be no means of getting Queensland debts paid. There is no question that we in Queensland are interested in seeing that the property of deceased persons is not taken away without payment of his debts. That safeguard is entirely destroyed by the Bill as it stands. I confess that these seem to me to be evils in the Bill. Now what corresponding advantages are there? None that are sufficient to outweigh the evils I have pointed out. There is simply a provision by which an executor who gets probate in the other colonies can come and claim probate here. In New South Wales the court refuses to grant probate to executors resident out of the colony; but, under this Bill, an executor resident in New South Wales having got probate there can claim it in Queensland. The whole scheme will have to be remodelled. The present practice is that if a man makes a will and dies a fortnight's notice is given; that gives anybody an opportunity of objecting. There is no difficulty in proving the will here if it has been proved elsewhere. The production of the official document is sufficient to prove the execution of the will; the only additional expense would be the advertisement.

Mr. CHUBB: The same form must be gone through here as well.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman is quite wrong. The exemplification of the probate of the will granted in another colony is taken as quite sufficient. I do not know that anything will be gained by the Bill; and I have pointed out serious inconvenience that may arise.

Question put and negatived.

JURY BILL—SECOND READING.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this Order of the Day be discharged from the paper. I do so for this reason: It was intimated to me that an hon. member intended to raise the question whether the Bill had been properly introduced. Since it was read a first time, I have had an opportunity of looking into the matter carefully, and I find that the 18th section of the Constitution Act requires that the proper mode of originating a Bill of this kind is that it or the necessary appropriation be recommended by message from His Excellency the Governor. That has not been done in this case; therefore it will be a fatal objection to the Bill. I have this afternoon given notice of motion for the purpose of introducing the Bill again, and I propose to do it in that way. I may say that in 1867 a Jury Bill was brought in, by Sir Charles Lilley, in the ordinary way; it did not come down by message from His Excellency, nor was it introduced in Committee of the whole House. In the same year a subsequent Bill amending that was brought in by Mr. Justice Pring in the

same manner. Either a message was not then thought necessary or the point was not taken notice of.

Question put and passed, and Bill discharged from the paper.

SUCCESSION ACT DECLARATORY BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. CHUBB, the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1—

"The provisions of the seventh section of the said first-mentioned Act are and have always been in force in the colony of Queensland, so that if after the death of a father any of his children shall die, or shall have died intestate, without wife and children, in the lifetime of the mother, every brother and sister, and the representatives of them, shall have and shall be deemed to have had an equal share with her in the surplusage of the estate of such intestate.

"Provided always that nothing herein contained shall invalidate or disturb the distribution of the estate of any intestate person heretofore made upon the assumption that the mother was entitled to the whole of the surplusage thereof."

The PREMIER suggested that the second part of the clause required a verbal amendment to make it clear and complete.

Mr. CHUBB thanked the hon. gentleman for the suggestion, and moved that the words "of itself" be inserted between the words "shall" and "invalidate."

Amendment put and passed; and clause, as amended, passed.

Clause 2—"Short title"—passed as printed.

Preamble—

"Whereas doubts have arisen whether the provisions of the seventh section of the Act of the first year of King James the Second, entitled, 'An Act for reviving and continuance of several Acts of Parliament therein mentioned,' have been repealed by the Succession Act of 1867, and it is expedient to remove such doubts."

—read and passed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill to the House, with an amendment.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

WAGES BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN, the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1, as follows :—

"From and after the passing of this Act, the provisions of the Wages Act of 1870 shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to and be deemed to include mines and all buildings, works, and machinery used in connection therewith; and the word 'mortgage' in the said Act shall be deemed to include any mortgage or bill of sale of any mine or building, works, or machinery used in connection therewith; and the word 'miners' in the Masters and Servants Act of 1861 shall mean and include all persons employed in and about any mine or in connection therewith."

The Hon J. M. MACROSSAN said he had an amendment to propose providing that a mining property should not be liable for more than one month's wages due to the men. It was not usual for miners to engage themselves for long terms, as was the case with labourers in other kinds of work. He therefore moved, as a proviso at the end of the clause, the addition of the following words :—

Provided that the mortgagee shall not be liable for any wages of a miner accrued more than one month prior to the date of such miner's first application for such wages to such mortgagee or a like period previous to the date of such mortgagee having taken possession of the mine, buildings, works, or machinery, whichever of such dates shall have been first in turn.

Mr. SMYTH said he should like to see inserted after the word "works" the words "ore or minerals on the ground or in transit." According to the clause, they were not liable to any claim the wages men might have on the mine, and he should like to hear an expression of opinion from the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to see ores made liable for the payment of wages; but they were not included in the mortgage, which generally included only the mine, or buildings, works, and machinery.

Amendment agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 2, and preamble, passed as printed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Thursday ext.

NATIVE BIRDS PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Mr. ARCHER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Legislative Council's amendments in this Bill.

On clause 1, as follows :—

"The Governor in Council may by proclamation declare any Crown lands, and, with the consent of the owner or occupier thereof, any other lands, as reserves for the protection and preservation of such native birds as are specified in such proclamation, and from time to time may amend, vary, or annul the same. Provided that the owner or occupier may withdraw his consent at any time by giving six months' notice in writing to the Colonial Secretary."

Mr. ARCHER said he was going to ask the Committee not to agree to the proviso inserted by the Council at the end of the 1st clause, for the reason that full power was given to the Governor in Council to effect all that was asked or done by the Council's amendment. It was stated in the 1st clause that the Governor in Council might proclaim certain lands as reserves, with the consent of the owners or occupiers, and at the same time that he might amend, vary, or annul the proclamation at any future time. He had read the debate in the Council which resulted in the amendment being inserted, and he found there that the chief reason why the amendment was proposed was that any person consenting to a reserve being proclaimed on his private ground, or land partly his own and partly belonging to the Government, might die; that his will might direct that his estate should be sold; and that in such a case the wife and children of the deceased, or his heirs generally, might suffer from the depreciation in the value of the estate through their not being able to have the proclamation abrogated. He did not think such a thing would happen; he did not believe that any Government would stand in the way of a widow or orphans getting full value for any estate left them. Another reason urged in favour of the amendment was that a person might wish to drain a swamp, after he had consented to its being proclaimed a reserve, in order to cultivate it. That Bill did not prevent a man doing what he liked with his property, as far as he could see. If a person drained his land it would be useless as a reserve, and the Government could have no objection to varying or annulling the proclamation.

The PREMIER: There would be no wildfowl there.

Mr. ARCHER said he did not see that there would be much use in the proclamation then. There could, therefore, be no benefit derived from the amendment; but it might have this

result: A person might have a piece of property altogether his own, or partly his own and partly Government property, and he might then give notice that in six months' time the proclamation was to be annulled. He might have the place beautifully stocked, and the public would have got into the habit of looking on it as a reserve if it were left; but if six months' notice had to be given they would have private individuals shooting all over it. They did not want shooting on these reserves; what they wanted was that the wild-fowl of the country generally should be preserved, so that from these reserves places outside them might be stocked. He hoped, therefore, that the Committee would approve of his motion. He moved that they disagree to the amendment of the Legislative Council in clause 1.

Question put and passed.

Mr. ARCHER said he should ask the Committee to agree to the amendment of the Council in clause 2. He thought it was a decided amendment that the notices which were to be displayed in a conspicuous place ought to be at the boundary of the reserve instead of within it. He moved that the Committee should agree to this amendment.

Question put and passed.

Mr. ARCHER said he wished the Committee to agree to the Council's amendment in clause 3, line 5. The word "is" was inserted and made it better reading:—

"Whether such person is or 'is' not within the boundaries of the reserve."

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee disagreed to the Council's amendment in clause 1, and agreed to the amendment in the other clauses of the Bill.

On the motion of Mr. ARCHER, the report was adopted, and the Bill returned to the Legislative Council with the following message:—

"That the Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the amendments of the Legislative Council in the Native Birds Protection Act Amendment Bill, disagree to the amendment in clause 1 of the Bill, because the clause, as worded before amendment, gives full power to the Governor in Council to amend, vary, or annul any proclamation creating a reserve under this Bill, and the amendment therefore becomes unnecessary. And agree to the amendments in the other parts of the Bill."

CLAIM OF DR. HOBBS.

Mr. ALAND said that the hon. member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, had requested him to ask the House to allow him to withdraw, for the present, this motion:—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the next Supplementary Estimates the sum of £5,000, as compensation to Dr. Hobbs for losses sustained by him by reason of the action of the Municipal Council of Brisbane, under the Municipal Institutions Act of 1864."

He understood that the hon. member intended to bring it on at a later period in the session. His reason for wishing to withdraw it at the present time was that it had been represented to him that it was customary not to introduce motions of this sort until after the Treasurer had come down to House with his Financial Statement.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

CROWN LANDS BILL—SECOND READING.

On the Order of the Day for resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Dutton's motion—"That the Bill be now read a second time"—upon which the Hon. Sir Thomas McIlwraith had moved, by way of amendment, that all the words after the word "that" be omitted, with a view to the insertion in their place of the following words, namely:—

"While earnestly desirous of remedying the defects in the land laws, of correcting the abuses developed under them, and of generally strengthening their administration for the more effectual carrying out of the intentions of the Legislature, this House regrets its inability to approve of the present Bill for, *inter alia*, the following reasons, that is to say—

"Because the Bill, while providing no additional safeguard against the fraudulent acquisition and monopoly of land, would, by abolishing solemn declarations now required to ensure *bonâ fide* settlement, open the door to fresh abuses of an aggravated nature.

"Because the substitution for the Governor in Council of a nominee board would not be in harmony with the principles of responsible government.

"Because the Bill, instead of strengthening land administration by judiciously enlisting the aid of trusted representative men, possessing local knowledge of the various duties, would unwisely entrust the entire administration to a central board, hampered by legal technicalities, and delayed by the difficulty and cost of procuring local information.

"Because the repudiation of the pre-emptive right involved in the repeal of the 54th section of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 would not only be a breach of faith towards the holders of existing leases, but also be injurious to the good name and fame of the colony.

"Because the Bill materially affects the land revenue of the colony, and no indication has been given by the Minister introducing it of the means by which the probable deficit shall be made good.

"Because, by abruptly substituting for the much-cherished freehold tenure a system of mere leasehold, except in respect of holdings termed agricultural farms, the Bill would give an impolitic and unjust preference to one class of selectors, and prejudicially affect the reputation of the colony as an attractive field for enterprising immigrants.

"Because the entire abolition of the much-prized facilities now offered for homestead selection would be a disastrous reversal of the most successful provision of the existing land laws."

That this House therefore requests the mover to temporarily withdraw the Bill, with a view to its early re-introduction in a form better calculated to check abuse and encourage the legitimate settlement of the people upon the lands of the colony.

being read—

Mr. HORWITZ said: Mr. Speaker,—Speaking on the amendment, I think that, as many hon. members on both sides of the House have ventilated their opinions on the Bill, it is hardly worth while to waste much more time on it. However, I wish to give my reasons for the manner in which I intend to vote. I do not feel disposed to accept the Bill as it stands now. I mean to give my opinion on the Bill in this House, so that members on either side may not be misled. I intend to vote for the second reading of this Bill, and if the Minister for Lands will accept certain amendments which have been referred to by hon. members on this side I will give a general support to it. When the Minister for Lands brought the Bill before the House, no doubt he brought it with the best of intentions; but it seems to me that the people on the Downs do not feel satisfied with it as it stands, and they have got great reasons for not agreeing with some parts of it. You know, Mr. Speaker, as well as I do that we have lost large estates on the Downs already, and it is therefore natural to feel shy of this measure. No doubt when the Bill comes before us in committee we may make such alterations in it as will be for the benefit of the colony at large. I may state, for one thing, that the people of the Downs do not feel satisfied with the homestead clauses being taken from them altogether. They have done a great deal of good in the way of settling people on the land in the districts of Warwick, Allora, and likewise on the Back Plains. I should like to see, instead of the homesteads being limited to 160 acres, that they should be increased to 320 acres; and instead of

the land being taken up at 2s. 6d. an acre I should like to see 5s. an acre charged, with ten years to pay the whole amount of purchase money. Then, if selectors pay that amount and make the necessary improvements, I think the Government should give them their deeds at once. The second provision in this Bill, to which I have a great objection, is the 20,000-acre grazing lease. 20,000 acres is far too much; at least that is my opinion, but I may be wrong. If, however, good arguments are brought forward in support of this clause, I shall be prepared to alter my opinion, and vote for it. I object to it now, because it allows people to take up 20,000 acres in one district, and the same amount in any number of other districts. That would be a fine thing for people who have got a large capital at their command, for they would then be able to take up selections of different sizes all over the colony, and the Crown cannot take those holdings from them for thirty years, which is altogether too long a period. But the greatest objection I have to this provision is, that if a man takes up 20,000 acres of land he has the privilege of mortgaging. That is not as it should be, and there should be no such privilege. No doubt that clause would suit me very well, as far as I am personally concerned, but I think it would act injuriously to the colony, and therefore I speak dead against it and shall not vote for it. I have got a good number of friends round about Warwick, and I might give them encouragement to take up land. I might say, "You have got no capital, but I will find you that capital for the purpose of fencing and stocking your land." If I find these men do not do as I desire, I can say, "You may go about your business and I will get somebody else in your place." But the law of the land comes in then and can give me six months' notice to sell, because I have no right to hold the land. I disapprove of that provision. I think that if I hold a mortgage I have a right to do what I like with what is my own. The man in possession of 10,000 or 20,000 acres of land may owe me £5,000 or £10,000, and the Crown may give me notice to sell the land which is my security. Times may not be exactly favourable for me to sell out, although I know that according to the law of the land I am bound to do so. What right has the Crown to call upon me to sacrifice my capital which I have invested in this way, and probably cause me to lose one-half of it? Unless I foreclose when called upon by notice to do so, the Crown can take possession of my land; and I object to that provision *in toto*. Then with regard to the impounding clauses. I do not see what right the squatter has to impound stock belonging to the selector, when the selector has no control whatever over his land. By this Bill the selector gets two years in which to fence in his selection, but if he has not got sufficient capital to do so the squatter may impound his stray stock. I am certainly of opinion that two years is too short a time to allow for the fencing in of a selection, and that the limit should be five years. Of course, the selector ought to be in a position to fence in some parts of his selection within two years, but he would not be able, as a rule, to complete that part of his conditions within a less time than five years. If land is not fenced in, no matter to whom it belongs, whether to the squatter or the selector, neither party should have the right to impound, because I consider land ought to be fenced in before it can really belong to anyone. I now come to the clause referring to scrub lands. I have great objection to that clause passing, and to selectors being able to take up 10,000 acres of scrub land and have control over it for thirty years. You, sir, know as well as I do that scrub land is the best land we have got. I am of opinion scrub land should be dealt with in a different way altogether. We ought to give our scrub land to immigrants who might feel inclined to come out, in areas of 200 or 300 acres. We know that scrub land when cleared is worth up to £3 an acre; and if anyone was willing to settle down on such land and make his home there for five years, and if within that time he fenced it in and cleared one-third of it, I think he should get the land without any payment at all. If we permitted this I am sure we would get a good many colonists to settle in the district around Warwick; and we should like to see them come there. But if, as under this Bill, people are allowed to select 10,000 acres of this land, and hold it for thirty years, they will not only take up all the land near Warwick, but they will go up north and get all the best sugar lands that are left, with all the best timber; and I consider it will be the ruination of the colony if they are allowed to do so. Our scrub lands are first-class lands; they are the best lands in the colony. I am of opinion, also, that before the Bill passes the whole of the land should be surveyed in 1,000-acre blocks and highway roads laid out. If men are to be allowed to take a piece of ground here and another piece there, the divisional boards will have a great deal of trouble afterwards in making roads. The land should be surveyed before it is selected. We ought, I think, to go in for close settlement instead of scattering our population all over the colony. We have enough land about the Darling Downs just now to settle people upon, if sufficient inducements are offered to them. It is well known to you, sir, that certain land was only last week put up in Allora in 80-acre and 40-acre blocks, and that land brought over £2 per acre. I believe the land should be reserved on both sides of our railways in 5-mile squares, and leased for ten years; and then we would have population settled upon it very soon, and they would not be scattered all over the colony. It must be remembered, too, that we have got the right already to resume land whenever we think proper, and I think that ought to be sufficient for us for the next five or ten years. I do not intend to detain the House longer upon the amendment before us; but when the Bill gets into committee I will have more to say upon it.

