

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1884

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 10 September, 1884.

Petition.—Questions.—Formal Motions.—Maryborough School of Arts Bill.—Supply.—Financial Statement.—Immigration Act of 1882 Amendment Bill.—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

Mr. JESSOP presented a petition signed by 390 residents of Dalby and the neighbourhood, asking the House to agree to the construction of a Railway Line from Dalby to St. George, and moved that the petition be read.

Question put and passed.

Petition read and received.

QUESTIONS.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked the Premier—

When the Additional Members Bill, promised in the Opening Speech, will be introduced?

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) replied—

I hope to introduce this Bill in the course of two or three weeks; but the precise time will depend upon the progress of the business of the session.

Mr. McWHANNELL asked the Minister for Works—

When is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the Survey of a Railway Line from Hughenden to Winton as authorised?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) replied—

It is not the intention of the Government to proceed with the Survey of a Railway Line from Hughenden to Winton.

Mr. McWHANNELL asked the Minister for Works—

When is his intention to again call for Tenders for the erection of Sub-Inspector of Police Quarters at Winton, the money for which has already been voted by this House as far back as 1882?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—
Tenders for the erection of Quarters for the Sub-Inspector of Police, Winton, will be called for at an early date.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to:—

By the PREMIER—

That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to declare the powers of local authorities with respect to imposing License Fees, Tolls, Rates, and Dues, and for other purposes.

By Mr. NORTON—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a Return showing the quantity of Fencing Wire forwarded by the Western and Central Railway Lines, and the Freight received for same, during each month since the 1st January, 1883, and 31st August, 1884.

1884—2 P

By Mr. MOREHEAD—

That there be laid on the table of the House, copies of all Petitions, Letters, and Papers, in possession of the Government, connected with or relative to Warden Lukin's Report of 1st July, 1884.

MARYBOROUGH SCHOOL OF ARTS BILL.

On the motion of Mr. BAILEY, leave was given to introduce a Bill to enable the trustees of an allotment of land in the town of Maryborough, granted for the purposes of a School of Arts, to sell the same or any part or portion thereof, together with the buildings erected thereon, and to devote the proceeds to the building of a new School of Arts.

Bill read a first time and ordered to be printed.

SUPPLY.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson): Mr. Speaker,—I move that you do now leave the chair, and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Question put and passed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in making his Financial Statement, said:—

Mr. FRASER,—

I purpose to submit to the Committee and to the country the present condition of the Finances of the Colony, and, in making the Treasurer's Annual Report thereon, to embrace the whole period comprised in the last financial year ended on the 30th June, 1884, notwithstanding that the Financial Statement for 1883-4, which I had the honour to deliver in January last, having necessarily been delayed to so late a period, included the transactions for the first six months of that year—the completed term of which I now retrospectively exhibit.

I think, sir, it will be admitted, after careful observation of the statistics I shall submit, that the colony continues to make very great progress, that the condition of the people, both as regards the increasing importance of their industrial pursuits and the accumulation they are continuously providing, shows that our prosperity is deeply rooted, and gives us also reasonable grounds for hoping that the effects of the severe drought, which for so long a period has hung over Australia, and which, unhappily, even yet cannot be said to have wholly broken up in portions of the vast interior of Queensland, are gradually passing away; and that when the colony is visited by a return of normal seasons the development of all our industries and resources will attain a magnitude such as our most sanguine anticipations are unable at present fully to comprehend. Doubtless these gratifying results will be greatly accelerated, and be more immediately felt by active progressive administration such as the colony demands and our increased wealth and credit enable us to achieve. Government are fully impressed with the necessity for aiding—nay, even urging—Queensland on the high road of progress and permanent prosperity at the present time, so that, even if she may not yet attain to the high position of the great nations of the world, she may be well abreast of her Australian sisters in their earnest emulation of the continual progress of our great mother-country.

I trust, sir, before I conclude, that these views will be deemed to have received ample consideration, and that the intentions of Government in this direction will yield no uncertain sound; but that our proposals will show to the country that the requirements of the colony have formed

subjects of deep and full deliberation, and that Government have marked out a course of assured progress and action, which they confidently submit to Parliament for its consideration and approval.

I invite the attention of hon. members to the Treasury Tables, prepared to accompany the Statement for this year, which have been circulated, and which will enable them more closely to follow my remarks in dealing with the finances, which shall be divided into—

- 1st. The Consolidated Revenue of Queensland for the financial year ending 30th June, 1883-4;
- 2nd. The Trust Funds for the same period;
- 3rd. The administration of the Loan Account for the same term;
- 4th. The Estimate of Ways and Means for 1884-5, embracing also Estimates of Expenditure for the same period;

And I shall conclude by expressing the views of Government concerning fresh loan obligations.

I now proceed to consider—

1ST. THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND OF QUEENSLAND FOR 1883-4.

And I request hon. members to direct their attention to Table B, which deals with the Consolidated Revenue of the Colony for the financial year ending 30th June, 1884. On the 1st July, 1883, the balance at credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to £311,594 13s. 4d. The revenue of the year 1883-4 represented £2,566,358 0s. 8d., and the expenditure £2,511,651 2s. 6d., leaving a balance at the credit of the Consolidated Revenue, on 1st July, 1884, of £366,301 11s. 6d.

Such is the Treasury aspect of the operations of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the year 1883-4; but, to enable hon. members to fully comprehend our present financial position, I would point out that the actual revenue paid into the Treasury during the year 1883-4 amounted to £2,643,236 10s. 10d.; £81,667 10s. having been furnished by claimants for pre-emptive selections, of which sum £76,878 10s. 2d. was disallowed, and transferred from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to Suspense Account Trust Funds, there to await application for refundment. On the other hand, the Consolidated Revenue credit balance on the 30th June, 1883, which amounted to £311,594 13s. 4d., was, to the extent of £310,000, appropriated by Parliament last session to provide for Special Services. In former years it has been customary to withdraw such appropriation from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and place the amount to a Surplus Revenue Account. I am of opinion that it is undesirable and inconvenient to withdraw from revenue, until required for purposes of actual expenditure, whatever surplus may accrue from time to time, and I do not think it to be just to our financial prosperity and progress to exhibit our revenue balance periodically in a depleted condition, when such impoverishment is not actually caused by expenditure, or actual revenue deficiency in fulfilment of Treasury estimates. Moreover, as we shall have to make application to English capitalists for a considerable addition to our present loans, it is desirable that we should exhibit our revenue balances in their true position from time to time for the information of the public creditor and investor.

During the year 1883-4, we had expended, out of this special appropriation of £310,000, the sum of £78,072 2s. 3d., leaving an available unexpended balance of such special appropriation to the extent of £231,927 17s. 9d.

Now, if we take our revenue for 1883-4, as above stated—namely, £2,566,358 0s. 8d.—and add the same to the amount of pre-emptives disallowed, £76,878 10s. 2d., we find the total revenue to be £2,643,236 10s. 10d.; from which, if we deduct the year's expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue, £2,511,651 2s. 6d., less the amount of the special appropriation included therein—namely, £78,072 2s. 3d.—there remains a net revenue expenditure of £2,433,379 0s. 3d., the result being a net surplus on the year's transactions of £209,657 10s. 7d.

The financial year 1881-2 commenced with a credit balance of £27,007 14s. 9d., and terminated with a credit balance of £245,410 6s., thus showing a surplus of £218,402 11s. 3d.; the financial year 1882-3 commenced with a credit balance of £370 6s., and terminated with a credit balance of £311,594 13s. 4d., £245,040 having been withdrawn to Surplus Revenue.

The financial year 1883-4, as just shown, has closed with an actual surplus on the year's operations of £209,657 10s. 7d.; or, to place the position in another aspect, the financial year 1881-2 showed an actual increase of revenue over 1880-1 of £78,426 12s. 0d.; 1882-3 over 1881-2, of £281,764 8s. 10d.; and 1883-4 over 1882-3, of £182,498 14s. 6d.; or, with pre-emptives disallowed amounting to £76,878 10s. 2d., a total increase of £259,377 4s. 8d.

An analysis of the revenue of 1883-4 contrasted with that of 1882-3 discloses very gratifying and cheering results. If hon. members will consult Table A, they will observe that the total revenue for the year 1883-4, amounting to £2,566,358, exceeded the estimate for the year by £61,358, after allowing for refundment of pre-emptives before mentioned; and even as thus reduced showed an increase of £182,499 in actual receipts over the year 1882-3, or 7·6 per cent.; or, if the full amount of pre-emptives disallowed be added, the ratio of increase on the preceding year represents nearly 11 per cent. Foremost amongst the chief contributors to revenue stands Customs, which in 1883-4 produced £866,475, or £66,475 over the estimate, as against £753,703 in 1882-3—an increase of £112,772 on the preceding year, or nearly 14·9 per cent. On the other hand, the revenue from Excise, which in 1882-3 was estimated to yield £58,000, and which only produced £51,362, has not even fulfilled the very moderate estimate of £35,000 for 1883-4—the total returns being £34,441. The decline in Excise Revenue has been steady and continuous since the assimilation of the excise with import duties in 1880, and forcibly illustrates the soundness of the fiscal axiom that high duties do not necessarily produce a corresponding increase of revenue, but tend to discountenance and divert consumption. The Excise Returns for 1883-4 show a decrease on the preceding year of £16,921, or at the rate of nearly 32·9 per cent.

Stamp Duties produced during the year £88,166, showing a small increase at the rate of 0·9 per cent. on the preceding year; while Licenses produced £46,401, or an increase at the rate of about 5 per cent. on 1882-3.

In short, from Taxation the sum of £1,035,483 was furnished to the Consolidated Revenue—an increase of £98,742, or at the rate of 10·5 per cent. on the preceding year of 1882-3.

In Land Revenue a marked decrease was only to be expected under the head of sales by auction, selection thereafter, and pre-emptives. The present Government, on entering upon office towards the end of 1883, acted up to their avowed intention of conserving our vast territorial estate as an inalienable inheritance to the people of this colony for all time,

thereby denying alienation of the fee-simple of the real estate of the colony in the country districts by auction; and they had also to disallow claims for the pre-emptive acquirement of freeholds which had been lodged with the Treasury previous to their entering on the administration of the colony. This action was subsequently confirmed last session by Parliament in passing the second reading of the Pastoral Leases Bill, and in pursuance of that assent Government have maintained their action in this direction pending legislation under the new Land Bill. I would remind hon. members that the applications which have been disallowed were deemed by Government to be a most unwarrantable interpretation of the provisions of the 54th clause of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869, taken in conjunction with the 69th clause of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876; for not only were these applications made entirely unsupported by any evidence of permanent improvements having been constructed, but the desire of each applicant was to consolidate these pre-emptives and obtain by way of exchange, under the provisions of the 69th clause of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876, an area equal in value and in one block of other country—in short, to acquire one large freehold estate, possessing water and other advantages, in lieu of the isolated pre-emptions which, under the conditions of the original lease, he was privileged to obtain to secure permanent improvements. While adopting this line of action, I desire to add that all those applications to pre-empt which had received Executive sanction under the former Government were passed through and completed. The administration of these heads of Land Revenue having been conducted on such principles, the proceeds of lands sold at auction, which amounted in 1882-3 to £114,227, have only produced during the whole of 1883-4 the sum of £75,260, being a decrease of 34 per cent. on the preceding year. In like manner, selections after auction, which in 1882-3 amounted to £49,847, resulted in a total of £10,688, only for the financial year ending on 30th June last, being a decrease of £38,799, or at the rate of 78 per cent. on the preceding year's operations. It will therefore be observed that while the total revenue of 1882-3 from auction sales and land subsequently selected amounted to £164,074, the amount received from these joint contributors for the financial year 1883-4 amounted to £85,948 only, of which sum £17,981 was derived from auction sales of country lands, being at the rate of 20 per cent. on the whole annual proceeds from auction sales. In 1882-3, the sum of £72,628 was derived from auction sales of country lands, being at the rate of 63 per cent. on the entire annual income under this head. And with regard to pre-emptives, which only yielded £29,824 in 1882-3, as I had occasion to note in my last statement while there appeared a sudden and extensive impulse to pre-empt just before the accession of the present Government to office in November, 1883, which placed the Treasury in possession of £78,083 from this service for the six months ending 31st December, 1883, the action of the Government in revising such applications as had not received Executive sanction under the late Administration caused the withdrawal from the Consolidated Revenue of a large portion of this amount—namely, £76,878, and confined the total operations for the financial year 1883-4 under this head to the extent of £4,789 only, exhibiting a decrease of £25,035, or at the rate of 82 per cent. on the preceding year. In other sources of Land Revenue an increase is discernible—not, however, in all cases commensurate with the general expansion and prosperity of the colony. The rents of homestead and conditional selec-

tions, which in 1882-3 produced £241,998, have during the past year amounted to £246,599; an increase of only £4,601 on the preceding year. It may, however, be observed that the actual increase under this head does not necessarily prove a corresponding increase of settlement, inasmuch as future instalments of rents—or, in reality, instalments of purchase money—may at any time be paid up in advance, with a view to acquire the fee-simple—the annual amount thus received at the Treasury being uncertain—produced by the caprice, the prosperity, or the necessity of the selector.

It has been shown in past years that seasons of depression have caused larger payments to be made to the Treasury for future instalments of purchase money, than seasons of comparative prosperity. To place more clearly before the Committee the operation of our land laws in regard to homestead and conditional selections, the financial results of the past three years will be of value. In 1881-2, the new transactions amounted to £49,153; the balances paid up in advance to acquire the fee-simple attained to £48,276. The annual rents received during the year amounted to £137,890, forming a total yearly revenue of £235,319, or an increase of over 20 per cent. on the preceding year.

The financial year 1882-3 showed new transactions under these heads to the extent of £46,020, a decrease of £3,133 on the previous year; while the balances paid up in advance amounted to £31,850, being £16,426 under the corresponding receipts for 1881-2, at the same time that the annual rents received amounted to £164,128, being £26,238 in excess of the previous year's receipts, the total annual revenue producing £241,998, or an increase of 2·8 per cent. on that of 1881-2.

The financial year 1883-4 showed new transactions to the extent of £35,910, a decrease of £10,110 on the preceding year; while the balances paid up in advance amounted to £40,839, being £8,989 in excess of the year 1882-3. The annual rents received amounted to £169,850, representing a total annual revenue of £246,599, or an increase on the preceding year of 1·9 per cent. It will be seen from the foregoing that new selections have been declining since 1881-2, and this, too, in the face of a large area of our territory, representing about 21,000,000 acres, now open for selection. Doubtless the intimation of fresh land legislation may have tended to delay settlement by possibly inducing selectors to defer applications until the greater facilities for settlement and occupation of our public lands as announced by Government have been confirmed by the Legislature. This much may be conceded. But there cannot exist a doubt in the minds of hon. members who will exercise a little reflection, that, considering the unprecedentedly large accession to our population during the past two years, and the great and general desire which has been displayed within that time to invest in real estate, our existing land legislation has signally failed during that period to attract and encourage occupation and settlement of our lands to an extent commensurate with the introduction of such a large addition to our people as we have of late received. Viewed by the statistics of the past three years, the provisions of our Land Acts specially framed to encourage homestead and conditional selection, which have hitherto been recognised as the most powerful factors in close settlement of the country, are failing to meet the requirements of possibly a newer class of settlers, or, at any rate, are not stimulating the settlement and occupation of the country in proportion either to the increasing population or to the industrial pursuits and accumulation of the people of this colony.

Pastoral Rents for 1883-4 produced £246,103, being an increase on the preceding year of £28,767, or at the rate of 13 per cent.

The area held under Pastoral Occupation on the 31st December, 1883, amounted to 475,601 square miles in the unsettled districts of the colony, of which area 181,902 square miles were classed as unavailable territory, and for which no rent was paid. The residue—considered available territory—produces an annual rental of £216,639, being at the rate of 12s. 7d. per square mile of available area; but if the unavailable area is included—which, if paid for at a similar rental, would increase the pastoral rent list £82,987 annually—the average rental is reduced to 9s. 1d. per square mile—under one-sixth of a penny per acre per annum. In addition to the foregoing, 11,162 square miles are occupied in the settled districts, producing annually £21,419, or an average of £1 18s. 4d. per square mile, being under ¾d. per acre per annum.

It is instructive at the present time, and in the face of legislation proposed by the Government, to note that, notwithstanding the above-mentioned extremely low rents, which, even in this House, few hon. members will justify, the average annual rents paid during the year 1883-4, for the leases of runs in the unsettled districts submitted by auction during that year, were £1 8s. 7d., and for those in the settled districts £2 5s. 3d. per square mile. The “inexorable logic” of these facts gives an overwhelming refutation to the frequently reiterated assertion that pastoral occupation cannot now afford to pay larger rents than those which, originally affixed under the Orders-in-Council, have been only slightly increased by the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869.

The revenue from Mining Occupation fulfilled the estimate for 1883-4 of £13,000, but has not attained to the receipts of 1882-3, which amounted to £14,317. The falling-off which took place in 1883-4 is to be attributed to the decadence of the Palmer Gold Field, and to the effects of the drought, which prevented men from working.

The total Land Revenue for 1883-4 amounted to £633,078, showing a decrease, arising from the several causes to which I have alluded, of £71,759 under the preceding year, or at the rate of almost 10 per cent.

Turning to the receipts from Public Works and Services, hon. members will view with unqualified satisfaction the continued progress and remunerativeness of our railways.

The Southern and Western Railway contributed to revenue, during 1883-4, £326,544, being an increase of £54,874 on the preceding year, or at the rate of fully 20 per cent. If hon. members will turn to Table Q they will observe that during the same period the working expenses have increased £11,689 11s. 7d., while the net earnings for the year show an increase of £43,184 0s. 2d.; thus reducing the percentage of working expenses, as contrasted with receipts, from 61·31 per cent. in 1882-3 to 54·58 per cent. in 1883-4. During the year 1883-4 new roadway was opened in connection with this railway to the extent of 106 miles, namely:—

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| Highfields Branch | ... | ... | 12 miles |
| Rona to Mitchell | ... | ... | 53 „ |
| Brisbane Valley Branch | ... | ... | 19 „ |
| South Brisbane to Oxley | ... | ... | 6 „ |
| Killarney Branch | ... | ... | 16 „ |
| Total | ... | ... | 106 miles |

Similarly, the Central Railway contributed in 1883-4 the sum of £153,121, establishing an increase over the preceding year of £25,240. During the same period the working expenses increased by £9,679 and the net earnings by £15,560, thereby reducing the percentage of working expenses in proportion to receipts, from 44·87 per cent. in 1882-3 to 43·78 per cent. in 1883-4. During the year 1883-4, 56 miles of new roadway were opened in connection with this railway, namely:—

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|----------|
| Bogantungan to Pine Hill | ... | 25 miles |
| Capella to Clermont | ... | 31 „ |
| Total | ... | 56 miles |

The Northern Railway showed a revenue in 1883-4 of £56,528—an increase of £13,070 on the preceding year; while the working expenses increased £7,650, the net earnings increased £5,422, the percentage of working expenses and receipts having slightly increased—namely, from 48·04 per cent. in 1882-3 to 50·92 per cent. in 1883-4. During the year 1883-4 this railway was further opened to Homestead, an additional 45 miles.

The Maryborough and Gympie Railway furnished in 1883-4 £37,838, being an increase of £10,716 on the preceding year. During the same period the working expenses increased by £9,827 and the net earnings by £889, the percentage of working expenses to receipts having risen from 65·95 per cent. in 1882-3 to 73·24 per cent. in 1883-4.

The Bundaberg Railway produced in 1883-4 £8,610, being an increase of £2,883 on the preceding year, while the working expenses have decreased by the small amount of £307—the net earnings amounting to £1,125. The working expenses in proportion to receipts represent a percentage of 86·94. During 1883-4 this railway was further extended 22 miles—Gillen's Siding to Mount Perry.

Taking the whole of our railway lines open for traffic during 1883-4, the total receipts represent £582,642, or an increase of £106,782 on the preceding year, being at the rate of over 22 per cent.; while the working expenses have increased within the same time by £38,539, or about 14 per cent. on the previous year.

The Post Office produced in 1883-4 £80,815—an increase of £10,523, or nearly 15 per cent. on 1882-3; while the Electric Telegraph receipts for 1883-4 amount to £75,181—an increase of £9,172, or at the rate of 13·8 per cent. on the preceding year.

Harbour and Light Dues produced £20,488 for 1883-4—an increase of £4,026, or 24 per cent. on the previous year. I must point out, in connection with this service, that previous to the remission of light dues in 1882 the sum of £3,286 had been received during the financial year 1882-3 for which no corresponding revenue appears in 1883-4. The South Brisbane Graving Dock, which furnishes revenue under this head of Harbour and Light Dues, produced £2,365 for the financial year 1883-4, an increase of £1,235 on the preceding year. Therefore the actual sources of present revenue, contrasted with their corresponding results in 1882-3, show an increase in this service of over 55 per cent. Escort Fees show a reduction of £864, arising from the suspension of mining works through the late drought, and also from the fact of the gold from Charters Towers and Gympie being now carried by railway.

