

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 1884

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 13 November, 1884.

Question.—Defence Bill—third reading.—Members Expenses Bill—second reading.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTION.

Mr. ISAMBERT asked the Colonial Secretary—

Have the Government any intention to include Queensland in the Postal Union of the world? And what steps have been taken by the Postmaster-General to bring about such a result?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. W. Griffith) replied—

The Government are desirous of having this colony separately represented in the Postal Union, and they have been invited to appoint special representatives to be present at the Postal Union Congress to be held at Lisbon in February next. Mr. Garrick and Mr. Hemmant have been appointed accordingly, and have received the necessary instruction.

DEFENCE BILL—THIRD READING.

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

MEMBERS EXPENSES BILL—
SECOND READING.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to move the second reading of a Bill to provide for the payment of the expenses incurred by members of the Legislative Assembly in attending Parliament. It is a good many years ago since a Bill of this kind was introduced by the Government; but on more than one occasion it has been passed through the House, and rejected in another place. I do not think it necessary to go at length into the question of the payment of members of the Legislative Assembly, or even to go into the history of the matter in this colony. It has been thoroughly discussed and considered by the public for a great many years; and I am of opinion that a large majority of the people of this colony are of opinion that the members of this House should receive some remuneration for their expenses in attending Parliament. The system of payment of members exists in a large majority of the countries in which representative institutions exist. I am not going at present—because I do not think it necessary—to give an elaborate list of all the different countries in which the system exists, or the amounts paid in them. In this colony, I think, it is especially needful that there should be some remuneration paid to members of Parliament, because of the great distances they have to travel, and the difficulty of communication. There is certainly no other colony in which members have to submit to such long absences from their homes, as in Queensland, not only because of the long distances they have to travel, but because of the time it takes to get from one part of the colony to another. There are some members of this House who will have been absent from their homes this session for five or six months—not that they could not have gone back to them occasionally, but the distances are so great as to render it practically impossible for them to do so. I think the country constituencies especially should have a better opportunity than they have now of choosing local representatives. It is undoubtedly desirable that they should be able to do so. Up to the present we have not been in the habit of speaking of the member “from” such a place, as is done in some countries, but we speak here of the member “for” such a place. The fact is that in many parts of this colony the question of getting a local representative is a very difficult question, or where it is possible the choice is extremely limited. I think it may be said now that payment of members is part of the programme of the democratic party all over the world. It has not yet been adopted in England, but I have no doubt it will be adopted there some day. Without saying anything more upon the general system, I will refer to the system we propose. In the first place we do not propose to pay members of the Legislative Council, and I think I need not give the reason for that; nor is it proposed that salaried officers of the House or of the Government should receive any remuneration. We do not propose either to pay a fixed salary for every session, which is, I believe, the usual system adopted. That is the system in Victoria and New Zealand, although the amount is not the same in each. In New Zealand the practice is to put the amount on the Estimates annually; and it is annually voted by Parliament. I much prefer that the system to be adopted should be the one proposed in this Bill, and that it should be dealt with in a separate measure. I should have no hesitation, for my part, if it should become necessary, to adopt the New Zealand plan; I should not have the slightest hesitation in making provision for the payment of members on the Estimates, because

it is a mode of expending the public money which I think this House is competent to deal with. What we propose to do is to make a daily allowance for expenses. The Government propose to amend the Bill now before the House when it gets into committee, in a manner which I shall presently point out. The schedule of the Bill contains the scheme for the payment of the expenses of members. The 1st clause of the Bill provides that the expenses mentioned in the schedule shall be paid to members of the Assembly, and that the allowances for mileage and passage money shall not be payable in respect of more than one journey to and fro in or for any one session, unless in the event of an adjournment extending over thirty days. The 3rd subsection provides that—

“For every day on which the Legislative Assembly is appointed to sit, and on which a member does not give his attendance, there shall be deducted from the sum which would otherwise be payable to him in respect of the daily allowance in the schedule specified, a sum bearing the same proportion to the whole of such sum as the number of days on which he fails to give his attendance bears to the whole number of days on which the Assembly is appointed to sit.”

That would deal with the case of a country member. If the House was appointed to sit four days in the week, and the country member only attended for two days out of the four, he would only receive remuneration to the extent of one-half of the amount payable for attendance during the week. The 4th subsection states that the allowances shall be payable “as and when the expenses shall have been actually incurred,” but there is a proviso to the effect that—

“No member shall be entitled to receive in respect of his attendance in any one session of Parliament a larger sum than two hundred pounds over and above the allowance for mileage and passage money.”

If the Bill passes it will no doubt be necessary to adopt some system of ascertaining what members are present on sitting days; and that will have to be provided for in the Standing Orders. The schedule provides the amount of remuneration proposed to be paid. The 1st paragraph provides:—

£ s. d.
“For each mile beyond the first three, which shall for the purpose of attending Parliament be actually and necessarily travelled by land by the nearest practicable route between the usual residence of the member in Queensland and the nearest seaport or railway station, or the place where Parliament shall be appointed to sit, whichever shall be nearest to such residence 0 1 6”

That is, from the member's residence to Brisbane, or wherever Parliament shall be appointed to sit. The 2nd paragraph provides for “the actual cost of passage by sea to and fro between any such seaport and the place where Parliament is appointed to sit.” Then the 3rd paragraph deals with the daily allowance. As explained in the schedule, it is that for each day during which any member is necessarily absent from the purpose of attending Parliament from the town or place in which he usually resides or carries on business, he shall receive the sum of £2 2s. It has been objected that that is ambiguous; and it has also been objected with a great deal of force that it makes a great distinction between members who live within three miles of Brisbane, and members who live beyond that distance. It is proposed when the Bill is in committee to amend that paragraph. The daily allowance proposed here is £2 2s., but that is a matter of detail. If the allowance be paid for every day during which a member is present in his place in Parliament, or is necessarily absent from his place of residence or business, it will meet the objection I have

mentioned. The Bill is proposed to remunerate members for the pecuniary loss to which they are put by attending Parliament, and I do not think it desirable to do any more. I should be very loth to propose a system of payment of members, which would render the position of a member of Parliament a salaried office to which men might look forward as a means of livelihood. That I think would be very undesirable, but I think that some of the expenses which members incur in attending Parliament should be paid. The usual argument brought forward in opposition to the system of payment of members, or reimbursing them for their expenses is—look at Victoria! And the opponents of the system say that since Victoria has had payment of members the character of her Parliament has deteriorated. But that is simply an assertion, and it is an assertion which, so far as I have been able to ascertain, is entirely without foundation. I believe that there is not the slightest evidence that anything of the kind has happened. I believe, on the contrary, that the different parts of the colony are better represented, and that the class of representatives has in no way deteriorated; and the paid representatives more fully represent the different parts of the colony than they were represented before the introduction of the system. There has been an extreme change of opinion amongst members of this House on this subject. I think I remember that the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition was at one time in favour of payment of members; and I do not know what are the principal reasons he relies upon to justify his change of opinion. I have myself always been in favour of it; and it is now more than twelve years since I gave my first vote and spoke upon this question. The history of payment of members, from the time of the earliest authority quoted on that occasion—"Aristotle"—down to that time, may be learnt from the debate on that occasion. Hon. members, I believe, thoroughly understand the question of payment of members, or payment of members' expenses, and I think the country also understands it; so that neither for the purpose of instructing hon. members, nor for the purpose of instructing the public, do I think it necessary to make a long speech on the subject. The amendment which it is intended to propose will make the 3rd paragraph of the schedule read thus: that "for each day during which any member attends in his place in Parliament, or is necessarily absent for the purpose of attending Parliament from the town or place in which he usually resides or carries on business," he shall receive a sum of two guineas. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think there has ever been a time in the colony when it was more requisite that reasons should be given for the introduction of a Bill of this kind than at present. The hon. gentleman, however, declines to give any reasons for the introduction of this measure, or, in fact, to make a speech upon it, because, he says, the question has so often been before this House and so often sanctioned by it. Well, sir, it has been before the House on several occasions, and has often received the sanction of this Chamber, and it has been as often thrown out by the Upper House. But I think the fact that a similar measure was brought before the Assembly in 1882, and was rejected by a majority of twenty, ought to lead the hon. gentleman to consider the reasons why a change of this kind should now be proposed. The hon. gentleman claims to have been consistent in his support of payment of members. I claim, sir, that he has been consistent in advocating it in words, and letting us understand by his actions that he does not believe in