Mr. GOVETT said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to say a few words on the Bill before the House. A Land Bill is certainly one of the most important measures that can be brought into this House. I may say I have learnt something about the Land Bills which have been introduced since 1848, as I have been closely associated with the pastoral interest from that time till the present day. I had an opportunity of seeing the working of many Land Acts in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland; and it has been shown me most clearly, in Victoria, that wherever the Government have attempted to "legislate for the poor man" as they call it—to reduce the areas to small blocks of land to be held only by these men—it has been the means of putting into the hands of moneyed men large quantities of land. The hon. member for Townsville put certain figures before the House; and I hope every hon. member will study those figures very carefully, for they showed very clearly that there must be for a considerable number of years a loss of revenue by the operations of this Bill. It was my opinion that this Bill was intended to increase the revenue. I understood that that was the secondary cause for which it was brought forward, and that the principal object was in order to settle people upon the land. I do not think that the Bill is suited to settle people upon the land faster than they have been

settled upon it hitherto, except in this way: that people will come here faster, and will then find their natural level, and settle upon the land even under the Act we have in force now. A Land Bill has a most disturbing effect in any country, and, I think, does that country for a considerable time a lot of harm. The disturbing influence which is brought to bear over the whole country when a Land Bill is talked about, and the excitement immediately after it is passed, always leads to some little difficulty and trouble to a great number of people. I have seen it in Victoria, where the auction system was first used for the sale of land. Then it came into force that people should have only small quantities of land, and that the Government should only take £1 per acre; and it is a curious fact that in Victoria the people who were supposed to get the land by the introducers of that Land Act did not get the land; and not only that, but people who bought land at £4 and £5 an acre had to see their neighbours across the fence get land equally good for which they only paid £1. I do not think this Bill will settle people upon the land, for this reason: I do not think the leasing system is a good one. I think people have a craving for land—that is, if they want to get land at all and work it. they have a very great inclination to be able to say that they own that land as a freehold. I know from my own feelings that it is so in a sort of a way; but, having been so long connected with the pastoral interest, I have not cared to go in for a freehold. Well, sir, as to the question of freehold as put forward by the squatters: I am one of that class which I consider has been spoken of in a strange manner in the House many many times; and, as I said just now, I have a feeling that if I wanted a piece of freehold to make a home upon I should like to be able to get it. I have not a single acre of freehold in Queensland; but, at the same time, I stand here and ask hon. members in this House to study well before they wipe away the pre-emptive right, which the squatter has held ever since there was a squatter in the colony. It is a right beyond all doubt; and I have heard hon. members on this side and on the other side say that if it was a bad bargain, then give the squatter an equivalent for his rights. That would be right enough, and they have a perfect right to expect something of that kind; but for the Government of this colony to repudiate the pre-emptive right of the squatter—I trust that hon. members of this House will never permit such a thing to be done. Now, coming to the farming land: I think that for purposes of close settlement, if a man takes a small piece of land, he ought to have the option of increasing it—that is, if he takes it for an agricultural farm—because in some places he can do very well on a small piece of land, and in other parts of the colony he will require very much more. I question very much whether he should not be allowed to take up more than 960 acres. I will now refer to the grazing farmers, who may obtain 5,000, 10,000, or 20,000 acres. I think that will be the most disappointing clause in the Bill to the introducers of it, and I think that they will in committee see many defects. These grazing areas are to be on the resumed half of the squatter's run, and I know, from my own experience, that one or two small selections of that kind will probably cause the squatter to throw up the whole of the resumed part, and not pay any rent at all; and there will then be more unused country and badly used country than there has been for a great number of years in this colony at all events. By being badly used I mean that it is used as common to everybody, and no one will get a real benefit from it. The squatter cannot get a benefit from it, and the people to whom it is intended to be a benefit will get none, because *bonâ fide* men will not take it up. That is my idea. I do not think it will be taken up by *bonâ fide* men. If it is taken up by a *bonâ fide* man he will fence it, and do his utmost to work it; but that is not the man who will be the first to get it. It will be the man who is always looking out for this kind of thing, and will always take it; and he has a right to forfeit it if the surveyor does not survey it off as he likes. However, that matter, I think, will be dealt with in committee, and I shall certainly vote for the grazing area farms. It will be discussed very fully, I am sure, because it is a very important clause, the object being to settle people on the land; and I do not think the clause as it stands will settle people on the land or increase settlement at all. I now come to the red line on the map. That is a line that we certainly do not understand, because it is said that within that line there is better communication than there is outside. I take exception to that, Mr. Speaker. There may be some hon. members in this House who will be rather surprised to hear that 200 miles out west of that line people are supplied with the necessaries required by stations, at a cheaper rate than the people of Blackall. Then it has been stated that the object of the Bill is to bring population to the colony. I will take down south, in the lower part of the Warrego. We all know very well that communication there is very much better, and people can get their supplies out there very much cheaper than we can get them at Blackall; so that I think, if the object is to settle people on the land, people from New South Wales should not be debarred from going there, although the trade may go to Sydney for a while. I think, therefore, that this schedule is altogether wrong, and that the proper course to adopt, if the Bill is to become law, is to allow it to go over the whole colony. I would be in favour of bringing the whole colony under the law at once. Of course, the administration of the law would be according to the parts of the country that required it. It has been stated that there will be a railway commenced before long from the Gulf of Carpentaria, running inland. There will be people wanting to settle there, and why should they not settle there as well as in other parts where there is railway communication? Although I am one of the class called squatters, I hold that I am as much in favour of the settlement of people in this colony as any member in this House, and I would not stand in the way of their getting the land that is most suited for close settlement. Settlement is going on in a gradual way, because we have towns springing up all over the colony, and if the people of Brisbane are allowed to purchase land to settle on, why should not people around those other towns also be allowed to do so? That is what I should like to get more information about than I have at present, because my idea is that very sparse settlement must take place in the first instance. The Minister for Lands spoke last night about my knowing Tambo. I do know Tambo, and the station that was held by the Minister for Lands and his partners; and I will just say in passing, as the hon. gentleman mentioned my name, that I consider Tambo Station was worked during the time they had it in an honourable and straightforward manner. There is one thing about Tambo Run that I would mention. The Minister for Lands said that he and his partners improved the land very closely. I know perfectly well he and his partners commenced to improve; and I will tell him that they did not do that before they got the example from one of those Melbourne men he has

spoken about. They got the example from the man whom the hon. member for Blackall mentioned as having laid out £80,000 in three or four years. That set them going, because I have heard the Minister for Lands' brother say that that was the first insight they had of what could be done by laying out money and improving the country. To show my opinion about the pre-emptives on the Tambo Run, I may state that I believe the Minister for Lands and his partners got a largely increased price owing to the known right — I call it the "known right" — of pre-emption by the purchasers. The purchasers looked upon that as one of their securities. They knew perfectly well that, according to the existing land law, before very long they would have to clear a portion of the run or lose it by being ousted altogether in the way of purchase—because that was the Land Act—and they calculated the amount of land that they could get by this pre-emptive right—a privilege which was considered, and has been considered for the last thirty years to my knowledge in this and the other colonies, to be a perfect right, which it was not likely would be taken away. Now the question is—how are we to deal with the lands of the country? I think that people should be allowed to get land by purchasing it for close settlement. The purchase may be on very easy terms; I have no objection to that, nor to the small farmers getting it on easy terms. I believe the homestead clauses have been the means of letting men have land on easy terms. Where the land is good they can pick out small quantities and develop it. I know that in Victoria it is not necessary for a man to have a large quantity, provided it is good and in a good locality. The land may be ever so good, but, if it is not in a locality where a good return can be got from it, it is no use going on to it. I have not the slightest doubt there is very good land in New Guinea, but there is no use a small farmer going there at present. I fancy some of the squatters will have to go and take some stock and make provision for other people to come after. That appears to be the only way in which settlement has taken place in these colonies.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: The pioneers!

Mr. GOVETT: You may call them pioneers if you like. They were stock-owners; and stock can be taken and fed on the native grass of the colony. What would the diggers in Victoria have done, in the great rushes of 1851 and 1853, had it not been for the squatters? What position would they have been in if there had been no squatters to provide them with meat? There were not the means then of shipping meat from other parts of the world as there are at the present time. But meat was provided; and I know from my own knowledge that it very soon got scarce owing to the enormous influx of population in a short time. I remember perfectly well that sheep were brought down from Moreton Bay, as it was then called; I bought thousands of them myself. Moreton Bay then was as little known in Victoria as the far West—the Barcoo—was known here when I first came to Queensland; there was just as little known by the people down there of the splendid land on the Darling Downs as of the Barcoo when I went there. I think the hon. member for Rockhampton was in Rockhampton at that time. It was in 1863 that I went out, and I fancy he knew very little of the country out west. If he had read the statements made in Mr. Gregory's book, he would have seen that at the time Mr. Gregory went there land was not very valuable on the Barcoo. I mention this because the hon. member has laid stress on the insignificant amount of rent that the squatters are paying. He says it is 2d. an acre. Well, to a man living in the town, with his ideas about acres taken from picked little spots enclosed near to him, that rent appears to be small; but my experience is that I have never yet found the rent to be too low. And I think I can prove my words to be correct in this way: After the drought of 1868, there were thousands and thousands of square miles of country on the Barcoo and the Thompson River forfeited, as the people could not pay, or did not care to pay, the rent. And out towards the Gulf there were magnificent stations, which had been improved, forfeited at the same time. I do not know whether there was so much of a drought out there, but there was a great crisis that brought about hard times and the want of a market for stock. I know that I had a very great difficulty to advise my own partners—moneyed men—to carry on the station I had taken up in 1863. The boiling-down establishment had just been started at Rockhampton, and they said, "Take all your stock off, boil it down, and throw the country up." I argued with them for hours before I could get them to let me carry on. However, I did, and the country has since proved that I was right—that it ought not to be thrown up. They were complaining that they could not get any income from it. I said it was not likely, and that I thought they would have to wait a considerable number of years before they did, but I was doing my best to develop the country and work the station up to some value. I know what difficulties I had to go through in the 1868 drought. I had about 35,000 sheep on the station; I had to clear out; and I went for some 160 miles over country that was not taken up at all, where I found good water and grass. That country was lying for years and years alongside of me, and there was no one there to take it up; and that proves to me that the settlement of the country must go on gradually. The whole of that country, or nearly the whole, has been taken up since; and that is the way that settlement begins. Hon. members make a mistake in saying that people are not paying enough rent for the pastoral lands of the colony, although I am free to admit that the rents must be increased. Hon. members talk lightly about the small rents that the squatters have paid, forgetting that, while at the present time people in Rockhampton are paying £10 or £12 a ton for flour, people in the western country have to pay £50 or £60 a ton for it. There is a difference to begin with which the first settlers have to meet. It is not altogether a question of rent. With regard to railway communication out to the West, I can assure hon. members that wool was sent in to Rockhampton by teams in the old days at very little increase, if any, over what we are paying now. But I do not object to paying a fair railway rate, provided the lines are sent out west at a sufficiently rapid rate, which has not been the case; and I think the squatters for hundreds of miles west of the present railway terminus have just cause to complain of the slowness of railway construction in that direction. They fully expected that before now the line would have reached Blackall; they had every reason to expect it; and on the strength of that they went ahead in a most rapid way with their improvements—in fact, I think they got the country too far ahead, because now the difficulty is to get the quantity of produce they have in the shape of wool to port. There has, therefore, been some settlement out west. I do not say for a moment that the squatter should not give way for closer settlement; but I argue that, when it comes to close settlement, the question should be dealt with in a different way than by taking land

from one lessee and giving it to another. I claim to be as liberal about settling people on the land as any member of the House; and I consider that if you get people here they will soon find places to settle. There is no locking-up of the land in this colony, nor has there been in Victoria for the last thirty years to my knowledge. I remember that in the old days in Victoria there used to be a very popular song about "unlocking the lands," while at the same moment it was being thrown open rapidly to people who required it. I know that when gold was found on stations in Victoria the whole of the runs were taken away at once without any notice, and the people were allowed to settle upon and make use of them. Under the present Act in Queensland we have to give up our runs on six months' notice being given, and that condition is well recognised by every squatter in the country. Referring again to the pre-emptive right, I will say that the pastoral tenants have always considered it a right which no Government would ever dream of taking away. If in the South you wish to settle people on the land, by all means throw open the whole of it, and I again say that I am in favour of freeholds for close settlement.

Mr. DONALDSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I have listened with very great attention to the various speeches that have been delivered on the Bill now before the House; and I have to thank hon. members on both sides for the able manner in which the subject has been handled, and for the good spirit that has prevailed on both sides during the debate. The question has by this time been so well discussed that it is hardly possible for any speaker rising at this stage to throw any new light upon it. My chief reason for speaking is that I happen to be associated with a party in this country—I refer to the squatters—who, it is generally said, are opposed to the settlement of the land. While there may, perhaps, be some who are in favour of holding the land entirely, to the exclusion of others, and to the exclusion of the selector, I am happy to say that they form a very small minority. I am confident that the majority of the squatters were always ready and willing to give way to settlement. Personally, I have always advocated those views, before I was a squatter and since; and the fact of my being a squatter now is no reason why I should change the views I formerly held. I have always been opposed to the aggregation of large estates. In any country, particularly a new one, they are not at all beneficial—in fact they are almost a curse, because they prevent close settlement on the land, and therefore must be detrimental to its best interests. No country, I contend, can be great without population; no matter how good its lands are, unless there is a population on the lands, it can never be great. Therefore, instead of approaching this subject—the subject of a Land Bill—in a party spirit, it is the duty of both sides of the House, and of all parties outside, to combine and make it the best possible measure for the country. Unfortunately for all the colonies, not this one in particular, some large estates have already been created; but before I sit down I will show that those large estates were not made by the free will of the parties who became their purchasers, but that they have been forced into the position which they occupy. I must complain—I wish the Minister for Lands to understand me thoroughly, that I do not do this in a carping spirit—I think the information he has furnished to the House is not at all satisfactory. Several Land Acts have already been passed, with some of which I am not even acquainted; and I think it was his duty, in introducing this measure, to have pointed out how those various Acts have worked. It would not have been a very difficult matter for him to have pointed out how lands were alienated under former Acts, the quantity of land sold by auction, the quantity selected, the number of selectors occupying land, and the quantity of land that has passed into large estates. If such information had been furnished, no doubt it would have been a great guide to us in discussing the Bill; and it might then have been better pointed out how existing defects could be remedied. We know, however, that the Minister for Lands does not claim perfection for the Bill, and that Ministers have already intimated their willingness to accept certain modifications in committee. A good deal of information, however, since the introduction of the Bill, has been dragged from—perhaps that is too harsh a term, so I will say furnished by—Ministers, but I do not for a moment make the accusation that the Minister for Lands wilfully withheld information. Probably, like myself, being new to Parliament, and to the duties appertaining to his office, he was not as well acquainted with what should have been done as he otherwise would have been, and as he probably will be the next time he introduces a Land Bill. I have no wish to take up too much time, because, as I stated at the commencement of my remarks, the matter has been so fully debated that very little light can be thrown on the subject; but as the information I have just complained about has not been furnished, and as I have had experience in the other colonies of Australia, I shall briefly refer to the Acts of those colonies. It is a remarkable coincidence that four of the principal colonies of Australia are each dealing with a new Land Bill. That proves to me that the land legislation of Australia must have been a failure; otherwise I do not think they would all be now engaged in framing fresh measures. It appears to me that all the Land Acts hitherto passed have produced nothing good or great—they have been merely shuttlecocks batted about from party to party, and have been simply a matter of compromise. Hence, no satisfaction has been given either to one party or the other. Selector or squatter, freeholder or leaseholder—none have been satisfied so far. Nearly all the colonies commenced craving for what they called liberal land laws in the year 1861. In New South Wales, a Bill was then introduced limiting the area of a selection to 320 acres. Well, it had this advantage: that a man, for each member of his family also, was entitled to take up the same area. The terms were 5s. an acre on application, and the balance subsequently. He need pay no further sum for five years. He had three years in which to make certain improvements, and then he need not pay the balance of 15s., provided he paid the rent. No term was mentioned in which he would have to pay that money; provided he paid his rent he might continue to do so for an indefinite time. That Act, so long as the rich lands of the colony were available for selection, proved a success, and was the means of settling many farmers on the agricultural lands of that colony. But after a time the selectors passed into the interior, and unfortunately it was not the general desire or aim of a great number of those men to select the land and hold it for good. I am sorry to say that the majority—a large number, at all events—of the selectors went there for the purpose of blackmailing. It was then that the squatter saw the necessity of protecting himself against such people, and commenced buying lands freely at auction. To this is entirely attributable the possession of large estates in that colony. In 1876 that Act was amended and the area increased from 320 acres to 640 acres, with the limitation, however, that a man was unable to select for the members of his family unless they had reached the age of sixteen years.