The total revenue from Public Works and Services in 1883-4 produced £760,375, being an increase of £129,639 over the previous year, or at the rate of 20·5 per cent.

Miscellaneous Services have produced £137,422 in 1883-4, showing an increase over the preceding year to the extent of £25,877, or at the rate of 23 per cent. £58,524 was received for interest on public balances, and £24,206 for interest on loans to local bodies; an increase for the year from these joint services having accrued to the Treasury to the extent of £19,257.

If hon. members will glance at Table K, they will observe the proportions in which our population—estimated since the last census—have contributed to the Consolidated Revenue of the colony during the year 1883-4.

Each unit of our population, now estimated to amount to 287,475 persons, has averaged a contribution to taxation, in the shape of consumption of dutiable goods, in the payment of stamp duty imposed on transfer of property or dealings therewith, or in the advantages accruing to business or otherwise by the extension of credit under bills or promissory notes, or in the issue of cheques or granting receipts, or in the conduct of licensed businesses—to the extent of £3 12s. 6d. per head; while for the use of railways, postal services, telegraphs, and shipping dues he has also contributed £2 12s. 8d., for the year 1883-4. And further, towards Miscellaneous Services—which comprise interest on the use of the public moneys, by means of which the custodians of same may have been enabled to assist him in business or other pursuits—he has paid 9s. 4d. therefore during the past year. So that our individual unit has, and with great advantage to himself, benefited the revenue of the colony to the extent of £6 14s. 6d. during the past year; while his assumed contribution of land revenue represents him to have been a total annual contributor to revenue to the amount of £8 18s. 6d.

Turning to the expenditure for the financial year 1883-4, the total amount represents £2,511,651, from which sum must be deducted the disbursements on account of the special appropriation of £310,000, amounting, as before shown, on the 30th June last, to £78,072. The actual expenditure, therefore, for the year stands at £2,433,579—an increase of 5 per cent. on the expenditure of the preceding year, which, however, included a surplus revenue appropriation to the extent of £245,040.

This increase of expenditure has chiefly arisen in connection with the following services, namely:—In Schedule D, the endowment to municipalities advanced from £38,390 in 1882-3 to £43,324 in 1883-4, or at the rate of nearly 13 per cent.; while the endowments to divisional boards, which in 1882-3 represented £80,596, attained to the sum of £98,890 in 1883-4—an increase of 22·6 per cent.

In addition to the foregoing increases, settlement has been made of the claim of Mr. P. F. Macdonald, which had so long stood over, notwithstanding the judgment of the Supreme Court in his favour, for £13,700, as from 7th September, 1880, with costs taxed at £3,462, as on 15th June, 1881, the total amount carrying interest at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum, and which had been unwisely ignored by the late Administration. The Government decided on meeting this augmenting obligation without further delay, and the payment of £21,903, representing judgment debt, costs, and interest, has necessarily increased the expenditure under schedules for the year just terminated.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: Corruption, corruption!

The COLONIAL TREASURER:

The Colonial Secretary's Department required, during 1883-4, £409,914, representing an increase of £66,846 over the preceding year, or at the rate of 20 per cent.; arising principally from increased requisitions—by the Police, of nearly 10 per cent.; Government Printer, 25 per cent.; Colonial Stores, 13 per cent.; Volunteers, 21·9 per cent.; Charitable Allowances, 31 per cent.; and expenses of the General Elections during 1883, which cost £5,595.

The Administration of Justice expended £33,520 for 1883-4, as against £28,278 for 1882-3, showing an increase of 18·5 per cent.; while the Department of Public Instruction absorbed £154,015—an increase of £23,983, or at the rate of 18·4 per cent. on the preceding year. The increase in this department was largely created by Buildings, which increased from £19,945 in 1882-3 to £36,433 in 1883-4, or over 82 per cent.

The Colonial Treasurer's Department required £156,033 for 1883-4, being an increase of £35,449 on the preceding year, and at the rate of 29·4 per cent. Of this large sum, £13,258 is due to the increase of refundments, the payment of which forms no charge on the Consolidated Revenue. And in connection with this matter of refundments, I would inform honourable members that it is intended in the future for each department to make its own refundments at the close of the month, and before final adjustment of accounts with the Treasury; thereby excluding this item hereafter from disturbing our actual financial transactions for the year, or unduly increasing our apparent receipts and expenditure.

The other increases arise from the following causes:—Commission on paying off our Loan of 1863, for £707,000, due 1st January, 1884; Customs, £5,798—an increase which may fairly be admitted when we reflect that Customs revenue during the same period increased by £112,772; Harbours, Pilots, and Lighthouses, which required £50,193 in 1883-4, as against £38,606 in 1882-3, being an increase of £11,587, or at the rate of 31·5 per cent. This expansion of expenditure has been absolutely necessary in consequence of the establishment and maintenance of additional lights along our coast, and also through the necessity for providing increased services to meet the rapidly developing requirements of our several harbours.

The Secretary for Public Lands expended £101,654 in 1883-4, as against £87,863 in 1882-3, being an increase of £13,791, or at the rate of 15·6 per cent. The principal increases in this department arose from Grants in aid of Reserves, which increased 43·6 per cent.; Survey of Land, which increased 6 per cent.; the extension of the Trigonometrical Survey, on which £2,358 was expended during the year; and Pastoral Occupation, on which an increase of expenditure is shown to the extent of £5,262.

The Secretary for Public Works expended £409,505 for the year 1883-4, being an excess of £74,107 over the preceding year, or at the rate of 22·1 per cent. Of this expenditure, Buildings, Roads, and Bridges represent £62,868 for 1883-4, as against £36,082 for 1882-3—an increase of £26,786. Mines required an increase of about £3,000, or over 18 per cent. advance on the previous year.

The expenditure on our Railways, out of revenue, for the year 1883-4, amounted to £309,308, as against £270,770 for the preceding year, or an increase of about 14 per cent. When

we bear in mind the large accession to our revenue which has been obtained from this source during the past year, establishing, as I have before shown, an increase of 22·4 per cent. on the previous year's receipts, and this too, in the face of a season which has diminished production, both from pastoral and agricultural settlement, and has largely militated against the development of the carrying trade of the interior—I say, notwithstanding these adverse influences, we have every reason to be satisfied with the financial results of our railway investments, as shown during the past year.

The Auditor-General's Department showed a small increase in expenditure during 1883-4 of £157, or about 3 per cent. on the preceding year, necessitated by departmental intervention being required to provide special audit for the adjustment of accounts between various local bodies.

Tables H and K are framed to exhibit, as in former years, the actual position of the Treasury at the end of the financial year.

Hon. members will observe that the financial year 1882-3 terminated with a net liability, for the unexpended votes of previous years, to the extent of £193,787.

The balance at the credit of the Consolidated Revenue amounted, on the 30th June, 1883, to £311,594.

A special appropriation of £310,000, made by Parliament during last session, reduced this available balance to £1,594; which amount, deducted from the net liability above mentioned, exhibits the outstanding liability on the 30th June, 1883, for the unexpended votes of previous year, as £192,192. The financial year 1883-4 terminated with a liability of £305,930, of which sum £60,000 may fairly be assumed to lapse after 30th September, reducing the net liability to £245,930. The balance unexpended of the special appropriation of last session amounted, on the 30th June last, to £231,927; which sum, added to the net revenue liability as above shown then outstanding, produces a total liability of £477,857, to be reduced by the balance of Consolidated Revenue, as shown in Table B—namely, £366,301—thereby decreasing the net liability for outstanding unexpended votes of the previous year to £111,556; showing our financial position to have improved on the previous year by £80,636.

The financial year 1883-4 closed with a surplus credit balance of £366,301 11s. 6d., of which amount the sum of £231,927 17s. 9d., belonging to the special surplus appropriation of 1883, remains unexpended, leaving a net credit revenue surplus balance of £134,373 13s. 9d. on the above date. The amount of unforeseen expenditure paid up to the 30th June, 1884, and included in the expenditure for the year, was £47,600 under schedules, and £72,280 for services of the departments—a total of £117,880. As, after this expenditure being made, the votes still unexpended for 1883-4 represent £305,930, which will probably be reduced by £60,000, for lapsed services, there being a balance of last year's revenue to the extent of £134,373, as above shown, against same, our position at the close of 1883-4 is considerably improved upon the preceding year 1882-3, as represented in Table H.

When I last had the honour to submit my Financial Statement to the House, I dwelt on the inconveniences which I conceived arose from the Government Accounts being circulated for public information in two somewhat confusing, if not conflicting, forms. Hon. members are aware that the Public Accounts issued by the Treasury, and published in the *Gazette*, deal with the transactions comprised within the periods

they represent—that is to say, the financial year, which commences on the 1st day of July and terminates on the 30th June following. Now, under the Audit Act, while the revenue receipts are still confined to this term the expenditure embraces not only the amount disbursed during the twelve months aforesaid, but also is charged with the expenditure which proceeds during the three months following—namely, up to the 30th September—on account of services which have been authorised by Parliament to be paid during the financial year ended on the 30th June previously; the result being that the Treasury Statement of the transactions of each financial year—compiled in terms of the Audit Act, and on which the Auditor-General bases his annual report—comprises twelve months' revenue and fifteen months' expenditure; that is to say, twelve months' full expenditure and the partial expenditure made during the following three months on account of services voted for the year. This, however, is only one phase of the question.

In addressing hon. members this evening, I have had occasion to refer to the expenditure, say for the financial year ended 30th June, 1884, as amounting to £2,511,651. Such has been the year's expenditure by the Treasury, made out of revenue and special appropriation; and this amount is published in the *Gazette* as the disbursements for such period. I have already informed the Committee that the Auditor-General, acting under the Audit Act, will, in reporting on the transactions of 1883-4, supplement the above amount by the expenditure which has taken place since the 30th June, on account of last year, and which may continue until the 30th September next. So far the account would not be wholly confusing. But when I speak of £2,511,651 as having been the year's expenditure to 30th June last, I will be found to be still further at variance with the Auditor-General's report; inasmuch as the expenditure made between the 1st July and 30th September, 1883, on account of the year which previously terminated on the 30th June, 1883, although forming part of my reported amount of the expenditure for the year ended 30th June, 1884, and also included in the statement of expenditure published in the *Gazette* for the three months ending 30th September, 1883—the first quarter of the new financial year 1883-4—is wholly rejected by the Auditor-General as being expenditure not chargeable to the year ended 30th June, 1884, and is charged back by him to the preceding year, 1882-3, thereby causing a wide divergence between the Treasury gazetted statement of transactions for the year and those presented to Parliament by that officer. The amount of expenditure made between the 1st July and 30th September, 1883, on account of the services of the financial year ended on the 30th June, 1883, represented £142,103, as hon. members will learn from Table H. If this sum be deducted from the expenditure, which I have already said amounted to £2,511,651, the expenditure chargeable to the financial year 1883-4, made up to the 30th June last, will stand as £2,369,548; and this will be the sum the Auditor-General will represent, in his report to Parliament, as the expenditure for the year, plus the continued disbursements on account of the year's services still proceeding up to the 30th September instant. I would further point out that the *Gazette* returns for the first quarter of each financial year are not framed to discriminate between the expenditure for the two services made during that period; consequently the public, and even hon. members, cannot learn the amount of actual expenditure for the preceding year until

the Auditor-General's report is laid before Parliament; and, on account of this delay in closing the accounts of the year, his report frequently appears only before hon. members at the commencement of another session of Parliament, when possibly public interest in the Auditor-General's statistics, then dealing with such a remote period, has considerably decreased.

I think hon. members will agree with me that the Public Accounts should be so framed as to afford full, exact, and early information in the most easily intelligible form; and, strongly impressed with this view, Government have during the short recess, and in pursuance of the promise made in my last Statement, given this matter due consideration; and I am now enabled to inform the Committee that an amendment of the Audit Act will be immediately laid before Parliament to deal with this subject.

The termination of the financial year on the 30th June will continue as heretofore, but the Treasury and Audit Office will deal with the transactions comprised within the twelve months ending on that date as the financial operations of the year. The appropriation remaining unexpended on the 30th June for services of the preceding year will be kept alive for three months, as is now the practice, to enable the vouchers to be received from distant parts of the colony, and charged to the respective services; but such continuous expenditure will, as is now the practice with any balance of appropriation expended after 30th September, merge into the general expenditure of the new financial year, and will be so treated by the Treasury and Audit Office.

Votes will be revised within the three months after the financial year has terminated, and unnecessary balances be lapsed, as heretofore; the residue of appropriation under which expenditure may continue being treated as part and further provision for the new financial year.

The Annual Statement, embracing the Treasury Accounts of the financial year, will be prepared for the examination and report of the Auditor-General not later than two months after the end of each financial year, whereby it may be practicable to place hon. members in possession of his report annually before the termination of the session. Still further advantage would be experienced in receiving the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the Auditor-General's Report during the same session, and immediately after the period to which they both refer. I trust, sir, I may receive from hon. members on both sides of this Chamber their support in endeavouring to carry out these much-needed reforms in our present system of keeping the Public Accounts.

I now invite hon. members to the consideration of the 2nd division of my subject, namely—

THE SUBSIDIARY ACCOUNTS AND TRUST FUNDS.

Table C exhibits the position of the Surplus Revenue Account at the end of the financial year ended 30th June, 1883-4, on which date a balance of £135,794 12s. 11d. stood at credit of the account. This unexpended amount of surplus revenue is comprised of two balances: the first amounting to £1,800 outstanding from the surplus revenue appropriation of 1874; and the second comprising £133,994 12s. 11d., being the unexpended balances of the surplus revenue appropriation of £245,040, in 1882. I may add that the operations under the special appropriation of £310,000 made last session do not come within this account.

Table E presents a statement of the Savings Bank Account for the financial year 1883-4. The total receipts within that period amounted

to £963,795, and the withdrawals and general expenditure to £931,508, showing the credit balance of the account standing on 1st July, 1884, at £417,335.

The actual position of the Savings Bank on 30th June, 1884, was as follows:—

| | |
|--|------------|
| Deposited in the Queensland National Bank—general account | £86,521 |
| On fixed deposit | £250,000 |
| On fixed deposit with Bank of New South Wales | £100,000 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £436,521 |
| And the amount invested in Government securities stood at | £698,899 |
| | <hr/> |
| Representing a total of | £1,135,420 |

An amount contributed by depositors, representing £38 0s. 9d. per head, or £3 18s. 11d. per head of population. It may be interesting to note that deposits to the amount of £36,082 were made by immigrants last year, before leaving Great Britain for Queensland; and it is also satisfactory to observe the increasing accumulations of the industrial classes, which the deposits of the Savings Bank may fairly be accepted to represent; and that such savings are steadily augmenting, having increased during the year ending 31st December, 1883, in the number of depositors to 4,489, and in amounts deposited to the extent of £53,471, on the preceding year, notwithstanding the inducements and opportunities for small investments in real property, which have been so numerous of late.

The transactions of the Trust Funds Account proper for 1883-4 are shown in Table F.

The receipts for the year amounted to £308,491, while the expenditure represented £229,183; the balance at credit on the 30th June, 1884, amounting to £223,833. The operations of this account, and the statement of the respective balances, as appended to the table, call for no special comment, beyond my remarking that the amount at credit of the Suspense Account—£44,586—represents the sum available to be refunded to those applicants whose claims to pre-empt, as I have before explained, have been disallowed by Government.

I now enter upon my 3rd division, namely—

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LOAN FUND FOR THE LATE FINANCIAL YEAR 1883-4,

and refer hon. members to Table D.

On the 1st July, 1883, the balance of this account appeared in the Treasury books as £37,415; for although the sale of £2,500,000, being the first-sold portion of our loans of 1881-2, was known to have been effected in the preceding May, yet, owing to deferred payments for same, account sales did not reach the Treasury till last February. During the year the account has been credited with £305 on account of Victoria Bridge debentures—a sum formerly received from the Corporation of Brisbane, under the Victoria Bridge Act of 1876, to provide for a portion of the outstanding debentures; also with £65,746 for credit transfers and repayments; and finally, the proceeds of the £2,500,000 of debentures before alluded to, which, allowing for depreciation, realised £2,420,347.

The expenditure for the year amounted to £1,665,823. Debentures were paid off maturing on 1st January, 1884, for £707,500; the expenses of sale of our £2,500,000 above mentioned,

£18,301; and stamp duties amounted to £1,878, leaving a balance on 1st July, 1884, at credit of the account, of £127,310.

The stamp duties charged to the Loan Account during the past year form a new item in connection with the inscription of Queensland stock with the Bank of England, which has now been accomplished.

Queensland stock for the sum of £2,500,000 has been created as a first issue to provide for the conversion into inscribed stock of debentures to that extent, which had been previously sold under the authority of the Loan Acts of 1881 and 1882, as the first instalment of such loans.

The arrangements made with the Bank of England for inscribing stock has been, at the bank's desire, extended to the sale of our loans, on the following terms:—For issuing stock, preparing stock and transfer books, and performing all the duties involved in placing the loan on the market (except the cost of advertising and stamping scrip), a charge of 10s. per cent. on the annual amount of stock issued. The above charge does not include the usual commission of 3s. per cent. to bankers, brokers, and agents, but the bank undertakes the settlement of the claims.

The Bank of England's annual charge for conducting inscription and paying half-yearly interest is £600 per nominal million of stock, equal to 1½ per cent. annually on the interest paid; and the amount charged by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for commuted stamp duty is 12s. 6d. per cent. on each loan issue converted into or sold as stock, with a rebate of 2s. 6d. per cent. for spoiled stamps on debentures converted into stock.

In addition to the apparent available balance of loan on the 1st July, 1884, the Government have been advised of the sale of our loans made in last May. These loan sales represented a sum of £2,672,000, comprising a portion of the loans of 1881 and 1882—originally £3,735,000, reduced by £2,500,000, sold in May, 1883—leaving a balance amounting to £1,233,000; and the loan of 1884, amounting to £1,439,000. These loans bear interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, to accrue from the 1st day of July, 1884—the first semi-annual dividend on both being payable at the Bank of England on 1st January, 1885—and were inscribed with that bank as Queensland stock. The balance of the 1881-2 loans, being redeemable on the 1st July, 1915, was announced as consolidated with the existing Queensland Government 4 per cent. stock redeemable at par on the 1st July, 1915; such consolidation, therefore, represents the total loans of 1881-2. The loan of 1883-4 being redeemable on the 1st July, 1924, was announced to be inscribed as a separate stock. The minimum price fixed was £98, and tenderers were informed that a deposit of 5 per cent. must accompany tenders, and that the following modes of payment would be observed:—

- 20 per cent. on the 6th June;
- 25 per cent. on the 19th August; and
- 50 per cent. on the 2nd December.

Subscribers paying in full, on and after the 6th June, being allowed a discount at the rate of 2½ per cent. per annum.

Tenders were opened on 30th May, and disclosed the gratifying fact of there being about 1,000 tenders in number, representing a total sum of £8,925,900, at prices varying from the declared minimum, £98, to £102. The highest allotment was £102, and the lowest £99 8s.; the sale resulting in a gross average of £99 9s. 2½d. per cent.

And it must further be observed that, whereas with sales of our stock since 1879 a promise had been volunteered that no further sales of Queensland loan issues should be made for at least one year from the date of such sale—a promise which, as I have previously pointed out, fettered our action in last January, and continued to bind us till the 9th of May of this current year—no similar promise formed a condition of the last loan sale, neither did the price received suffer thereby; and the Government are now, therefore, free to act, and may immediately deal with such future loans as Parliament shall, during the present session, authorise to be issued.

At the time our loan was placed before the investing public, dissatisfaction was expressed in certain quarters at the declared reserve, as being unnecessarily low; and it was asserted that Government should have boldly decided on par as the reserve, that being the limit fixed by the South Australian Government for its 4 per cent. loan of £1,650,000, announced ten days prior to our loan sale. But the conditions of the respective loans were dissimilar. The net returns of the South Australian loan, for which the average price tendered represented £100 6s., produced net, after allowing for accrued interest and deferred payments, £98 15s. 8d. per cent. The Queensland loan, reserved at £98, sold at an average of £99 9s. 2½d., bore no interest to the investor until the 1st of July ensuing, and after allowing for deferred payments by purchasers showed a net return of £98 10s. 6d. per cent.

It is therefore evident that the mere price affixed to a loan is no true indication of its character as an investment. And also, it may be fairly assumed that, should too high a minimum be announced, the success of the loan may be jeopardised; while, on the other hand, the colony is not really prejudiced by fixing a minimum which subsequent tenders may show to have been unnecessarily low.