it. In 1882, when the measure to which I have referred was under discussion, he told us that in the abstract he did not believe in payment of members, but as it was a part of the programme of his party he supported it. I have been an advocate of payment of members in this House, and in the political arena elsewhere, but I have since changed my mind completely on the matter. I gave my reasons for that change not only to this House but also to my constituents, and I need not go over the ground again now. I may, however, say that the alteration in my views on this subject is the result of experience that I have gained in the Australian colonies and in other parts of the world—in fact, it is the result of a fuller study of the matter. I have not changed my opinions since I spoke on the subject in 1882, when this House refused by a majority of twenty votes to accede to the proposition that members should be paid. That is a division that is not likely to take place on the present occasion. It is possible that the majority may be on the other side, but I am quite sure that we shall not have the same number of members voting now as we had then. It is something like indecency to bring down a measure of this sort at the tail-end of the session, when so many members are absent, especially so many of those who, according to the arguments of the Premier, are most interested in it—namely, the gentlemen who reside up-country at a long distance from the capital. We are actually bringing a proposition before the country, to appropriate to ourselves from the consolidated revenue a sum of £10,000. It will not be less than that, and it will probably be a great deal more; and we are to do that not only for the future years of the present Parliament, but, so far as I can understand, as soon as the Bill is passed—if it does pass—vouchers can be issued, and we can claim payment for the work we have actually done during the present session. I think there is an amount of immodesty about that which may be characteristic of this House, but I hope it is not. What have we done for our constituents that we should come forward now and claim payment? Was payment of members a prominent article of the creed of what the hon. gentleman calls the democratic party at the last election? I hold that it was not. It was very little heard of at the last election, and possibly it was not heard of at all in those constituencies to which the hon. member contends payment of members peculiarly applies. The hon. gentleman said he would refrain from giving arguments in favour of the principle he advocates. Well, I do not feel inclined to follow in giving arguments against payment of members. But I will discuss the reasons that he has given why the principle is peculiarly applicable to this colony. He says that a great number of members have to come a long distance, and that those members ought to be remunerated. Now, let us brush aside altogether the delusion that underlies the whole of this Bill, and see what is actually proposed. The title is "A Bill to provide for the payment of the expenses incurred by members of the Legislative Assembly in attending Parliament," but the Bill is actually a Payment of Members Bill; and any little delusion of that sort is swept away by the intimation of the Premier that it is proposed to make an amendment in the schedule by which all members will be paid, town members as well as country members. The amount of money proposed to be paid for travelling expenses is a mere bagatelle compared with what will be paid to members attending Parliament, or who are necessarily absent from the town or place in which they reside for the purpose of attending Parliament. A man may get drunk on the road, and may not get to the House at all; but according to

this Bill, so long as he leaves home with the intention of attending Parliament, he will be entitled to two guineas a day. I knew that the proposal would result in a Payment of Members Bill. I predicted last year that it would come to this. It is now said it would be quite unfair to pay members who come from the North and West, and refuse payment to other members who give their attention to public affairs because they reside in town. I never could see the distinction between the payment of the expenses of members and the payment of members, and the Premier proposes by his intended amendment to sweep away the distinction that has been made in this Bill. Has the country ever asked for such a measure as this at all? I say it has not. The members who are likely to vote for it have said that it is a pity that those members who come from the North and West at considerable expense to themselves should not be paid, and I have contended that if you pay Northern members you will soon come to the conclusion that similar arguments apply to other members; and that is what has actually resulted. It is asked, why should not one be paid as well as another, and this, as I said before, is a Payment of Members Bill. It is proposed to pay two guineas a day to every member who gives his attendance in Parliament, or leaves his home with the intention of giving his attention to the affairs of the country, but who, by some fortuitous circumstances, may never get to Parliament. I shall have something hereafter to say with reference to the deductions proposed to be made, but they are matters of detail, and I need not enter upon them now. The amendment of which the Premier has given notice has destroyed the pretence that this is simply a Bill to reimburse members for their actual expenses; because there must be an immense inequality in the expenses of various members, which the Bill does not recognise at all. It is simply a Payment of Members Bill. So long as the country can find members willing to perform their duties, why should we rush in and say, "You must not do that unless the country pays you for your services"? Why should that principle be introduced unless it is demanded by the country, or unless we have seen some evils arising from the fact that members are not paid? Have any such evils arisen in this or any other colony? Have we seen a class of men, whose ability, education, and interest in public affairs makes it desirable that they should represent constituents here, excluded from the parliamentary arena by poverty alone? There have been no such men in this colony or any other colony. We have seen, no doubt, a number of pretentious men who would like to be in Parliament, but whenever we have seen a man of conspicuous ability he has always found some means, by the mere force of his ability, of getting into Parliament. The way payment of members actually should take place is in the style of payment of members of old in England. When the knights of the shire were sent up to represent the commons in Parliament they were paid; but they were not paid out of the consolidated revenue of the country. They were paid by the people whose interests they were sent up to represent. That is the proper kind of payment of members. If any constituency sees a gentleman whose ability they appreciate, and whose interest it would be to look after their interests, they should elect him and pay him for his services; and such a man would have the respect of the people here. Now, what other classes of people who give similar services to the country are paid? Are town councillors paid in this colony or any of the adjoining colonies? or members of divisional boards? They render gratuitous services, and are

chosen from the best members of the community, and it has never been pretended that better men would be chosen if they were paid. The community find that their interests are looked after well by men who are not paid, and they believe they would get a worse class of men if payment of members were the rule. Payment of members, thank God, is not the rule in the Australian colonies, but we have seen it tried in Victoria. The hon. gentleman contents himself with meeting the argument that it is a failure there, by simply saying that in his opinion it has not been a failure, and that there is a better House there than there was before. I do not think that is the opinion of the Press of the country, and I am quite sure it is not the opinion of the electors generally in Victoria. In fact, we have seen a conspicuous example of the failure of payment of members in Victoria in the tyranny not only of one side of the House but of both sides. We have seen Sir James McCulloch in power, backed by a body of paid members, and able to retain power till the sense of the country was completely against him; and in the same way we have seen Mr. Berry, backed by a majority in Parliament, hold office against the opinion of the country, as the results of the elections conclusively proved. It has been conspicuously the case that wherever payment of members has been tried it has had a consolidating effect on the Government side of the House, and makes the party in power immovable, notwithstanding the opinion of the country, until Parliament expires by effluxion of time. That triennial Parliaments is a necessary corollary to payment of members no one who has studied the question will deny; and the hon. the Premier must be prepared to go a great deal further, and see annual parliaments ultimately asked for if we have payment of members. I deny altogether that Victoria is a country to which we can look as an example of the good effects of the system. I claim that it is an example of its bad effects, and if the matter were doubtful, I claim, at all events, that if payment of members did not exist there the country would be so much the better for the money saved. The Government are proposing an experiment which is going to cost us at the present time, according to the estimate in the Bill, £10,000 a year.