That amendment was the means of settling a large number of people in the interior; but still there was a complaint that the area was not sufficiently large to enable people to make a good living. And that was the reason for the introduction of the measure now under the consideration of the Upper House in that colony. I merely refer to that Bill to point out that the blackmailing and speculative selection which took place in that colony were the means of creating the large estates that exist there at the present day. In Victoria, in the year 1861, a liberal Land Bill was framed; and after it became law the Act was evaded in all directions, and very little settlement took place under its provisions, the measure having been framed in such a loose manner. At that time there were large areas of good agricultural land in that colony, for which Mr. Brookes, the then Minister for Lands, issued occupation licenses; and under those licenses several persons took up, I think, areas of 160 acres each. They held it for some time, but the Supreme Court afterwards declared the selections to be illegal, because two licenses could not be issued for the same land. However, under a subsequent Act in 1862—called the "Duffy Act"—these were legalised. That was the first instance in Victoria of selection without survey. The Act of 1862, which was a measure intended to be liberal in its provisions, failed in settling a population on the lands in consequence of its administration, and on account of the numerous evasions of the law. It was amended in 1865 by Grant's Act, which, instead of permitting a ballot for each separate lot, enabled the selectors to draw by ballot and select any lands open in a certain area on fixed dates. That Act was the first in Victoria which had the effect of settling the people on the land. It was very ably administered; but it also had its defects. Before proceeding to that I should say that in New South Wales the same provision existed, but in a very short time—about a year after—transfers were allowed. In 1869 the Victorian Act was amended, but the area was reduced from 640 to 320 acres, and then selection was allowed without survey. I believe that this Act was more successful than the former one. Its chief defect was that there was not sufficient land allowed to enable people to make a living, unless they got choice selections. Hence large sales have taken place since. In that Act we had land boards for the first time. I contend that in all the other colonies any failure that has taken place in the land laws in settling people upon the land simply arose from this: that the facilities for selling were too great, and generally the area allowed to be selected was not sufficient to enable a man to earn a living from it by cultivation. Hence the people, when they got their titles, disposed of the land to large holders, and this was the means of creating large estates. Let us now examine this Bill and see whether it covers all the defects I have indicated. I am not referring to previous Acts in this colony, because I am aware that many hon. members know more about them than I do. Let us, I say, examine the present Bill and see whether it provides against the defects which, as I have pointed out, exist in the other colonies. I shall not deal with the several parts in the order in which they occur. I shall commence in the middle of the Bill, with the grazing farms. The hon. the Minister for Lands in introducing the Bill referred to the fact that there is a large number of young men in this country who have had considerable experience among stock, who are precluded from entering into the occupation of the land simply because their means are not sufficient to allow them either to buy a station or a share in one. I think if the provisions of this Bill are passed such persons will be enabled to settle on the land. I agree with the hon. member in that respect. I think that there is a large number of people in this colony, and also in the neighbouring colonies, who have had considerable experience among stock; young men, with experience and money, who will come here if this Bill passes, and will, I believe, make the sort of colonists that we want; and I hope they will be successful here. The only danger arising from this part of the Bill is that it may be taken advantage of by people who have had no experience whatever, and who have the erroneous idea that they have only to go on the land to coin money. I would just utter a word of warning to those people—let them be well advised before going on the land. But to practical men, to men of experience, there is a good opening. As to the land itself, it is admitted, I think, that there are some lands that we can only occupy for pastoral purposes—though I shall be very glad to find that I am wrong—that lands in the interior cannot be converted into agricultural holdings. All, I believe, are agreed that this is a matter of impossibility. To settle on 20,000 acres, a man would require from £5,000 to £8,000, according, not only to the quality of the soil, but also to the natural features of the country; whether it is near a market, whether it has natural waters, or whether an artificial supply would have to be provided. The difference of £3,000 would perhaps cover the difference between the one and the other. With regard to the rental that these people will be called upon to pay, I think the minimum fixed by the Bill is rather too high, and any remarks I may have to make upon this head will also apply to the pastoral leases. Any person going out into the interior has to develop the country. He cannot get any advantage from the land at first; he must have the use of it for one, two, or three years before he can develop it sufficiently to get a return for his outlay. It is the same with pastoral lessees of the present day. They are not able to obtain any advantage from their holdings at first; but they have to settle down upon them, and bring stock there, and it takes five or ten years, or more, before they get any return. The same remark applies to these grazing farms. I would not only advocate a lower rent than is proposed for the first period, but I should like to see the rent made a fixed rent. No great harm can occur to the State if we do not get the full value from the land. The people who take up these farms are likely to become useful and permanent colonists; and I think any direct loss that might occur to the State through their not paying a sufficient rental will be more than counterbalanced by their going on to the country and developing it to the fullest extent. I have heard a great many arguments from the other side of the House for and against this portion of the Bill. I think I have already pointed out what I believe to be the main defect of every Land Bill in the other colonies, and that is that they generally do not give people a sufficient area of land to enable farmers to settle upon the soil and make a living out of it; and if it is the opinion of hon. members that 960 acres or 320 acres is too small a quantity to allow, I shall be very glad to assist in passing any amendment that may be proposed in committee. I do not wish to offer any opinion of my own upon it, but I shall be pleased to support any amendment that will make the Bill more practicable. With reference to the provision respecting fencing, I am quite in accord with the opinions expressed by the hon. member for Warwick. I think the period allowed for agricultural farms is too short, and that if

the selector required it he should have more than two or three years. I see no objection to making the term five years, because very often farmers go on to the land with limited means; they have not much stock to keep; and as they usually put the land under cultivation, that might take all their time and available capital. As they raised money from the produce of the land it could be applied to the purpose of fencing; therefore I am inclined to allow a much longer period than is proposed in the Bill. I think in many cases it is hardly necessary for the selector to fence his farm at all, because if he were a man of limited means he would have enough to do with his money in clearing his land and raising crops instead of erecting fences which would probably be useless to him. At the same time, I cannot agree with the hon. member for Warwick, who, I think, is in favour of allowing selectors the right of impounding before they enclose their lands. If that were done we would have nothing but war and rumours of war in this country—in fact it would be a war of extermination, with a result something like the fable of the Kilkenny cats, when both were destroyed. I also think it is desirable that we should have survey before selection. By that means the land of the country could be properly partitioned, so as not to allow any person the opportunity of selecting the eyes out of it. In places where water was sparse, several people would be able to get the benefit of it, instead of one person being allowed to select it to the exclusion of all others. I think that is the strongest argument in favour of having survey before selection. There is another objection also. If the surveys are allowed to proceed without having proper connections, there is no doubt that in the future a very large expense would be incurred in readjusting these surveys. I have already had some practical experience of that. In Victoria, though the country is small, and the selections were near each other, the whole of the land had afterwards to be surveyed—in fact is being surveyed now, at very great cost to the State. I think if the surveys were carried out in the first instance it would be far better. This remark also applies to grazing farms. If selection followed survey, there is no doubt it would be an easier matter to dispose of the land than if it took place prior to survey. With regard to fencing upon grazing farms, I think the time allowed is sufficiently long, because the inference is that any person who goes out for the purpose of taking up a grazing farm is a man of certain means; he cannot make a proper use of the land until it is enclosed, even if it has water on it, and the probability is he would have to develop the whole country before being able to use it at all. Unless he is prevented by dry weather, likely to last for a long time, I think the present period allowed for fencing is quite sufficient. He certainly should not have any rights of impounding until his land is fenced. This would save a lot of difficulty, and create more harmony than if he had the right; and would prevent people from taking up land to make money out of it by using it for purposes not intended by this Act—that is, impounding the stock of neighbouring squatters to get fees out of them. With regard to grazing farms, I certainly think, from having had a practical knowledge of the interior, that the maximum should not be less than 20,000 acres, because the country is poor, and it will take a greater number of acres to carry a sheep than many hon. members in the inside districts are aware of. No person can be expected to go out and live upon country, and make the best use of it, unless he can make it profitable. No one, however, should have the privilege of being able to select more than 20,000 acres; and I object to the part of the Bill allowing that to be done. The very object of this Bill is to prevent a monopoly of the lands of the country. It is said even now that the runs are already too large, and this Bill is brought in for the express purpose of reducing their size; but if we allow persons to select 20,000 acres of land in each of twenty or fifty districts, as there may be, one man will be able to get 400,000 or 500,000 acres, which would be a larger run than many of those existing in the present day, and held under a better lease. There are other matters connected with the 4th part of this Bill—small matters of detail, upon which I shall reserve what I have to say until the measure gets into committee. I now come to the 67th clause, which provides that selectors under the Act of 1876 may surrender and come under this Bill, but I hardly think that will meet the case of those selectors who have been for two or more years paying rent under that Act. Some better means should be devised; some extension of time should be allowed, to enable them to tide over their present difficulties; because, as has been observed by some other hon. members, they would go to the money-lenders to borrow money to meet their wants, and by so doing they would get themselves into greater difficulties and would be of no real benefit to the State. I shall now address a few remarks to the 3rd part of this Bill—the part referring to pastoral lessees. I maintain, sir, that the pastoral lessees of this colony are entitled to greater consideration. They have been the means of developing a large amount of this country; they have been, and in fact are at the present time, the backbone of it. The pastoral industry is the leading industry of this colony, and one to which every encouragement should be offered; not only because it is a large exporting industry, but because it is one which gives employment to a large amount of labour. Many of these men, in the more favoured districts, have had an opportunity of selling out for good prices; but the majority of them have never reaped the benefit of their expenditure. Not only have large sums been spent, but a long time has been taken up by the pastoral lessees in improving the country. Their object has not been to make an immediate profit—all the money taken out of the land goes back into it, and that has been going on year after year. When we hear of good sales having been made it is not because the lands have increased in value; they have increased to a certain extent, but only on account of the improvements that have been made, and the increase of stock that has taken place. At the present time few transactions take place, because our land laws are unsettled. I do not say this will be a crushing land law, but until the question is finally settled there will be a certain amount of depression, and as soon as that disability is removed large transactions will again take place. In some of the districts, both inside and outside the schedule, to my certain knowledge matters are at a standstill for the present. If we pass a fair, just, and reasonable measure, things will go on vigorously again. Many of the pastoral lessees have had very great difficulties to contend against. They have not only been far from the centres of population where labour has been both costly and scarce, but they have had a high expense in the carriage of their goods, and wool, and stock, to market. Therefore their gains would not be anything like as large in a district which have no communication as in a district where carriage is provided, supposing the grazing capabilities of each to be equal. Since the extension of railways into the interior by the Government of this colony, in some portions of the country, it is true the carriage has been reduced; but as I can assure the House from personal experience, and from information

I have received from people who have had long experience in this business, I have reason to doubt that carriage is cheaper now than it was when the railways were within 100 miles of the coast. At the present time the Western Railway has not pierced to the heart of the country, and the trade of the colony is going to New South Wales for the want of railway extension in that direction. This matter has also been referred to by the hon. member for Mitchell, and, although I may be going out of the way in speaking of railway matters, I shall occupy the time of the House for a little while upon that subject. It is only by the extension of our railways into the heart of the country that the land can be truly developed. It is a fact that the improvements on any number of runs are held in suspense in anticipation of the extension of our railway lines, but the idea still prevails among many people, people who can know nothing of the subject, that the pastoral lessees are deriving large profits at the present time. We are visited from time to time, I am sorry to say, with disastrous droughts; we have had them in the past and we have got one now—one that promises to be the greatest that we have ever had; and probably before many months are over the leading industry in the colony may be landed in a deplorable condition, and many men may be ruined. I hope such a state of things will not take place, but I am seriously afraid that it will. There is another thing in connection with railways that is worth mentioning. It is desirable, in a country like this, with its variable climate, that facilities should be given for removing stock. I am glad to see, by a telegram from New South Wales, that an idea which I have had for many years is about to be carried into effect there. Arrangements are now being made to allow stock to be removed at a cheap rate from the parched plains to the coast, to other districts where they will be able to be depastured until the country in the interior again becomes capable of carrying them. The loss of stock is not only a loss to the individual but it is a national loss; and, if railways are extended further into the country, stock will be able to be removed from one district, where there is no water or grass, to another more favoured locality, and thus tide over a long drought. Such has been my experience during the short time I have been in this colony—that I have known one portion of it to be covered with plenty of grass and another to be a parched desert. I therefore trust that in the future, when we have railway extension, this loss can to a great extent be avoided. It will cut both ways, because sometimes the lands towards the coast may be suffering from drought when the lands in the interior have plenty of grass. With regard to the quantity of land which it is proposed by this Bill should be resumed, I think a lesser quantity would do in the first instance. I am in favour of resuming, say, one-fourth of the run at first, and after a period of a few years to resume another fourth, taking half of the run from the pastoral lessee, say in five years. I consider, however, that the leases proposed to be given in lieu of them are hardly long enough. I may be accused of being interested on this question, but I think it would be only fair to extend the period in the settled and unsettled districts, by five years in each case, making it, instead of ten and fifteen, fifteen and twenty years in each case. With regard to the rental, it will be a matter outside the province of this House to fix that. It will be adjusted by a board; but I would like to see the minimum rental fixed at a lower rate than it is in this Bill; because large portions of land in this colony are not worth anything like the minimum fixed in this Bill. If this were done it would not have the effect of preventing us from getting a fair revenue from the land where it is valuable, because the assumption is that the land will have to pay according to its grazing capabilities and other conditions which are herein named, and which, I think, are very fair. If the land is worth more than £1 or £2 a mile, the board, of course, will have to regulate that; but I think it will be very hard indeed if they are not to have the privilege of fixing the amount at less than £1, where the land is only worth, say, 10s. a mile. For that reason I would like to see the minimum reduced, for it will certainly apply to a large portion of land in the interior to which it is not proposed to extend the operations of the Bill, but to which it may be extended in the future. These matters are to a certain extent matters of detail, and may also be dealt with in committee. Another thing upon which I wish to say a few words is subsection *(e)* of clause 25, which says:—

"Provided that in estimating the increased value the increment in value attributable to improvements shall not be taken into account except so far as such improvements were necessary and proper improvements without which the land could not reasonably be utilised."

I see a difficulty in interpreting the phraseology of that clause, but the way I take it is this: that if a man has natural water on his country he will have to pay exactly the same rent as a man who has had to provide artificial water, provided the grazing capabilities are the same. I think that is hardly just, as some allowance should be made to the man who has provided artificial water on the land. It would, of course, be hardly reasonable to expect that because a man took up country that was not naturally watered, and he took means to provide artificial water for his stock, he should not be taxed at all; but he should certainly have some consideration and some allowance made to him. Perhaps we may see a way out of the difficulty in committee. There is another proposal in the 26th clause which says:—

"When any part of the land is selected or otherwise disposed of, a reduction shall be made in the rent proportionate to the area so selected or disposed of."

That would be hardly fair, for a selector might possibly take out the eyes of his country. Suppose the case of a block of 40,000 acres, and 20,000 acres of the best of it were selected, a reduction proportionate to the area of one-half would hardly be fair in such a case. If my suggestion made a short time ago is adhered to, and the survey is made before selection, this can all be avoided, because it will be quite possible for the board to value every allotment prior to selection. The 27th clause is one which has already been spoken about, and I think very ably, by the hon. member for Stanley, Mr. Kellett. I think it is one which will apply very harshly in some instances. I think it should be either modified very considerably or expunged entirely. In a very dry season it may be impossible for stock to get water on many parts of a run, and it may act very harshly if pastoral lessees are compelled to remove their stock from where there is some grass and water, before rain falls. If it could be shown that the pastoral lessee had overstocked the land over which he has the right to depasture, for the purpose of having the grass eaten down in such a way as to prevent selection, there would be some force in it; but I can assure the House it will bear very unequally, and for that reason I should like to see it either greatly modified or expunged altogether. In connection with the 31st and 32nd clauses, concerning the travelling of stock, I will have some remarks to make in committee. I have gone through, I think, most of the important portions of the Bill, and, as I do

not wish to detain the House very long, I shall be as brief as possible. With regard to the repeal of the 54th section of the Pastoral Leases Act, I may say I have heard many arguments advanced in this House on both sides on that question; and before coming here I heard those arguments outside, and I cannot say that I have heard any reasoning which would justify us in saying that the pastoral lessees should not be entitled, where they have made improvements, to that right. For that reason I think this section is the greatest blemish in the Bill. No matter how you argue about it, it has the appearance of repudiation, and I think the Parliament of this colony should be very careful that no measure passed in it should contain anything of that kind, because that not only injures us at home, but abroad. I shall not traverse over the same ground which many hon. members have traversed with regard to the question. I may say that there is not the slightest doubt that many gentlemen who have purchased runs, in borrowing money represented to their creditors that they had these rights, and made a great deal of them, and so got the money. If these rights are not given to them it will put them in a very awkward position; and I therefore think that these rights should be reinstated in the Bill. I am almost going through the Bill backwards, but I have touched upon the most pleasant things in it first. With regard to the land board, I quite approve of the idea of a land board; first of all, because I believe it will be a protection to the State, and, in the next place, it will save the Minister a great deal of difficulty. I have, however, a very strong objection to the composition of the board as set down in this Bill. By this Bill the board will be thoroughly irresponsible. They will have to follow a too stringent law, and will not be allowed to exercise any opinions of their own. They will be tied down to technicalities, and will not be allowed to use their own discretion. They may be just and honourable men—I grant that—but still they may err; and it is quite possible that, in making valuations, the evidence which they will receive will not be sufficient to enable them to do the work justly and properly. Notwithstanding the fact that I have not only been for some years in this colony, but also in the other colonies—and have, I venture to say, a much larger experience of these matters than many hon. members in this House—yet there is only a small portion of this colony that I can give a fair decision upon. My experience does not extend over the whole of it; but I think it is necessary that the board should—not only in addition to the evidence that may be brought before them—have some knowledge of their own for their guidance. If it were possible for them to have that and to act justly, in all probability there would not be the difficulties that I anticipate. I think it only fair, while criticising the measure, that I should suggest a remedy, and my remedy is this: Whilst approving of the necessity of having land boards, I think that several of them should be appointed. I will not go into details just now. They should sit in various parts of the colony, and have the powers of taking evidence which are prescribed by the Bill. From that they should make a recommendation, and then, if any party should feel himself aggrieved, he should have the right of appeal to the Minister, who should sit in open court and hear the evidence. He would have the Press and the public to guide him, and in that manner it is not likely that we shall hear of those corrupt cases which have been flung about before this House. We hear a great deal indeed, but I think that, with these modifications, the Bill will give satisfaction to the country. In our law courts, if two parties go to law over perhaps an imaginary grievance, or over a small sum of money, if either party is not satisfied with the decision given there he has the right of appeal to another power. Everyone knows that judges are, or should be, thoroughly impartial in these matters, and are guided solely by the evidence; yet they may make errors. Either party then has a right of appeal, and why should we not here, where there is a large stake and a large principle involved? We should certainly have the right of appeal to the Minister. Surely this House will be able then to have some control! I think by having that modification we will be able to get satisfactorily through that portion of the business. I have another remark to make in regard to scrub lands—the 5th part of the Bill. Some hon. members are under a misapprehension with regard to this portion of the Bill. They are afraid that it will apply to the rich agricultural lands of this colony. I do not think such is the intention of the framers of the Bill. My idea is that it is intended to apply to the lands beyond the Dividing Range—the gidya and brigalow and other scrubs. I really think that this is one of the best parts of the Bill. I think there is a chance of being able to clear these lands by giving a long lease; but that is a matter of detail that we can discuss in committee. I also think that the period should be increased, because if that land is reclaimed and turned to good account the Crown will lose nothing by giving a thirty years' lease, and the country will certainly benefit by it. I believe I am correct in stating that that is the intention of the framers of the Bill. I think I have already gone beyond the limits of the time I allowed myself. I have, as briefly as possible, referred to most portions of the Bill; but, if I chose to be critical or make a long speech for the purpose of filling *Hansard*, I might probably continue for a much longer time. But such is not my intention, and I shall certainly take the opportunity when this measure gets into committee to endeavour to remedy some of the evils I notice in it, that I have passed over at present. I shall certainly do the best I can to have those modifications made.