It is highly gratifying and only right for Queenslanders to be impressed with the fact that the credit of the colony in the great centre of finance has never commanded more attention or respect, and that, too, in the face of strong representations from a certain section of colonists who for the attainment of a political object have not hesitated to disparage the resources, the elasticity, and irresistible progress of this fine dependency of the British Empire, by asserting that its borrowing powers are well-nigh exhausted. The highly successful results of our last loan issues on the London money market—sales of stock, made solely on their own merits—namely, the credit and reputation of the colony of Queensland—made, too, without any solicited support or intervention other than the able financial administration of the Bank of England, supported by the loyal co-operation of the Government bankers—is an assurance to the colony that our credit, if wisely conserved and directed to the attainment of reproductive works, so far from being exhausted is but yet in its infancy, and must tend not only to the extensive and early development of the immense resources of this rich country, to the permanent foundation of a great insurance annuity fund for the continuous surplus accumulations of our mother-country which may be invested in Queensland, but also to the maintenance of closer and more cordial relations between the United Kingdom and this, her youngest daughter of the Australian group.

The expenditure out of loan during 1883-4 shows an increase over the preceding year of £461,450, or about 38 per cent. This large increase chiefly occurred during the six months ended 31st December, 1883, which showed £388,712 as the

increase on the corresponding period of the preceding year. The principal item of such loan expenditure was for Immigration, on which service £232,653 was expended for the six months ending 31st December, 1883, at which date the Immigration loan vote was overdrawn to the extent of £238,325. Hon. members will remember that a sum of £300,000 was provided out of the 1883-4 loan to replenish this vote, and that a further sum of £150,000 has been also provided out of special surplus appropriation in aid of this (Immigration) service.

The Loan vote for Immigration, notwithstanding the first-mentioned amount of replenishment, exhibited on 30th June last a credit balance of only £59, while the amount then available from the special surplus appropriation was reduced to £77,287.

In addition to the large unforeseen loan expenditure on account of Immigration, £112,937 for other services had been expended up to the 31st December, 1883; principally on account of Railways. This expenditure, now amounting to £186,119—as detailed in Table D, Loan Balances—requires to be covered by a loan vote; and if considered in connection with the present condition of our Immigration funds, is suggestive of the action which Government intend to take—namely, of presenting to the House, as early as practicable, proposals for a new loan.

The position of our loan funds on the 30th June, 1884, stood as follows:—

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Credit cash balance of the account ... | £127,310 |
| Inscribed stock, representing the balance of the debenture loans of 1881 and 1882 ... | 1,233,000 |
| Inscribed stock, 1883-4 loan ... | 1,439,000 |

Representing a total of ... £2,799,310

Against which we have to retire:—

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Debentures on 1st January, 1885 ... | £1,019,000 |
| Loss on sale of debentures ... | 27,662 |
| | 1,046,662 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Leaving a balance of ... | 1,752,648 |
| To which is to be added the amount of unforeseen expenditure to be provided in first Loan Bill ... | 186,119 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Which will show the amount available for Loan Services on the 30th June, 1884 ... | £1,938,767 |
|---|------------|

On the 30th June, 1884, the public balances, comprising as under, namely:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------------------|----------|----|----|
| Consolidated Revenue Fund ... | £366,301 | 11 | 6 |
| Loan Account ... | 127,310 | 14 | 7 |
| Surplus Revenue Fund ... | 135,794 | 12 | 11 |
| Trust Accounts ... | 223,833 | 4 | 10 |
| Government Savings Bank ... | 417,335 | 4 | 2 |

£1,270,575 8 0

were disposed of as follows:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|--|------------|----|----|
| Queensland National Bank, Brisbane ... | £878,168 | 15 | 10 |
| „ London ... | 239,678 | 5 | 5 |
| | 1,117,847 | 1 | 3 |
| Bank of New South Wales, Brisbane ... | 100,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Agent-General ... | 52,728 | 6 | 9 |
| | £1,270,575 | 8 | 0 |

And the proportion of such balances which were placed with the banks on fixed deposit was as under:—

| Bank. | Amount. £ | Term. | Rate of Interest. | Due Date. | |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | |
| Queensland National Bank | a 100,000 | 12 months | 5½% | 10th July, 1884. | c Savings Bank Funds. |
| Ditto | b 100,000 | 12 " | 5½% | 10th July, 1884. | |
| Ditto | c 50,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 10th July, 1884. | |
| Bank of New South Wales | c 100,000 | 12 " | 5½% | 19th August, 1884. | |
| Queensland National Bank | b 100,000 | 12 " | 5½% | 21st August, 1884. | |
| Ditto | b 200,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 24th August, 1884. | |
| Ditto | c 50,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 11th October, 1884. | |
| Ditto | c 50,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 25th October, 1884. | |
| Ditto | c 50,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 25th October, 1884. | |
| Total | £900,000 | 12 " | 6 " | 3rd May, 1885. | |
| | | | | | b Revenue Funds. |
| | | | | | a Loan Funds. |

And since the 30th June, 1884, the deposits fixed with the Queensland National Bank, as above shown, have been reduced by the sum of £100,000 placed to the Government Operative Account.

The above-mentioned public balances are exclusive of the loans sold in last May, amounting to £2,672,000, of which, however, 50 per cent. may not be paid up till next December.

I think, sir, I have now dealt fully with the transactions of the financial year ended 30th June last, and I am of opinion that it will be admitted that such review is satisfactory, and tends to confirm our confidence in the healthy and vigorous progress continuously made by this country, and, with that entire trust in its future growth, I submit the financial proposals of Government in connection with

THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1884-5.

The Estimates for 1884-5 exhibit an expectancy from Ways and Means of £2,748,500, being an increase of £182,142 over the receipts of last year, or at the rate of 7½ per cent., being under the percentage of increase obtained in 1883-4.

Under the head of "Taxation" I estimate to receive £1,093,000, an increase of £57,517. The increase under this head last year amounted to £98,742, or at the rate of 10·8 per cent. on the previous year. I should unhesitatingly have framed a larger estimate at this time for this

branch of the revenue but for the reason that the colony has suffered for two years from a protracted drought, which unfortunately has not yet wholly broken up. It is gratifying to know that rain has fallen quite recently in some of our western districts, which I trust may be the prelude to a more general and ample downpour. Undoubtedly our financial position in 1884-5 will be more directly affected by the seasons than has been shown during the last two years. I have, however, framed an estimate which I confidently anticipate will be realised, and under which, if the drought were wholly to disappear, a most extensive increase would become immediately apparent in our revenue. It is the duty of Government fully to recognise the present position of the colony, and to estimate its ability to meet such increased departmental expenditure as may necessarily be required. The position of the colony has been fully considered by Government at the present time, and we feel that not only is the present estimate of taxation certain to be received within the year for which it is estimated, but that it is no severe strain for the colony to bear, and that it can be yielded without the imposition of any additional taxation. Indeed Government is of opinion that, instead of increasing taxation at the present time, one at least of our industries may be relieved and stimulated by a reduction of taxation—action which it is not anticipated will decrease revenue, inasmuch as the unwise augmentation of this duty did not assist it as was anticipated, but has directed consumption to the foreign as against the colonial manufacture. I refer to the excise duty on colonial spirits.

The excise duty on spirits manufactured within the colony, which previously stood at 6s. 8d. per proof gallon, was assimilated in 1880 with the import duty on all foreign spirits except brandy—namely, 10s. per gallon of proof strength. The effect of this legislation is best illustrated by exhibiting the annual revenue received by the Treasury under the head of "Excise," say for three years before and subsequent to this alteration; also the quantity of rum distilled within the colony during the same period as furnished by the Inspector of Distilleries:—

| Rum Distilled in | Gallons. | Excise Duty Paid. |
|------------------|----------|-------------------|
| | | £ |
| 1877-78 | 196,001 | 33,222 |
| 1878-79 | 216,395 | 36,453 |
| 1879-80 | 238,710 | 36,976 |
| 1880-81 | 201,111 | 42,782 |
| 1881-82 | 157,325 | 50,248 |
| 1882-83 | 149,428 | 48,545 |
| 1883-84 | 144,073 | 33,475 |

The Act abolishing the differential duty in favour of Queensland rum was assented to on 19th November, 1880, and took effect from 13th August of that year.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the excise duty, notwithstanding an increase of 50 per cent. in 1880 on the previous rate imposed, has during the past year only produced to the Treasury the same revenue as was yielded in 1877-8, when the duty stood at 6s. 8d. per proof gallon; while the production of distillation, which in 1877-8 amounted to 196,000 gallons, and previous to the increase of excise attained to 238,710 gallons for the year 1879-80, has since continuously dwindled, until during the past year only 144,000 gallons were produced. On the other hand, the consumption of foreign rum has, since 1881, undergone a very large increase, the annual amounts

paid for duty thereon since the assimilation of Excise being as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|--------|----|----|
| 1879-80 | ... | ... | £5,653 | 18 | 8 |
| 1880-81 | ... | ... | 6,726 | 3 | 5 |
| 1881-82 | ... | ... | 7,097 | 12 | 11 |
| 1882-83 | ... | ... | 13,936 | 5 | 9 |
| 1883-84 | ... | ... | 28,862 | 10 | 9 |

Under these circumstances the continued decline in our Excise returns demanded the attention of Government during the recess. It is evident that, since the equalisation of the excise duty with the import duty on foreign rum, the latter has gradually been displacing the colonial production. The result has been that large stocks of colonial spirits are now held at the distilleries throughout the colony, which are unsaleable at a remunerative figure, consequent on the large quantity of imported spirit in the market, for which, as it can be sold at the same price, consumers show a preference. Large quantities of molasses are also in the hands of sugar-growers for which there is no sale, distillers being fully supplied. Although it may not be asserted that the present large surplus stocks of molasses are wholly due to the falling-off in distillation, yet it may be assumed that an increased demand for colonial spirit would induce those distillers whose works are at present idle to re-open, and others to erect plants for the purpose of turning their molasses to account, whereby the revenue would be benefited and the industry of distillation be encouraged. It must not be forgotten that this industry was established mainly by the inducement of the differential duty which previously existed, and that large amounts of capital have been invested in buildings and plant which are now lying unproductive. And as the closing of these factories does not discourage the consumption of spirit in itself, or tend to promote greater sobriety in the community, but transfers the profits of manufacture from the colonial to the foreign producer, Government have decided to introduce a Bill forthwith, whereby it is proposed to reduce the duty on colonial spirits to 8s. per gallon. And it is confidently anticipated that this action will not only arrest the further reduction of duty under this head of revenue, which decreased last year by £15,060, but should thereafter provide a large addition to our Excise Returns.

During the recess the question of encouraging the consumption of wine produced in the colonies has been brought before Government. I believe, sir, that if the whole of the wine-producing colonies of Australia concurred in a uniform tariff under which such wines should be reciprocally admitted, public consumption would be encouraged in favour of a local beverage, habits of greater sobriety would pervade the communities, and the result would be, I am assured, beneficial to the vignerons of Queensland as well as of the other colonies. Communications have therefore been addressed to the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia on this subject, but up to the present time no general intimation of their concurrence has been received.

From the Customs, which produced last year £866,475, I hope to receive during the present financial year £920,000, or an increase of £53,525. As we obtained in 1882-3 an increase of £114,700, or nearly 18 per cent. on the preceding year, while during 1883-4 an increase of £112,772 was produced, or nearly 15 per cent. over the previous year, I think hon. members will give me credit for extreme moderation in assuming an increase in Customs for the present year at the rate of under 6 per cent.

I am gratified to inform hon. members that the duties collected for the month of July and August in this year largely exceed any previous month's receipts in the history of the Custom

House. July produced £83,085, and August £81,105, which, if maintained throughout the year, would result in a Customs revenue of nearly one million; an amount which the Collector of Customs does not consider unlikely to be reached, provided the season becomes propitious, with favourable rains to gladden and encourage settlement and re-occupation of our great interior country.

The estimate for Excise and Export Duties is framed at £35,000, about the same amount as has been received during the past year. This estimate will not be fulfilled unless the action of the Government in reducing the rate of excise duties to a less amount than that charged on foreign spirits be supported by the House. Under the judicious treatment proposed by the Government, I have every reason to expect a surplus on my estimate during the present year, with a certainty of considerably larger returns thereafter, when the distilleries have fairly resumed manufacturing operations. The estimate for export duty on cedar is assumed at £1,000, being the amount received last year. But this item would increase considerably if heavy rains visited the districts where large quantities of cedar are felled and await transportation. Stamp Duty is estimated at £90,000, or an increase of £1,834 on last year; and Licenses are assumed to produce £48,000 for 1884-5, an increase of £1,599 on 1883-4—an amount considerably under the increase yielded by that year over its predecessor.

I think, sir, after my explanation, that honourable members will concur with me in believing that the total estimate of taxation will be largely exceeded by actual results, and if so, may cover possible divergences which may present themselves under other heads.

I now proceed to the consideration of the Land Revenue for 1884-5, which undoubtedly at the present time, and pending ratification by Parliament of the land policy of Government now under consideration, presents more difficulties in arriving at a correct estimate of immediate results than surround any other branch of revenue.

As the new Land Bill, however, if accepted by Parliament, will not come into operation till the commencement of 1885, and even then will not affect pastoral lessees within its schedule for six months thereafter, unless they elect to come immediately under its provisions, no appreciable effect in our revenue will be felt during the present financial year 1884-5, except through the absence of auction sales of country lands, selections thereafter, pre-emptives, and new transactions arising under homestead and conditional selections, all of which in their present form are assumed to be discontinued under the Bill, as from 1st January next.

It must be borne in mind that the auction sales, which may be discontinued from and after the 1st January next, are sales of country lands, the proceeds of which in 1883-4 amounted to £17,981, while the proceeds of town and suburban lands with selections thereafter during the same period represented £66,862. I have framed my estimate for 1884-5 at £75,000, from these sources—a very moderate amount when we reflect on the large and numerous land transactions which are at the present time being carried out by the general public in the acquisition of town and suburban freeholds.

The sum of £14,000, which appears on the estimate of Ways and Means under the heading of "Pre-emptives," has excited comment, and has led to considerable misapprehension.

This amount represents a sum which is actually due to the Treasury for pre-emptives which were approved by the late Administration, and, as I

have previously stated, have not been disallowed by the present Ministry. The deposits have been paid to the Treasury, and settlement only awaits completion of survey. The appearance, therefore, of this amount on the Estimates for 1884-5 in no way indicates, as has been vainly imagined, any recalcitrancy on the part of Government in dealing with the pre-emptive question.

Beyond the amount due to the Treasury for this service, as above stated, no further estimate is made of receipts under this head.

Under the head of "Rents of Homesteads and Conditional Selections," an estimate of £220,000 for the present financial year is submitted. This shows an anticipated reduction of £26,599 as compared with 1883-4, and of £21,998 as compared with 1882-3—a decrease based on the assumed termination of applications for settlement under this form, after the passing of the new Land Bill, and also founded on the position of the rents still payable by these selectors. The total amount of rents, or rather instalments of purchase money, to be paid by homestead and conditional selectors, amounts to £1,259,770, distributed over next ten years, and becoming due to the Treasury at the following periods:—

| Year. | Rents of Homesteads and Conditional Purchases as due. |
|---------|---|
| 1884-85 | £183,480 |
| 1885-86 | 183,607 |
| 1886-87 | 168,624 |
| 1887-88 | 153,169 |
| 1888-89 | 157,340 |
| 1889-90 | 164,992 |
| 1890-91 | 119,635 |
| 1891-92 | 79,717 |
| 1892-93 | 39,206 |
| 1893-94 | 10,000 |
| | £1,259,770 |

Hon. members will observe that the Rent List for 1884-5 exhibits £183,480 as the amount falling due this year. To this sum has to be added the amount of new transactions which will take place certainly up to the 1st January, 1885, and which we may fairly assume to equal one-half of the similar transactions which occurred in 1883-4. This would produce about £18,000; and we have then further to consider the rents which may be paid up in advance, and which amounted last year to £40,839. As I have already pointed out, these receipts are uncertain, being largely produced by the pecuniary position of the selector. I have accepted one-half of last year's receipts under this head—namely, £20,000—bearing in mind that under the operation of the new Land Bill, if passed, the latest conditional selectors may, instead of paying up their instalments of purchase money, accept the easier conditions of a leased tenure, and surrender therefor their larger annual payments, now being made, for the purchase of their selections. The figures I have given above produce a total of £221,480; therefore, in placing before the Committee my estimate for the year of £220,000, I have guarded the Treasury against any present disturbance which may occur through early change in our land tenure. And I would further point out that, although it is proposed that homestead selection in its present form shall cease after the 1st January, hon. members are aware that such selection is not intended wholly to disappear. During the year 1883-4 homestead selection produced to the Treasury £20,291; therefore its resumption, in

an amended form, will still further relieve the Treasury from any apprehension of immediate revenue disturbance.

A new item appears on the estimate of Ways and Means under the head of "Leaseholds," amounting to £10,000. This is an initiatory estimate based on the inception of the grazing-farm system under the new Land Bill. Although the period extending from 1st January to 30th June may not be sufficiently long to allow the beneficial operation of the Bill in this direction to be availed of to any great extent, still, when we remember that 21,000,000 acres are now open for agricultural and grazing selection, we are justified in assuming that while homestead settlement under new conditions will be as fully made as heretofore, occupation of portions of our territory under grazing leaseholds will contribute to the revenue fully £10,000 before the end of the current financial year. For, assuming that only 100 farms are applied for, averaging 25 square miles, or 16,000 acres, each, the minimum rental under the Bill would fulfil this estimate of £10,000.

Survey and Transfer Licenses are set down to produce £22,000, while timber licenses and other receipts are estimated to contribute £9,000; these two services being assumed to provide an increase of £1,695 on last year's receipts. From Pastoral Occupation I hope to receive, before the 30th June, 1885, for annual rents, £260,000, an increase of £13,897 on last year's receipts. When we observe that the financial year 1883-4 showed an increase under this head of £28,767; and when I add that the rent of the renewed leases under the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869, which fell due on the 30th June, 1884, averaged about 21s. per square mile, while the average rent paid at auction for such leases in the unsettled districts as were sold in 1883-4 produced £1 8s. 7d., I think hon. members will admit that I fully justify my estimate.

Survey and Transfer Fees are estimated to yield £7,000 for 1884-5, being a reduction of £1,321 on last year's receipts, amounting to 16 per cent. Miners' rights and business licenses are estimated at £4,000, being slightly in excess of last year's receipts; while other receipts are placed at £9,000, slightly under last year's transactions, the two services being assumed to produce that amount jointly furnished in 1883-4. The total territorial estimate is expected to provide £635,000 during 1884-5, being £1,922 in excess of last year's receipts, excluding the amounts for pre-emptives which had been disallowed.

I do not think, sir, that it is incumbent on me here to pursue the possible operations of the new Land Bill in future years. I deal now with the financial year 1884-5, and I trust I have satisfactorily demonstrated that during that year the revenue will be undisturbed, while if the Bill be passed the foundations will have been laid of a fiscal policy which will provide the Treasury with territorial revenue in the future to an extent which past records will fail to parallel.

The receipts from Public Works and Services are estimated to produce £893,500, or an advance on last year's receipts of £133,125. The increase shown in 1883-4 on the preceding year of £129,640, or the rate of 20·5 per cent., justifies me in assuming that an increase on these services will be presented during the present year of 17½ per cent.

The Southern and Western Railway is estimated to produce £380,000, or an increase of £53,456, or at the rate of 17 per cent. on last year's receipts—an amount which I expect will be fully produced, inasmuch as the department anticipates having over 67 miles of new roadway open for traffic during this financial

year. The Central Railway is expected to yield £195,000, or £42,879 over the preceding year—an increase at the rate of 28 per cent. Although this estimate may appear high, it must be remembered that an additional length of road to the extent of 56 miles has been opened during the year, and that an early opening of further sections comprising 53 miles is anticipated before the 30th June, 1885.

The Northern Railway is estimated to contribute for the financial year 1884-5 £70,000, being an increase on the preceding year of £13,472, or at the rate of 23 per cent. The year 1883-4 showed an increase of £13,070, or at the rate of 30 per cent.; and when I intimate that an opening of the road 24 miles further west will be accomplished this year, I think there need exist no apprehension of my estimate being unfulfilled. It is anticipated that, including the Ravenswood branch, over 48 miles of additional roadway will be opened for traffic on the Northern line during the present financial year.

The Maryborough and Gympie Railway is estimated to produce during this year £46,000, being an increase of £8,162 on last year's receipts, or 21 per cent.; the year 1883-4 having established an increase of 39·5 per cent.

The Bundaberg and Mount Perry Railway I assume to contribute £14,000, or an increase of £5,390 on the preceding year's revenue, which represented an increase of 50·3 per cent. on its predecessor.

From the whole of the railways I anticipate a revenue for 1884-5 of £705,000—an increase of £122,359, or at the rate of 21 per cent. on the financial year 1883-4, which in its turn advanced 22·4 per cent. on the previous year.

The Post Office expects to furnish the Treasury during 1884-5 with £85,000—an increase of £4,185, or less than one-half the increase obtained in 1883-4; while the Telegraph Department is estimated to produce £80,000—an increase of £4,819 on the previous year.

Harbour Dues are expected to yield £22,000 during the present year, anticipating a small increase of £1,511, which, if produced from no other source, will likely be furnished by the increasing demand for the services of the Graving Dock.

Escort Fees, set down to produce £1,500, a small increase on last year, will be affected by the progress of the mining industry, hitherto suffering from the effects of the drought.