The PREMIER: Not nearly as much as that.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: If the hon. member wants me to go into a calculation, I shall very soon show him that it will be a great deal more than £10,000 a year. Fifty-five members at £200 a year—how much is that?

Mr. DONALDSON: Take seven members off—the Ministers.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Even then it is very little under £10,000 a year. There can be very little doubt that the maximum will be reached by all the members. I claim that Victoria is an argument in favour of those who oppose this system of payment of members. The hon. member has told us that in some countries at the present day payment of members is the rule. Well, it is in Germany and in France.

The PREMIER: Everywhere on the Continent except in Italy.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Everywhere on the Continent! I suppose the hon. member wants to claim Russia too; and I will grant him Russia. Italy is a conspicuous example of the good that arises from the non-payment of members, because it certainly has the best Parliament in Europe. The hon. member for Rosewood looks very glum at me when I put Italy before Bismarck, but he need not do that. I would no more think of drawing an

argument from Germany with regard to parliamentary government than from Russia. America is the next country put forward as an example. Well, I hope we are not so degraded a lot as the American representatives, for anyone who has read the history of the great body of them, has studied their conduct, and noticed the jobs that have been perpetrated by them, will reflect a long time before he will do anything to assimilate us to them. I do not say it is in consequence of the payment of members that they are such a bad lot, but we ought to realise the fact that, without payment of members, we are a far purer body of men when compared with the American representatives; and we ought not to be led away by the argument that because they are paid we ought to be. The jobbery of the American Legislature has been conspicuous throughout the civilised world, and has been a blot upon all representative institutions. We come now to Victoria, and I say that, in the opinion of every thinking man, to say the least of it, payment of members there has been a waste of money. In my opinion it has been detrimental to the colony, because it has shut out a class of men who otherwise would have been eligible, and who would have been returned to Parliament. Now, in 1882, when the Premier brought this matter before the House, he rightly, I think, intimated—in fact it was in one of the resolutions—that they should not apply to the existing Parliament. In bringing forward the Triennial Parliaments Bill this year, he took very good care that that should not apply to the present Parliament either; but he has gone further in this case, and if the Bill pass not only will the members of the present Parliament be paid, but the members who have sat during this session. I hold that it is actually indecent, in a thin House, and before members have had an opportunity of consulting their constituents, to come down now and, without asking the country, to actually take the money out of the Treasury to pay ourselves. There is no other one between us and the Treasury, except the Governor and the Upper House; but the Upper House to a certain extent block the way; and I question very much whether the Premier is in earnest in his proposal. I do not believe that he believes in the payment of members. I believe, if his heart had been in it, he would have made a better speech than he did when moving the second reading of the Bill; and he has brought the matter forward knowing that the Upper Chamber will not agree to it unless they themselves are included in the scheme. I believe they will be an effectual bar to the passage of the Bill, and I am very much inclined to think that it was intended that that should be so. The amount of £10,000 a year that our salaries will cost the country is money that can be ill spared at the present time. I believe, myself, that the Treasurer will have to face a deficit when he comes before us again; I believe that every class of the community is commencing to foresee bad times, and that some of them are actually feeling the effects of depression, and that we should, without the leave of the people, vote such a large sum of money to ourselves is a fact that we shall have to account for to our constituents. The main argument of the Premier is that it is a hard thing for members living at a distance to come here and give their services to the country for nothing. Well, I will draw your attention, sir, to what the division will be when the question comes to a vote; and you will find that it is not the members who come from a distance who will be found in the majority. It never has been so; the members who live nearest to the House have always looked forward to the day when they would be paid for their services; and the men who come from a distance are not the men

who have hitherto voted in favour of being paid for doing the work of the country. Not only that, but the question has been brought conspicuously before the outside districts as well as the inside districts, and I will say this: that the outside districts have always repudiated the idea of the payment of members. The principle of payment of members' expenses, the Premier said, was becoming recognised by the democratic party; but what he means by the democratic party in the country—in a country which is purely democratic—I do not know. No matter how many sections we may be divided into, we are all democratic: we live in a democratic country, and I do not know that one party is more democratic than another. That argument, therefore, conveys nothing to my mind at all except this: that I know of a certain section of the party opposite with whom payment of members has been a constant cry at election times; whilst the verdict of the country, as far as I know, has always been that we can well afford to put off the consideration of the question. In 1872, 1873, 1874, and 1876 we agreed to the payment of members, but it was at the latter date we began to see the evil effects of it in other colonies, and it was at that time also that the other House commenced to reconsider their position and whether they would be safe in rejecting the principle again. In 1882, certainly the biggest majority who ever voted against the principle voted against it then. In all, of a House of fifty-four members, forty-nine actually voted. I hold that this is not a time to bring forward a Bill of this sort; irrespective of the waste of time caused by it, it is positively indecent to introduce the Bill at this stage. When we see the prospects I have referred to before us we should not at the fag-end of a session come forward and ask the country to remunerate us individually, not only for what we are going to do in future sessions, but for what we have done already. I do not think myself that it is decent, and I do not think any member who votes for the measure will be able to tell the tale of the session to his constituents. It must be remembered that the money will come out of the consolidated revenue; but I think that, even if the matter were brought before the constituencies, and they were asked to remunerate the members who represented them, the great majority of members returned to Parliament would be unpaid men.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) said: I sincerely hope the Bill will become law; and I do not feel the least alarm at what has been said by the leader of the Opposition. I know for a fact that ever since this question has been mooted I have always supported it. I have gone before my constituents time after time, and advocated the principle of payment of members. I believe I have stood more contested elections than any other member of the House, and I have always been successful but once, and that was when I was opposed by the leader of the Opposition.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I know of another time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was only defeated once, and that was by the present leader of the Opposition. There is nothing new about this Bill. On two occasions, I know, the principle of payment of members has been affirmed by Parliament, and it is not at all surprising that the Bill in which that principle was embodied was thrown out by the Upper House, because they were exempted from it. No Parliament, I am certain, would ever venture to pay the hon. members of the Upper House, who are nominated by the Governor in Council. It would be simply

pensioning them on the country for all time. If it should ever happen that the colony had a corrupt Government, whenever vacancies occurred in the Council it would be the easiest thing in the world for the Premier of the day to pension off a needy friend or a troublesome opponent to the Upper House. To pay the members of that Chamber would be monstrous. I hope that after the present Bill has been read a third time the Premier will put it beyond the power of the Council to interfere with it by placing a sufficient sum on the Estimates for the purpose, and voting the money. What is there deplorable about members receiving payment for their services to the State? Do we not all travel free on the railways now? Do we not have cheap dinners down in the Refreshment Rooms, for which Parliament votes each year a large sum to subsidise the caterer? Have we not a splendid stable for our horses, and a groom to look after them, with accommodation for our carriages? Who pays for that?