The HON. R. B. SHERIDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I have listened with great pleasure and attention to the many excellent speeches that have been made on the Land Bill now before the House. I have lived in Australia for nearly forty-three years, and have lived in Queensland for almost thirty-three years, and during that long period I have seen a great many attempts at land legislation; but I have come to the conclusion, with regard to the Bill which is now before the House, that it is infinitely the best Land Bill I have ever known to be introduced in Australia. And, singular to say, at this particular time, new Land Bills—and I hope that all the Bills I read of will be as good, if possible, as the present—have been introduced in South Australia, Victoria, in New South Wales, and in Queensland. Many excellent speeches have been made on the subject from both sides of the House. The question has been almost exhausted, so far as the Bill itself is concerned, and little is left to criticise until it goes into committee. But of all the speeches I have heard, so far as I am personally concerned, there is not one I admire so much as that which was made by the hon. member for Stanley, Mr. White. Mr. White felt all that he said; he rose from the matter-of-fact daily routine of life till he almost became poetical upon the important subject he had in hand. He said that when a man looked at his own holding he loved it, and

considered that all above it and all below it, and all around it and all belonging to it, were his own. I heartily agree with the sentiment, and I do hope that a numerous, and intelligent, and industrious, a moral and well-behaved population, will spring up in Queensland, who will look upon the land of Queensland as their own, and view it in the same poetical and fanciful manner as the hon. member (Mr. White) did. I have heard from both sides of the House the most extraordinary amount of figures referred to. The hon. member for Townsville, who is always very intelligent, and who always speaks in a manner that persons who listen to him must admire, spoke of a vast number of figures—not tens, or hundreds, or thousands, but of many millions. So did the Colonial Treasurer. The hon. Premier tried to explain all these figures, the hon. member for Mulgrave tried to criticise them; but, in my opinion, there is not one man in the House one bit the wiser for all the figures that have been mentioned. As to the Bill before the House, I look upon it, as I before stated, as the very best Bill that was ever introduced into any Parliament in Australia, because it is a Bill calculated to people the country: calculated to induce persons to come out here, not as paupers, but with means so that they may settle in the country and establish homes for themselves, not far away from each other, but within view of each other—from one end of the country to the other. There are gentlemen in this colony for whom I entertain the very highest respect—squatters, who are the owners of 100,000, 200,000, or perhaps 300,000 sheep. Since I was capable of thinking on the subject—and as I think now—I consider that this colony would fare infinitely better if, instead of having one squatter with 200,000 sheep, we had 100 squatters with 2,000 sheep each, who would establish themselves in the country, and rear up healthy, wholesome, happy families, as it was ordered from the beginning of time up to the present. I want to see persons building up homes in the country, from which they never mean to move—homes which will be the habitation of themselves and families for generations to come; men who will subdue the wilderness of Queensland and change the far-off interior, from being a howling wilderness as it is now, into a blooming garden to spread throughout the length and breadth of the colony. A great deal has been said about the probable loss of revenue which will arise under this Bill. There is no doubt that there will be a loss of revenue for the moment; but if the Bill induces a large number of persons to come from the old country, the continent of Europe, and the neighbouring colonies, and bring with them capital to settle on the land, it will be an immense benefit; because I believe, as the Colonial Treasurer has explained, that every man, woman, and child that comes to the country is worth so much to it and will bring in revenue. It is not on the number of acres of land that you have, but on the number of your population that you depend. If the whole of Australia belonged to one man, it would be totally useless to him if there was no population to utilise it. If population is induced to come to Queensland and settle on the land in the far-off interior, we shall have no fear of the revenue; we shall be able to get plenty of money for the extension of our railways, the making of roads and bridges, and the carrying out of other public works. There will be no want of money, I say, if we can induce population to come here with capital and go into the country. Our revenue will be sure to increase if persons take up land and settle on it, which is the fundamental principle of the Bill now before the House. In a short time we shall have a revenue sufficient, and we can borrow as much more as ever we require; indeed, the time will come when we will not have to borrow at all; we shall have abundance of our own. A great deal has been said about the "Georgian" theory—about its introduction here, and about Mr. George's idea of the non-alienation of land. There is nothing new about it. More than a hundred years ago the Hon. Arthur Young wrote about it, and it has also been written about by John Stuart Mill, by Councillor Kay, and by several French philosophers. France has been highly cultivated and improved; and we are told that the reason that that country is in such a blooming state—*la belle France*, as it is called—is because the people generally have an interest in the land. It is not monopolised by large estate owners; it is divided among the people; and it was from the profits which the people made by cultivating their small—their very small—farms to the highest state of perfection, that they were so readily able to pay that terrible indemnity which was demanded from the country by Germany. The general details of the Bill I will not at this time discuss; they will be freely discussed in committee. If I saw that any absolute promise had been made, or that any law could be argued into an absolute promise by any previous Government, I should be the last man to repudiate that act. I say also that I will warmly support any phase of the Bill which will enable a man to call a certain portion of Queensland his home. There is no word in the world that is greeted with such affection as the word "home," and I hope that the land laws will be so arranged as to induce men to occupy the land from the furthest limit of the colony to the nearest portion of it—that is, Brisbane—so that they will be able to call a piece of land their "home." I do not think it is necessary to alienate land to a man in order to induce him to look upon it as his own. There is no reason why the land should not continue to contribute to the revenue of the colony. The government of the colony is carried on for the most remote part of it just as much as for any other part; and there is no reason why the man living furthest away should not contribute to the maintenance of good government. There is one thing certain, and that is, if we, as a body, were called upon to inhabit a new country, I am perfectly satisfied that every one of us would, on the principles of the Bill, say that not one yard should be alienated. Every town, every hamlet, every inch of the country would be dealt with in the same way; and thus the various parts of it, as they improved, would pay their fair share towards the maintenance of good government. But we are too late for that here; unfortunately we cannot do that now; almost all town and suburban land is gone; but I hope that in dealing with our 430,000,000 of acres we shall keep in view the necessity of making the best of it—making it pay towards the improvement of the country by the construction of railways, by the building of bridges, by the formation of good roads, and by the general benefit conferred by public works of all kinds. I will not detain the House long with my speech, for all I can say has already been said, and said, perhaps, in a much better form than I can express it. Still, I feel that, under the present circumstances, it is my duty to state my views on the subject. It has been said that the Bill will check immigration. I believe quite the contrary. I believe it will bring a greater influx of immigrants of a self-supporting character than we have had before,

I believe that when it is known in England, Ireland, Scotland, and on the Continent, that land is so easily acquired in Queensland;—that the leases in Queensland are not like the Irish leasess; that a man in Queensland will not be evicted by his landlord as the poor unfortunate Irish have been;—we shall have a very large influx of immigrants from Ireland and Scotland. An Irishman—I am one myself—particularly objects to paying a rack-rent to a middleman. It is not the chief landlord to whom he objects, but the man to whom he has sub-leased or sublet his land; who exacts the last farthing from the poor unfortunate tenant; who pulls the roof down from over his head; who turns him out into the snow, and casts him forth to the world without giving him one farthing compensation for any improvements he may have made in the holding where his forefathers were born. We shall get abundance of these men—men who will prove themselves most excellent colonists—men who come out with capital in their pockets, and who will not object to the State being their landlord. They know that they are never ill-treated by the State; and they have good reason to know that they have been badly treated by landlords. Only this very day I heard a statement made which made me laugh. It was with regard to the occasional shooting of landlords in Ireland. The case was that of a landlord residing in England, who drew his rents from Ireland. There was a dispute about the rents, and someone said to him, "They will shoot your agent." The landlord's reply was. "Oh, bother the agent! They may shoot as many agents as they like, as long as I get my rents." That was his feeling of morality on the subject, and it explains the state of matters very clearly. The crofters in the Isle of Skye, in Scotland, were treated in exactly the same way. They were not so demonstrative as the Irish, but they had just as much cause of complaint. The cause of complaint of each will have disappeared when they come to this bright and happy country. There will be no occasion for Irishmen to shoot landlords, because the State will be the landlord. The State will not allow the aggregation of large estates. Individuals may, like Englishmen, "live at home at ease." They will have to occupy the land here to live upon it; to make it a benefit to the country and to the people who inhabit it. With regard to fencing, a good deal of discussion has taken place on that point; and in my opinion the time for fencing should be extended. A man with small capital who comes to this country will find himself placed in a very hard position if he has to expend that capital on immediately fencing his land. A farmer who takes up 160 acres, or any number of acres between that and 900 acres, is himself the best judge as to how much money he can afford to expend on fencing; and I hold that he should be allowed to economise his means, and do what he deems best, as a wise farmer would do, instead of being compelled to spend all his money, as a preliminary, in fencing. I shall strongly and certainly urge that, when the Bill comes into committee. I have already stated, with regard to absolute promises which may have been made by the Government, how cordially I will support any Government that says they will carry them actually into effect. I have little more to say on the subject. It has been exhausted. It has been put before this honourable House in various forms, and perhaps in a better form than I have put it. At the same time I will say that not one amongst all who have spoken feels a warmer interest in the advancement and welfare of the land of his adoption than I do. Queensland is a land where I have lived for a long time, where I have experienced the greatest pleasures of my life; and it is the land, no doubt, where I shall leave my bones; and I do hope that such a law will now be framed as will make Queensland the best country in the universe. If the principles of the Land Bill now before the House are carried out, such, I believe, will be the result; and I believe that generations yet unborn will look back and will quote history to prove that all the honour, all the credit, of this most excellent and liberal measure is due to its founder—the Hon. C. B. Dutton.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I really hope the House will not be—I may call it—misled by some of the contentions of the hon. member for Maryborough. I do not know that it will affect the passing of this Bill whether Queensland is the land of his adoption or not, or whether he leaves his bones here or elsewhere. Speaking personally, I do not care whether he leaves his bones here or takes them to some other place. As far as I am concerned, I am perfectly willing that the hon. member for Maryborough may take his bones to any clime he likes, and leave them there; and I do not think the same fate will happen to them, even if he leaves them at St. Helena, as happened to Napoleon's bones. I do not think any sum of money will be voted by this Legislature to bring them back again to the colony. I do not care where his bones are laid, so long as they rest—whether in this colony or anywhere else. When we consider that the hon. gentleman has already described himself in his public utterances as an utterly worthless addition to the State coach in the shape of a fifth wheel, it, perhaps, does not much matter whether his bones lie here or elsewhere. The hon. member was very flowery in his language, and pathetic in his sentimental allusions to this colony and his relations thereto, but he did not use a single argument in favour of the Bill. What he seemed to talk about was the difficulty there would be for an Irishman coming to this colony to shoot his landlord. That really seemed to him to be the weak point in the Bill. An Irishman in his own country can shoot his landlord at any time, but when he comes here, where the State is to be his landlord, he would have to go round to seek for the Ministers for the time being. That seems to be the inducement the hon. member offers to his own countrymen to come here. Practically, he said, "If you Irishmen come out here you will have some difficulty in finding a landlord, but you will have some country; and if there is any bother with regard to the rent, you will have to shoot the first man you happen to see, and probably he will be a Minister of the Crown." And if we get many more of these fifth, sixth, and seventh wheels, the discontented Irish tenant will have very little difficulty in achieving his object. I have a higher opinion of the Irishman. No doubt landlords in Ireland have been shot, and I dare say in some cases—I say it advisedly—not improperly shot; it was because those men could not get the freehold of their land. This Bill proposes to place the State in the same position that an Irish landlord is in at the present time; and on that point we join issue with the hon. member. We say those men in the mother-country cannot get freeholds, and we ask them to come here and we will give them a piece of land which they can call their own. Hon. gentlemen on the other side think—I am talking now of the Ministry, and those who hold to the principles of this Bill—they think otherwise. They think that men will be content with a lease ranging from fifteen to fifty years. There is the whole point at issue between the two sides. We hold that freehold is the only tenure which the British-speaking people rely on as a permanent holding. We do not object to leaseholds under certain conditions, but we say that if men come to this country

from other lands we should be in a position to give them that which they are debarred from getting at home. If we do not do so we may as well give up immigration. It is all very well for the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. Sheridan) to say that the Bill offers enormous inducements to people to come from home. He must know differently—that he is making an enormous mistake. Has the hon. gentleman read—I have no right to ask the question, but I ask it through you, Mr. Speaker—has the hon. gentleman read the Canadian regulations with regard to immigration?

The HON. R. B. SHERIDAN: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Has the hon. gentleman read the American regulations with regard to obtaining land in that country?

The HON. R. B. SHERIDAN: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: And does the hon. gentleman, after reading those regulations, mean to tell me that this Bill will offer equal advantages to immigrants coming to this colony? He is silent—and well he may be! He knows that he cannot answer my question in the affirmative. We have to take this into consideration: Not only are there greater advantages offered by America and Canada, but the emigrants from the British Isles have a shorter distance of sea to bridge over in getting to the land they choose to adopt. The distance to this colony is 12,000 or 14,000 miles, while to America it is only something like 3,000 miles. If we want—which I assume we do—this colony to become a great colony, to be a populated colony—and without population it can never be a success;—if our feelings lead us in that direction we should offer special inducements to people in the old country to come here, seeing that they have the counteracting attractions of America and Canada. This Bill proposes to do away altogether with what will bring people to the colony. The hon. gentleman, the member for Maryborough, talked a good deal about what happened in Ireland with regard to evictions. He must conceive—I take it from the tenor of his speech—he must conceive it an impossibility that such a thing as an eviction should take place under the Bill if it should become law. I hold, also, that it would be an impossibility. I hold that the thing would be so dangerous to the State if an eviction took place, after permitting continuity of tenure for a considerable time, that it would amount to a rising of the people of this colony. If an eviction raises such ill-feeling and bad blood, as we know it does, against the landlord where the holding is a matter between two individuals in a particular way, how much stronger would be the ill-feeling where it was a matter between the State and one man, who is one of thousands! People will say, "The State is our landlord; and what is this man's case to-day may be ours to-morrow." I hope hon. gentlemen will take that fact—that important fact—into consideration, for it is one which strikes really at the heart of the Bill.