Miscellaneous Services are expected to yield £127,000, being a decrease of £10,422 on the receipts from these services during 1883-4.

I have had to bear in mind the decrease in our fixed deposits and bank balances, and also the reduction in the rate of interest for fixed deposits recently made by the banking institutions.

I invite the attention of hon. members to the probable expenditure for the year 1884-5, amounting to £1,971,524, an increase of £232,852 over the amount of Parliamentary appropriation for the preceding year; or, if the interest on the public debt be included, the estimated expenditure amounts to £2,703,659, showing an increase on the Parliamentary appropriation for 1883-4, including interest, of £287,937. Many circumstances have combined to create this large increase in expenditure at the present time; but before entering upon an explanation of these in detail I would request hon. members to turn to the Estimates prepared for this year, from which they will observe that they come before them in a shape which I hope will enable them to apprehend more clearly than in the past the requirements of Government in the various depart-

ments, the extent of the Civil Service, and the remuneration and emoluments attached to official positions.

The Government, in preparing the Estimates, have been desirous of carrying out two principles—

First, that the salary voted by Parliament shall be the full remuneration attached to the office, and that all fees or perquisites paid by the public to such officers shall be considered to be public revenue.

Second, that, so far as is practicable, one salary shall cover the whole duties performed by the recipient in his service to the State. I am sorry to say that this last principle is one which may not be carried out immediately without almost revolutionising the Civil Service and inflicting very serious loss and injury on old and meritorious officers. It can only be introduced gradually as new appointments are made or old offices become vacant, but it is a reform which it is highly desirable should be introduced as opportunities are afforded.

With regard to the first-mentioned reform, hon. members will find that the Estimates have been framed to give effect thereto as far as may be done at present without occasioning individual hardships; and to assist further the elucidation of this matter Schedules accompany the Estimates showing the total remuneration or emolument which has been enjoyed by each officer during the year ended 30th June, 1883-4.

I do not affirm that these Schedules may in all respects be correct. Their compilation has occupied much of the time available during the late short recess, and has entailed considerable labour and attention. They are tentative in character, and in presenting their first appearance may possibly be chargeable with sins of omission.

To give effect to their first expressed views, Government have obtained this session the sanction of Parliament to an Act providing for payment by Civil officers into the Consolidated Revenue of all fees hitherto received by them as private emoluments; and it is the desire of Government to give to such officers a salary fairly approximate to the total remuneration which from this source they have hitherto enjoyed.

The first endeavour to frame the Estimates of Expenditure on these principles must necessarily be attended with an apparent increase of expenditure. The Schedules show expenditure for the year 1884-5 to the amount of £206,060, as against £180,076 for 1883-4—an increase of £23,984, of which sum £25,000 is demanded for additional endowment to local bodies, and £1,500 for the proportion of subsidy to be paid by Queensland under the New Guinea and Pacific Jurisdiction Contribution Act.

The Executive and Legislative vote for 1884-5 amounts to £18,618, showing a small increase of £455 to provide for additional services during the year.

The Colonial Secretary's Department requires £430,928 for 1884-5, as against £411,448 in 1883-4—an increase of £19,480, or at the rate of 4·7 per cent., of which £340 is for increase to staff, salaries, and office incidentals. The Registrar-General's Department, for which in 1883-4 £11,420 was voted, having been divided into two establishments—namely, Registrar-General, and Registrar of Titles—sums jointly amounting to £12,894 will be required for 1884-5.

The Police Department, for which £122,582 was voted in 1883-4, requires £133,837 for the present year, an increase of £11,255, arising from a considerable addition to the force, the consequent

increase of expenditure for forage, watchhouses, rent, fencing paddocks, and addition to the clerical staff. The Petty Sessions vote, including Police Magistrates, for which in 1883-4 appropriation to the extent of £28,810 was made, requires £33,888 for the service of 1884-5, an increase of £5,078. It will be observed that in the Estimates now presented the salaries have been increased to include the various sums formerly granted in lieu of quarters.

The Government Printer requires £33,042 or 1884-5, an advance of £6,032 on the preceding year, which sum has been produced by placing on the Estimates £5,670 for providing the Printing Office and Parliamentary Buildings with the electric light, which hon. members may expect to see in operation next session.

The Agent-General's Office requires £3,300 for 1884-5, as against £3,050 for last year—an increase of £250, of which sum an amount of £200 is rendered necessary to provide fees for a Board of Advice in London, whose counsel and assistance to the Agent-General in conducting the business of this country in England will result in benefits far outbalancing the moderate honorarium now appearing for the first time on these Estimates.

While referring to the London Office, I may inform hon. members that reforms in two matters of administration in the Agent-General's Office have been introduced by the Government. Formerly the Agent-General withdrew from the Government bankers in London sums amounting to £5,000, to provide, when required, for Immigration Expenditure, and £500 for Miscellaneous Services, and placed these amounts as withdrawn to an account opened with Messrs. Glyn and Company, the well-known private bankers in London, but who had no connection with the colony, and no direct knowledge of or correspondence with the Queensland Government, and who did not even render a Statement of Account to the Treasury.

At the time this system was carried out the Government bankers for the time being did not allow operative accounts to be opened with their London branches. I am glad to intimate that arrangements have now been made by which Government is enabled to keep the whole of the London account directly with their own bankers—the Queensland National Bank—and, consequently, further transactions with Messrs. Glyn and Company for services of the Agent-General have been discontinued.

The second matter refers to marine insurances. A large amount of correspondence in connection with this subject has been laid before hon. members this session, showing, *inter alia*, the largely increasing expenditure for marine insurance, and which, in view of fresh loans and the consequent increase in shipments, is certain to be augmented. Hon. members will also observe that the insurance companies in London were combining to take advantage of the necessities of Government in this direction, and the Treasury was informed by the local agents of one of the leading insurance companies that, in consequence of "the combination of insurance companies, rates for Government business were being quoted which they did not care to repeat."

Under this treatment, and nerved by the experience of past years, Government decided to accept their own marine risks, as is now very generally done by large trading companies and firms, limiting their action in the initiation of this step to ordinary risks on general cargo ships, and meantime protecting the country under special policies against loss of full-rail cargoes and hulls of vessels and dredge plant built in England to the order of Government.

The Immigration Department shows an increase of £510, requiring £7,590 for 1884-5 as against £7,080 for 1883-4. I do not think any hon. member in this Committee would desire to see this vote reduced when we remember the vast benefits immigration confers on the colony, and which, under the Bill now before Parliament, we trust to see greatly extended, so that the introduction of continuous large accessions to an industrious and revenue-producing population may be permanently maintained.

The new department under the head of "Insanity" requires the sum of £1,175 for executive and clerical staff; the expenses of the asylums being only £1,025 above the appropriation for 1883-4, while reception-houses require £425 advance on the same year's votes. The proposed appropriation for Colonial Stores amounts to £26,625 for 1884-5, being an increase of £2,036 on 1883-4, nearly the whole of which sum is comprised in increased stores required by the department.

Gaols, Penal Establishments, and Reformatories show a total of estimated appropriation required for 1884-5 to the extent of £21,835, or £2,546 beyond the vote for last year; while the Benevolent Asylum, Dunwich, claims £6,580, or £1,550 in addition to the appropriation for 1883-4.

The Defence Force vote represents £28,509 required for 1884-5, as against £23,421 voted for 1883-4, or an increase of £5,088, of which sum £4,603 represents six months' provision for the Permanent Force and School of Instruction. This estimate is presented in an entirely different form from the shape in which it was framed for 1883-4; but beyond the amount required for the special vote for Permanent Force and Instruction, the size of the vote now asked is not materially affected. Hon. members will, I am sure, agree with me in hoping that this large amount of annual expenditure, which Parliament continuously and liberally sanctions, if now remodelled as proposed, may be attended with more satisfactory results to the force and to the country in the future than have been effected so far as our observation extends of results in the past.

Charitable Allowances are reduced during 1884-5 to £47,800, a decrease of £17,800 on last year; and a small reduction of £400 is observable in the vote for medical officers and board. In view of present legislation concerning the public health, the Central Board of Health has increased appropriation made for fees to non-official members and contingencies during 1884-5.

The vote for Miscellaneous Services, notwithstanding new appropriation required in the shape of two large sums—namely, £5,000 additional vote for the new steamer "Lucinda," and £7,000 additional required to complete the two defence gunboats—shows a decrease in the total service for 1884-5 compared with the votes sanctioned for 1883-4 of £1,070.

The Administration of Justice requires for 1884-5 the sum of £28,375, being an increase of £1,650 on the preceding year, of which amount the vote Law Officers of the Crown require £250, the Supreme Court £360, the Sheriff £300, and District Courts £690. Hon. members will observe that there is a change contemplated in the administration of intestacy. The present Curator is also Chief Inspector of Distilleries. It is intended to combine the duties of Curator of Intestate Estates with those of Curator of Insanity, and accordingly six months' provision for these salaries appears on the Estimates for 1884-5. The Chief Inspectorship of Distilleries will, therefore, at the end of December, 1884, be separated from the Curatorship of Intestate Estates.

The Department of Public Instruction, for which £142,539 was voted in 1883-4, requires for 1884-5 the sum of £163,027, showing an

increase of £20,488, or at the rate of 14 per cent. £210 additional is required for salaries and contingencies in the clerical staff, £1,100 for inspection of State schools, £12,000 for salaries and contingencies of State schools, while buildings require an addition to last year's vote of £7,470. The allowance to teachers in provisional schools has increased from £9,400 in 1883-4 to £11,650 in 1884-5. The appropriation for this department has necessarily been extended for the financial year 1884-5 to cover a general increase of salaries to teachers, who for eight years previously had received no pecuniary promotion. The salaries, even as proposed to be paid, are considerably under the amounts provided for similar services in the State schools of New South Wales and Victoria, and were introduced here to prevent the loss to the department of some of its best teachers, to whom inducements were held out elsewhere. I give some idea of the increased scale of remuneration when I mention that the lowest grade of teachers receive an increase of £12 per annum.

Orphanages show a decrease in the estimated expenditure for 1884-5 of £3,492 compared with last year's Estimates, caused by a vote of £5,000 for the new buildings, Townsville, appearing in the preceding year's Estimates. Hon. members will also observe that the Museum appears for the first time in the Education Estimates, having been transferred from the Department of Public Works, to which it has hitherto been attached. The appropriation required for the Museum during 1884-5 is estimated at £2,598, an increase of £650 on the preceding year, to provide additional assistance, specimens, etc., etc.

The Treasury Estimates at the first glance will impress hon. members with the opinion that this department is the only one in the Public Service where expenditure has been curtailed in the appropriation asked for 1884-5, and that it furnishes a commendable example of economic retrenchment. While claiming for the department full credit for the economy of its estimates, I must admit that the larger reduction in the amount asked to cover the services of the year 1884-5 is only apparent, not actual. I have previously referred to the proposed alteration in the system of paying refundments—the appropriation for which amounted in 1883-4 to £20,000—and this sum has been removed from the Estimates for 1884-5, less £2,000 to cover special Treasury refundments. The estimated expenditure for 1884-5 amounts to £124,673, while the amount voted in 1883-4 represented £130,958. The decrease apparently is £6,285; but, allowing for the withdrawal of services for refundments, the increase in the Treasury Department for this year amounts to £16,715. Increases in the departmental staff of the Treasury, Stamp Office, and Government Lithographer amount to £230; while £3,500 in excess of the vote for 1883-4 is required to provide for increased commission and exchange. A sum of £2,500, to provide a moiety of the cost for six months of proceeding with the completion of the Admiralty survey of our eastern coast, further increases the present estimate. The Customs require £36,525 for the service of 1884-5, thereby showing a small increase, allowing for the discontinuance of the refundment vote of £2,000 on last year's Estimates, of £1,721. When we remember that the Customs collections have during the past two months nearly attained the rate of £1,000,000 per annum, I think it will be conceded that this service is most ably and economically conducted.

Distillation requires £4,270 for the year 1884-5, being a small increase of £270 over the preceding year. This has chiefly been caused through the intention of Government to confine the duties of Chief Inspector of Distilleries to

the supervision of distillation and excise; as they are of opinion that with the stimulus intended to be given to this industry through the reduction of excise duties, the attention of this officer will be hereafter more constantly required for the protection of such revenue than in the past.

Harbours and Pilots seek an appropriation of £33,175 for 1884-5, as against £27,275 for 1883-4, or an increase of £5,900; while Lighthouses and Lightships require £16,586 for 1884-5, or an increase of £1,429 on the preceding year.

The causes of these increases may be briefly enumerated, namely:—Additional provision for buoys and beacons, £1,000; additional cost of Double Island Point Lighthouse, £1,600, and maintenance of service, £379; additional cost of lighthouse, Pine Islets, £500, and maintenance of service for the year, £336; lights, North Head, Mary River, £1,200; pilot vessel for Cairns, £250, and additional expenses of lighthouse and lightships for the year. The estimated expenditure during 1884-5 for Harbours and Rivers, amounting to £5,355, shows an advance of £275; for increases to the professional staff. This important and growing department must, however, be viewed in connection with salaries paid from Loan Estimates (folio 88), from which it will be observed that the total expenses of the department amount to £10,339, or an increase of £1,393 on the preceding year 1883-4. The equipment of the new dredge "Platypus," the supervision of the new dredge building in Maryborough, and necessary inspection of ironwork where dredge plant is being constructed, as well as additional professional assistance, account for the increases required on these Estimates for 1884-5.

The Department of Public Lands requires £104,731 for the public service of the year 1884-5, which represents an increase on the preceding year of £5,230, or at the rate of 5½ per cent.

Salaries of land, embracing salaries to land agents and commissioners, represent £885 of this increase, while bailiffs and Crown rangers require an addition of £325.

A reduction in the estimate for 1884-5 of the expenditure on reserves, of £3,150, is noticeable. The Botanic Gardens require £682 beyond the vote for 1883-4, but it will be observed that special expenditure under the head of extra labour, to the extent of £1,000, is being proceeded with this year, to bring the Gardens into a condition worthy of the colony. The survey of land is estimated to require £50,708 in 1884-5, being an excess over last year's expenditure of £7,998; of this sum £7,000 is provided to be available if required to meet office expenditure in connection with licensed surveyors.

Pastoral Occupation estimates show a decrease in the cost of the clerical staff and contingencies during 1884-5, to the extent of £440; and the miscellaneous expenses of the department show a further anticipated decrease on the expenditure of 1884-5, representing an amount of £1,072.

The Department of Public Works and Mines requires an appropriation for the service of the year 1884-5 of £142,870, as against £109,865 for the preceding year, or an increase of £33,005.

This large increase is demanded in view of the extensive and urgent public services for which provision is made in these Estimates by my hon. colleague the Minister for Works.

The Public Works staff requires provision to the extent of £11,432 for the present year, being an increase of £2,600 on the preceding period. This amount is justified by the absolutely necessary increase to the professional and clerical staff

of the department; a new office—that of Engineer of Bridges—having been established to carry out construction of the much-needed bridges authorised in the special appropriation of last session, and other similar structures which may from time to time be sanctioned by Parliament.

The vote for Buildings comprises a list of works amounting to £81,150, exceeding the appropriation under similar service last year, 1883-4, to the extent of £13,040.

Hon. members, in looking over these services, will observe that out of this sum of £81,150 for Buildings several services are included which heretofore have been provided for out of loan. The same observation extends to the Miscellaneous Services of the Colonial Secretary's Department, wherein, as I have before observed, a sum of £12,000 is needed for additional expenditure on steamers and gunboats—services ordinarily provided from the Loan Fund. Government desire to make the Consolidated Revenue furnish, as far as is practicable, the cost of works of a temporary character which do not, in themselves, become contributors to the General Revenue, and this principle accounts for the Public Works assuming such enlarged proportions on the Estimates for 1884-5.

Roads and Bridges show, in addition to the usual annual vote of £10,000 for "Excepted roads under the Divisional Boards Act Amendment Act," a further special provision of £15,000 for expenditure on bridges and main roads during the year 1884-5.

Goldfields show an estimated expenditure of £25,288 for the year 1884-5, as against £20,423 for 1883-4, or an increase of £4,865.

With a view to stimulate and encourage the search for additional auriferous areas throughout the colony, and fully recognising the importance of our gold-mining industry, which I am glad to say is reported to be now highly prosperous, Government have extended the annual vote for prospecting, which has hitherto appeared as £2,000, to £5,000 for 1884-5; also with a view to enable miners to extend their knowledge of the conditions under which mining may be more successfully conducted, the sum of £2,000 has been placed on the Estimates for 1884-5, to furnish grants in aid to schools of mines; and I hope that the increased provision now made for both these services will be fully and immediately availed of by our mining population.

The important department of Railways next claims our attention. This service requires an appropriation of £449,025 for 1884-5, as compared with the appropriation for 1883-4, amounting to £350,104; showing an increase of £98,921 on the preceding year's expenditure at the rate of 28 per cent. The general establishment of the Railway Department requires £11,260 for management, clerical expenses, and contingencies, being an increase of £2,230 on the preceding year. This increase is necessitated through the salary of the Acting Commissioner for Railways not having appeared on last year's Estimates; and also to provide for additional clerical salaries and contingencies.

The Chief Engineer's Department, Southern Division, shows a decrease of £775—the salary (£800) of a Deputy Chief Engineer being now discontinued.

The Southern and Western Railways and branches require provision during 1884-5 to the extent of £222,490, as against £181,122 voted in 1883-4; an increase of £41,368, or at the rate of 22 per cent.

The Wide Bay and Burnett District Railways require appropriation to the extent of £36,717 on

the Estimates for 1884-5, showing an increase compared with the votes of 1883-4 for £29,158, of £7,559, or at the rate of 25 per cent.

The Bundaberg and Mount Perry Railway asks for 1884-5 an appropriation of £13,940, which, compared with last year's appropriation, amounting to £10,230, shows an increase of £3,710, or at the rate of 36 per cent.

The Central Railway demands £117,377 for 1884-5, which exhibits an increase of estimated expenditure over the appropriation for 1883-4, amounting to £86,081, of £31,296, or at the rate of 36 per cent.

The Northern Railway requires appropriation by Parliament, for the services of 1884-5, to the amount of £45,316. In 1883-4, £31,783 for this service was voted; the estimated increase of expenditure for the present financial year is, therefore, £13,533, or at the rate of 42 per cent.

The summary of annual expenditure on our railways, as exhibited in our Revenue Estimates, is not, however, complete. I have given hon. members the particulars of our expenditure required to be provided in the Revenue Estimates for 1884-5, which, in itself, represents the very considerable sum of £449,025; but, in addition to this amount, expenditure out of Loan Funds for the professional and clerical salaries of officers employed on lines in course of construction has to be considered as shown in the salaries paid from Loan Funds, on page 89 of the Estimates. In addition to our disbursements from revenue for the year 1884-5, we find that appropriation will be required out of Loan, for lines under construction in the—

| | |
|---|--------|
| Southern Division | £7,590 |
| Logan Branch | 1,150 |
| Brisbane River Valley Branch ... | 1,250 |
| Highfields to Crow's Nest ... | 525 |
| Warwick to Killarney | 1,210 |
| Extension beyond Roma | 1,520 |
| Stanthorpe to the Border | 625 |
| Kilkivan and Burrum to Bundaberg | 2,450 |
| Bundaberg Railway | 256 |
| Extension Surveys | 9,475 |
| Central and Northern | 7,212 |
| Central and Clermont | 2,245 |
| Springure Railway | 578 |
| Mackay Railway | 1,355 |
| Northern Railway | 2,070 |
| Ravenswood Railway | 1,100 |
| Cooktown Railway | 1,682 |
| Central and Northern Railway Staff | 7,190 |

Representing a total of salaries out of

Loan Account for the year 1884-5 £49,483

The Postmaster-General's Department requires £297,672 for the post and telegraph services of the year 1884-5, as against the appropriation of £264,213 for 1883-4—an increase of £33,459, or at the rate of 12 per cent. The new arrangement for the conveyance of European mails by first opportunity, whether by the P. and O., Orient, or San Francisco lines, and at uniform rates—an immense boon to the mercantile and general community—has increased the Post Office estimate to the extent of £6,500, while additional post and telegraph services have necessitated the increase of appropriation for the present year.

The Auditor-General's Department asks for £5,545 for the year 1884-5, being an increase of £485 on 1883-4, an additional travelling inspector having been appointed, and other departmental readjustments having been made to enable a more extensive audit of some of the Government Departments to be carried into effect.

In concluding my remarks on the departmental expenditure of the Government, I may

again refer to the salaries paid from Loan. The expenses of the London Office show an increase of £475 over last year's expenditure. Hon. members will note that six months' provision is made for two emigration agents for the Continent, and also nine months' provision for a lecturer in the United Kingdom. These appropriations are necessary to give full effect to the Immigration Bill now before Parliament.

The Loan Expenditure for Waterworks and Water Supply, estimated to amount during 1884-5 to £16,107, as against £5,023 in the preceding year, indicates that the department is resolved, during this year, to enter upon a much larger scale of works for the conservation and discovery of water, particularly in the northern and western districts of the colony, so that the severity of seasons, such as the settlers in these districts have lately had to undergo, may never again be experienced.