THE HON. SIR. T. MCILWRAITH: I pay for all I get.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am very glad to hear it. Having all those conveniences found for him by the State, why, in the name of common sense, should not a man be paid for his loss of time in attending to the business of the country? I maintain that we shall never have an honest Parliament until we have payment of members. Hon. members may laugh, but that is my belief. The leader of the Opposition said it was not the men who came from long distances who wanted to be paid. That is quite true at present, and it is possible that when the question comes to a division they will vote against it. But I can quite understand that. The men who come from long distances are men of wealth, and they come here to protect their own interests. Of course such men will vote against payment of members. But the object of the Bill is to give a wider choice to the electors; to enable them to return men who are more likely to represent their interests. Everybody knows that the moment a man becomes wealthy he becomes a Conservative, and his chief object in life is to keep what he has got and to get more. When the Bill becomes law the electors will be able to return men who will come here to represent the interests of the constituencies, and not of themselves. I am certain the Bill will pass this Chamber; and I trust it will not be necessary to submit it afterwards to the tender mercies of the Upper House. Where does the deterioration come in? New Zealand has payment of members, yet they seem to get on very well, and I cannot perceive any serious deterioration among them; and their Parliament, I might say, will compare favourably—almost, I might say—with that of Queensland. Then there is Victoria. Where is the great damage that payment of members has done to Victoria? On the contrary, Victoria is, I maintain, the most prosperous colony in the group. It is a most extraordinary thing about these evils that are going to follow the passing of the Bill. It is not necessary for me to take up the time of the House. The question has been discussed over and over again, and I am satisfied that the majority of the constituencies are thoroughly in favour of it; and they may well be, seeing the vastly wider choice it will afford them to find a representative. It is a very poor compliment to the constituencies to say that they will not know a demagogue or a stump orator from a man who is likely to represent them well. I have no fear on that point, and my impression is that the first Parliament elected under the system of payment of members will be superior to anything we have ever had yet. I therefore trust the Bill will become law.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I think, sir, we may pay the hon. gentleman who has just sat down the compliment of saying that he has followed his leader's example very closely. Like the Premier, he has thrown no light on the subject, and has avoided the discussion of it. The Premier stated he did not intend to discuss it.

THE PREMIER: At length.

Mr. ARCHER: The Premier did not discuss it at all. He explained the Bill a little, but he gave no reason why, in his opinion, the Payment of Members Bill—the name “Members Expenses Bill” seems to have been dropped—should be adopted, or how it would lead to an improvement on the existing state of things. He did indeed refer us to a previous speech of his delivered some twelve years ago, when I had not the pleasure of being present in the House; and I do not think the hon. gentleman will be offended when I tell him that I do not intend to read up that speech. The Premier might at least have paid us the compliment of stating the reason why he has brought in the Bill now, and why he thinks the passing of it will be an advantage to the country. For myself, I can see no reason to anticipate that it will be of the slightest advantage to the country. As long as I have lived in Queensland—and I have lived here a very long time—I am not aware of any person who has been anxious to become a member of Parliament, and who has had the slightest chance of being elected, being disqualified by reason of poverty. On the contrary, where men of equal social standing opposed each other, it was not the poorest man who got returned. The Minister for Works, who is probably the wealthiest man of the House, has not been particularly unfortunate in his appeals to electorates. He has plenty of leisure without having this money paid him, and we have perfect confidence in him. He is a living witness of the fact that it is not for want of payment of members that poor men are not elected, but that the people elect wealthy men in preference to others. Nothing has been said on the other side to show that there is any reason why, if the Bill pass, it will be a benefit. If the leader of the Government had taken the trouble to give us reasons we might have combated them; as, however, he remained silent in that respect, all we on this side can do is to decidedly deny what the hon. gentleman says—namely, that the Bill will be an advantage to the country. I think there is a good reason why the hon. gentleman did not enumerate the States where members now receive payment. His mind is far too logical not to see that he had to do something more than that. What he has to prove is not that the greater number of the legislative assemblies in the world are paid, but that the paid assemblies are better representative bodies than the unpaid ones. That is the first thing. Then he has to prove that their being better is caused by the payment. Now, I do not think that is the case. As far as my reading goes, I say it is decidedly not so. I repeat what has fallen from the leader of the Opposition, that, at all events on the continent of Europe, Italy is far above any other representative bodies in its independence and in the manner in which it conducts its business. We all know how the French are at present conducting their business; and we know how that grand man, Bismarck, influences the Legislative Assembly of Germany; we know quite well that again and again he has forced his military dicta through the House in spite of the majority against him, as far as their opinions went. We know quite well that an adverse vote of the German Parliament has not the slightest effect upon the Ministry of the day, who still remain and

carry on the government of the country; in fact we can hardly look upon it as a constitutionally governed country at all. It is a country where the Assembly may, perhaps, vote a certain amount of money, but it is not one in which the Ministry is changed when in a minority. Therefore these examples do not appeal to us. The only nations that appeal to us are those which, to some extent at all events, carry out our own system—that is, make the life of the Ministry dependent upon the majority of the Legislature; and which, at the same time, carry out in other ways what is generally called the British Constitution, although of course it is an unwritten one. The only nation of that kind on the continent of Europe, with the exception of Italy, is France, which to a certain extent does change its Ministry on an adverse vote. In Italy, the system is carried out thoroughly. In the United States it is not so, because the Ministry is elected for four years at the will of the President. But, anyway, I am prepared to prove that in those countries where payment of members does not exist there is better government than in countries where it does exist. I will take the mother of all parliaments—the Parliament of England—and I deny that that is any worse than it was when it was a paid assembly in the sense spoken of by the hon. member for Mulgrave. It is an assembly upon which every free-governed country is trying to base itself. We are not trying to base ourselves upon it, because we inherit it. We inherited that constitutional form of government which we brought with us, and we are accustomed to it here. I believe that the assemblies in other parts of the world where members are paid, instead of being improved by the system, as the Minister for Works said, have been deteriorated by it. And there is some reason why they should be. Take, for example, America, where men are actually making politics a means of living.

The PREMIER: They are getting good salaries.