The HON. R. B. SHERIDAN: People do not rise when a man is hanged for murder.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I know nothing about hanging. Perhaps the hon. gentleman may know something about it before we have done with him. Am I to be interrupted by the "fifth wheel" in this way? I am sorry that any words I have used in my argument have irritated the hon. member for Maryborough. I am excessively sorry, more especially as he has not troubled the House lately with many of his speeches. The hon. gentleman spoke during the course of his remarks about the principle of indefeasible leases. I have said before, and I repeat now, that the principle is as old as Adam. It has in it a certain amount of the comic element, which I am not averse to using in this House. I maintain, as I have maintained before, that indefeasible leases have been a mistake since the days of the Garden of Eden. Certain things cropped up there in connection with the inhabitants—who were very small in number at that time, Mr. Speaker, with a large property to wander over—from all that we can understand and read, a very good property too;—however, certain things were locked up under this indefeasible lease. There were some things they were not to touch; but they were not satisfied—they went inside the fence; and I suppose that is the reason, Mr. Speaker, why we are here to-night, if history is to be believed. I maintain that from that time till now indefeasible leases have been a mistake. If you lock everything from the people they will at once believe—and judging from their pedigree one is not surprised—they will believe that what is inside that fence is a great deal better than what is outside, though the facts may be dead against them, as it was in the case of the Garden of Eden; and they will have what is inside the fence. Though I may be, as I have been told, a greater Radical than even the hon. member for Townsville with regard to leasing—I apologise to the hon. member for Townsville for being called worse than he is—I say, even in the interests of those who really are assuming to advocate the interests of the leaseholders, that an indefeasible lease is a mistake. And I go further, and say that we have no right whatever to lock up any portion of the colony for any fixed period, except in the form pointed out already—in the shape of freehold. Under the Act of 1869, we have now practically, so far as the State is concerned—I wish to inform hon. members who do not know that Act as well as I do—the squatter has practically six months' tenure. It rests with Parliament to determine the lease at any time by giving six months' notice. Can the public have a freer tenure than that? Can they ask for any greater freedom to enjoy the leased lands of the colony than that? They can get the land by giving six months' notice. The present Bill provides that when the Government resume lands a very large sum shall be paid in the shape of compensation for improvements, and for the value of the balance of the existing leases. Now I ask members of the party opposite—gentlemen who take a pride in calling themselves the great Liberal party—which, from their standpoint, is the better tenure of the two to give the squatter? I think there can only be one answer, and that is, the six months' tenure as it stands at present. I would ask any hon. member opposite—any hon. member on either side of the House—to tell me of any one individual instance in which their right has been refused by this House. I would ask any hon. member of this House—more especially those who know the working of the Act of 1869, and the districts to which that Act generally applies—to tell this House of one single instance where land has been required by the people and has not been obtained by the people—to point to one centre of population where land has been required, that it has not been taken by the State or given up by the lessee, and without notice in some cases. I ask hon. gentlemen opposite, what can be gained by the passing of this Bill? We were told by the Colonial Treasurer that he does not expect an accession of revenue—in fact, he rather glories over the fact of there being a slightly decreased revenue for a year or two; and then, smoothing himself all over, he told us that he was going to issue Treasury bills! He is a bit of a political Micawber—always hoping that

something will turn up. He always has the evil day in view. The hon. gentleman reminds me also of Dick Swiveller. I think Dick Swiveller said that if he was provided with brandy and water he would sign blank acceptances all night. He was a kind, easy-going gentleman, something like the hon. the Treasurer. At the same time I do not know that he would be a very good man to put in charge of the Treasury. There appears to be a good deal of Micawber and Dick Swiveller about the hon. the Treasurer. The hon. gentleman also gave us something Pickwickian. When his attention was called to the proposed issue of Treasury bills, he gave us to understand that we were to take his remarks on that matter in a Pickwickian sense; they were not meant at all; it was a way he had of smoothing matters over. I wish now, before I sit down, to have a word or two with my friend the hon. the Minister for Lands. He made some statements last night—I was not present at the time—that require a little correction. I know the hon. gentleman is amenable to correction, although he does not like it. A friend of mine told me to-day that he once met a parson in California named Taylor, I think, who said his time had been devoted to clearing the works of his friend Paul from the glosses of commentators, and he had no doubt that, when he met Paul in the next world, Paul would personally thank him for what he had done in this. It may or may not be my mission to correct the Minister for Lands, and possibly we may not meet in another world, to shake hands with one another. However, so long as I am here, and am spared, I will try to put that hon. gentleman on the right track, so that he may not say, when there is a great gulf between us—he on the lower side—that I have not done my very best. At any rate, I will appear in the *rôle* of a benefactor, probably with a halo of glory around my head. The hon. gentleman made a statement in reference to Wealwandangie, but I think I need not press him upon that point, because he will find if he looks into the papers that he was utterly wrong. The exchange was not as he stated. The exchange was not made on equal terms; but after examination by the Government a considerably less amount of land was granted to the lessee than his pre-emptive would have permitted him to take up, paying a sum which, as far as I can remember now, came to about 12s. per acre, where otherwise he would have paid 10s. With reference to the statement of the hon. gentleman about Orion Downs, I may say that, as a matter of fact, there is no pre-emptive on Orion Downs. The hon. gentleman also says something with regard to myself which I do not object to, seeing it comes from where it does. The hon. gentleman also said, referring to a statement made by me:—

> "I only speak of these private matters because it was said by the hon. member for Balonne that I had taken up runs, had never improved them, and sold them to other men. Those statements are utterly untrue. At the time my firm sold Tambo it was as well improved a station as there was on the Barcoo, though a small one. The hon. member for Townsville, the other night, referred to the utter impossibility of our being able to get people from the old country to settle on the land here."

Well, with regard to Tambo and the people settling on the land, we all know why the hon. gentleman sold Tambo. He cleared out because people were likely to settle there. The blacks cleared out, and he moved off with the blacks. Now, seeing the hon. gentleman's statement in this morning's paper, I took the trouble to send a telegram to the gentleman managing Tambo Station, asking him, if he had no objection—of course if he had any objection he would not have given the information—to telegraph to me the improvements, and the value of them, on Tambo Station when it was bought by the present proprietors. I have now the reply in my hand, which I will read. I may mention that it has cost me a considerable sum of money; but I do not care for that, though I do not suppose I will be recouped by the State. It is as follows:—

> "When we bought only two dams one very small Have now ten on run Also only five paddocks have now fifteen One of five only partially completed Fencing poorest description being chiefly stakes driven in ground Believe wire in same nearly all second-hand from Baahina Have had to renew nearly all the wire Buildings barring woolshed excessively poor consisting rough slab and bark Consider adjoining stations Landsdowne and Grendale and Northampton better improved."

I could give the hon. gentleman a little more information, as I have also taken the trouble to telegraph to Nive Downs to ascertain what were the improvements on that property when it was handed over by the hon. Minister for Lands.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I only held that two years.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is a matter of indifference to me how long the hon. gentleman held it. I only know that when he gave up the station it was not improved to any extent; it was not developed by him. I simply refer to these matters because the hon. gentleman has challenged the statement made by me. Now, how has this Land Bill been brought about? I believe the Minister for Lands has upbraided—I would say maligned, but that word is scarcely parliamentary—at any rate he spoke badly of Melbourne and southern capitalists coming to this colony and investing in stations, he himself at the same time getting a considerable sum of money from those very capitalists. He spoke of them coming here as if it were a grievous fault.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I must protest against this sort of statement. I never maligned or spoke disparagingly——

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is a mere matter of terms. I hold he has maligned them, and before I sit down I will prove that he has maligned them; and I will prove that these Melbourne speculators and southern capitalists are the fathers of the Land Bill, and that but for them we would never have seen the hon. member nor his Bill here. If it had not been for them coming up from the south with their capital and developing our great western country as they have done, we would not have heard anything of the hon. Minister for Lands. He would have been out on the run, probably, with a blackboy, at the present moment. We would never have known the great value of our western lands if they had been left in the hands of individuals such as the hon. Minister for Lands and others—I do not specialise him, except as he has selected himself as champion of the cause against those southern capitalists. The country would not have been in any way developed as it has been, but for that capital the hon. gentleman now scouts. I maintain if affairs had been left as they were in the days of Lot and Abraham, with a lot of wandering shepherds going about from waterhole to waterhole trying to live as best they could, we would not have known the great value of our western lands, which it is now proposed to blackmail. I use the word "blackmail," also advisedly, because it must be borne in mind that those men have gone out and paid enormous sums of money for the holdings they possess at the present time, and I am perfectly convinced they have taken very little out of them. When you have regard to the large amount of money they have spent in improvements, and also to the exceptionally bad seasons they have had—not only this year, but last year, and portions of most

of the previous years during which the high prices ranged for these western properties—these men cannot have taken anything at all out of their holdings. Now, on the top of that, this House is asked to pass a measure that will still further put them in difficulties. I maintain that, instead of attempting to discourage capital from coming to this country, which appears to be the object of the hon. the Minister for Lands, we ought to do all we can to encourage it. We borrow money at home on the strength of our being a thriving and flourishing country, and it is perfectly well known that at present our greatest interest is the pastoral industry. By allowing this Bill to become law you will be inflicting a great blow upon that industry. I must admit that there is a great deal of consistency in the argument of the hon. the Minister for Lands. He justifies that schedule by saying he does not want men to come in from New South Wales and take up land. Why should they not? There is a Latin proverb, I think, which says that "no good money stinks," and we want money in this colony, and settlers in this colony, no matter what portion of the colonies they come from.

The PREMIER: That is a swindler's maxim.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Then it is very appropriate to the present Government. I do not intend to be personal to the Premier, but if he takes it as such I cannot help it. I hold, Mr. Speaker, that if this Bill passes it will do an incalculable amount of harm. It will have the effect of locking up the land, if such a locking-up can take place, which I do not believe. If Parliament can undo one thing it can undo another, and these leases can be determined by a majority in this House just as quickly as it is proposed to determine other things we hold to be rights under existing Acts. The hon. gentleman can no more lock up this land for ten, fifteen, thirty, or fifty years than he can prevent the moon rising. He can at the present time, with a majority behind him, pass any land law he likes, and any Minister that comes after can undo that land law just as easily and as fully as the present Ministry proposes to undo existing laws.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not intend to take up the time of the House for very long; but although a great deal has been said about this matter it has not been fully discussed yet, and I suppose it will take a very considerable time to discuss it fully. I would like to say a few words now with regard to some matters which can be more properly spoken of on the second reading than in committee. There can be no doubt that this measure will completely alter the land tenure of this colony. It goes contrary to a great many old received opinions; but I suppose no measure altering such a serious matter as the land legislation would be received all at once without a great many objections being made to it. When I first saw the Bill, although I held with its main principles, I certainly did not like it; but on thinking the matter over and trying to think out what would be the probable results of the measure on the future prosperity of the colony, I came to think it would be a very judicious measure on the whole. I take it that the key-note of this measure is the placing the administration of the land under a board, instead of a Minister responsible to this House. It has been said that this is not in accordance with the principles of parliamentary government; and strictly it is not so. The only thing that would induce me to place the administration of the land laws in the hands of a board is what I will term the utter failure of the past legislation of the colony. Ever since I came to the colony, nearly thirty years ago, I have heard long speeches on the floor of this House, read long articles in the newspapers, pamphlets, letters, and all kinds of things about settling the people on the land. We need do nothing more than look at the returns of the Lands Department to find out that there has been an utter failure to settle people on the land—I mean an agriculturist population, who gain their living by raising crops on the land. I find that, even in the case of conditional and homestead lands, the area cultivated is only about 1 acre in 6, and of course in areas of other kinds it does not approach that. I cannot agree with the views of the Premier in regard to the land board, when he says that their duties will be analogous to those of the Supreme Court judges, and that they will simply be assessors of value. When I look at the Bill I find that they are more than assessors of value. They have very important functions to carry out. Nearly all the matters in this Bill have to be initiated by the land board. Of course, I admit that the object of this Bill is to place the administration of the land laws outside the range of politics; its object is to do away with political pressure being brought upon the Government. The appointment of a board will, no doubt, have that effect; and I feel persuaded that if anyone will study and reason out this point they will become not only reconciled to it, but to the Bill as a whole, as one which will be conducive to the prosperity of the colony. The institutions of the mother-country have always been of such a nature that they can deal with any difficulties that may arise in a practical way. Perhaps not in exactly a logical way, and their measures may not have been always consistent with one another, but still the legislation of Great Britain has been of a practical nature. If a difficulty has arisen it has been met in a practical way; and the same remark applies to our land difficulty. A difficulty has arisen, and I believe the promoters of this measure have endeavoured to meet the difficulty in a practical way. They have seen where the fault has been, and that political pressure has been brought upon the Minister and the Government generally—I do not refer to one side more than another—but I believe the administration has been lax. I think that three members would be preferable to two as composing the board. When I look at the tremendous power these men will have, I cannot help thinking there should be a casting vote. The judges of the Supreme Court have nothing like the power, and the nature of their functions are quite different. There is a right of appeal from the judges of the Supreme Court, but here there is no such thing, and the decision of the board is final in all matters. The judges of the Supreme Court have to adjudicate between various individuals who may have disputes; they have to decide differences between private parties, as a rule; but here the land board has to act between the State and private landholders. Therefore, their responsibility and power is far greater. I believe, however, that three members would be better than two. The Minister for Lands said he could not conceive of two men disagreeing. I have looked the matter fairly and squarely in the face, and I do not think we should rush into and accept any innovations whatever at the bidding of any man or any Government. As members of this House, we ought to look at them fairly and clearly, and try to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. It is no use closing our eyes to the fact that there is a possibility of two men disagreeing, and not even a possibility, but a great likelihood; and I think that three men would be more likely to come to a decision, because there would always be one

man to give a casting vote. I do not know if the salary of £1,000 a year would facilitate the obtaining of the very best men or not, but, if it would not, I would give a larger remuneration. £1,200 or £1,500 a year would not be too much, and we might even go as far as £2,000 a year, if by that means we could get reliable and trustworthy men. There are two or three other things I should just like to say a few words about. A great deal has been said with reference to the omission of the homestead clauses in this Bill. I believe that the homestead clauses of the Act of 1868 have been the means of settling the very best settlers on the lands of the colony. They have generally been men with small means who have had to work very hard, but have had to get their living by agriculture and by the produce of the soil; and I take it that these are the most useful of all men and the kind of colonists we want to encourage. However, although it is proposed to do away with the homestead clauses, there are some equivalents provided in this Bill. There is a clause to the effect that agricultural leaseholders may, after a residence of ten years, convert their leaseholds into freeholds. I think a better plan would be to limit their power to 320 acres—that is to say, it would be a better thing to limit their power of acquiring freehold to that amount. We do not wish to part with the freehold of the lands of this colony. The principle of this Bill is that the unearned increment shall belong to the State; there is no one principle more clearly laid down in the Bill than that. I really cannot understand how the hon. member for Townsville could compare a measure of this kind to the Irish land laws, and try and make out that the same state of things will be brought about here as exists in that country. The reason of the trouble in that country is that the holdings are all too small; there is not enough to live upon, and where the tenant has made improvements—and in some cases nearly all the improvements have been made by the tenants—the landlord raises the rent. It is the rack-renting that has caused the trouble. Where does the hon. member for Townsville find any clause which would have an effect like that in this Bill? There is not a vestige of it; it is the very reverse. The Bill is diametrically opposed to rack-renting. It provides that the unearned increment of the land and not the improvements shall be paid for. With reference to fencing, this Bill provides that selectors in grazing agricultural areas shall fence their holdings in within two years—that is, there shall be a license to occupy for two years, and the selector will have to fence in before getting his lease. I am quite certain that that is too short a time, and that it would prevent some of the very best settlers from taking up land. To fence in 320 acres it would take three miles of fencing, and, reckoning that at £60 a mile, it would cost £180. That sum would have to be expended within two years. That provision is altogether a mistake, but I have no doubt that any reasonable and good amendment, which will not interfere with the principle of the Bill, will be considered by the House and accepted by the Minister for Lands. An alteration of that clause would not interfere with the principle of the Bill; and I hope to see the time extended to five years, or four years at the very least. There is another matter that I strongly disapprove of, and that is the provision with regard to impounding. I do not think any man should be allowed to impound from unfenced land. I am quite sure that if you give the right to the pastoral tenants to impound off their land on one side of their boundary, and do not give the right to the selectors to impound off the other side unless their land is fenced in, it will occasion a great deal of injustice and hardship. I do not think anyone should impound off unfenced land. If a man wants to have his land to himself let him fence it in. A great deal has been said about the bearing of this Bill upon the finances of the colony. I have not time to follow the hon. members on the other side who have gone into this matter, but I will just remark that both the hon. member for Townsville and the hon. member for Mackay, who addressed themselves to it, omitted one very important item from their calculations. The hon. member for Mackay told us what we would lose every year if we stopped conditional and homestead selection. For the first year we would lose £7,000, for the next £9,000, and so on until at last we reached the £146,000 at the present time derived from those sources. He then told us that we would have to lease, in order to meet that deficiency, something like 18,000,000 acres. But he omitted one very important item: that before ten years have gone the rent from these leases will be increasing. The clauses of the Bill provide that the rents for agricultural farms shall increase at the rate of not less than 10 per cent. per annum, and grazing farms at the rate of not less than 15 per cent. So that after the first five years the increased rents will begin to come in—an increase of 10 per cent. on agricultural and 15 per cent. on grazing farms. The Government also contend, expect, and firmly believe that we will have a large increase of population under the operation of this Bill; and we know that every increase of population in the colony is an increase to the revenue, and a very large increase too. No doubt there will be a natural increase of population, but we expect an accelerated increase of population under the operation of the Bill. There has not been a great increase in our agricultural population, for the simple reason that it has been found almost impossible for real agriculturists to get real agricultural land. I quite agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley (Mr. White), and I quite endorse his views when he says that it is not so much the price of the land as it is the getting of the very best land for the purposes of agriculture. Anyone who has studied the matter will know that 40 acres or 80 acres of good agricultural land will be worth 500, 600, or 1,000 acres of indifferent land. It does not pay at the present time, with the disadvantages of a limited market and high rate of carriage, to cultivate anything but the very best land, and if ever we are to expect to see a real agricultural population settled upon the lands it must be upon the very best lands. I should like to have seen something in the Bill to provide for agricultural areas being set aside at once all over the colony—the very best bits set aside at once to prevent the possibility of their being taken up in large areas. Because, from the evidence we have had heretofore, we know that when a man takes up 3,000 or 4,000 acres of the best agricultural land he does not usually turn it to the best purpose for the State. Objection has been taken to the 20,000-acre grazing farms. Some gentlemen have thought that to be too much. I do not think so, because a very great deal depends upon the locality. Different localities and different distances from water, and a variety of other things, will make a deal of difference in 5,000 or 20,000 acres. There is one matter with which I cannot agree at all, so far as I understand it. By the present laws a selector can take up a certain area, and, no matter how many districts he goes into to select, there is a maximum fixed, and he cannot go beyond that. He cannot go into one district and take up the maximum, and into another and do the same thing. This Bill makes the maximum apply in every district in the