The estimated expenditure out of Consolidated Revenue for the financial year 1884-5 is assumed to amount to £2,703,659, while the revenue for the same period is estimated at £2,748,500, showing a surplus of £44,841—a surplus, though not in itself excessive, yet if taken in conjunction with the net surplus shown at the balance of Consolidated Revenue on the 30th June, 1884, of £134,373 13s. 9d., and also bearing in mind that our financial position has improved, as per Table H, to the extent of £80,636 on the preceding year, is, I consider, sufficient at the present time to cover any immediate unforeseen expenditure which may of necessity present itself. And the desire of Government is to discourage, as far as practicable, all further expenditure beyond the appropriation for the services of the year 1884-5, as now placed before Parliament.

And now, Mr. Fraser, having concluded my retrospect of the Public Accounts for the year 1883-4, having further carefully submitted my estimate of Ways and Means for the financial year 1884-5, together with the probable expenditure required during that period; having, sir, in brief, brought my hearers down to the present hour, it may be expected that I should address myself to new and necessary loan proposals. Government are thoroughly impressed with the extreme importance of this matter, and recognise fully the great and permanent benefits which must not only accrue to the colony immediately, from a large extension of loan obligations, provided the funds so obtained are employed chiefly in the construction of reproductive works, but are also aware of the great inheritance we are building up, through the justifiable extension of our credit, for the benefit of future generations. We have no hesitation in leaving such an inheritance, even though accompanied with large loan indebtedness, provided we attach to it a territorial estate which, improved by such indebtedness, shall be perpetually providing and augmenting revenue to liquidate not only the annual interest, but, when necessary, to lead to the extinction of principal.

I have in previous statements dwelt upon the reciprocal benefits enjoyed by the mother-country and this colony in the enlargement of bonds of financial obligation. I may again state that, while our loans now amount to £16,570,850, £8,546,674 has been expended in railway construction, up to 30th June, 1884, on lines open to traffic, and that the net earnings on such lines for the last financial year amounted to £263,526, producing the full amount of interest accruing to the English creditor on an invested capital of £6,588,150.

This of itself should impart additional confidence in our position by the investor; but I would further add, that actually in borrowing

we are but buying the manufactures of Great Britain in an extended form of credit, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum. Since 1879, we have borrowed £8,225,000, of which sum only £100,000 has been drawn directly in cash to the colony. To save exchange our semi annual interest, which, as hon. members know, is always provided out of Revenue, is charged to the proceeds of loans sold in London. The amount of this interest since 1879 has represented £2,801,323. The residue of the above-mentioned loans, representing £5,323,677, therefore has been, or will be, expended in British manufactures and industries, promoting the business enterprise of Great Britain, thereby exhibiting a phase of Australian loan transactions which, I think, does not appear to be sufficiently recognised by Great Britain in connection with the immense advantages she enjoys through her colonial possessions.

Government are now framing the Loan Estimates—such as they consider the requirements of the country demand—and these will be laid before Parliament as early as practicable; but they desire to see their land policy affirmed, so that provision may be made for the payment of interest without oppressing taxpayers of the colony. Should their proposed land legislation be accepted, they will have no hesitation in advocating a much larger loan than any that has heretofore been sanctioned by Parliament, and, if they deem the services of the colony demand it, will not hesitate to approach the sum of £10,000,000 sterling. They conceive that the circumstances of the country justify this action, and that the present time is opportune, not only for the greater development of the country and the encouragement of immigration, but also is highly favourable for the necessary financial negotiation.

I may be challenged to point out how the interest on such a sum is to be paid. In reply, I may state that such a loan, if authorised, would not all be sold simultaneously; its disposal would be a matter of time; but of the ability of the country to meet the interest especially under the new Land Bill there cannot be the slightest doubt, even assuming the proposed loan to increase our indebtedness to £26,570,000. If the area of our lands held under pastoral lease, at present exceeding 311,000,000 acres, were only to contribute 1d. per acre per annum—not, Mr. Fraser, a sum of 1d. per acre in addition to present rentals—but to average an annual rental of 1d. per acre, not only would the whole annual interest to the public creditor be provided on a loan indebtedness of £26,570,000 at 4 per cent. per annum—an annual charge of £1,062,800—but a surplus of £233,033 would annually accrue to revenue; a sum but little under the whole amount of pastoral rents received by the Treasury during the past financial year.

But, sir, I do not look solely to pastoral occupation to defray this interest. I have illustrated my argument by taking the pastoral areas and rents, being both known quantities; but I look to the increased and closer occupation of our territory by the agriculturist and the small grazier—I look to the general progress and prosperity of all the inhabitants of the colony—I look to the continuous introduction of a prosperous and industrious population, which in its turn must stimulate the production and extension of our growing manufactures and industries—to bear the increased responsibility of interest, which will be far outbalanced by the immediate and permanent benefits to the country at large in which all classes of the community must largely participate.

I desire to refer hon. members to the other tables supplied by the Treasury, which are in—
1884—2 Q

structive as indicating the continued progress of the colony and the growing extension of the industrial pursuits of our population. Table M shows the progressive receipts from Customs and Excise, which show that since 1860 a sum of £9,899,424, to the 30th June, 1884, has been furnished by these joint contributions, and from Table L we observe that the land revenue received during the same period, exclusive of pastoral rents and assessments, provided £5,526,242.

The financial history of our Immigration expenditure is given in Table N, from which we learn that our total expenditure since Separation under this head has amounted to £2,491,620, of which the Consolidated Revenue has furnished £249,659; Loan Fund, £1,809,018; and Special Receipts, £432,943. The expenditure on account of this service, which commenced in 1860 with the moderate amount of £6,840, expanded last year into £438,547, towards which sum Revenue contributed £84,098; Loan, £294,289; and Special Receipts, £60,159. The excess of arrivals over departures by sea, during the twelve months ended 31st December, 1883, is represented to be 34,371 persons, of whom 26,508 were from the United Kingdom. The arrivals from the United Kingdom for the financial year ending 30th June, 1884, is represented by the Immigration Department to have amounted to 21,955 persons, so that the average cost of their introduction to the colony stands at £19 19s. 6d. per head. Let not the information of Table K, in connection with population, be forgotten, for even at this cost per head of introducing people to the colony—when we observe that each unit has averaged a contribution of £8 18s. 6d. to revenue during 1883-4—we may well be satisfied with the remunerativeness of our investment and earnestly endeavour to extend the field of its operations.

Table P exhibits the rapid progress of Public Works Expenditure, which will be found to represent a Government expenditure in public works per head of population as assumed by the Registrar-General's statistics, showing in 1880-1, £4 1s.; in 1881-2, £3 6s. 7d.; in 1882-3, £4 0s. 3d.; and last year, 1883-4, £4 19s. 11d.

Table Q represents the receipts and working expenses of our railways, to which I have before alluded, and Table Z gives a full and interesting return in a new form of the capital sums invested in the construction of our railways to 30th June, 1884, the interest thereon, and the net earnings; showing that on the total cost at that date, both on lines open for traffic and on those in course of construction, the net earnings gave a return at the rate of £2 19s. per cent.

Table R refers to exports and imports. In 1882 the value of our exports amounted to £3,259,217, at the rate of £13 2s. 7d. per head of population; while in 1883 our exports amounted to £4,653,889, or an average of £16 3s. 9d. per head of population, which had increased by 39,000 persons over the preceding year.

Imports during 1882 amounted to £5,168,628, of which sum £150,788 was on Government Account, or at the rate of £20 16s. 4d. per head of population; while in 1883 they reached £5,777,667, reducing the rate per head of population to £20 2s., towards which rate the imports on account of Government services alone contributed £1 6s. 8d. per head. Wool and sugar showed the largest increases in our Export Returns for 1883. The value of wool exported in 1883 represented £2,277,878, or an increase in value of £948,859 on the preceding year, while colonial sugar was exported to the value of £538,785, being an increase in value over the quantity exported in 1882 to the extent of

£386,597; the whole quantity exported during the year 1882 being valued at £152,188.

Table J exhibits the growing extent and importance of our shipping trade, while Table T exhibits the financial position of the banks doing business within the colony.

It will be observed that the year 1883 shows the deposit per head of population to amount to £21 8s. 9d., a reduction on the preceding year 1882 of £1 8s. 10d. per head; a divergence which, when explained by the light of Treasury Table C, does not imply that the financial accumulations of our population were sensibly decreasing.

On the 31st December, 1883, the Government balances in Brisbane amounted to £1,240,785; and on the 30th June, 1884, these balances in Brisbane had decreased to £976,168, or nearly £1 per head of the population of 1883.

Loans and discounts amounted in December to £29 1s. 2d. per head of population, being a reduction of 6s. per head on the average of the preceding year.

Tables V and W exhibit the state of the pastoral industry in returns of stock. The number of cattle in the pastoral districts in 1883, as returned by the Chief Inspector of Stock, exhibits a total of 4,246,141, as against 4,324,907 for 1882—a decrease of 78,766; while sheep in the pastoral districts of the colony are returned for 1883 as amounting to 11,183,400, as against a total of 10,663,600 for 1882—an increase of 519,800. The severe seasons under which pastoral settlement has suffered of late will have prepared hon. members for results showing absence of increase. It is, however, gratifying to know, from information supplied by the Chief Inspector of Stock, that at the present time the whole of the eastern coast watershed—carrying 1,800,000 cattle—has completely recovered from the drought of last year, and although, in places, water is not plentiful, feed is in abundance.

Mr. NORTON: Nonsense!

The COLONIAL TREASURER:

That part of the colony extending for some distance eastwards, all along the western boundary of the colony, has not suffered severely from drought. The portions that are suffering most severely are Darling Downs, the south of Maranoa, and portions of Warrego, Mitchell, Leichhardt, Burke, and North Gregory. Those portions are, however, patchy; thus, whilst around Winton—where, I am glad to say, rain fell last week—in the North Gregory district, the drought has been severe, the country only 80 miles distant north-westerly is reported as looking like a wheat-field. The same patchiness is observed in the other districts named. Of course the *absence of increase* will be severely felt by many, but if we are favoured with the usual seasonable showers and thunderstorms during the next three months, there is no reason to apprehend any further great losses.

The heaviest losses amongst stock have occurred more from want of water than want of feed; and the unqualified success that is attending the sinking of wells throughout the western and north-western portions of the colony will very greatly reduce the casualties from drought for the future.

Amongst our other national industries it is also most encouraging to know that, as anticipated in my last Statement, the mining industry throughout the colony is assuming increased proportions, being in a more flourishing condition than during last year. The Mining Department reports that large yields are still forthcoming from many of the mines in the principal goldfields. The yields at Gympie and

Charters Towers continue to maintain a high rate, and promise to be very large before the close of the present financial year. Indeed, it is expected that Gympie will exceed the yield of any previous year.

The recent rich discoveries at Mount Morgan have attracted the attention of many persons from the southern colonies who are interested in mining pursuits, and the opinion generally expressed is that the discovery is one of the most important that has ever taken place in Queensland.

Unfortunately, the mines at Herberton are not being vigorously worked, owing chiefly to the high rate of carriage, and in some parts to the want of proper smelting works for treating ores, which at present have to be shipped to Swansea at great expense; but the railway to the coast will give considerable impetus to mining in this district. Favourable accounts have also been received recently from the tin-mines at Cannibal Creek, Maytown. A large quantity of silver ore is being obtained at Ravenswood, which will be increased as soon as the necessary machinery has been completed to enable the mines to be worked on a large scale.

On the whole, it can with safety be averred that mining in the colony was never in a more prosperous condition than at present; and there is every indication of a great future for this industry when the excessive rates of carriage, crushing, etc., are reduced by the extension of railways.

I think, sir, it will be admitted that I have clearly shown the great progress and accumulation made by this country during the past year. I think I may also safely assert that the great industries of the colony were never on a sounder footing or had more encouraging prospects before them; and having thorough confidence in the irrepressible vitality of this colony, knowing also that an opportune time has arrived for a larger immediate development of its great natural resources through increased financial power than has heretofore been attempted, and having thorough reliance in and knowledge of the progressive characteristics of the people who in this fair land, named after Her Majesty, have made their homes and reared their families to become the future citizens of this State, and who, in settling here, demand from the Government of the day that they shall not be left in the rear of fellow-countrymen who have provided their homes elsewhere in other portions of the British Empire, I recommend this Statement of the financial position of the colony at the present time to the Parliament of the colony, and beg to move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1884-5, the sum of £300, to defray the salary of Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said: Mr. Fraser,—I think that the hon. Colonial Treasurer will take it in good part if I congratulate him upon having delivered the longest Financial Statement ever delivered in any House of Parliament in the Australian colonies. I think I can go further and say, any other Parliament in the world. And not only that, sir, but I think, when we examine that Statement more at leisure, we shall find bigger sentences in it than have ever appeared in any other Financial Statement. Indeed, I can go even a little further and say that, on analysing these sentences, we will find bigger words—that is, words containing more letters—than have ever been seen in any other Financial Statement laid before Parliament. It is customary to adjourn the debate on a Financial Statement until we have had time to digest the Statement itself; and

there are additional reasons why we should adjourn now. On account of the soporific tendency of the speech itself and the state of the weather, I do not think hon. members are much inclined to discuss it to-night. But for that, sir, I should be quite prepared to meet the hon. gentleman on the broad principles of his Statement now. I therefore think we should have time to digest it; and while intimating that it is my desire—and I know it is the desire of the Opposition—to give every facility for the despatch of public business, and that we shall be quite prepared to take the discussion on the Financial Statement as early as ever the Government wish, I should like to hear a statement from the hon. Premier of his idea of the business on the paper that he hopes to get through this session. The Land Bill, I suppose, is considered by the Government the most important business before the House; and I assume that the Financial Statement will require to be discussed in order to clear the way for that. I should, however, like to hear an intimation from the hon. gentleman of the probable progress of business during the next month or so—not simply from day to day, but how he expects we will progress with the various Bills before the House? He might indicate at the same time the Bills or other business that he considers likely to pass, so as to give hon. members some information as to the probable length of the session. What I say is entirely with the desire to further the business of the country. It is my intention to give the Government, as I have done heretofore, every facility for discussing their various measures; and it is on that account that I now ask them to fix their own time for discussing the Financial Statement. The sooner the better, of course. It has taken the hon. the Treasurer two hours and a-half to rattle over it, and I think it will take anyone a great deal longer than that, in the ordinary course, to read it carefully. If the hon. gentleman had not embodied in it a great deal that has really nothing to do with a Financial Statement, but matter of comment that any man of common sense could see by reading the Estimates, it would have facilitated my work very considerably. I remember reading that the late Sydney Smith was once put to work to write a review of a three-volume novel in three days. He tackled the matter, and at the end of the three days he awoke just in time to scratch a review stating the circumstances—that he had been put into such a drowsy state by the time he got to the third volume that he slept right up to the hour for the matter going to press. He was only able to intimate that to the public. I hope that this Statement will not have the same effect upon my hon. colleague, who, I suppose, will answer the hon. the Treasurer. We cannot well take the debate on the Statement before Saturday, but we shall be quite prepared to proceed with it on Tuesday. If the Government wish to fix any other day we will be quite prepared to meet their views.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: There will be no objection whatever to adjourn the debate on the Financial Statement. It is not customary that the debate should be proceeded with on the same evening that the Statement is made. It would appear sometimes from the statements of hon. gentlemen opposite that their thirst for information could never be slaked; but at other times they seem to get too much of it. I have endeavoured to give them as much as I could; and I shall be quite prepared to hear as much criticism as they can direct against the Statement, and have no doubt that I shall be able to answer it perfectly

satisfactorily. We will be quite prepared to resume the debate on the Financial Statement on Tuesday next. The hon. the Premier has just suggested that Wednesday will be more convenient. At any rate we will not proceed with it to-night, and I therefore move that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again. The resumption of the debate will be made an Order of the Day for Wednesday next.

Question put.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Does the Premier not intend to give any intimation as to the course of business?

The PREMIER: I think I shall be better able to give information of that kind in a day or two—probably to-morrow. I will give the earliest information possible on the subject. It is not convenient to do so this evening, but I shall endeavour to do so to-morrow before the House rises.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he hoped that in the information the hon. gentleman would give them he would not forget to intimate as soon as possible when the Loan Estimates would come on. It was a very important matter, and he should like to know whether he was going in for a £10,000,000 loan. It was rather an important consideration. If it had the same result that the last telegram forwarded to London had, it would fail materially in its effect.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not understand what the hon. member for Mulgrave referred to in his remark about the last telegram that arrived in London. He was not aware that any telegram sent by the Government had been unsuccessful. Certainly the result of the last loan did not show that. If he referred to that, he (Mr. Dickson) had shown in his Statement that there was no want of success attending it. He should like to know what the hon. gentleman meant?

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he would tell the hon. gentleman. When the last Financial Statement was delivered a telegram was forwarded through Reuter's Company, but its insertion was forbidden by almost all the London papers, and it only came out as an intimation from the London Office. He thought it was only a friendly warning that he gave the Treasurer to be careful when he telegraphed to London in future, because, although those advertising statements might look well here, they might have the opposite effect on the people in London.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the Committee have leave to sit again to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER laid on the table the tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement for the year 1884-5, and moved that they be printed.

Question put and passed.

IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1882 AMENDMENT BILL—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

Question—That the following new clause be clause 5 of the Bill—put:—

The Agent-General shall issue to each person approved by him, who has not previously resided in any of the Australasian colonies, and who emigrates from Europe direct to Queensland, paying the full cost of passage of himself or any other person being a member of his family and approved by the Agent-General, a land-order warrant in the form of Schedule G hereto.

A counterpart of every warrant so issued, indorsed by the person to whom it is issued, shall be forwarded by the Agent-General to the Minister.

For the purposes of this section, the term "member of his family" shall include a wife, child, grandchild, father, mother, brother, brother's wife, sister, sister's husband, wife's sister, and wife's brother.

The PREMIER said that he intimated last night that he desired to hear the views of the hon. gentleman who moved the clause, before expressing the opinion of the Government on the matter. It was only courteous and proper to do so. The hon. gentleman moved the adoption of the scheme of land-orders in what he considered a very able speech indeed, and gave very strong arguments showing the advantage that system had been to the colony in its earlier days, and very strong arguments why the system should be adopted at the present time. He (the Premier) understood, however, that the 5th of these new clauses was quite distinct from the others, and he did not approve of it at all. He thought the money contributed towards paying the passage money was quite sufficient, without giving any other inducement to men to remain in their service afterwards. He need not say any more about that. The hon. gentleman's speech last night in no way referred to it, nor did he understand that it was part of the scheme that gentleman advocated with respect to the system of land-orders; that was to say, giving persons who paid their passages a privilege with respect to the remission of rent. The position of the Government was this: If the Government had proposed to make it a Government measure, they would have taken the responsibility of it themselves; but they had discussed the matter, and had arrived at the conclusion that they would not make it a part of their policy, before it was introduced. For himself he had no hesitation in saying that he had not changed his opinion from the time he occupied a seat on the other side of the Committee, and proposed a scheme similar to that now proposed by the hon. gentleman. He should be very glad if a scheme of the kind were adopted, because, for the reasons given by the hon. gentleman, he believed it to be a good system. But, as a Government, he did not ask the Committee to support it, although if the hon. gentleman pressed the matter to a division he should vote with him. He did not know whether his colleagues would or not, and he trusted that every hon. member would exercise his own discretion entirely in the matter.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he thought it was a most extraordinary position to be taken by the hon. the Premier on a Bill of that sort. The hon. gentleman brought in a Bill of four clauses, and now they had amendments to the extent of five clauses proposed by an hon. member sitting on the Government side of the House. The amendments were in no way connected with the Bill—at all events, not directly connected with it—yet the hon. gentleman, after having come to the decision that the Government would not undertake the responsibility of bringing in those clauses, said that he himself would vote for them if they were brought forward. He (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) thought the Government ought to take a stand on their own Bill and say whether they would support the amendments. It was not sufficient for the Premier to say that he individually believed in them. If the Bill was made a party question, surely the amendments should be. Why should the hon. gentleman renounce all responsibility in connection with them, and run the chance of tampering with the Bill? It was an unworthy position for the Government to take up. The hon. gentleman ought to put his foot down and tell the hon. member who proposed those clauses that if it was intended to bring in a Bill to make the land-order system a part of the legislation of the country,

he would introduce it himself. Why should he give facilities to the hon. member to spoil his own Bill, when the slightest discussion on the most important clauses of it had elicited from the hon. gentleman nothing but ill-natured ejaculations? He (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) thought they had discussed the question well, and he did not think the hon. gentleman ought to allow others to interfere with the measure on such flimsy grounds as had been advanced, and to state that he was so much in favour of the amendments that he would allow them to be pressed to a division. The hon. gentleman knew perfectly well that he could make the hon. member refrain from pressing those clauses if he chose. He (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) intended to oppose them. He did not believe in them, and he remembered he fought against them two years ago when they were brought before the House. If the Government did not want those clauses introduced into their Bill, they ought to take a proper stand in the matter, and not throw the whole responsibility on the Opposition. The 5th clause of the amendments contained the most outrageous proposal that had ever been put before that House. Hitherto planters had been introducing their own labour at their own expense, but now the Government stepped in and said, "We will introduce that labour for you at the expense of the colony—at the expense of the taxpayers of the colony." But their followers were not inclined to stop there; they said, "We will give every man a reward of £20 who faithfully fulfils his agreement." Was there ever such a wild proposal put before the House? He knew that the hon. member for South Brisbane was an advocate of the land-order system, but surely the hon. member could find other means for advocating it instead of trying by his amendments to get it inserted in the present Bill. They had no connection whatever with the measure. The only clause relating to the Bill was clause 5. If the hon. member liked to bring that forward, let him do so and have it discussed. But clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 had nothing whatever to do with the Bill, and nothing whatever to do with any discussion on it up to the present time.