Mr. ARCHER: Just so; and you will find that in a constitutional assembly where there are paid members there will be professional politicians. What is to prevent them from doing as we are doing, and getting very good salaries? This is just the beginning of the thing. In all countries where members are paid there is a tendency to increase the payment until, as in America, travelling money and the payment the members receive reach to such an amount that they enable a man, with the "lobbying" and other means by which money is made, to reap fortunes. That cannot be done here, but by introducing the system of payment of members we shall introduce a system that will lead to that; while if we do not introduce payment of members there is no chance of such a thing taking place. I have already said that there is really nothing to refute on this question. I believe the hon. gentleman who introduced the Bill wished to say as little as he could on it, because, although of course his profession enables him to speak on all sides of any question, I believe he has not this Bill at heart and does not care much about it. I may say, too, that I agree with the leader of the Opposition that it is indecent to introduce the Bill at this time. It is indecent to make it retrospective, to make us vote ourselves money when we came down here without the slightest expectation of it. Although hon. members may favour the Bill, they ought certainly not to do so with the intention of being paid for services given before the Bill becomes law; they have only a right to expect payment after it becomes law. There is certainly actual indecency in asking us to pass this Bill for the purpose of paying ourselves for back time. I do not think

I ever heard of anything that showed such a real want of dignity, as that members who came here without payment, promising to do the best they could for the country, should vote themselves remuneration for the time since they left their homes. It is so utterly beneath the dignity of the members of this House that I am perfectly astounded that the question is introduced in this way. Of course, I suppose a pretty compact body on the other side will vote for the Bill. I believe myself that the matter is one that shows such a want of delicacy, and such a wish to get hold of a sum of public money, and an attempt to vote themselves payment for the present session, that I hope some of the members on the opposite side will, at all events, try and make the Bill prospective and not retrospective. I shall give my vote against it, and I must express my most thorough belief that if the Bill pass it will be a great evil to the country, and that the tone of this House will not improve but deteriorate considerably.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to say that I am thoroughly in favour of the Bill now before the House. Before ever I had the honour of a seat here I had the same opinion, and I am more decided in that opinion now than I was then, from all I have seen of the elections and hon. members who have been elected at different times for different constituencies. We know that in such a country as this, where the population is so scattered, and where some parts are so far away from the seat of government, it is very difficult to find suitable members who can spare time to sit in this House for some months and leave their own business, which they have to attend to. For that reason I believe thoroughly in the Bill, as it was brought in for the payment of the expenses of members who are absent from their homes, because those are the persons it will apply to principally. Beyond that, I believe in the entire principle of payment of members. I was thoroughly satisfied to vote for the Bill without mentioning this: that we in Brisbane or near it are not at the same expense or trouble as far-distance members are in attending the House. It applies much more to the outside constituencies, because the only men who can really and fairly advocate the claims of a constituency are those who know what its requirements are; and we have found so often in this House that it is not a good thing for the House or the country that men living in Brisbane, who hardly ever went out of Brisbane up to the time they had to seek an election, should be returned for Northern constituencies. I can instance the hon. gentleman who sits at the head of the Treasury benches (the Attorney-General), a gentleman well able to advocate a Northern constituency if he knew anything about it and understood what it wanted; but all he can understand now is simply from letters he receives from it, without knowing anything at all about the district himself; and I am satisfied that if payment of members is carried, as I hope it will be, that gentleman will take an inside instead of an outside constituency. I do not mean to say he cannot have a seat without going far from home; but the outside constituencies will be represented by men who are in a better position to understand their requirements. There was one remark made by the leader of the Opposition which I will refer to. He said that the matter of payment of members was not referred to at the last general election. All I can say is, that at all the meetings I held I mentioned the fact that it was on the programme, and in all cases I made a particular point of telling them that I thoroughly believed in it. There are some on the democratic side who do not understand it,

who are not in favour of any man being paid if they are not paid themselves, and they would like to see members of Parliament doing the work, as heretofore, without any payment; but the majority, I found, were perfectly satisfied, and thoroughly believed in it. To show my constituents that I believed in the system thoroughly—and that I went further—I told them that I believed that from the day that any gentleman was nominated by the electors, or asked by requisition or otherwise to sit in Parliament, he should not have to pay one shilling expense. That was my belief, and I stated it on all occasions. The candidate's expenses should be paid by his constituents up to the time he took his seat in Parliament, and then he should be paid out of the consolidated revenue by the country; and, to show that I was always firm upon that point, I shall read an extract that I read at several of my meetings, from the autobiography of a well-known author—John Stuart Mill. In speaking of election expenses, he says:—

"Now it was and is my fixed conviction that a candidate ought not to incur one farthing of expense for undertaking a public duty. Such of the lawful expenses of an election as have no special reference to any particular candidate ought to be borne as a public charge, either by the State or the locality. What has to be done by the supporters of each candidate in order to bring his claims properly before the constituency should be done by paid agency, or by voluntary subscription. If members of the electoral body, or others, are willing to subscribe money of their own for the purpose of bringing by lawful means into Parliament someone who they think would be useful there, no one is entitled to object; but that the expense or any part of it should fall on the candidate is fundamentally wrong—because it amounts in reality to buying his seat. Even on the most favourable supposition as to the mode in which the money is expended, there is a legitimate suspicion that anyone who gives money for leave to undertake a public trust has other than public ends to promote by it, and a consideration of the greatest importance: the cost of elections when borne by the candidate deprives the nation of the services, as member of Parliament, of all who cannot or will not afford to incur a heavy expense."

That is the opinion which I stated clearly at all elections; and I repeat that I am of the same opinion now; because I am perfectly satisfied that this country, when the payment of members' principle is carried, will be better represented from all points than at present. It is well known that the Conservative party, or the moneyed men, have a real objection to this, and for very good reasons on their side, as I can tell, for we know that it is a common thing for the moneyed parties to bring out men to go into Parliament who have not a shilling of their own, and pay all their expenses during the elections. That was done to my knowledge at the last election. They could do that, and consequently they could override the democratic people of this colony in that way, or try to do it. In all cases they cannot carry that out; but it is tried, and often successfully; because, as is well known, money is a great power and always will be, and the man who possesses the money, if he only chooses to spend enough of it, can carry his ends in any way. The leader of the Opposition has instanced that America is not a very good example of the success of the payment of members system, and he alluded to the great amount of jobbery in the American Parliament. I do not think that comes very well from the hon. gentleman, because he must know that in our Parliament—small in proportion—there is an equal amount of jobbery. And no man knows that better than the hon. gentleman. Though our country is so much smaller, and big rings have not the standing they have in America, they try to stand, and if they get a footing there will be as great jobbery as in the American Parliament. There was one other remark made by the leader of the Opposition, and that was that the leader of the

Government brought the Bill forward in a half-hearted way and he was satisfied he did not believe in it. I do not know any more about the leader of the Government's belief than the hon. gentleman does; but I do not think the Premier would have brought it into the House unless he did believe in it. I asked him only a few days ago, on which side he had spoken years back when he had spoken on this question? The Premier replied that he had always advocated it, and I take it that that proves that the leader of the Government was always in favour of it, and that it was not only for the purpose of pleasing his party that the measure was brought in. The leader of the Opposition said that the Upper House will throw it out. The hon. gentleman knows so well how that House was packed, and how the majority of it is disposed, that he has only just to tell us here that the Upper House will throw it out and that is enough. If the hon. gentleman had considered that for one moment he would never have made that statement. The only way to get over the difficulty is to do as has been done in other places, and that is simply that the vote of this House shall carry this payment. Let it be placed on the Estimates the same as is done in New Zealand, year by year. The next Parliament, when the leader of the Opposition comes into power, if they do not think it is advisable, need not place the amount on the Estimates; and then the country can see who is the better man and which is the better idea. The time of the hon. gentleman will come, and then he need not put the amount on the Estimates, and thus show the country that he is very anxious not to have the money of the country wasted. It is well known that we have a precedent to go on in this House. We know that when a Bill was before this House, and the leader of the Opposition could not carry that Bill in committee, he got a "round robin" signed by his party, and the Bill was passed in that way.