colony; and if there are twenty districts laid out in the colony a man can take up the maximum area in each district right round. I do not think that ought to be the case. If that remains as it is, we will certainly lose a lot of our best lands. It must be remembered that it will be the best land which will go first; and when one man can take up 15,000 or 20,000 acres in one district, and repeat that in a number of other districts, 100 or 200 men will be able to take up all the best of the lands in the colony—that is, under the operation of this Bill. Some hon. gentlemen on the other side made reference to the probable loss of revenue we should suffer from in the first few years. They said, of course, "possible" loss, because they do not know what the operation of it will be, any more than the Treasurer or anyone else. Their calculation and forecast must be purely imaginary and problematical. The calculation of the ablest financier on the operations of this Bill, and their effect upon the finances of the colony, cannot be other than problematical, because no one can tell what will be exactly their effect. There is a well-known saying that figures can be made to prove anything, and I believe they can almost. But there are a great many other elements which must enter into this argument besides simple figures. It is very easy to calculate what will be the revenue from so many millions of acres at 1½d. per acre, or at 2d. per acre; but we must take into account, in addition, the largely increased population we will have under this Bill, in order to get an idea of the increased revenue we will have, to enable us to carry out works by loan. A good deal has been made about what the Minister for Works said in this connection. Hon. members opposite have spoken as if he said the Government were going to pass a Bill to alter the administration and the whole system of our land laws, in such a way that they would be able at once to raise sufficient revenue to carry on the ordinary affairs of the colony, and to meet the interest on a large loan. I read the speeches of the Minister for Works and other members of the Cabinet, and I did not derive that impression from them. The impression I derived was this: hitherto we have been killing the "goose that lays the golden egg." There is nothing problematical about that. We have only commenced it; but if we go on as we have been doing we will soon get into the same state as New South Wales and Victoria are in at present. And I am sure we do not want to get into that state. The Government have, under these circumstances, decided to introduce a change at this stage before so very much harm has been done. We all know it has often been said that the man who lives on his capital is bound to come to the ground. There is nothing strange about that. If a man lives upon his capital he is bound to come to grief. I suppose we can easily see whether we are living upon our capital or our interest. I take it that the idea of the Government is this: that if we are going to derive a permanent and ever-increasing revenue from our public lands without parting with the fee-simple of it we will be in a good position to meet all our liabilities and pay the interest upon our loans. I believe that that process would enable the Government to borrow large sums of money to lay out on our public works. There are just one or two matters I shall refer to. The hon. member for Mackay made a very strong speech; and he is very fond of calling people to book and wanting them to show reasons for the statements they make. He made a statement the other night, and did not give us any reasons for it, and I think that it was a statement that will not bear investigation at all. He stated that labour would always hold its own and get its rights as against capital. I presume he meant that it would get it without extraneous aid and without special legislation—that it would always find its own level in the same way that water flows down a hill. I say that the history of the world contradicts that statement. The history of the world shows that the working classes are not a match for the capitalist; that they do not get their fair share of the profits that are made by their labour. If there is one thing that has been demonstrated by modern society—and it has been demonstrated by ancient history as well—it is that this matter has given rise to some of the greatest dangers society ever was in, and a danger that is a standing menace to the old countries of Europe at the present time—that the working people, the industrial class, do not get their fair share of the profits of their labour. Of course in a country like this it may have a better chance than it will in a crowded country like Europe. We know that the working classes do not get a fair share of the profit of their work—the capitalists, shrewd men, obtain it; and this Bill provides that in the matter of populating the colony, the State shall obtain a fair thing, and the State means the whole of the individuals in it. They shall have the benefit, and not a few shrewd men with lots of money, who can go and grasp the best lands and hold them until the industry and perseverance of the great mass of the people, and the increase of the population, has increased the value of that land enormously, and then go and realise on it. I do not think I will say any more on that point. There may be some other matters that I shall refer to in committee. While wishing to see some alterations made in the Bill, I do not think that the alterations I have indicated will interfere with the spirit or principle of the Bill. I believe they are all in keeping with the principle of the Bill, and I hope that in committee some of those alterations that have been indicated by members on the other side of the House will be carried out. I think that when the Bill comes out of committee it will be a blessing to the country—I firmly believe that it will; and I take it that we are here, not to legislate merely for ourselves—we are here to legislate for persons who are not represented in this House; we are here to legislate for the rising generation, and for generations that are yet unborn, and for people who have not yet set foot in the country—not to legislate simply for ourselves. If it were merely that, it might be very well to throw this Bill to the winds, and introduce a measure that would suit us far better. But it is far nobler and better for the State that we should look ahead, not simply at the present year. Hon. gentlemen opposite wanted to upset this measure by saying that in the first year we will lose £100,000 revenue. Such an idea is preposterous, and shows that hon. gentlemen on the opposite side, able as they are, are badly off for arguments when they fall back on one like this. With these remarks, I beg to support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—So many able speeches have been made on the second reading of this Bill that I shall confine myself to a few general principles. The Bill consists of three great principles—namely, the settlement of people on the land, the prevention of the establishment of large estates, and the establishment of a permanent and increasing source of revenue. To judge from the speeches of hon. members of the Opposition, they seem entirely to agree with the principle of the Bill; if not, it is difficult to understand what they are really intending to say. They profess to be even more anxious than we are to settle people on the land; they profess to be more anxious than we are to prevent the establish-

ment of large estates, and to preserve the revenue of the country. If we are to judge from the past—while they have thrown, as it were, bones to the people in the shape of homestead clauses, they have gone on alienating and forming large estates; and it has been proved that the bones which they threw to the people have been of more benefit to the State than the whole carcass with which they walked away. The change of front which the Opposition members have shown by their speeches, since the time when they sat on this side, is immense. They used every argument, not only to form large estates, but to give away 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 acres to one company. The difference is immense; the poles of the globe can hardly be more asunder. Therefore it is very difficult to understand their arguments. Professedly, they agree with the fundamental principles of the Bill, and then base their criticisms on side-issues, and by another method of reasoning come to the conclusion that it does not act up to those grand principles. Even the amendment of the hon. leader of the Opposition does not shake those great principles, and not one hon. member on that side has been able to shake any of those principles. The ex-Premier advocated the cause of which he is the champion—that of the pastoral tenants. I was really pained when I heard his method of defending that class. In doing so he introduced an old acquaintance. When he was on this side of the House he advocated the construction of railways on the land-grant system, or, more properly speaking, the formation of large estates. He tried to prove to the colony and the world that our credit was exhausted, and so frighten the people of the colony and the members of this House into adopting his preposterous measure. Now, again, he advocates the interests of that class, and, like the bird which fouls its own nest, says that squatting does not pay. If that is the case, how is it that pastoral tenants occupy the best positions in the colony, command the greatest amount of capital, and have the arrangement of the moneyed institutions? The hon. gentleman at the same time accused the members of this House of being the enemies of the squatters. Well, I for one look upon the pastoral interest as the chief industry in the colony, and no one would dream for one moment of injuring it. The land is required for closer settlement, and the squatters will have to move on; but I do not think that, whatever Government is in power, they will wilfully injure that interest. With regard to the proper method by which the land should be held, great differences of opinion prevail. Professedly, this Bill was to do away with freehold, and introduce the occupation of land by leasehold—indefeasible leases. If that means anything, it means a freehold under which the State reserves to itself the right to periodically readjust the amount of revenue which it ought to derive from the land. But, giving way to popular sentiment, a permissive clause is introduced into the Bill permitting the acquisition of freeholds of small dimensions. I think that is a very wise proviso. The question as to the manner in which land should be held is decided by experience. It has been proved that the accumulation of large estates is injurious to a country; hence there is no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that large estates should not be formed, particularly in a colony like this, where we may prevent them in the future. We can pass a law making it impossible to accumulate large estates—large areas of land—in the hands of a few persons. Experience has also proved that the most profitable manner in which land can be held is in small areas, on which the people can settle and cultivate the soil; and that small settlers—peasants—are always the backbone of the country in which they dwell. Hence it is a very wise thing that a clause was introduced by which homestead selectors can acquire small properties. As the present Government, or the party in power, are bound to the fulfilment of these principles, I am convinced that the Government will accept any reasonable amendment in committee which will carry them out. It has been said by hon. members on the other side that the Bill is too narrow. It is too narrow; but who for? For capitalists. It removes the land from the arena of speculation and land gambling. Not so many thousands of pounds will be made as brokerage for buying land from the Government; there will be no bargain such as that in which from £800 to £1,000 has been made. The Bill is not a commission agents' Bill; it is a little too narrow for them. With regard to local boards, we cannot do worse than we have been doing. From what I have learned from a gentleman who knows the operations of land boards in New Zealand, I have every confidence that, however imperfect they may be, they will be infinitely better than our past land administration. With regard to pre-emption, I have no intention of entering into the legal technicalities of that supposed right. All I know is that, however much it may be a right to the pastoral tenants, it is an immense wrong to the country. In every country, whenever certain rights acquired by a certain class have become wrongs to the people they have been abolished in some way or other. The Government deserves credit for taking this in hand. If it is proved that pre-emption is a right, by all means let the pastoral tenants have compensation; but do away with a system by which men pick out the eyes of the country. If pre-emption is to be allowed, then the whole Bill might as well be thrown into the fire. It would be more profitable, if it is a right in law, to borrow £6,000,000 or £9,000,000 and give the pastoral tenants compensation for its abolition rather than let it be continued. The majority of the people are of opinion that if the homestead clauses are retained, and if the period for fencing is extended, the Bill will be one of the best land measures ever brought in in the Australasian colonies. It is a question whether these stringent regulations with regard to fencing are necessary. Under the present law, if one selector wants to guard his land, he erects a fence, and makes his neighbour pay one-half the cost of it; and I think that law is a sufficient safeguard against any abuse in that direction. With regard to grazing farms, 20,000 acres may appear small in the outside districts, but gradually, as settlement goes on, and townships are formed in the interior, they may appear just as large, comparatively, as the runs of 100 and 500 square miles appear now. And those 20,000-acre grazing farms ought to be taken up on such a basis that when they are required for closer settlement the Government should be able to resume them as they can now resume the runs held by pastoral tenants; and I trust that something to that effect will be introduced in committee. It is difficult to follow hon. members on the other side, or comprehend their arguments, in trying to prove that the revenue would suffer so heavily. Those hon. members advocate the maintenance of our present system of acquiring revenue from the land; but under our present system we are using capital as revenue, whereas, by doing away with that spasmodic and temporary revenue, we should establish a permanent and increasing revenue. It would speak very poorly for the colony of Queensland, whatever party held the reins of power, if revenue lost from one source could not be replaced from another—if settlement would not go on in such a way as to compensate for the

loss of revenue by leasing instead of alienating the land. I will refer again to the pre-emptive right—supposed right. As long as I can remember, the people of the colony have always protested against it as being an immense and shameful wrong; but pastoral tenants always managed to get into power, or to be so powerfully represented in the House, as to prevent any measure being passed for abrogating such public wrong. Therefore, if they suffer to some extent now by the abolition of this pre-emptive right, they, to a great extent, have to thank themselves for it.

Mr. JESSOP said: Mr. Speaker,—I have listened with delight to the speeches of hon. members on both sides of the House, and I must confess, also, that I have listened with surprise to some of the statements that have been made during the debate. It is becoming evident that this Land Bill is a more complicated thing than some hon. members seem to imagine. Some hon. members have gone so far as to say that it is the best Land Bill that has ever been brought before this House. I look upon it as the worst. I am free to admit that it has some good points, but it has a great many defects. I am not going to enlarge upon the Bill. The time is getting late; many hon. members want to go home; and as it is intended, I believe, to bring the second reading to a division to-night, I shall be as brief as possible in referring to a few of the defects in the Bill. I will first refer to the board. I totally object to it. I do not see how a board sitting in Brisbane can legislate on applications for land all over the colony. The Bill provides that the board shall hold public sittings in "Brisbane or elsewhere," and that the two members of it shall each have a salary of £1,000 a year; but you will not find men receiving £1,000 a year travelling all over the colony. I object to the board because I do not think it right to take the administration out of the hands of the Minister for Lands. If any gentleman forming a Ministry cannot choose a sufficiently honest man as Minister to take charge of the Lands Department of the colony, the colony is in a very bad state, and the gentleman who is forming the Ministry has not the confidence of the people. The board would be an evil to the colony and a great inconvenience to the people. Suppose, for instance, a dispute arose at Tambo. I should like to know whether people would have to come from Tambo to Brisbane to have their dispute settled, or whether the board would go to Tambo to settle it. It is about a thousand to one that the people would have to come to Brisbane. Such a system would entail a large expense on the class which the Bill contemplates as the *bonâ fide* settlers of the colony. Therefore I say the board would be a great mistake. If, however, the House should decide on the appointment of a board, I contend that it should consist of three members. I go further, and say there should be a local board of three attached to every land agent's district, and this board should sit at every land court in conjunction with the Minister for Lands. It is almost impossible to imagine the expense that people would be put to in coming from the far West to Brisbane, to settle any dispute that may arise; and as the Bill stands they must do so. The board also has the power of proclaiming areas and fixing prices. How are we to know that some influence may not be brought to bear on the board, so that, instead of proclaiming an area open at a certain price, they will so proclaim it as to throw it into the hands of the present pastoral lessee? How are we to know that they will not reduce the 20,000 acres to 10,000 or 5,000 acres? They have all this power in their hands. It would be better to wipe the board entirely out of the Bill, and leave the administration wholly in the hands of the Minister for Lands. Then again you have the bailiff. The bailiff must report to the commissioner, and the commissioner to the board, and the board to the Minister for Lands. I object to all this red-tapeism. How are we know that the bailiff knows what he is about? Judging from some of the Government officers who have been appointed to positions of trust and importance in the colony, they are likely to know very little about it. Therefore I register my objection to boards altogether. I object to the repeal of the 54th clause of the Act of 1869. Under that Act, the man who bought a run bought the right of pre-emption to the extent of 2,560 acres out of every 25 square miles. Many pastoral lessees have borrowed money, representing to the money-lenders that they have the right of pre-emption. The right has been purchased over and over again; and it is infringing that right: it is breaking a contract between two parties—and one of those parties the Government—to repeal that right. And if the Government set the example of breaking contracts, where will it end? A great deal has been said about the word "right" and the word "privilege"—some call it "right" and some call it "privilege." I maintain that it is a right; and I believe the Minister for Lands believes it is a right. If it is not a right in law he has power to refuse to grant pre-emptions. If it is a privilege only, why does he seek to have it repealed? I also object to the leasing clause *in toto*. I am an advocate of the old system of the free selection of homesteads. I am a great believer in every man obtaining a freehold of his own. It is neither good for the country nor the people themselves that they should have to pay for many years a certain rent, and after all perhaps have to give up the land to someone else, through not being able to pay to the end of the time. The idea of settling people on small areas and creating close settlement, so much advocated on the other side, and of which I also am an advocate, is a most important part of the Bill. I object, however, to the principle of leasing—especially of scrub lands. The hon. member for Mackay, in the early part of the session, called for a return of homestead selections. The return shows that there are 449,260 acres of homestead selections, with an annual rental of £10,228 6s. 3d. Allowing 160 acres each, that gives within a fraction of 2,208 selectors in the colony, making homes for themselves and their families. If you abolish homesteads and freeholds, you will cause people to lose confidence; and I am surprised to hear hon. members like the hon. member for Rosewood—who, I suppose, has never been past Rosewood—advocating such a course. I believe it is the ambition of nearly every man in the land to become a freeholder—to have a home of his own which he can hand down to his children when he dies. Nearly every man has ambition in different directions — even to aspiring to a seat in this House. And I cannot understand people—especially people representing the German vote—going against the freehold principle. I have received communications from large numbers of people in my district asking me to stand by what I have said—to object to the leasing of lands and the exclusion of freeholds. The hon. member for Ipswich put the matter very nicely when he said they were legislating for people not yet in the colony. He is perfectly right. Our immigration agents have held out inducements to people to come here and take up land at 2s. 6d., with five years in which to pay, or 6d. per acre per annum. A large number of people have come here on that promise; but now it is proposed to put such restrictions on taking up land that people will not be able to fulfil the conditions. The hon.