Mr. JORDAN said he regretted that the hon. member for Mulgrave held the views he had expressed, and that he objected to the last clause. He had not intended, when the clauses were originally drafted, printed, and circulated among hon. members, to make any such addition. The history of that addition was simply this: An hon. member on the opposite side of the House, who represented the sugar-planting interest, expressed some disappointment that black labour was to be discontinued, and that the planters were to be forced into the adoption of another system—that was, the employment of European labour—and also that some step of the kind proposed in the clause objected to had not been taken by the Government. He understood the hon. gentleman to say that the persons coming out under agreement should have some encouragement; some special inducement offered them to fulfil their agreement. He understood the hon. member for Mackay to say that much, and that suggested to him (Mr. Jordan) the idea of the last clause. He did not think that it was unreasonable on the part of the hon. member for Mackay, under all the circumstances of the case. They must recognise the fact that a very great change had been brought about by the verdict which had been given by the country—a verdict which had been recognised by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, Sir Thomas McIlwraith—namely, that the country had said that they would not have black labour. The planters under the sanction of Queensland law had

embarked immense sums in sugar-growing, representing he did not know how much capital at the present moment, with the expectation of getting a supply of Polynesian labour. The country had tried that kind of labour for some twenty years, until the people had become thoroughly disgusted with the system, and they were now quite satisfied that the time had arrived when black labour must come to an end; at least that was the view he took of it. The Government now stepped in and proposed the indentured system which existed already under the Act of 1882, and which had previously existed under the Act of 1875; but which was so materially altered by the hon. member for Mulgrave, Sir T. McIlwraith, that instead of a deposit of £5 being required for indentured passengers, employers wishing to enter into that system had now only to pay £2, and had not to pay the balance of the passage-money, which they had to do under the Act of 1875. So that it would cost the colony nothing for the introduction of indentured labourers. The payment of the balance of passage-money was, as he had said, altogether done away with under the Act of 1882, and indentured labourers could now be brought in upon payment of £2, neither employers nor immigrants having anything to do with the balance of the passage money. With that indentured system the present Government had nothing whatever to do. It was invented by hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the Committee. The present Government simply said—"Try this system, only you must provide for the accommodation of the wives and children; we do not intend that passengers in future shall be merely single men. We believe in family settlement, in settling the people upon the land, and that men should bring their wives with them." As he understood it, that was the proposal made in the Bill before the Committee. He thought that some consideration was due to the planters; and, if the colony were to introduce people under that measure, it was not doing too much to offer them an inducement to keep their engagements by simply giving them twenty acres of land. What was the value of the land until it was occupied? Surely the colony would not lose much by giving those men twenty acres of land, if, by the prospect it held out to them, they were induced to keep their agreement, and it was the means, as he believed it would be, of bringing about that state of things which the Premier wished to see realised—namely, that those persons, after they had served the planters, should enter upon their own land, cultivate cane, and sell it to the manufacturers of sugar. The country would not lose a farthing, and it appeared to him that it would induce the planters to enter cheerfully upon a trial of the indentured system. They could very well afford to give twenty acres to each of those immigrants, and for every twenty acres they would have an additional farmer with his family settled on the land. But if there was such a strong objection to the clause he would not press it, as it was not essential to his amendment. The principle of his amendment he would briefly explain. The Land Bill would unlock from 100,000,000 to 200,000,000 acres of land. If the time had come for taking that land away from the great Crown lessees who paid 9s. 1d. a square mile—if the time had come for depriving them of the half, third, or fourth part of their runs to provide for close settlement—the sooner that land was occupied the better. That he thought was a *sequitur*. Whether the time had come was another question; but the Bill said it had come. Until that land was occupied the Crown lessees were to have it still at the infinitesimal rent of 9s. 1d. per square mile or $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per acre. If by the principle of giving land or a

remission of rent to the capitalists now going to America they could get that 100,000,000 acres of land occupied in a few years, it would make a good deal of difference as far as the Financial Statement was concerned, because, at an average of 2d. per acre, it would bring in over £800,000. That was a very important consideration, and on that ground especially—that the Bill would induce hundreds and thousands of people at home who were waiting with money in their pockets to come to the colony—the measure was a good one. They knew from experience that it must be by means of a bonus of land that they would induce people to come to the colony, rather than carry out their purpose of going to the United States of America. The principle of the amendment was a gift of land to induce people to come to Queensland instead of going to America. He would be prepared, however, at the desire of the Committee, to omit the 5th clause.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that formerly the hon. member (Mr. Jordan) had a great deal to do with bringing out a superior class of immigrants under the system he now proposed, and judging from past experience he naturally thought the same thing could be done again to the advantage of the colony. But the circumstances of the colony had changed since twenty years ago, when the hon. gentleman was the agent at home for sending out people under the land-order system. The Bill had been discussed two days already, and if the hon. gentleman persisted in his amendment it would take two days longer. He believed that a good few of the members on his side were opposed to the amendment altogether. It was proposed that a land-order of £30 should be given to persons coming out who had not resided before in any of the Australasian colonies; but why should those people be put into a better position than the people coming from the other colonies, or the natives of Queensland? Looking at it in that light, and also considering the prospect of passing a new Land Bill, which would give facilities for settling people on the land at such a cheap rate, he had made up his mind to oppose the amendment; and he thought it would save time if one or two hon. members on his side would shortly express their opinion on the subject.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it appeared to him that the first of the amendments certainly was drafted on the "gerrymandering" principle displayed in the first schedule to the Land Bill, and that it was intended to prevent as far as possible the introduction of capitalists from the other colonies. That was the position taken up by the Minister for Lands in defending the construction of that extraordinary schedule, and in that respect the hon. member for South Brisbane had followed in his footsteps.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member for South Brisbane had repeated what he said the other night—that the indent system was introduced by him (Sir T. McIlwraith). It must have been by inadvertence, because he explained at the time that he was bringing forward clauses contained in previous Acts. If what he said had not convinced the hon. gentleman, he would read what his leader, the Colonial Secretary, said when the Act of 1882 was under consideration:—

"Just a word as to the changes in the Bill. Hon. members seemed to think that the provision enabling persons to indent labour was new. It was not new; it was the old law, only that persons now had to pay £6 instead of £3, and the term of service was not to be for less than twelve months."

That was clear enough. He only noticed the matter because the hon. member seemed to be afraid of the effect of the indent clauses, and wished to settle the responsibility on him. There was

another reason why the hon. gentleman should pull up the Opposition in discussing the clauses, in addition to that given by the hon. member for Ipswich, who quietly stated that they might stop the whole thing by a few remarks from members on the Government side. All the knowledge, all the experience and intellect of the Opposition, might hammer away at the Government without effect; but it only required two or three on the other side—no matter what they said—to bring about a collapse. If the thing was to collapse in that way, he should like to hear what those hon. gentlemen had to say.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Run up your dummies!

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he would give them a subject on which they might talk. He remembered well that all the proposed clauses, with the exception of clause 5, were exactly the same as those introduced in 1882 by the Premier; and they knew what his advocacy then was—that the ownership of land in the Australian colonies was one of the finest inducements in the world for immigrants to come out from home. But that was now altered. They were now told that the ownership of land had nothing to do with it, and that it would be abolished as soon as possible. That was a potent reason why the hon. gentleman should turn his back as quietly as possible on the land-order system.

Mr. GRIMES said he would support the clauses, with the exception of the 5th, which would tend to cause a great deal of unpleasantness amongst the workmen and their employers. They should certainly have an equivalent for the land if they got the holder of the land-order to settle upon the land. He took that view of it; and as he believed the amendments would be the means of introducing a large number of the farming class from England, he should have much pleasure in supporting the amendments of the hon. member if he would consent to withdraw the 5th clause.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, when he referred to the course the hon. Premier should have taken in dealing with the matter, came as a revelation to him. The hon. member said the Premier should have put his foot down, and should not have allowed any of his party to introduce any amendments. He (Mr. Dutton) would be very sorry indeed to see the Premier adopt any such tyrannous exercise of his position as leader of the party; and he further hoped that the members of that party were far too manly and independent to agree to anything of that kind, even if the Premier tried it, whatever hon. members opposite might think. Much as he admired the earnestness and enthusiasm of the hon. member for South Brisbane to introduce such a class of people as he believed would be brought out by such inducements as he proposed to offer them, he could not see the justice of giving men in the United Kingdom or in any part of Europe an advantage over people here, and more especially over their own native-born people. There were, he believed, some 15,000 or 16,000 native-born boys now attending their State schools, and what advantages were they to be offered to go upon the land? He did not think that men from the continent of Europe or the United Kingdom should be brought here and given an advantage in settling upon the land which those boys would not possess. He thought they offered sufficient inducements to people to come here and take up land on very easy terms indeed—terms which they thought good enough for the people here. If people cared to come here on those terms they would receive a welcome and would be offered the land on the same inducements offered to their own people, but he believed greater inducements should be given to nobody. He should oppose the clauses *in toto*. As the hon. gentleman had notified his willingness to withdraw the 5th clause he should not attempt to speak to it, but if he did speak to it, he should have to oppose it. To say that they should give the sugar-planters an opportunity of getting men here, and secure their services by a bonus of £20, was too much to expect.

Mr. MOREHEAD said this was truly delightful. It was "Queensland for the Queenslanders." That was the policy now enunciated by the Minister for Lands. He did not think the hon. gentleman could have consulted his colleague, the leader of the Government, because that gentleman told them last night that he declined altogether to import any labourers from Great Britain, and that he was going to bring in only foreigners under the Bill.

The PREMIER: I never told you anything of the kind.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman was simply again reiterating the misstatements he made last night. He distinctly told them that until he had tried Europe he would not go to England.

The PREMIER: He did not.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He did. In discussing the Bill last night the Premier did say so.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not take the denial of any hon. member on the other side—even that of the hon. Premier himself. He maintained that the hon. member said so and meant so.

Mr. GRIMES: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked, who was the hon. member who said "No"? Was it the hon. member for Oxley—"the employer"—who said "No"? He would deal a little with that hon. member. He was the picker-up of unconsidered trifles. He was the hon. gentleman who picked up cheap white labour and employed it for a little while, until the white labourer got very tired of cheap labour and moved on, and then the hon. gentleman picked up another cheap white labourer. The hon. gentleman then talked a great deal to the House and to the country, through the medium of the Press, about the cheap way in which he worked his plantation. That was how he did it.

Mr. GRIMES: How do you know?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would ask if he was to be interrupted in that way? He did not know that he had said anything unparliamentary, and if he had done so he should apologise to the Chair, but he should not apologise to any hon. gentleman who interrupted him in the grossly discourteous way in which he was interrupted. He said the hon. member for Oxley was in the habit of picking up cheap labour wherever he could get it, and after the labourer found he had been deluded—he used the word advisedly—by the hon. member into working upon what the hon. member had frequently termed his "plantation," he passed on, and the hon. member got some other ignorant man and led him to believe that the wages he offered was the current wages of white labourers. When the last man got a little knowledge of what was going on, he moved on, and then the hon. member got another, and that was how he managed his "plantation." He managed it with a series of spurts. Then he came down to the House and told them that the wages he gave to those men was the current rate of wages obtainable in the colony. He hoped the hon. gentleman was satisfied so far. If not, he would give him a little more.

Mr. GRIMES: Go on.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would say no more at present. He would see what the hon. gentleman had got to say to that. He objected to the hon. member's interruptions, and he could tell him that Oxley was at one time represented by a much more superior man than the present hon. member was. They heard from the other side of the Committee that the Premier of the colony was prepared to accept one thing, whilst the Minister for Lands took quite a different line. The Premier of the colony said that night that he was prepared to accept the amendments of the hon. member for South Brisbane, with certain modifications in the 5th clause. The Minister for Lands, on the contrary, said he would have none of the amendments at all; and he would not allow them to come into the Bill. He did not wonder that the hon. Minister for Lands objected to the amendments or to accepting any of them. They would certainly not in any way square with the Land Bill, the second reading of which had been passed by that House. No doubt the hon. member for South Brisbane was an enthusiast, and there was no doubt that according to his own lights—and he gave him all honour for them—he believed he was doing a good thing for the colony in asking that Committee to accept the clauses which he proposed. There might, however, be a method in his madness, or there might be the madness without the method. His own impression was that the hon. gentleman was, perhaps, not mad; but the Chairman, as his colleague, was possibly a better judge of that than he was, and possibly the gentlemen who returned him were better judges of it than either of them. He thought there was a certain amount of craze or madness in those amendments, and that could not be denied by anyone, more especially when they found that they were not to receive the unanimous acceptance of the Cabinet. It might be that the Cabinet wished to get out of a difficult position by one member taking up one position, and another taking up quite a different position. It might be that they had a certain amount of deserved respect for the hon. member for South Brisbane, and they might further value his support, which was worth something. At any rate the split in the camp showed that either the Minister for Lands was wrong, or the Premier was wrong—they certainly could not both be right. One member of the Ministry was willing to accept the amendments with the exception of one clause, and the other would have none of them. The time had arrived when the Government should say distinctly what they intended to do with regard to those amendments. So far they were in doubt. The Ministry appeared to be acting with dual leaders, or, rather, with two horses in the team pulling in different directions, which showed the necessity for the fifth wheel. There could be no half-dealing with this measure. It was a broad question that could only be dealt with in one way; but although they had asked the Premier, on the previous night, whether he would support the amendments or reject them, they could get no reply. Although the hon. the leader of the Opposition had expressed his willingness that the debate on the Bill should close on the previous night, it was prolonged at the instance, and no doubt under the direction, of the Premier. They now asked the hon. member again whether it was his intention to support or oppose the amendments proposed by the hon. member for South Brisbane. They were entitled to a direct answer to the question, and when they got it they would have a clear field to deal with. He was inclined to discuss the details of the amendments, and he hoped they would have from the Government an expression of opinion regarding them.

The PREMIER said he did not know what object the hon. member who had just sat down could have in making the remarks with which he began his speech. Misrepresentations of that kind could serve no useful purpose. All he could say was—he might as well say it now as at any other time—that if any hon. member persisted in making misrepresentations of that kind he would disentitle himself to be treated with the courtesy ordinarily shown to members of the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he rose to a point of order. Was it in order, even for the leader of the House, to attribute misrepresentation to any hon. member?

The PREMIER: There is no point of order. There is one thing I wish to say, Mr. Fraser—

Mr. MOREHEAD: There is a point of order, and a very important point of order—whether any hon. member should charge another with misrepresentation.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member state the point of order again?

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. member has charged me with misrepresentation, which is equivalent to lying.

The PREMIER and HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government Benches: No, no!

Mr. MOREHEAD: I say the word "misrepresentation" is not parliamentary; and I hope, Mr. Fraser, that from your long parliamentary experience you will know that I am perfectly right in the contention I set up. At any rate, if you do not decide the matter, I shall have it referred to the Speaker.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is right on the part of any hon. member to charge another with misrepresentation.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Hear, hear! That is all I wish.

The PREMIER: When an hon. member makes a speech in this House, and another hon. member gets up and represents him to have said something diametrically opposite to what he did say, it is usual, I think, to use some English word to describe such conduct. The word I have used expresses it as accurately as I could express it in one word. The hon. gentleman wanted to know—

Mr. MOREHEAD: Is the hon. gentleman going to withdraw the word "misrepresentation"? You have ruled that it is out of order, Mr. Chairman, and I ask you to insist upon your ruling.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman is very eager to fit the cap on his own head. What I said was this—

Mr. MOREHEAD: I ask for your ruling, Mr. Chairman.

The PREMIER said that what he said was, that if any hon. member was persistently misrepresented by another hon. member, certain consequences would ensue. The hon. member wanted to know what view the Government took of the amendments of the hon. member for South Brisbane. He (the Premier) had already stated the views of the Government, and if the hon. member was absent when that statement was made he should have inquired about it when he came into the House.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said that certainly no hon. member had a right to misrepresent another, but, at the same time, he did not consider that what his hon. colleague had said amounted to misrepresentation. He had said that if the hon. member did not in exact words say that he meant to introduce

Continental labourers under this Bill, he said so by inference a dozen times during the debate. What did the Bill mean if it did not mean the introduction of Continental labour? When his hon. colleague said that the hon. member had actually stated that the Government intended to bring exclusively Continental labour, he (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) thoroughly believed him, and he was assured to the same effect by other hon. members. If, however, the hon. gentleman denied using the words, he would accept his statement. At the same time the hon. member had inferentially repeated the same thing a dozen times during the progress of the debate. But he wanted to address the House now on a much more important matter. The hon. the Minister for Lands had taken up a *rôle* which was in such contrast to the commencement of his speech on the Land Bill that it was worth noticing. He turned round and told him (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith), who had had some experience in party management, that it would not be a right thing—that it would be a tyrannous thing—for the Premier to inform his supporters that certain amendments could not be admitted into a Bill. In his opinion, it was only by working on that principle that it would be possible for the Government to get the Bill through at all. Here was an important measure with regard to which the Premier had announced the policy of the Government in a speech which had been sent all over the country. After the Bill had virtually passed, when there remained nothing but the last formal clause, and after they had fought three nights about it, the hon. member for South Brisbane brought forward amendments which went beyond the subject-matter of the Bill—amendments which were not directly connected with it, or if they had any indirect connection it was a very remote one. The hon. gentleman, instead of telling the hon. member for South Brisbane, as he would have told any member on the Opposition side of the House, as he would have been justified in doing, that the amendments had nothing whatever to do with the Bill—and instead of calling upon his party to reject them absolutely—said he was in favour of them personally, that he would not interfere with them, and would vote for them if they came to a division. The hon. gentleman, in fact, rejected one of the most important—probably the most important—matters that could be brought before the House for discussion, while, at the same time, members of his own party characterised the proposed amendments as excrescences upon the Bill. Let them consider what the real land-order principle was. There was not one single subject that had been discussed by Parliament more often than the land-order system; and the hon. the Premier knew well that no Ministry would be able to put through the House a Bill carrying out the land-order system without an immense amount of discussion, and even then he questioned very much whether it could be put through on strictly party lines. But they were now asked by the Premier to discuss the question, and come to a conclusion upon such a vital principle at once. Now, he held there had never been a question of such importance treated by any Government since he had been a member of the House with such apparent indifference. The Premier had charge of the Bill, and he would be perfectly justified in saying to the Opposition or to his own party—“These amendments have no connection with the Bill, and if you wish to carry out such principles you must embody them in a separate Bill.” Why should members of the Opposition and of the Government party be obliged to pay such an amount of deference to the hon. member for South Brisbane, simply because the Premier did not wish to offend him?

The Premier must know that if that view of the case was the correct one, and if he intended the discussion to go on, it could only be with one object, and that was the blocking of the Bill. The land-order system would never be carried out simply by a vote of that House; the hon. gentleman knew that such a thing could never be done, and instead of placing the question before the Committee himself, he had left it to one of his supporters, and now asked the Committee to refer it to a vote. It could never be decided in that manner, and they must have the views of the House on the matter. He quite agreed with the hon. the Minister for Lands in what he had said with regard to the land-order system. Land-orders, to be equitable at all, must be transferable, for there could be nothing but dissatisfaction if they were made non-transferable. If a man was given a land-order after he had paid his own passage to the colony, it was given as a kind of reward; and instead of paying his passage his dignity was consulted by giving him an equivalent for his money. That being the principle, they must be given to farmers, or that class of people who would use them. If that was done, and if every man who paid his own passage received a land-order, an anomaly was introduced—an unnecessary expenditure incurred—because an order for land simply meant giving money. There was no difference between the two things, because whenever a land sale took place the order might be paid into the Treasury, and would represent so much money. As the hon. Minister for Lands had pointed out, if every man who paid his passage out to this country was to be rewarded with a land-order to the value of £30, what was to be given to those who were already here and had done the same thing? Were those who had been working for years for themselves and the colony less entitled to land-orders, and were the children whom they brought out with them less entitled to such a privilege? The principle, he maintained, could only be carried out on the one system, and that was by commencing afresh and giving all those already in the colony who had paid their own passage a land-order, and placing them on the same footing as all future immigrants. The hon. gentleman would see the iniquity of the 5th clause; he must see that it was an abomination, and if he reasoned over it he would find that the other four clauses were just every bit as bad.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would ask the Minister for Lands whether, under the proposed Land Bill, the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876 was not to be repealed? That was a very pertinent question, and he would wish the Minister for Lands to say whether the Bill of which they passed the second reading a few nights ago would not repeal that Act.