Mr. ARCHER: It was not a Bill at all.

Mr. KELLETT: The hon. member for Blackall says it was not a Bill at all. The hon. member is quite right: it was not a Bill, but it was a vote that was asked for; and it is tantamount to the same thing, because this will result in a vote upon the Estimates. Hon. members will see this is a matter we have a good precedent for, and it will be a much smaller matter than the one I have referred to. It has been said that the times are not favourable; that we have had bad seasons, and we should remember that we shall have to go before our constituents if we pass this Bill. Well, I am quite prepared to go before my constituents, because every time I have gone before them I have advocated the same thing, whether they cared to reject me or not. I do not think I am likely to change my opinions in the way hon. gentlemen opposite have done. It comes to this: the big men do not care twopence about it. It is not hundreds they want to gain in this House, because I know men who gain thousands by having a seat in this House. But the small fry, who may have just as much intelligence and are not looking for the emoluments, have no chance in the country at all. If this Bill pass I am satisfied it will prove beneficial to the country, and I am satisfied, also, that the country will think so. I am satisfied that if I went before my constituents they would endorse my action in voting for a Payment of Members Bill. I hope to see the Bill carried by a large majority, and I believe it will be. Then we shall be able to see what will be done with it in the other House, and I give those gentlemen credit for a little more sense than they have been credited with by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—The Premier in introducing this Bill did not say much in favour of it. But one thing he said was that he was consistent in advocating it. I can claim consistency also in this matter, because I am perhaps the only member in the House who voted against this Bill when it was first brought in, and I have voted consistently against it ever since. In a speech made by the hon. Premier in 1882, when the Bill was before the House, he said:—

"He (Mr. Griffith) had before him the division list of 1874, and he was sorry to see that of the majority who then voted for the resolution affirming the principle of payment of members, only his hon. friend the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Miles, and himself were still in the House; and of those who voted against it the hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Scott, was the only member now in the House. In 1876, of the majority of twenty-nine who voted in favour of payment of members at present in the House were the Premier (Mr. McIlwraith), the member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Beattie; himself; the Minister for Works; the member for South Brisbane, Mr. Fraser; the member for Bundamba, Mr. Foote; and the member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom; and the only members now present who voted against it were the member for Leichhardt, Mr. Scott, and the member for Enoggera, Mr. Dickson."

I am happy to say that the Colonial Treasurer was in good company in those days; and I hope he also will be consistent and vote against this principle now, as he did then. I do not see any good that is likely to be derived from payment of members. The only evidence we have by which to judge of the working of payment of members in these colonies is the experience of Victoria, and as that is not such as would lead us to support this principle, I shall vote against this measure.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—Fault has been found with the hon. Premier because he did not make a long speech in advocacy of the measure now before the House; but I think that hon. members, instead of finding fault with him for not doing so, ought to be of opinion that it entitles him to the consideration of the House. He had thought it better to refer hon. gentlemen to the number of *Hansard* in which his previous speech on the subject may be found, and other speeches as well, from which they may learn for themselves what his opinions were, and what were the arguments upon which he based his advocacy of this matter, than to go over the ground again and thrash out arguments which have already been so well thrashed out. The hon. gentleman has also been complained of because, it is said, he introduced this measure without being a thorough believer in it himself. That is an accusation which I am perfectly satisfied cannot be sustained. The hon. gentleman has shown his consistency in this matter by always advocating and voting in one way upon it; and I remember, myself, when he was before the electors of North Brisbane that he referred to the necessity that existed for the introduction of a system of remunerating members of Parliament for their outlay in attending Parliament. The hon. gentleman has, both inside and outside the House, consistently advocated this principle, and I do not think it is fair now to say that because he did not make a speech of an hour and a-half in advocacy of this measure he is not sincere in bringing it forward. The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition stated that this measure ought not to be discussed now, because the question of payment of members was not before the constituencies at the late general election. The hon. gentleman, speaking for himself, no doubt says what is correct. I do not suppose that he did then, any more than now, advocate the system of payment of members; but I speak for myself, and I say that during the

whole of my candidature for the electorate of Kennedy I made the question of payment of members a very prominent question, and I had to give distinct pledges again and again to my constituents that I would support a measure of this kind. The hon. member for Stanley referred to some anomalies that are occasioned by the absence of a measure of this kind from our Statute-book, and he instanced myself as a fitting illustration of this anomaly. I do not find fault with the hon. gentleman for that, because I think that the illustration he cited was one exactly in point. The reason why I am the representative of the Kennedy electorate rather than of a Southern constituency is this: that those 400 electors who invited me to go and contest the election in the electoral district of Kennedy were under the impression that if I did not do so there was a probability of two supporters of the late Government being returned. There was a hope that if I did go there would be two supporters of what was then the Opposition returned to this House, and it was because of the absence of a provision of this sort, whereby the electors of the Kennedy might have a wider choice of a local kind, that I was induced to go and become a candidate for the constituency, and subsequently became the elected representative, or rather one of the representatives. Other instances are to be found of gentlemen who are not local residents in particular electoral districts, representing those districts. We have a notable illustration of the way the absence of a provision such as is contained in this measure operates in the case of New South Wales. I do not exaggerate when I say that at least one-third of the representatives of country electorates in New South Wales are very seldom outside of Sydney—their residence is in Sydney and always has been—because from the distance of some of the electorates from the metropolis, and the enormous expense of attending the sessions of Parliament in Sydney, many gentlemen living in the electorates who, from education and from natural aptitude and general ability, would be very suitable persons to fill the position of representatives, are entirely debarred from doing so. The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition has stated that, as the Bill stands, and even with the amendment proposed to be introduced into it, a member need not attend Parliament to be entitled to the remuneration fixed by the schedule. The hon. gentleman, however, draws that deduction from the fact of his considering the schedule quite apart from the provisions in the Bill to which the schedule is attached. If he will read the 1st section he will see that it is provided that—

"Every member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to receive and be reimbursed the expenses incurred by him in attending Parliament at the rates specified in the schedule to this Act."