member for South Brisbane, I think — I was not in the House at the time, but I was told so—spoke of land which supported from thirty to thirty-five sheep per acre. That hon. gentleman can never have been on a sheep farm ; he never has taken an axe in his hand to clear scrub, and has never put his hand to the plough. His farming has been theory from beginning to end, and very bad theory too. The late George Henry Davenport—a gentleman who once occupied a seat in this Chamber, and who commanded the respect of both sides of the House—that gentleman showed how farming ought to be carried on in this colony, and was the means of inducing a large number of people to come here. Mr. Davenport told me that before ever he got a crop off his land it cost him £10 an acre. To my knowledge that land was open country, and you, Mr. Speaker, know the country as well as I do. Very little of it is timbered, and that little is timbered but lightly ; and if it cost £10 an acre to prepare that land for crops, how much would it cost to prepare scrub land? I think scrub land should be almost given to the people. And it wants classification. I am quite sure it will cost any man more than £10 an acre, even now wages are somewhat cheaper than they were some time ago, to prepare scrub land for cultivation ; and I consider that a man who is prepared to go to the trouble and expense should be entitled to the fee-simple of the land. And I should much prefer these lands being taken up just as it suited people, in areas from 10 acres to 1,000 acres. The payment should be 6d. an acre per annum for say twenty years, and at the expiration of that time the holder should be entitled to the fee-simple. There is a great deal of difference in scrub lands. On this side of the Main Range a man may make a living out of 200 or 300 acres, but between Dalby and Roma, or Dalby and St. George, or Dalby and Goondiwindi, I defy any man to make a living on 25,000 acres of scrub. Therefore, the classification should be such that a man might take up different areas according to the quality of the land. The fencing clause I look upon as too arbitrary. A man takes up 320 acres, and he is bound to fence it in two years, or in three years at the most. Why should he not be allowed to fence a portion in five years and put that under cultivation, and then fence another piece the next five years, according to circumstances? I would certainly extend the time for fencing to five years at the very least. A good deal has been said about impounding from these lands. Well, that is a very delicate subject to handle, and there are several things to be considered. The provision that was in force in New South Wales some years ago in this respect led to much trouble and complication, and we should be very careful in dealing with the matter. In reference to selection before survey, I think that system has been worked out. It has worked badly, and has enabled people to pick out the eyes of the country. On some of the runs westward from here, you find, perhaps, not more than 4,000 or 5,000 acres of really good land, and if that was taken up the squatter would not be able to reap the advantage which is intended to be conferred on him by the Bill. There is one matter in connection with the selection of land that, in my opinion, requires alteration, and that is with regard to applications. It is stated that an applicant shall mark out his land and then put in his application, and, if two applications go in together, the applicants are to draw lots. So far that is right enough, and gives both a fair chance ; but it has its objectionable feature. If a man is seen marking out a selection the party who sees him may put in an application with a view to levying blackmail. I have seen this done under the present Act, and I should therefore like to see some alteration made in the provision dealing with this matter. I am not going to detain the House much longer, as there are other gentlemen on both sides who wish to speak on the question. I simply wish to register my objections to the Bill. I may, however, say a word or two in reference to the provisions respecting grazing farms and resumptions. In a station containing 100 square miles there would be 64,000 acres. By this Bill it is proposed to resume one-half of that area. The owner of the station, with his son, eighteen years of age, could then select the whole of the resumed portion of 32,000 acres. With his son and daughter he could take up 40,000 acres. If there is one thing more than another calculated to create large estates it is this part of the Bill. I am quite sure that this side of the House will never agree to a provision of that kind. If the leader of the Opposition had brought this Bill forward he would have been hunted out of the House. I am certain the second reading of the Bill will be carried. I shall, however, vote for the amendment. When the Bill goes into committee, I hope hon. members will cast aside all party feeling, and endeavour to try and make it a good measure.

Mr. BUCKLAND said : Mr. Speaker,—I have listened with considerable satisfaction to the various speeches that have been made by hon. members on the second reading of this Bill on both sides of the House. I am sure, after the admirable speech of the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, no hon. member can doubt for a moment that the pastoral lands of the colony are not at this moment producing anything like a fair return to the State. It has been stated by some hon. members that the pastoral tenants cannot afford to pay a higher rent than they are doing at present, although the State has been put to considerable expense in the construction of trunk lines of railway into those estates. Well, sir, I think that is not a very sound argument. The colony has been put to the expense of several millions of money in carrying out these trunk lines of railway, and we are told by the Colonial Treasurer that the average rental paid by the pastoral lessee is something like ¼d. an acre. What do we find in the settled districts of the colony? Under nearly every divisional board in the neighbourhood of Brisbane, every freeholder or leaseholder is paying an annual tax of something like 6d. per acre. That is a fact which cannot be denied, and I believe if the necessary information were available it would be found that the average is even higher than that. I think that if a freeholder has to pay that in the shape of a tax for the purpose of getting roads and bridges, in order to get his produce to market, the pastoral tenant can afford to pay a much higher rent than he does at present, more especially as it is proposed to extend his present facilities for carrying stock and produce to the port of shipment, by extending the railways. Now, while agreeing with the principle of this Bill—with the principle of leasing — I must say there are several clauses in the measure which I certainly do not approve of in their present shape, and I hope before it comes out of committee that they will be considerably modified. I refer particularly to the fencing clause. Two years is far too short a time, and I should prefer to see it extended to four or five years. I do not see why it should be compulsory for a selector to fence even in that time. There are several other improvements he must of necessity make, such as the construction of dams, the erection of a house, and building stockyards ; all of which should, I think, be considered in his improvements for the term. It has been said by several speakers who

have preceded me during this debate, that this is a new system of land legislation. I admit that, sir. It is a principle I have believed in for some years past, although I cannot be said to be a disciple of Henry George, as I have not read that gentleman's work; I hope, however, to have an opportunity of doing so before long. But still I believe in the leasing principle. What is the condition of Victoria at this moment? I knew that colony twenty-eight years ago, during the prosperous times of the goldfields. There were then thousands of men there earning a large amount of money as successful diggers, and what was their position? Why, they could not get a piece of land at that time, without going into the auction-room and competing with wealthy landed proprietors. The consequence was that a large number of men, to my own knowledge, left the colony and sought out homes in other parts of the world. If this leasing principle had been introduced in Victoria, at the time I speak of, what would have been its condition to-day? I will read an extract which appeared in the *Telegraph*, copied from the *Albury Banner* of last year. The extract refers to the present large freeholds in Victoria:—

"The largest contributor to the land tax fund is, as might be expected, Sir William J. Clark, whose contributions in rates alone are the main support of the series of shires surrounding Melbourne on the north and western sides, and extending beyond Sunbury. Sir William possesses ten distinct estates, comprising 181,435 acres, and pays in land tax, annually £4,611 4s. Next to him in acreage owned stand the trustees of the estate of the late John Moffatt, with 99,117 acres; and close upon them, another territorial laird—dignity endowed—Sir Samuel Wilson, with 94,863 acres. But if the Moffatt estate has the advantage in area, it is far less valuable to the possessor or the State than that of the Lord of Ercildoune, for while the bulk of the Moffatt possessions are fourth-class land, carrying less than a sheep to the acre, no less than 35,000 acres of Sir Samuel's are classified as of the first and second order. The difference may be gauged by the tax paid, which, in the case of the Wilson property, is £2,299 3s 8d., as against Moffatt's £1,231 7s. 6d. Of the territory-owning families, the supreme is that of Messrs. Thomas and Andrew Chirnside, who, joint owners with their nephews, Messrs Logan and Forbes, possess 254,659 acres, yielding to the revenue in taxation £4,063 16s 10d. annually."

Had the leasing clauses been introduced into Victoria at the time I speak of, its condition would have been very different from what it is now. Many speakers who preceded me have asserted that this is a new departure in land legislation. It is a new departure, and I hope and believe that it will be for the great benefit of the colony. The Bill is one of the most important that has ever been before the House, and I believe it will be the means of introducing to this colony thousands of people who are looking for homes—in England, Ireland, and Scotland, as well as in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia. In reference to the leasing system, I will refer to the report of Messrs. Morris and Ranken, produced before the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales last year; and will show the House that this is not a new theory in New South Wales, as far as the Church and School lands are referred to. I find that—

"The conditions under which these lands are leased are as follows:—The lease is for seven years, at the annual rental derived at the sale, the lessee having the option of renewing for two further periods of seven years each, at an increase of 20 per cent. on the last rental of each expiring term; it will therefore be seen that the rental of 7d. per acre per annum, and the two increases of 20 per cent. each, will, at the expiration of the twenty-one years, have yielded to the estate a revenue of 14s. 10d. per acre, with the benefit of the land and improvements thereon reverting to the estate."

Now, in these leases the improvements constructed by the tenant revert to the State without any compensation; but under the Bill before us improvements are to be paid for at a valuation. This is not the case under the leases now existing in New South Wales, which merely convey the grass rights.

"These leases merely convey a grass right, and in the event of the lessee desiring to cut and remove timber for sale, or for any purpose other than for erecting buildings, fences, or other improvements on the land, he has to pay a license fee of £1 per quarter for every man employed under the conditions referred to. The right is reserved to the Minister to grant permits for timber getters to cut on lands held under lease (pastoral), but as yet such right has not been exercised, nor would it be, unless under extraordinary circumstances.

"The Minister has also the right reserved to him to resume for roadways or for mining purposes any part of any leasehold, and in the event of the Minister and the lessee failing to arrange as to compensation, the matter is referred to arbitration, but in no case is the award to exceed three times the average price per acre paid on the whole leasehold.

"With reference to the ninety-nine years' leases, an area of 16 acres 1 rood, partly within the city boundary and adjacent thereto, is leased for ninety-nine years, at an annual rental of £555, or £34 3s. 9d. per acre.

"In 1881, an area of 210 acres 3 roods 25 perches was leased for ninety-nine years, at an annual rental of £1,940 10s. 4d., or £9 4s. per acre. The principal conditions under which these lands are leased are—

"1st. That there is to be an increase of 10 per cent. added every twenty years to the rental derived, so that at the end of the term the estate will have obtained a revenue therefrom of £236,940 5s. 10d.

"2nd. That within the first five years of their leases the lessees must erect a stone or brick building of a value equal to £100 for each acre of land leased."

I will not read any more of that report, with the exception of the various returns of these lands which have been sold by auction under the conditions I have read. In the Bathurst district there are 23,923 acres, and the average price per acre is 7¾d.; in the Carcoar district, 47,887 acres, average price 1s. 2½d.; in the Stroud district, 25,536 acres, average price 1½d.; in the Dungog district 60,154 acres, average price 1¾d.; in the Copeland district, 47,360 acres, average price 6¾d.; in the Braidwood district, 13,497 acres, average price 1s. 0¾d.; in the Botany district, 210 acres 3 roods 25 perches, average price £9 4s.; and Petersham, 16¼ acres at an average price of £34 3s. 9d. The total area of pastoral and agricultural land so leased is 218,357 acres, at an annual rental of £6,333 18s. 7d., or an average of nearly 7d. per acre. I think those facts speak for themselves—that pastoral lands in the adjoining colony—and I believe a large portion of them are very inferior—under the condition of an increase of rental every seven years during the twenty-one years, are rented at an average of 7d. per acre. These facts show that if this Bill passes, even if its immediate effect should be to slightly reduce our income, in the future it will be very largely increased. A great deal of reference has been made to the clause repealing the 54th section of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869. Now, sir, if the pre-emptive is a right granted by this House—I fail to see that it is a right at present, and the hon. the Minister for Lands states that it is only a privilege—but if it is, I, for one, would be the last to be a party to any act of repudiation. When that clause is reached in committee, I hope to form some better conclusion than I have at present. Another part of the Bill refers to scrub lands. I think many hon. members who have spoken on this clause somewhat misinterpret its intention. I take it that the clause refers more particularly to scrub lands in the pastoral or western and southern districts of the colony, and not to our rich alluvial coast scrub. They are specified here as gidya and other scrub lands. Now, I believe that there is a large proportion of these that are at present of very little use either for stock purposes or for agriculture. I shall read from the report of Messrs. Ranken and

Morris, the statement of a selector in the mallee scrub in Victoria. I daresay there are lots of hon. members in this House who know something of that scrub. I have once or twice been in that country, and I have always taken it to be about the worst description of land you could possibly cultivate—in fact, I always understood it was not worth cultivation. But, sir, on the 44th page of this report, there is the report of a selector in the mallee scrub country. I think at this particular period of the debate the evidence is valuable. The selector says:—

"Out of 1,700 acres which myself and family first selected, about 1,100 acres were covered by dense mallee and other scrubs. There was no grass whatever on the land, which was the haunt of wild horses and marsupials, which only fed by night. In the space of three years I converted this wilderness into the prettiest home on the Edward River; and I challenge competition and inspection. I was compelled to tackle the mallee in order to live, as my land was enclosed in on every open side, north, east, and west, with reserves, and our pre-leases were measured and submitted to auction; our grass rights were 'peacocked'"—

I daresay some hon. gentlemen know the meaning of that term—

"And you will find them in the parish-charts looking like a piece of tartan plaid."

The selector continues:—

"The result of this labour, I may say, is magical. During the first year all kinds of salsolaceous plants come up mixed with grass. Afterwards the salt plants succumbed to stocking, and then the grass grew so luxuriantly that my sheep would not face them, and I was compelled to eat them down with cattle. The final result is that I have surmounted all the difficulties strewn in my path during my early settlement, as well as the havoc which the bad seasons and drought have worked upon others, which have affected me very lightly. In ordinary years I can feed from one and a-half to two sheep to the acre where grass never grew before, on land which my neighbour, the owner of the run on which I selected, said he would not accept as a gift. If I have prospered, it is only by industry and skill; and I think I have fairly earned some relaxation of the conditions of my purchase."