After a pause,

Mr. MOREHEAD said surely the Minister for Lands would answer a question of that sort, because the 4th clause in the amendments to the present Bill dealt most distinctly with the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876, and they were entitled to a reply from the Minister for Lands as to whether the new Crown Lands Bill did not repeal that measure.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Read it yourself, and see.

Mr. MOREHEAD said surely the hon. gentleman would have the courtesy of replying to him. He was an older member of the House than the hon. gentleman, and he had had the high privilege of holding office. On that account he thought, therefore, the Minister for Lands might have had the courtesy to give a direct answer, addressed to him through the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the hon. member had asked him a question which he

could very well answer for himself if he had looked at the Land Bill, which he supposed he had. But perhaps he had not, and from what he had said he would lead hon. members to come to that conclusion. It must have been, at all events, a very cursory glance that the hon. member had given the Bill, and he (the Minister for Lands) did not believe he had read it through. If the Crown Lands Bill became law, the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876 would be repealed.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought he might have had a direct answer from the hon. gentleman without a surplage of impertinence, which was not uncharacteristic of the source from which it came. If it was as he had imagined, that the Land Bill did include the repeal of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876, were not the amendments of the hon. member for South Brisbane rather premature? Had he not better wait until it was known whether that Act was to be repealed?—because as it stood now the 4th clause of the amendments would lead to complications. It said:—

“In payment of the rent or instalments of purchase money of any selection of country lands acquired under the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876, or any other Act relating to the selection of country lands, of which the person to whom the land-order is issued, or the person in respect of whom it is issued, or the husband of either, is at the time of making such payment the holder.”

He thought that might lead them into very grave complications. They had not yet decided that the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876 was to be repealed. They had not yet decided that; and, further, he thought they had before them two measures—one dealing with a very material matter, which was not at all alien or running contrary to the measure under discussion. When they had before them a measure which would affect the interests of a great number of people, and also a Bill and a schedule of amendments—the amendments being larger than the measure itself—he thought they had better deal with one subject first. They had better settle the Land question before deciding upon a proposed amendment in an Immigration Bill, framed for the purpose of bringing people here from the other side of the world. It was proposed to give those people land-orders, which were authorised by an Act that might in a short time be struck off the Statute-book. They had far better deal with the Land Bill first and the Immigration Bill afterwards, or the proposed amendments at all events; and he was astonished at the Premier not seeing what he had pointed out. If the hon. gentleman had not seen that, he would be beating the wind in regard to the attractions he was pretending to offer to immigrants—such attractions not really existing.

Mr. GRIMES said he hardly liked to interrupt the debate on the Bill with any remarks of a personal nature, but he could not allow the remarks of the hon. member for Balonne, with reference to himself, to pass without some notice. He (Mr. Grimes) had never been afraid to hold up his head wherever he had been, and he certainly was not afraid to hold it up in that Chamber. As far as his personal business was concerned, there was not one single transaction upon which he was not prepared, if called upon, to answer any question that might be put to him. He hardly knew how to characterise the remarks of the hon. member for Balonne, but it would, perhaps, be within the bounds of parliamentary language if he were to speak of them as “Morehead’s truths.” That term would be understood outside, and also by hon. members of the House, who knew well what the hon. member’s truths were. He would not say they were untruths; they were merely a sample of the hon. member’s truths. He would like to ask the hon.

gentleman whether his business relations would bear inspection—whether everything that had been transacted by the firm of which he was the head would bear scrutiny—whether he would be prepared to answer any questions that might be put to him with reference to every transaction that had passed through his office? The hon. member, he thought, would not care to do anything of the kind. There was a certain very important matter brought on the floor of the House, some two sessions back, relating to dealings with Crown lands—was the hon. gentleman prepared, on that occasion, to tell “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth”? When the hon. gentleman appeared before that committee he was rather placed in a dilemma. The hon. gentleman did not like to break his oath by any statement he might make, and, on the other hand, he did not want to commit himself; so he thought the safest way was to stand upon his dignity and remain silent, saying “I shall not answer any questions.” That was the *finale* of the Cullin-la-ringo inquiry. No business transactions of his (Mr. Grimes) had ever appeared to the public in such a shady light as that transaction did. He trusted that before the hon. gentleman referred again to any of his (Mr. Grimes’) business transactions he would look well to his own books for a few years past, and see that there was nothing there which he would hardly dare to have brought to light.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was sorry he had not his books with him to show to the hon. member for Oxley, but if the hon. member would call at his office in the morning he would show them to him—if he could understand them. What he wanted to point out was simply that the hon. gentleman was in the habit of employing cheap labour; and he thought that would have pleased him, especially as he was advocating a measure which would give him plenty more of it. He pointed out that the hon. member got labour that was cheap, and, very likely, nasty, but that it did not stop long with him. Whether that was owing to the labour or to the employer, he would not offer an opinion. But, from what he knew of the hon. member, he would rather employ him than be employed by him, and he did not think he should employ him very long.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he understood they were discussing the 1st clause of the amendments of the hon. member for South Brisbane, but the hon. member for Balonne had dragged in the Land Bill, which had nothing whatever to do with the question before them. If the discussion were conducted regularly, they would come to a conclusion sooner than by wandering at random through all the clauses, and he hoped the Chairman would keep the Committee to the clause which had been proposed.

Mr. BEATTIE said the Committee would be placing themselves in an extraordinary position if they adopted the advice of the hon. member for Ipswich. If a division took place, and half the Ministers voted one way and the other half the other way, what sort of a position would they be in? It would be much better if the Premier were to say at once whether he intended to support the amendment. He (Mr. Beattie) had always been in favour of the land-order system, but the circumstances of the colony had changed since that system was in operation; and he certainly could not agree with the 3rd paragraph of the clause defining the term “member of the family” to mean—he did not know how many generations. That would have to be altered. He was afraid that if, on a division, the Premier, who had expressed himself in favour of the land-order system, voted in favour of the amendment, and the Minister for Lands and other Ministers were

found voting against it, the Bill could not be reported to the House as a Government measure. If the hon. member for South Brisbane did not withdraw his amendments it would place the Government side of the House in a peculiar position.

Mr. BLACK said the amendments ought never to have been introduced in connection with the Immigration Bill; the objects sought to be obtained by each were so different that they could not possibly be considered together. If the hon. member for South Brisbane wished his amendments to receive proper consideration they should be embodied in a separate Bill, when the principle of the land-order system could be exhaustively discussed on the second reading, and hon. members could take whatever stand they chose, in committee, upon it. In its present shape they were not likely to make any progress with the subject, for it was entirely irrelevant to the Immigration Bill, which he considered was virtually passed last night. Some hon. members, while willing to accept the first four clauses of the amendment, which gave to all immigrants paying their passage to the colony a £30 land-order, objected altogether to the 5th clause. In his (Mr. Black's) opinion, if there was a single good clause in the amendment, it was clause 5. The Government were making an entirely new departure in the labour system of the colony; they were endeavouring to introduce a class of labour which must necessarily work at lower rates than those at present existing in the colony. The origin of clause 5 was owing, he might fairly say, to a remark of his own. When the discussion on the second reading took place he, while deprecating the introduction of cheap white labour to take the place of coloured labour in the North, stated that he could not understand how those cheap white labourers would ever be held to fulfil the term of their agreement—it was supposed to be for two years—unless they had some bonus held out to them at the end of their term as a reward for working at lower wages than other Europeans were receiving. Though he said that, he did not go so far as to say that he would advocate giving them £20 land-orders. It must be understood that he had always deprecated the introduction of cheap white labour; he believed it would have a most injurious effect; but certainly the only advantages he would give indented immigrants in any way, would be something to encourage them—not necessarily a land-order, but perhaps allowing them to have land on easier terms than other people got it. The Government proposed, in their land legislation, to promote the settlement of the country, and they wished indented labourers—the class which must come out at lower wages—to become settlers on the land; but he would point out the impossibility of men brought out under the new Land Bill being able to settle on the land. He assumed that these labourers would be brought out at rates varying from 10s. to 12s. per week. It did not require much calculation to show that in two years they would have very little of that money left. Men like them could not save much in the northern part of the colony; living was more expensive, and they had to pay more for domestic necessities than in the South; so that they could not be expected to save much out of 10s. or 12s. a week. At the end of two years, therefore, a man would not be in a position to settle on the land. Even if the Government cut up the land into small areas, the men would be absolutely unable to go on to it because they would not have the money. Men who came from the Continent as indented labourers would be poor; the labour thus brought must be cheap labour entirely, and, to settle on the land, those labourers must comply with the

regulations under the new Land Bill, which made it absolutely necessary that they should fence in the whole of their selections before they got a right to the land. In the first instance they would get a license, but until they fenced their land, which would involve considerable expense, they would be unable to get any right to it whatever. Therefore he considered that if the Committee thought it advisable to revive the land-order system those indented labourers were certainly entitled to some encouragement, such as that now proposed by the hon. member for South Brisbane, who, he believed, was honestly anxious to see the system brought into force.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was sure hon. members would pay great attention to any amendments introduced by the hon. member for South Brisbane in connection with immigration, because he had had more experience in connection with immigration than any member of that Committee, and they knew that any such amendments were brought forward by the hon. member with a desire to promote the best interests of the country. He (the Colonial Treasurer) felt great pleasure, therefore, in acknowledging the attempt the hon. member was making to improve the Bill. But it must be admitted by all those who had resided in the colony for any length of time, and who had witnessed the effect of land-orders, that, while they were incentives to immigration, they were certainly attended with great abuses. The operation of such a system would of course affect the Treasury, of which department he had the direction, and therefore he considered that the question had a much wider scope than seemed to be thought during the debate. He thought it was a pity that the Government should be prevented in any way from carrying the Bill into effect through the introduction of a phase of the question which really demanded a great deal of consideration, and on which there was a great deal to be said on both sides. The Immigration Bill would of itself encourage immigration sufficiently without these clauses being introduced; especially as it was known the Government intended to put in the Land Bill those aids to settlement on the land under the homestead selections, which, if he mistook not, were introduced subsequently to those clauses in the original immigration system, and were supposed, in fact, to be substitutes for the system of land-orders. He strongly objected to the 5th clause of the amendments brought forward by the hon. member for South Brisbane; but he thought that on the whole question there was a great deal to be said on both sides. Under the old system of land-orders great abuses did exist, and were perpetrated so that many people who saw those abuses could not view with favour the revival of the system; especially as the Government were endeavouring to amend the immigration system in such a liberal manner. He thought, therefore, it would be advisable for the hon. member to withdraw the amendments. He did not think they formed a complement to the Bill under consideration. He gave the hon. member credit for a sincere desire to improve the Bill and deal honestly with the subject; but he thought it would be better that they should not be pressed. He must say, at the same time, that even if the amendments were passed he had not much faith in the operation of the system. But they formed no complement to the Bill, and therefore in the interests of legislation they had better be withdrawn.

Mr. STEVENSON said it seemed that there was a slight difference of opinion between Ministers on that question. It was a strange thing that the Premier and his colleagues did not find

that out before. The amendments to the Bill—a Bill which ought to be called a Bill for the introduction of Germans and for reducing the price of labour in the colony—as proposed by the hon. member for South Brisbane, were, he believed, accepted by the Premier for the purpose of throttling the Bill. It was a most extraordinary position for Ministers to place themselves in. The Premier supported the amendments; the Minister for Lands was entirely against them; and now the Treasurer cut in between the two and tried to pour oil on the troubled waters by asking the hon. member to withdraw them. Why did not the Premier tell the hon. member for South Brisbane that he could not accept them in the first instance? It was evident that the hon. member for South Brisbane got a certain amount of encouragement, or else he would not have introduced the amendments. After getting the hon. member to bring them forward with the object of throttling the Bill, the Premier found that there was a difference of opinion on the subject. The hon. gentleman now saw what he did not see before. He intended that the Bill was to be a measure to soothe the friends of the hon. member for Mackay up north—a measure that would prevent them from turning round against him—but now, when he found the planters did not care about the Bill, because it would not supply the want created by the deficiency of kanaka labour, he would like to do away with it altogether; and therefore he got the hon. member for South Brisbane to propose those amendments, knowing perfectly well that his supporters would not agree to them, and consequently he would have an excuse for doing away with the Bill altogether. He contended that the Premier should let hon. members know what he meant to do with the Bill—whether he meant to pass it, whether he intended to accept the amendments, or whether he agreed with his hon. colleague the Treasurer, and would advise the hon. member for South Brisbane to withdraw them. The Committee ought to know the position they were placed in; and that information should be given by the hon. the Premier himself, as he was in charge of the Bill.

Mr. JORDAN said he should be sorry if he found himself in a minority, and in opposition to hon. gentlemen on his own side of the House. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." He had always recognised that principle, and voted with his party, unless on a question of conscience, where he felt compelled to vote against them; and that had happened only once in his lifetime. He did not intend to press the amendment to a division, because he had gathered from the sense of the Committee that it was not acceptable. He dared say it did appear—especially from some remarks that had fallen from hon. gentlemen opposite—a piece of presumption that an humble member of the House should have attempted to introduce those clauses, and tack them on the Immigration Act Amendment Bill under consideration. But he must say that he had had a little encouragement to do so—but not from the Government in any way. But he remembered that, when the present Premier introduced those same clauses into the discussion on the Immigration Act Amendment Bill of 1882, Sir T. McIlwraith said that he should have no objection to give £20 as a bonus in money to those persons who paid their own passages and came to the colony.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No he did not.

Mr. JORDAN: He could not refer to the hon. gentleman's words at that moment; but no doubt he would remember them. That was the principle of endeavouring to attract people to the colony from the other side of the globe by

bonuses; and the hon. the Premier having introduced very similar clauses to those he had now submitted, of course he thought that his proclivities were in that direction. He should be very sorry indeed to see members of the Government voting on opposite sides, and to think that he had taken any action that would necessitate such a course. He would therefore, with leave of the Committee, withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On clause 5—"Short title"—

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member for South Brisbane no doubt thought he was quoting him correctly when he said that he (Sir T. McIlwraith) had advocated a £20 land-order when the Immigration Bill was before the House in 1882; but he was quite sure the hon. gentleman had not read the whole of the debate, because his contention was—and he defeated the Opposition at that time on all the clauses then introduced, which were exactly similar to those introduced by the hon. member—he admitted that, under certain circumstances, he would give an £8 or £10 land-order in preference to certain provisions contained in clause 17. He saw, on reference to the debate, that it said he mentioned £20; but if the hon. gentleman looked through the debate he would see that it was £8 or £10, and that he (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) was consistent in that all through the discussion. He might say that he did not correct his speeches; he left that to the reporters. He was not like the Premier, who spent more time in correcting his speeches than in making them. He did not think it right that hon. members should be allowed to correct their speeches. The matter ought to be left entirely to the reporters, and if an hon. member found a mistake in his speech that was worth calling attention to he was perfectly justified in doing so in the House. But he held that hon. members were not justified in correcting their proofs. As a matter of principle he had refrained from doing so for a long time. He believed it led to bad reporting. If anyone considered the matter they would see that it must do so. If the reporters had the privilege of getting their proofs corrected by the members themselves, it must necessarily—in spite of what the reporters might say to the contrary—lead to laxity that would not otherwise occur. He always left himself in the hands of the reporters, and did not think that any hon. member should be allowed the privilege of correcting his proofs. Before the clause was passed, he might be allowed to congratulate the hon. the Treasurer upon making a statement that was certainly not premature. He had intimated that the homestead clauses were going to be reintroduced in the Land Bill. Why, hon. members knew that the other day! They knew it even before the Minister for Lands himself—two days ago. The hon. gentleman must see that he was only a tool in the hands of other people who were working him. There would be a good many other clauses introduced into that Bill before it passed.

The PREMIER said he did not propose to depart from the subject before the Committee, by going into the question of the homestead clauses, which hon. members would have the opportunity of reading for themselves to-morrow morning. He rose to take exception to the statement by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, with respect to the correction of *Hansard* proofs. Had the hon. gentleman not corrected any speech of his own this session or last session?

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: No; not one.

The PREMIER: Since when had the hon. gentleman given it up?

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Two or three years ago.

The PREMIER: It was perfectly well known that the hon. gentleman, when he made an important speech, corrected it before it got into *Hansard*. But he did not care whether the hon. gentleman did so or not. He thought that if *Hansard* was to be a correct record of what took place in the House every reasonable step should be taken to see that it was correct. It was no disparagement to a reporter, if he made a mistake, that that mistake should be corrected. He did not answer those hon. members who could themselves condescend to the dishonesty of altering a speech after they had made it; he did not answer hon. members who could descend to that dishonesty and impute it to others. The hon. member for Mulgrave took a different view, and said he left the matter entirely to the reporters. He (the Premier) did not take that view. He held that reporters, however skilful they might be, were liable to fall into errors, and hon. members were therefore perfectly justified in correcting the mistakes they made. At the same time he thought it was entirely unjustifiable for any hon. member, in correcting a proof, to alter anything he himself had said that was wrong. If he had made a mistake it should appear in the records of the House. He was only justified in seeing that the speech recorded was what he had said. On that question he (the Premier) was not single in the view he held.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the hon. gentleman need not have answered him so warmly as he had done, because there was not one word he said that could impute dishonesty to the hon. gentleman.

The PREMIER: I did not refer to that at all.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: He did not hint for one moment that the hon. gentleman altered his speeches. What he did say was that he spent more time in correcting them than he did in making them. But he could tell the hon. gentleman this: that the way in which he corrected his speeches was an offence to the House. He sat at the table correcting his speeches when he ought to be attending to the business of the House, and he did it in a way which could not help offending members even on his own side of the House. He took up a position which sometimes led to interruptions, and there was a good deal that might be complained of in that respect. He differed entirely from the hon. gentleman with regard to the correction of speeches. He thought it was a bad system, which had cropped up as other abuses had. The hon. gentleman was quite wrong in saying that he (Sir T. McIlwraith) had corrected his speeches this year. He had not done so. In fact, he never opened the parcel containing his proofs, and had not done so for a long time—not, he thought, since the session before last. He never did correct his proofs very much. He confined his corrections to what were always admitted to be matters that could not possibly be correctly reported—that was, to figures. When he made a financial statement he had always consented to give figures and to correct them afterwards. He considered that to be actually necessary; but in ordinary reporting correcting proofs led to any but the best results. He was not accusing any hon. member of altering his speeches, but it must necessarily, from the nature of things, lead to laxity in reporting.

The PREMIER said that was merely a difference of opinion. When he spoke warmly, he did not in any way refer to the hon. gentleman. He did not understand him to impute dishonesty, but the hon. gentleman did not

control his friends who were continually, not on that night only but on many occasions, willing to impute dishonesty to others. As to the lecture on decorum, and the length of time he took to correct his proofs, he did not think that was worthy of the hon. gentleman. The statement was absurd. Certainly he never sat at the table without hearing all that went on, and being prepared to take his part in the discussion.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the word "condescension" was getting rather too big a mouthful for the hon. leader of the Government. He did not know whether hon. gentlemen on that side of the Committee condescended, or those on the opposite side condescended; but all he knew was, that the statement made by the leader of the Opposition was absolutely true as regarded the time that was taken by the hon. the Premier in correcting his speeches. He thought that if he would correct his speeches first and make them afterwards it would possibly be better. He was perfectly certain that the hon. gentleman's speeches as they were delivered in that Chamber, and as they appeared in the corrected edition of *Hansard*, showed a great diversity. He had seen the hon. gentleman sit at the table, certainly for two hours; notably the other night, when he was correcting the proofs of his speech on the Land Bill, he sat there for two hours and corrected the speech he made—or rather, to put it in another way, revised or re-wrote it. He was perfectly certain that the accuracy of reporting in the gallery was such that it did not require even such a slipshod speaker as himself to take more than a few minutes to correct everything and send it up to the gallery. If there was any doubt about that, the matter could be brought to an issue very easily by getting the Principal Shorthand Writer at the bar of the House, and having him asked the question as to the way in which proofs were corrected by different members of the House. There was a question at issue between the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, and there was a difference of opinion between the Premier and many hon. members on that side of the Committee, as regarded the way in which that hon. gentleman revised his speeches. The hon. Premier had shown that his condescension only went down to a certain point. He said there were some members in the Committee—he assumed that he did not attempt to cast any reflections upon those members who supported him, and therefore he referred to members on the Opposition side—whom he would not condescend to have anything to do with. That was really doing it in almost too lordly a way. He had always thought the present was a Liberal Government, and a Government the leader of which would be happy to grasp the hand of the "horny-handed son of toil." But it seemed to be quite different. It seemed that the hon. gentleman was like the creature described by Hotspur, that came between him and—he could not exactly recall the words, but the hon. gentleman would know what he meant—that there was some fellow who came between him and interfered between him and his nobility, and that such a man must stand aside; that he was only going to argue with—not his equals, because he had no equals—but, at any rate, only with people that he would deign to cross ideas with. As for the riff-raff rabble—the fools—as he described one member of the Opposition, they must stand out of his way; the Liberal leader would have nothing to do with them. That was the leader of the people, the great Liberal, the man elected of the people. They had come to a sorry pass, indeed, if the people of the colony were to be led by such a man. They had been told of the traditions that attached to the unfortunate race from which the hon. gentleman was descended.