And then the schedule goes on to specify that—

"For each day during which any member is necessarily absent for the purpose of attending Parliament from the town or place in which he resides or carries on business"—

he shall be entitled to the sum of two guineas. So that a member who left his electorate for the purpose of coming down here to attend Parliament, but who never came near Parliament, and was never found in his place in the House, could not claim the remuneration fixed by the schedule; he would not be entitled to payment simply because he was absent from his place of residence. It has been said that a comparison of the legislatures of those countries where payment of members has been adopted with the legislatures of other places, leads to the conclusion that the character of a legislature degenerates as the result of the

adoption of the principle of payment of members; and America and Victoria have always been cited as shocking examples. Well, I do not think that Victoria is a country which presents any very shocking example of demoralisation resulting from the payment of members of Parliament. It is also said that if we adopt the system of payment of members the Government of the day will always be able to command the obedience of a servile majority; and that, should a threat of dissolution be held over their heads if they did not do as the Government wished, they would be ready to obey the Government in anything, no matter how unreasonable that obedience might be. Well, I think we need not go far from home to find how servilely obedient a majority may be without payment of members—a majority who regard the principle of payment of members with absolute horror. But, so far from Victoria being an example of members sticking to their places in order to prevent the Government dissolving the House, we find that dissolutions are more frequent in Victoria than they are in any other colony of Australasia, if we except New Zealand, where the principle is also in force. The last Parliament in this colony existed during the full period for which Parliament can exist under our law. The majority of the members of that Parliament were not gentlemen who would be in any way dependent on a measure of this sort; the majority were composed almost wholly of wealthy men representing distant places, and they obeyed the behests of the Government as obediently as the most impecunious majority could possibly do. We know, of course, that there were some impecunious members supporting that Government, and we know too that the absence of wealth from private sources was made up by liberal subsidies in one direction or another, though they were not called by that name. It is a matter of history that certain members were paid considerable sums of money in that way, for on several occasions attention was called to the fact that certain members of Parliament were receiving money from the Government, ostensibly for services rendered to the country, but really as a reward for the fidelity with which they supported the Government in office. America has also been referred to as a shocking example of what may result from payment of members. Now, we know that it is possible to trust too much to what newspapers of a partisan type are apt to promulgate respecting public men. We know that nowhere is the vicious custom of seizing upon every small point for the purpose of holding up a man to public execration and contempt more rampant than in America. However small a slip a man may make, and however little it may have to do with his capacity to serve the public in any way, if he is a public man it is raked up to his discredit, and he is described in the most atrocious language in order to depreciate him in public esteem. We know that such newspapers have a great deal to do with the circulation of reports concerning members of the Legislature in America, and that they have created impressions with regard to the character of American representatives which are wholly at variance with the real facts of the case. I do not wish to say a single word in defence of the system of lobbying in America, or of those large wealthy corporations which have approached members of Parliament in America for the purpose of inducing those members to vote against their consciences. I do not say a single word in defence of things of that kind; but we know that when the newspapers have given publicity to facts as they have been discovered we have frequently come to the conclusion that what a few of the members

of the American Senate are the whole of them are. I venture to say, however, that there are men in the American Senate, and a large proportion of the members of the Senate, who would do honour to any representative assembly in the civilised world. Only look at such a man as Garfield, who for a long time was, as far as we were concerned, an unknown man. We had no knowledge of him until he was unexpectedly placed in the highest position that can be conferred on any man by the citizens of the United States, yet I venture to say that a purer type of a noble patriot was never produced in any country. And yet Mr. Garfield was unknown to us in this part of the world. It does not follow because there are a few corrupt men in the American Legislature, that, therefore, payment of members has resulted in the demoralisation of the representatives of the people in that great country. I do not think we do ourselves credit by instituting comparisons between ourselves and people in other parts of the world. If we must go into comparisons, we have only to compare ourselves with the neighbouring colony of New South Wales—the oldest and most conservative of all the colonies in the Australian group—and I maintain that the facts which have come to light there show that a system of corruption can prevail in the absence of payment of members, such as would hardly be possible in connection with a system which recognised payment of members. We have never had such scandals here as they have had there. We have never had committees of the House giving their decisions for corrupt considerations in favour of certain claims. We have never had a Minister of the Crown driven ignominiously not only from office, but also from his place in the House, because of suspicious behaviour in connection with money matters. I do not wish to deny that the Assembly in New South Wales contains a large proportion of very admirable men, but we know that there have never been wanting a class of professional politicians, who believe they can make a good thing out of their position as members of Parliament in other ways than by receiving money openly and honestly out of the public purse. I think that to attempt a comparison between the condition of things in Great Britain and a colony like this is an admission of weakness. What comparison is there between the case of Great Britain and any of the Australian colonies? We know that there is a very large class of men in England who have the requisite leisure, ability, and all the other qualifications for occupying a position in the Legislature, and they are so numerous that the constituencies have no difficulty in finding men who combine the qualification of wealth with all the other necessary qualifications. We have not a class of men like that in this colony, nor is there such a class, I believe—if we except New South Wales—in any of the other colonies of Australasia. We know that the majority of the men who are most conspicuous for their ability, and who possess the greatest number of qualifications for a position of this kind, are obliged in some way or other to work for their livelihood. Where is the wealthy class upon which the constituencies throughout the colony can depend for their representatives? And the evil would be just as great even if there were a large wealthy class; for they all gravitate to Brisbane. When a man becomes wealthy in pastoral, or mining, or any other occupation, he does not live in the interior. He wants to educate his family; he wants for various social reasons to make his home in the metropolis, and so all the wealthy men—or the great majority of them—gravitate in time to Brisbane, or some other centre of

population. Such a man is then no longer resident in the locality where he made his money, and the same disadvantage attaches to him as a local representative as to any other intelligent inhabitant of Brisbane. Local representatives are, perforce, many of them, resident in distant localities, and unless some means are provided to relieve them from the almost ruinous expense they will not leave their homes and come to Brisbane for three or four months of the year to attend Parliament. It is too much to expect from the patriotism of any man. I do not wish to say one unnecessary word in advocacy of this measure. Hon. members who vote for the Bill have nothing whatever to fear in going before their constituents, and answering for their views and vote upon it. I may say that the principle is actually adopted. I do not wish to disguise from hon. members that, so far as I am personally concerned, I should not have been a member for Kennedy if I had had to pay my own expenses as a candidate for that constituency. When 400 influential residents of that district requisitioned me to become a candidate, I told them I could not afford the entire expense; that I was under no obligation to go there to look for a seat, as I had a constituency down south which reposed the utmost confidence in me, and no doubt would return me as they had done before; and that if my services were wanted by them they must provide for all the expenditure except my own personal outlay. They did that cheerfully; and was not that the adoption of the same principle that we find in this Bill?