Well, now, sir, that is the evidence of a selector in the mallee scrub on the border of Victoria, which had been the home of the wild dog, the wild horse, and the rabbit; and I think that, from what we have heard from hon. members during the last few weeks, with reference to the near approach of the rabbit pest to this colony, this is a very wise clause to introduce into the Bill. Mr. Speaker, I should have liked to see—and I hope before this Bill gets through committee to see—some provision made to meet the homestead difficulty. I think they have been a source of great benefit to many industrious settlers in this colony. The Bill is a very liberal one as it stands, but I hope we shall make it more liberal. It is late now, and as several other hon. gentlemen wish to speak I shall not take up the time of the House any further. I can only say that this Bill has my hearty support, and I have great pleasure in voting for its second reading.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—As it is possible that in the event of a division not taking place to-night I may not be present to vote, I shall take this opportunity of expressing my opinion on the Bill. The Minister for Lands informed the country a few months since that it was his intention to introduce a Bill based on the principle of the non-alienation of land; but an inspection of this Bill shows that he has receded from that principle. The only instance in which he has introduced the principle of non-alienation which did not exist before is in the repeal of the power of the Government to sell country lands by auction. This Bill, to any believer in the non-alienation system, is simply a sham. One argument in favour of non-alienation of land is that the land should be held by the State instead of the individual, in order that the increase of value which accrues therefrom should go to the coffers of the State, and be expended for the general good. The principle, of course, should be applied to land from which the greatest increase in value would arise; but so far from the principle having been applied to those lands, its application to them is studiously shirked, and is applied to other land from which a hardly appreciable increase in value accrues. We know from experience that town lands increase in value in an infinitely greater proportionate rate than country lands. I was pointed out, three or four years ago, a piece of land belonging to a gentleman who owns a paper in this town which is a thick-and-thin supporter of the present Government, which at that time was open for sale at the rate of £1 an acre, and I was informed by the same person a few months since that some of this land was sold lately at £100 an acre. I was also shown another piece of land which two or three years ago was offered for £1,700, and only a few months ago was sold for about £40,000. Those are the lands to which an honest believer in the system of non-alienation would apply the principle, and the Minister for Lands could just as easily have applied the principle to these town and suburban lands as to country lands. He has refrained from doing so, and made the measure a farce by applying it only to country lands, whose increase in value during the last few years may be estimated by the fact that the Government propose to charge no more rent for them than they realised years ago. The hon. member for Rosewood this evening—and he is not the only member who has tried to make political capital out of the reference that has been made to the aggregation of large estates, and accused this party of having made use of their position when in power to encourage that aggregation —but the foundation of large estates was laid long before we had responsible government. The foundation of these large estates on the Darling Downs was laid in 1847 long before Separation, in 1860, by Orders in Council enabling squatters on the Darling Downs to pre-empt the whole of their stations at £1 an acre. Subsequently, another measure was passed by the Liberal party which enabled squatters to obtain their land on far easier terms; the immigrants frequently selling their £30 land orders at half price to the squatter, who got the full value they indicated in land from the State. Further on, in 1866, a Leasing Act was passed—another measure of the so-called Liberal party—which enabled the whole of the agricultural reserves on the Downs to be dummied, and of which measure the squatters availed themselves to fill up any little gaps in their large estates which Liberal legislation had assisted them to acquire. It will be thus seen that the aggregation of large estates was actually the result of the action taken by the Liberal party. Under the Railway Reserves Act of 1876—another Liberal measure, and one which the present Premier was mainly instrumental in passing, more land was alienated by auction in one year than ever before occurred in the history of the colony. It is therefore evident that every one of the measures which have caused the aggregation of large estates have been passed by Liberal Governments. And now what does this same Liberal party propose to do? Under the proposed Act any squatter whose present lease has all but expired—say, within one month of its expiration—if he chooses to come under this Bill, will be allowed a lease of his run for an additional ten years under the same conditions, or even better conditions than those upon which he now holds it. It has been always asserted by the party now in power that the squatters were allowed to make too good a bargain with the State, and that they

got their lands at too low a rental. Why, if they believe this to be the case, do they now propose to give them an additional ten years' lease, with greater security, at a similar rental? When the present contract between the squatter and the State terminates by the expiration of his lease the land reverts to the State, and it should be used for the benefit of the State. But the present party proposes to allow the squatter to take up, under a fresh lease, without competition, half of the country formerly held by him, on even better terms than he held the country before. Compare the treatment thus accorded to the squatter by this party with their treatment of the poor man. The small man is allowed to take up 5,000 to 20,000 acres, but he has to pay four or five times as high a rental for it as the squatter pays for his land. He has also to fence it; the squatter is not obliged to do so. If his cattle run upon the squatter's land they can be impounded; but if the squatter's cattle trespass upon his he is not allowed to impound them. If the small man fails to occupy his country, it is forfeited; but no such restriction is imposed upon the squatter. If the small man can afford to pay the rental he is charged, surely the squatter can afford to pay an equally high rent; and if, again, the rent imposed upon the squatter is a sufficient rent, surely it should be considered sufficient for the small man to pay. But this Bill not only gives the squatters in settled districts an additional monopoly for ten years over half their runs, but it also gives them the right of compensation for any resumption which may take place within that time. Further, they are not to be charged a farthing more rental than they are now paying under their present leases, although under the present leases the whole of their runs can be resumed without compensation. It is certain that in these settled districts, if this colony progresses in as great a ratio as it has done during the last few years, we will require to resume these runs before ten years, and we will then have to pay heavy compensation for that resumption. The Treasurer omitted estimating the amount of compensation we would have to pay when calculating the way in which the Land Bill before us would affect the revenue. But not only is compensation to be given for improvements, but for disturbance. If the pastoral tenant can show that he is actually out of pocket £10,000 or £15,000 a year by the resumption of his land, the Government will have to give him that for each year that his lease has been shortened. With regard to the repeal of the 54th clause of the Pastoral Leases Act, that is a clause around which the battle has raged furiously. I am sorry that clause exists. At the same time, any person who understands English must admit that, according to that clause, the squatters have an undoubted right to the pre-emptive right of 2,560 acres per block. The Premier well knows that it exists, because, did he not last session introduce a Bill to repeal that right? And is he the kind of man to introduce a Bill to repeal a right which he knew did not exist?

The PREMIER: To repeal that clause.

Mr. HAMILTON: That clause is a right, and is admitted to be a right by cleverer lawyers and greater statesmen than the Premier can ever hope to be. The Premier is endeavouring by a legal quibble to get this House to squirm out of that right. He is endeavouring to make this House believe what really, in his own inmost heart, he cannot believe himself. During the last Liberal Administration, when the Railway Reserves Act was passed, we know that under that Act land was sold at 20s. and 30s. per acre in the Roma district, and, at the same time, the squatters in that district were allowed to purchase their pre-emptives under that Government, at 10s. per acre. If the present Premier, who was then in the Ministry, was satisfied that the squatters had no right to these pre-emptives he committed a fraud upon the country in allowing the squatters to purchase their land at one-third of the price which others were obliged to pay for equally good land in the same district. I consider repudiation is as dishonourable in a nation as in an individual, and we will certainly be guilty of repudiation if we act as the Premier suggests. On several occasions, when hon. gentlemen on this side have said that litigation will ensue if this right is disallowed, I have heard the Premier say, *sotto voce*, that he hoped they would go to law. Well, that is a remark worthy of a Ministry, two-thirds of whom are lawyers—namely, Messrs. Garrick, Griffith, Mein, and Rutledge. But from what we know of the advice which the Premier has given on national questions we ought to be very chary about taking it. We all recollect the Davenport case, regarding which he advised the Government, of which he was Attorney-General, to go to law, and then engaged himself to conduct the case, for which he was paid handsomely. The Privy Council decided that his advice was worthless, and the country suffered—but not Mr. Griffith. In the mail contract case, again, the Privy Council decided that his advice was worthless—but he was not out of pocket. And in the *Courier* case, where he also advised a prosecution, the decision of the highest judges of the land showed his advice to be worthless; but the country, nevertheless, suffered loss. I see by clause 11 that the Minister for Lands provides a board to hide behind and cry out "no responsibility," if his administration is attacked. This departure from the principles of responsible government by the so-called democratic party is strange indeed. Such a system will provide an opening for a most gigantic system of fraud. The Minister will have this board, practically, under his thumb; and he will, as a matter of fact, be able to do what he pleases; and at the same time he will be able to shirk all responsibility and place it on the board. I regret that the Minister for Lands expressed himself so strongly as he did against the continuance of the homestead clause in the Bill before us. He said that "he was satisfied that the homestead clause was one of the greatest defects in the Act of 1876." I regret that he has expressed himself so strongly against them, for as no man can be expected to sacrifice his honest convictions for political expediency, we cannot expect him to assent to the introduction of a measure which he has told us that careful consideration has convinced him is bad for the State. I regret it very much because most persons will admit that the homestead clause has had a greater effect than any other in promoting settlement—and a good kind of settlement—upon our land. *Apropos* of that, several members on the other side have stated that we are really not in earnest in our objections to the elimination of that clause in the present Bill; but a glance at the conduct of this party, regarding this clause, will capsize every statement of that kind. In 1868, Mr. Archer was the first who introduced the homestead clause.

Mr. FRASER: No.

Mr. HAMILTON: It was introduced by the Government of which Mr. Archer was a member, in 1868.

Mr. FRASER: It was introduced by the Hon. T. B. Stephens.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the hon. member for South Brisbane has any right to interrupt the hon. member for Cook.

Mr. HAMILTION: Mr. Archer should know best, and the clause, I am under the impression, was introduced into this Bill when he was a member of that Government in 1868. In 1872 Mr. Palmer's Government increased the size of the homestead clause to 120 acres; in 1876 the present Liberal Government reduced it to 80 acres; in 1879 the late Government increased it to 160 acres; and now, in 1884, the Liberal Government have—abolished it. As I have stated, this homestead area clause, which has been one of the most powerful inducements to immigrants, has been swept away by the present Government—in this Bill. In attempting to attract immigrants to our shores we must recollect that there are other countries also which are offering attractions to immigrants. I shall mention one—America. It is reasonable to suppose that the immigrant compares the attractions offered by respective countries. Let us put ourselves in the position of an immigrant in England, wishing to seek his fortune in some other country. He compares, say, Queensland and America. In Queensland, he sees that his passage is paid for him, and that after he has arrived in the colony he is entitled to 160 acres, which he gets for £20, the payment of which extends over five years. He sees that in America he has to pay his own passage, which amounts to £4 or £5, and after he has got there he gets land for nothing. Taking all things into consideration, he finds that the inducements in one case are about as great as the other, because a selector has generally a family, whose passages he would have to pay to America, and in Australia the £20 has not to be paid at once, but extends over a period of five years. That has been the case. But what is the difference now? In America a man simply expends, for the passage of himself and family, about £10 or £12, and meets with no vexatious restrictions whatever. In Queensland, under this proposed Bill, he will have to live upon that land for ten solid years before before he is entitled to purchase it. He has to pay his landlord—the State—a large increase as he improves that land year by year. He has to fence it, and at the end of that time, under the most favourable circumstances, he cannot get it under £1 per acre. The Minister for Lands said last night that farming tenants preferred State landlords to other landlords. It is immaterial to the tenant whether the landlord is a State landlord or a private landlord. What is of most importance to him is, whether that landlord is a fair landlord. What he cares for is to have a lenient landlord. Let us compare this State landlord with even the hated Irish landlord. In the first place, suburban lands are sold at an upset price of £1 per acre, but the farmer is handicapped from the jump; he has to go into the bush and live for ten years upon that land before he can purchase it, and then under the most favourable conditions, at £1 per acre. During that time he has to expend a considerable amount of money in fencing, and if, during that time, he improves the land by his own labour, his rent is increased. If he happens to fail to pay that rent, he forfeits the land. Under the landlord system at home, if a tenant fails to pay his rent, process is brought against him, and he is liable to proceedings which will enforce payment; but, in addition to that, not only is he liable under this Bill to the same proceedings, but if he has lived for even eight or nine years on the farm, and spent £800 or £900 on it, and owes only £50 or £60 for rent, which he fails to pay, not only is he liable to distraint upon his goods, but he will forfeit the whole of those improvements. All because he is unable, through misfortune, to pay £50! Why should all these vexatious restrictions be enforced upon a farmer? It appears to me that this Bill is framed to restrict agricultural settlement, and to conserve the interests of town land-sharks. It was said some time since that the principles of this Government are repeal, revenge, and repudiation; and I do not think that the inception of this Bill shows that it is an exception to that rule. With regard to repeal, we can see that the very Bills which that party has introduced are now being repealed by this Bill—an admission of their own which cannot be flattering to themselves. Revenge can be seen by looking at the lines on that map indicating where the squatters who supported that Government are to be rewarded, and the squatters who went against them are to be punished. Repudiation is seen in the action of the Government regarding clause 54.

Mr. SMYTH said: Mr. Speaker,—I have listened very patiently to hon. members; I have heard all the arguments upon the Bill, and they have all been from an agricultural or pastoral point of view. But there is one clause in the Bill that will be received by one class of the community with great satisfaction—that is, the 104th clause. In Victoria at the present time they are trying to pass a law to enable miners to mine on private property. This is the twenty-seventh time this Bill has been brought forward in Victoria. They have failed to pass it twenty-six times, and it is very probable they will fail this time. At the present time, as the law stands, all gold and silver belongs to the Government; the land only belongs to the holder. The matter was tested in the Privy Council in England in 1877, and it was decided that the gold and silver belongs to the Crown: but they have no right to enter upon the land and take it, and can give no permission to enter upon the land and take it. In this Bill there is a clause providing for that. If that clause is passed, it will enable miners to enter upon any of those lands and search for minerals. Compare this clause with that introduced by the hon. leader of the Opposition in his "transcontinental" Bill. The leader of the Opposition in that Bill proposed to give 12,000,000 acres of land away to a syndicate, and he proposed, not only to give the land, but what was not given to any other freeholder in this colony—the minerals contained in that land. Now what do the miners gain from the present offer?

Mr. HAMILTON: That only applies to leases.

Mr. SMYTH: Would you like to have the clause read?

Mr. HAMILTON: Yes, certainly.

Mr. SMYTH: It is in the Railway Companies Preliminary Act of 1880:—

"The interpretation clause in the Railway Companies Preliminary Act of 1880 (passed by the Queensland Legislature on the 18th November, 1880) shall apply to this agreement except where the same is repugnant to or inconsistent with its meaning or the context. The words "Crown lands" in the said Act of 1880 shall include all lands held under pastoral leases, licenses, or agreements to grant the same, and all mines and minerals under Crown lands."

What this Bill proposes is to allow the miners the right of entering upon the land. We know the harm that has been done in the other colonies. I have worked as a miner, where thousands of miners were working, in New South Wales—that was on private land in the Braidwood district—and the landlord came down on us, and exacted £1 a month from every miner. All that went into the hands of one or two families, although the gold did not belong to them. That is pretty

often the case in Victoria. One company there has paid £137,000 for the right to mine on private land.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What company?

Mr. SMYTH: The Port Philip Company, at Clunes. The Dowling Forest Company, with 6,000 acres, gives a bonus of £2 per acre and 5 per cent. royalty for 14 years. The Adams Freehold Company, at Talbot, 1,000 acres, gives £1 per acre bonus and 5 per cent. for 21 years. The Ristori Company (Kingston and Smeaton) has already paid £45,000 royalty to freeholders. The Port Philip Company, since 1857, has paid £137,000, or nearly 40 per cent. on the profits. From the Frederick the Great Company the freeholders received, in four years, £14,127, and the mine-owner £10,400, so that the mine gave to the freeholder 58¼ per cent. of the profits. The charge is £72 10s. per annum per acre. Since 1870, there has always been inserted in any land law in Victoria a provision giving the miner the right to enter upon and work land. I believe a great deal of what was said by the hon. member for Rockhampton. I believe in leasing the land; I have been used to it all my life. At the present time I am charged by the Government £1 per acre for the right to mine for gold. I also have to pay 1s. per acre on homesteads. As one hon. member has said, there is grumbling in New South Wales about it. We get the land from the Government for twenty-one years. We know the State will be a good landlord; and that at the end of the twenty-one years we shall be able to renew the lease. There is no fear of the miners being turned out to bring in some other tenants of the land. I say that the land of the colony ought to be leased as the miners lease it; I do not see why, if one class is made to pay, another class should not also be made to pay. Therefore I consider that the introduction of this 104th clause, giving the miners the right to enter upon land, is the best thing in the Bill. It will give great assistance to an important class in the community—a class which has assisted to raise the colony to what it is at the present time.

Question — That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put, and the House divided as follows:—

AYES, 34.

Messrs. Miles, Griffith, Dickson, Sheridan, Dutton, Rutledge, Fraser, Brookes, Aland, Smyth, Annear, Mellor, Isambert, Jordan, White, J. Campbell, Kellett, T. Campbell, Buckland, Bale, Kates, Foxton, Foote, Macdonald-Paterson, Beattie, Salkeld, Grimes, Horwitz, Higson, Bailey, Midgley, Ferguson, Wallace, and Macfarlane.

NOES, 17.

The Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Norton, Chubb, Morehead, Hamilton, Jessop, Palmer, Govett, Scott, Lalor, Donaldson, Nelson, Stevenson, Lissner, Black, and Macrossan.

Question, therefore, resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed, and committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday week.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I meant to have given notice earlier in the evening that I would move that the House, on its rising, adjourn till Monday, and I now ask permission of the House to move that motion without notice. I hope that on Monday evening we may proceed with the second reading of the Health Bill, and possibly of the Defence Bill. There are also one or two smaller matters to be dealt with.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: What will be the business on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in next week?

The PREMIER: There are three important Bills at the head of the paper—the Health Bill, the Immigration Act Amendment Bill, and the Defence Bill. All these are not only important but urgent measures, and I hope to be able to make substantial progress with them during next week.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Will you take them in the order in which they stand on the paper?

The PREMIER: I will take them in that order.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I think the hon. member had better adjourn the House till Tuesday. I have not read the Health Bill yet. I know it is a matter of considerable importance, and I should not like to consent to the second reading of it before I was prepared to discuss it. The other Bills will give rise probably to a great deal of discussion; but I understood that the non-contentious business was to be taken on Mondays.

The PREMIER: Yes.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I do not know whether the Health Bill can be considered among that class of business—it has been rather a contentious subject hitherto, and I think the hon. gentleman had better adjourn till Tuesday.

The PREMIER: I was anxious to further that measure one stage on Monday, but if it is the wish of the House to adjourn till Tuesday I have not the slightest objection. My only wish is to consult the convenience of hon. members. I move that the House adjourn till Tuesday next.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I should like to ask, has the Treasurer made up his mind when he is likely to deliver his Financial Statement?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I hope the Estimates will be down next week. As hon. gentlemen will remember, an intimation was given some time ago that schedules would be prepared showing the different offices held by the members of the Civil Service. The preparation of those schedules has, to a certain extent, delayed the Estimates, which will, I hope, be ready next week. It is probable that the Financial Statement will be made the following week.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: That will, of course, delay the Land Bill. Do I understand that to be the case?

The PREMIER: We intend to go on with the Land Bill on Tuesday week.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Does the Treasurer intend to ask for an Appropriation before he delivers his Financial Statement?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at seventeen minutes to 11 o'clock.