He hoped, at any rate, that the "larcenial" proclivities of his progenitors might not have been passed down to him. It was a rhyme taught to all the children that—

"Taffy was a Welshman,

Taffy was a thief,

Taffy came to my house, and stole a leg of beef"—

and so on. The hon. gentleman would understand the nature of what he had alluded to; and he would be willing, at any time, when the hon. gentleman was in any doubt as to the nature of the allusion he made, to describe fully and fairly the source from which that allusion was derived. There was no doubt that it was a most unfortunate nationality to belong to. However, he was certain that if the hon. gentleman remained long in power, even the traditional habits of his race would not enable him to take anything out of the Treasury. It would be left so bare that, unless he stole the deficit or ran away with the overdraft, there would be nothing left for him to take; he was perfectly satisfied of that. What he wanted to point out to the hon. gentleman was, that although he might be a very great statesman;—possibly he was; he doubted it though, but he was assuming the possibility;—he had no right, in his place in the Committee, to put upon one side any member of the Committee, no matter who he might be. Every representative in the Committee had an equal right to object to anything that might be stated even by the leader of the Government, and he was perfectly certain that, although there might be a small number on the Opposition side, there was not one who would not assert his independence when any such arrogance was shown as was exhibited by the Premier that night.

Mr. JORDAN said he felt sure that the hon. member for Mulgrave did not wish to accuse him of having wilfully misrepresented him. *Hansard* very distinctly said that the hon. member for Mulgrave stated he was in favour of giving a bonus in money of £20; but he would accept his explanation that that was a misreport. He had understood that the reporters, from the fact that they sent proofs to members, wished to be assisted in the matter of figures particularly; and as *Hansard* reports were constantly being quoted against hon. members by other hon. members, it seemed to him to be very important indeed that hon. members should have the privilege of correcting their speeches—not of altering them, but correcting them—and he hoped that the practice would not be laid aside.

Mr. FERGUSON said he did not agree with the Bill, but he would like a little information upon one point. Every member of the Committee knew he did not care for the Bill, and the more he looked at it the more he disliked it. He was certain it was the worst Bill that was ever brought before the Committee by the present Government. It was a Bill which provided for a large quantity of indentured or low-paid Continental labour being introduced into the colony; and they knew very well that the planters, for whom that labour was intended, would ever be ready to take advantage of the Bill; in fact, hon. members were aware that they were already prepared to take advantage of it to a very large extent. He wished to know how far did the Government intend to go in that matter? Of how many thousand immigrants a year did they propose to pay the passage, supposing the planters were prepared to indent them? Hon. members knew that those labourers were to be introduced at the expense of the taxpayer. Then how far were the taxpayers of the colony to be taxed for the purpose of introducing free immigrants? The hon. the Premier himself had told them that the

Bill was to be applied, first, to foreign countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Norway—

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. FERGUSON said he understood the hon. gentleman to say so. He understood that it was to be applied to those countries, and others, including Italy, he believed, and Germany. Well, how far were the Government prepared to tax the taxpayers of the colony to bring people of that kind into the country? That was what he wanted to know before the Bill was passed.

The PREMIER said the question was asked the previous day, and answered as fully as possible. It was impossible to say how many applications there would be. He had not the slightest idea how many there would be. Some hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House appeared to think that there would be no applications—that the Bill would be a dead-letter. Certainly they did not propose to introduce an enormous number; the first twelve months there would not be more than two thousand at the outside, perhaps not so many. He did not know how many would be applied for. If the number applied for was likely to be injurious to the country, the Government would hold their hand. They did not propose to expend money without the sanction of Parliament.

Mr. BEATTIE said he thought hon. members would be very glad if the hon. the Premier could give them some information as to how many free immigrants had been introduced into the colony during the last eighteen months—immigrants for whom no money had been received by the Government. They had heard a good deal of talk about the introduction of free immigrants. He was not afraid that those people would work for very low wages. Hon. members might depend upon it that after indentured labourers came here they would be perfectly satisfied that their agreements were in accordance with the general—the ruling rate of wages in the colony. They would have the necessary information before they entered into an agreement. If the people of the North who required cheap labour applied to the Government for indentured labourers, he thought, and had always thought, that it would be the duty of the Government, first, to try England, Ireland, and Scotland, and then go to the Continent—

Mr. MOREHEAD: They say they will not.

Mr. BEATTIE said he never heard the Premier say that. He had heard the hon. gentleman state that he intended to go to England, Ireland, and Scotland, although he said there was great difficulty in getting agricultural labourers; and he (Mr. Beattie) had no reason to doubt that statement, seeing the high authority from which the hon. gentleman obtained his information. He did not think it would be advisable to leave the getting of the class of labourers to be introduced under the Bill to the shipping agents, as he was perfectly satisfied that they would fill their ships very quickly, as they used to do when the Blackball line existed; and hon. gentlemen knew what class of labour those shippers introduced when the land-order system was in force. He would be very sorry to see the power given to shipowners to act as assistant immigration agents. He had no fear that the Bill would be the means of bringing out the low class of labour which hon. members opposite—particularly the hon. member for Rockhampton—seemed to fear. If applications were made for indentured labourers, it would be the duty of the Government to have the whole matter explained to the men whom it was intended to indent.

Mr. JORDAN said he did not wish to protract the debate, but he must refer to an error

into which the hon. member who had just sat down had fallen. The hon. gentleman said that the owners of the Blackball line were permitted to fill their ships with immigrants. That was a mistake. The fact of the matter was that the selection of immigrants under the old system was left to the Agent-General until 1865, when the colony commenced to build its railways. Then that officer got an order to set aside all certificates and forms as to the selection of navvies, and the selection of that kind of labour was left to the railway contractors. The Commissioner for Immigration was deprived entirely of the power of selecting them. The objectionable people were not selected by him, nor by the owners of the Blackball line.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not suppose the hon. member for Portitude Valley could have been in his place last evening, otherwise he would not have made the remarks he did just now, when he said he was perfectly certain that the Premier would go to the British Islands before going elsewhere for immigrants under the amending Bill. What he was about to read was what happened the previous evening. It was an unreviewed and truthful statement of what happened—

"He (Mr. Morehead) would therefore ask the Premier whether he would accept such amendments as would admit of the British Islands being exhausted before he went further afield for the immigrants he proposed to bring out?"

"The PREMIER: No, Mr. Fraser."

He had nothing else to say.

Mr. FERGUSON said it seemed to him that there was no limit to that class of labour, according to the answer just given by the Premier. The number of labourers to be introduced simply depended upon the number indentured by the planters. Hon. members knew that the Bill was brought forward especially to accommodate the planters, and they knew that the planters would indent labourers at the lowest rate they could get them, and that in the countries where it was intended to go for the labourers they could get them in thousands at a few shillings a week. The result would be that the planters would keep indenting every six months, because as fast as the labourers came they would leave them. He would guarantee that not 25 per cent. would remain on the plantations six months after their arrival; so that, as he had already said, the planters would keep indenting away every six months. He knew that from his own experience. He had employed men who had served three months in gaol. They had engaged for twelve months at £1 a week on a sugar plantation, but left before they had served their time. They would rather, as some of them told him, serve their twelve months in gaol. He had employed them after they had been three months in gaol, in order that they might get a pound or two, and be able to clear out of the district, which many of them did, some going to New South Wales. What he wanted to know was whether the Government were prepared to bring to the colony as many immigrants as the planters were prepared to indent, and the answer given by the Premier was to the effect that there would be no limit—that it would rest with the planters themselves.

The PREMIER said it was unfortunate that he was unable to make himself understood; but the fact was that he had expressed the very opposite—that it would not rest with the planters. He said that the Government would not allow the planters to bring out as many as they pleased; that the Treasury was not to be at the disposal of the planters, but that the system would be carried out under Government supervision. It was absurd to suppose that people

would be allowed to bring out as many as they chose. That was a system which was put a stop to when the present Government came into office, and he could assure the Committee that the Government intended to maintain a strict control over the expenditure on immigration.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the remarks of the hon. member only showed how useless was the Bill. If it was good for 1,000, was it not much better for 10,000? The hon. gentleman's remarks in reference to the Bill reminded him of the nurse in "Midshipman Easy," who said, "Excuse the thing; it is so small."

Mr. BLACK said he might give the Premier some sort of idea what number would in all probability be required. At present there were about 9,000 Polynesians in the country.

The PREMIER: More than that.

Mr. BLACK said there were about 9,000 or 10,000, exclusive of the time-expired men who had received certificates of exemption and the terms of their agreements extended over three years. Now, they might assume that 3,000 of those Polynesians returned to the islands annually, and that their places would have to be supplied by the new indentured labour, of which the Government said they intended to give an ample supply. No doubt the Pacific Island labour, judging from present appearances, was not likely to last; and, assuming that the principles advocated by the Government were successful, and that the European labour would adapt itself to plantation work, it would require 3,000 indentured European labourers to take the place of the 3,000 Polynesians who were leaving annually. Then there was another thing to be taken into consideration. He did not think he exaggerated when he said about 50 per cent. of the indentured labour would not fulfil their agreements; that, as soon as they became acquainted with the language and capabilities of the colony, they would break their agreements in the hope of participating in the higher wages which prevailed in other parts of the colony. He was certain that it was not the intention, nor would it be the intention, of the planters to put those men into gaol. If they did their work willingly they would receive the same treatment which Europeans always received at the hands of their employers; but if they showed an inclination to break their agreements the Premier need have no apprehension that he would have to build gaols in which to confine them, because the planters would let them go. To provide for the 50 per cent. who would break their agreements, they would require 50 per cent. in addition to the 3,000 he had already mentioned to keep up the supply. Therefore he was not going beyond the proper estimate when he said that between 4,000 and 5,000 would require to be indentured annually to take the place of the coloured men on the plantations. In estimating that number he did not take into consideration the possibility of any further extension of the industry. The numbers he had quoted were merely those required to take the place of the existing coloured labour. If the industry should extend—and he was sure it was the hope of every hon. member and of the people of Queensland that it should extend, under proper conditions—if the industry was to make any extension beyond its present position, it would require a largely augmented number of those labourers. With regard to the source of supply whence the labour was to be brought, he might safely say—and any impartial member would readily admit—that labour from England, Ireland, and Scotland was not to be got to work at the rates which the present condition of the sugar industry would allow the planters to pay.

Those rates were about 10s. or 12s. a week—10s. a week for the first twelve months and 12s. a week for the second year—and their own countrymen would not work at those rates; but he believed that there were thousands to be got on the continent of Europe who would gladly accept them. They would be perfectly prepared to sign agreements at home to work in Queensland for one or two years; but he very much doubted whether those men would be inclined to fulfil their agreements when they came to the colony and found that the rate of wages paid to men who were physically not more capable than themselves was very much higher. They would find out what the diggers were getting; what were the wages of labouring men on the railways, and of able-bodied men throughout the colony; and it was not in human nature to believe that any European, even from the most despotic country, after getting a taste of the free institutions of the colony, would settle down to work at a low rate of wages when people of the same colour were receiving 50 per cent. or 100 per cent. more.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he believed that after the Bill passed they were going on with the Defence Bill; but perhaps the two could be run in common. Could they not indent some cheap foreigners to do the fighting under the provisions of the Bill? Could they not indent a substitute? Would it not be very much better to defend the colony by the indenting clauses of the Bill? He thought that would be a good way of defending the colony, and therefore he suggested the possibility of working the Bill before the Committee in connection with the Defence Bill. He was perfectly certain that the Bill as it stood did not meet with the approval of a large section of the community; therefore he would ask the Premier whether, if eight or ten individuals elected to indent Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, or Germans to take their places as portions of the defence force, that would be within the meaning of the Bill should it become law?

Mr. GRIMES said the hon. member for Mackay had calculated that the Government would have to make provision for the labour done now by 3,000 kanakas, by introducing 3,000 labourers from Europe. But he thought that 500 men with proper implements and good horses, as far as the cultivation of cane was concerned, would be ample to do the work of 3,000 kanakas. He had been amongst the plantations in the North, and he knew that on some of them the work had to be done by hand labour. Very often the workmen had to skip over a rock the length of the table, on which there was no more soil than there was dust on the carpet. That was on some plantations; and if they did not get very cheap labour those plantations would have to go to the wall. There was no doubt about that; and he looked forward to seeing a number of plantations in the North failing, as, if they could not be sold, they would have to be given up in about two years, simply because they could not be cultivated. As soon as the couch-grass got amongst those stones there would be no getting rid of it, and the land would have to be abandoned. As far as the ordinary cane-land was concerned—that was, alluvial soil—one English or European labourer who understood the use of his implements, and was provided with good implements and a good horse to work them, would be able to do the work of six kanakas.

Mr. STEVENSON said the question raised by the hon. member for Rockhampton, and which had been so unsatisfactorily answered by the Premier, had opened up new ground. The hon. member for Mackay had stated the number of Germans, or whatever class of immigrants were to be introduced, who

would be required to take the place of the kanakas on the sugar plantations; but he did not know that the Bill was simply intended to bring in Germans for the sugar-planters. He understood that he could go and indent those Germans for his station, if he chose, just as well as the hon. member for Mackay could for his plantation. Where was it going to end? If those men were to be brought out simply for the planters they should be confined to the sugar plantations as the kanakas were now. He could not see where the Premier was going to draw the line. As the leader of the Opposition had said, if it was good for 1,000 it ought to be good for 10,000; and if it was a bad Bill it should be thrown out at once. The hon. Premier might tell them that he could hold his hand; but if it was a good thing for one man to have those labourers it was a good thing for another to have them. The Bill was a Bill to introduce cheap labour into the colony—all over the colony—not only for the sugar-planter, but for any man who liked to introduce it.

Question put and passed.

On Schedule F, as follows:—

Scale of Payments for Indented Passages.

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

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

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

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

The PREMIER said that on the second reading of the Bill it was pointed out that there might be an error in the ages, and that forty years would be too low. He then intimated that he thought so too, and that he was prepared to increase it. He thought forty-five would be a much better age. It was also suggested, in the course of the debate last night, that it might not be attempted to employ children in the field-work. He hoped that would not be attempted, and he thought it should be indicated that children under fifteen years of age should not be engaged as indented labourers. He proposed to alter the ages in the schedule to between "fifteen" and "forty-five." He moved, therefore, that the word "twelve" in the 1st line of the schedule should be omitted, with a view of inserting the word "fifteen."

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved that the word "forty" in the 1st line be omitted, with a view of inserting the word "forty-five."

Mr. JORDAN said he would suggest that the Premier alter the word to "fifty" instead of to "forty-five," as he thought that would be very much better. It might be perhaps because he was himself an old man, but he thought that when a man was fifty he was in his prime. A man of fifty was likely to have sons and daughters who would be very valuable to the colony, and he thought it was a pity, therefore, that a man of fifty should be practically excluded, as would be the case if the Premier's amendment was accepted.

The PREMIER said he thought forty-five was old enough, as they looked forward to the men who were brought out under the Bill settling in the country themselves for some considerable time.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would have agreed with the hon. gentleman had he accepted the suggestion made to him to bring out people of their own race. But when he found that the Emperor of Germany lived to the age of eighty years, and as the Bill was intended to import Germans, and Germans only, he quite agreed

with the hon. member for South Brisbane that they should make the age fifty years, or even a later period than that. He would point out to the Premier a story which he thought he had told the House before. It was gathered from the pages of a great writer—he thought, either Artemus Ward or Mark Twain. The narrator of the story was described as seeing a pilgrimage setting forth—or, rather, he met it on the way, and asked the leader of the caravan what the pilgrims were going forth for to do. The answer was that they were going forth west, to open up a new settlement. The narrator saw amongst those who were in this pilgrim body a very aged man—a man such as he fancied would be like some hon. members who had spoken on the other side of the Committee. The narrator asked, and very naturally, “Wherefore bring ye out this old gentleman?” The leader of the caravan said—“We do everything perfectly in America. We have perfected our scheme, and we are taking over this old gentleman with us to open the cemetery.” If it was proposed to have men of fifty brought out here to open cemeteries, he quite agreed with the amendment suggested by the hon. member for South Brisbane. He thought, however, they should stick to “forty-five” and let fifty-year-old men go, unless they could give them a guarantee that they would be buried at their own expense. He should have preferred himself that the hon. the Premier had left the age at forty. However, he supposed, as he had amended his own Bill, and as he probably knew its weak points best, they had better accept his amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER said he wished to move the substitution of “£2” for “£1” in the 1st line of the second column. It had been said in the course of the debate that persons desiring to introduce immigrants would be willing to pay that amount, and he thought it would be by no means too large an amount.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved the substitution of the word “fifteen” for the word “twelve” in the 7th line of the schedule.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER said that, as they had increased the rate to £2 for adults, he now moved that it be increased from 10s. to £1 for children.

Mr. MOREHEAD said one would think the hon. gentleman was speaking after dinner; he appeared to duplicate everything. He had completely changed the whole attitude of the Bill by his amendments in the schedule. Would he give them any reason for altering it? It was the backbone of the Bill, and, if he was going to take it out, it would be as well to let the jelly-fish flop down and have done with it.

Mr. LISSNER said he had been taunted by the Premier on the previous evening by the remark that he would be called a fool by his children for not voting for the Bill; but they would not do so now, as it was quite a different Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved that the words “forty-five” be substituted for “forty” in the last line.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. BLACK said it would be more in accordance with the Premier's former amendments if he had doubled the passage-money of all above forty-five.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Or doubled the ages.

The PREMIER said he would like to be able to give the hon. member credit for having some serious purpose in his remarks. He had explained

once or twice the difference between this schedule and that of the existing Act. The administration of the Bill was, of course, an entirely different thing from the small alterations contained in it. If hon. gentlemen desired, he would again explain the variations from the present Act.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition Benches: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER said that the present Act contained a Schedule D, originally framed for nominated passengers. Those passengers might be of any age; they might be the parents of the nominators, or they might be their grandchildren. When dealing with the question of indented labourers, a change was made in 1882. Up to that time the clause dealing with the subject had fixed the price at £6 for adults—that was to say, all above twelve years old—and £3 for children below that age. By the Act of 1882 it was proposed to reduce the rates to £2 for male adults over forty, and to £1 for females, with some other variations; but, instead of inserting a new schedule, the schedule applicable to nominated passengers was used, and the result was that the only provision that was made was for bringing out indented passengers themselves, and not their wives and children. What the Government desired to do was to bring out married men with families, who would be more likely to become permanent colonists; and it was with that idea that the schedule was altered. That was the object of the Bill; but it was also very proper that they should discuss the manner of its administration. The effect of the schedule as it stood would be that all indented labourers over forty-five would have to pay the whole amount of the passage money. The Government did not propose to go beyond that. If the labourers were married the Government would pay the passages of their wives and children at the rates fixed. That would be the operation of the Bill.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he wished to correct the hon. gentleman upon one point. He had described what he said was the intention of the Act of 1882, but that Act spoke for itself. There was not the slightest intention under that Act to pay for indented labourers under fifteen. The only men contemplated were labourers, and they were paid for at £2. The part of the schedule dealing with children did not apply to indented labourers; it was not applicable, nor was it meant to be applicable. The hon. gentleman wanted them to infer that that schedule was intended to be applicable to children, but it was not, as it was never intended to indent children as labourers.

The PREMIER said he considered that a great defect in the Act of 1882 was that it did not provide for paying the passages of the wives of labourers.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the hon. gentleman had not adverted to another point. Why did the hon. gentleman alter the scale of payment from £2 to £1, and then, when he altered the schedule, go back again from £1 to £2?

The PREMIER said he had explained that all before. The desire was to show what appeared to have been a mistaken idea—to show a special kindness to certain persons. It had since been pointed out that £2 could very well be paid. He was convinced by the argument, and therefore adopted the suggestion.

Mr. BLACK said that if the hon. member referred to the sugar-planters, and thought that they wanted any special kindness shown to them, he was woefully mistaken. If he thought that the planters were going to accept

his kindness by paying £1 a head for labourers, and throw the responsibility of introducing cheap labour upon them, he never made a greater mistake in his life. The sugar-planter wanted none of that sort of kindness, which was going to be the ruin of the working men of the country.

Question put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill, with amendments; the report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, said if there was any time after the disposal of private business to-morrow he hoped to be able to make some progress with the Defence Bill. He took that opportunity of saying, with reference to the marine force, that he proposed to introduce one or two amendments for the purpose of making the provisions relating to that force more distinct.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: When will the amendments be distributed?

The PREMIER said they would be ready to-morrow. They would not differ in form from anything in the Bill at present. They provided for the better application of one or two clauses to the naval force.

The House adjourned at four minutes to 10 o'clock.