THE HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: No.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It is another phase of the same thing. The people resident in any one locality would only contribute their proportion of the expenses; and what does it matter whether you take the expenses of all the members out of the pockets of the people through the Exchequer, or take the expenses of the members individually out of the pockets of the people in the several electorates? It comes to the same thing, and it is easier, cheaper, and more satisfactory in the end, to do it this way. If the constituencies are agreeable, especially as the House has repeatedly affirmed the principle, I do not see that we should be at all reluctant to adopt it now. It is perfectly true, as the hon. leader of the Opposition says, that in the last Parliament there was a majority against its adoption; but I have indicated a probable reason why the proposition of my hon. friend the then leader of the Opposition was not adopted. It has been complained by some hon. gentlemen in this Assembly that proposals coming from the other side of the House are not treated as they should be by members on this side. I do not say that there is any force in that statement, but we do know that it had very great force as applied to the last Parliament. I have not the slightest doubt that if in the last Parliament any influential member on the Government side of the House had made a similar proposition, and any considerable section of the party had been prepared to support it, the hon. member for Mulgrave would not have been so strong in his opposition to it as he is to-day. But, on the other hand, if the last Parliament did pronounce against the adoption of this principle, let it be borne in mind that, on, I think, three previous occasions, Parliament committed itself to the principle, and on the last of those occasions adopted it without division. The House may rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that it will not be in any way flying in the face of the opinion of the constituencies by giving its cordial assent to the adoption of the principles of this measure.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—We have just experienced quite a new sensation; and we ought to be thankful to the Premier for having let the Attorney-General deliver such a speech as he has given us. Why, it is almost the first time this session that the hon. member has opened his lips, and really it is quite a treat to hear the old style once again. The hon. member has kept so quiet hitherto that we had almost forgotten he could speak. But he has made some very wild statements about all the wealthy men gravitating to Brisbane—about the members of the Sydney House being open to receive bribes in the most barefaced manner—and about the American representatives all consisting of such men as Garfield. It is quite a treat to have all this old wild talk again, but no one believes such statements. Not a member of the House listening to the hon. member believes what he has said any more than the hon. member believes his assertions himself. It is simply his manner, and the hon. member cannot help it. I must refer to his own return for the Kennedy, as he has said such a great deal about it himself. He spoke of the allowance which was made to him by an arrangement which he came to with the people up there, and he has said that was another phase of the payment of members question. Well, I suppose his representations now are another phase of the representations he made at the time he stood before his constituents. How has he carried out the promises he made to his electors? What about the Bowen and Haughton Gap Railway? That was quite another phase of the question when he promised before he was returned that the people of the Kennedy should have that line. But what happened afterwards? His hon. colleague the Minister for Works says, “No; no railway to Haughton Gap for me”; and the hon. member still represents those electors whom he led to believe that under any circumstances whatever they should have the railway to Haughton Gap. Well, it is only another phase of the question. That argument applies just as well to the circumstances I have mentioned as to the circumstances the hon. member dealt with. Now, the Attorney-General when he got up said he thought the Premier deserved some consideration from the House for not having reiterated the statements he made on a previous occasion when he spoke on this subject, but what does that amount to? It amounts to this: that the hon. gentleman, if he believes in the subject at all, thinks that he has a majority in the House who will simply carry out any programme he puts forward. “If you want to know what my opinions are, take them and make the best of them.” That is what the Premier’s speech amounts to. I think if the Premier did believe in the subject, and if he was not sure of a majority, he might have taken a little trouble to place the case properly before the House at more length, because there are members in the House who have never heard him speak upon it. It would only have been a matter of courtesy to those members to let them hear what the principles were on which he advocates the passing of a measure of this kind. I did not get up for the purpose of making any lengthy speech with regard to the question. I have always spoken against it, and I entertain the same feelings now as I did on former occasions, and shall probably always speak and vote against it; but I must refer to one remark of the Minister for Works before dealing with the Bill itself. The hon. gentleman said we can never have an honest Parliament until we have payment of members; but he must surely have an extraordinary idea of honesty. Honesty can never be secured without payment—that was the hon. gentleman’s

argument; and we have heard so much about honesty from the hon. member that we cannot help feeling alarmed when a statement of that kind is made. I wonder whether the hon. gentleman himself was not honest when he was not receiving his salary; because, if the statement applies at all, it applies to a case of that sort. The Premier tells us that the Bill will cost the country nothing like £10,000 a year. I say it will cost the country that amount every session, unless the session is a very short one indeed. In the first place, every country member is to receive his travelling expenses—not on the railway, but the expenses which he incurs out of his own pocket. That alone will amount to a very considerable sum when the whole of the members are paid, but I understand that the daily payments are not only to be made during the sitting days of the House, but that for every day a member attends a committee meeting he will be entitled to receive two guineas. I daresay there will be a good many committees under the circumstances. There are quite enough, generally speaking, but I believe there will be more, when, in addition to the sitting days, members will be paid two guineas for attendance at a committee meeting. The Bill does not say that, but, as I read it, it means that.

The PREMIER: It does not say it, or mean it.

Mr. NORTON: I do not know whether the hon. gentleman intended it to mean that.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. NORTON: The Bill says—

"For each day during which any member is necessarily absent for the purpose of attending Parliament from the town or place in which he usually resides or carries on business"—

he shall be paid a certain amount. Well, I suppose a man is absent from business when he attends a parliamentary committee.

The PREMIER: It does not mean that.

Mr. NORTON: I am glad to hear, then, that I am wrong so far. I suppose the provisions of the Bill will apply to every day of the week, Sunday included; and, considering the number of country members who are obliged to remain in town during the session, I am quite sure every one of them, at all events, will draw his full £200. It will not take a great many fourteen guineas a week to amount up to £200. Why, it is absurd to contend that the Bill will not cost £10,000; and any member who goes into figures will see that it will cost more than that during a long session. As I said before, I do not pay any attention to the arguments brought forward by the Attorney-General, because he talks in such a wild manner. He does not mean what he says, any more than he meant that the Charters Towers people should have their railway. His speaking was all bluster, and he knew it was bluster. At the same time I was very glad to hear him, because we had almost forgotten that the hon. member could deliver himself in that style. A great deal of ingenuity is required in taking a long time to say nothing, and the hon. member is a perfect adept at that. Speaking seriously, I do not think any good will result from a measure of this kind. There is certainly some force in the argument that it will enable people to take seats in the House who could not under ordinary circumstances do so, but I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that for every good man who is enabled by a Bill of this kind to take a seat here there will be twenty who are totally unfit for the position. There is one remark I will make about members who do not reside in the constituencies which return them, but who live about Brisbane, and are thereby able to attend to their duties regularly, which they could not do if they were men of comparatively small means

resident in the district. Especially in New South Wales—of which colony the Attorney-General has spoken, I must say, in such libellous terms—that fact is more noticeable than in Queensland. But as a general rule the men who live in the city of Sydney, and who represent country electorates, are men who have acquired a certain amount of influence, and it is because of that that they are elected to represent those districts in Parliament. I am not generally in favour of non-resident members, still it is a fact to be taken into consideration that members who live at the capital possess influence in the House, and can attend to the interests of their constituents, not only during the session but all through the year. Their business keeping them in town, their constituents can always have the advantage of their services, instead of being compelled to entrust their work to a stranger, or to leave it unattended to. As to the Bill itself, I have always been opposed to its principles, am now, and hope I always shall be. No doubt the second reading will be carried; and I can only express my regret that a Bill of this kind should have been introduced, and that there is a possibility of its being carried during this session.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Hon. gentlemen who have spoken from the other side of the House against this Bill must certainly be complimented on their consistency. They profess to be Conservatives; and Conservatives, both here and in the old country, have always been opposed to payment of members. Payment of members must be either a good thing or a bad one. If good, it ought to be adopted; if bad, it ought to be resisted. If it is thoroughly bad, as hon. members on the other side seem to believe, why are they not logical and carry out the idea to its fullest extent? Ministers are members, and yet they are paid. The Speaker and the Chairman of Committees are members, and yet they are paid. They have a perfect right to be paid; but, to be logical, those who oppose this Bill should refuse to pay Ministers and those members who carry on the work of Parliament. The time of private members is just as valuable to them as the time of a Minister is to him; and that being so, it simply amounts to a question of equal justice to all. Payment of members was one of the original "seven points" of the Charter. As a Chartist, I approve of the whole of those "seven points"; and therefore I approve of payment of members. I have always held that it is right and proper that members who give up their time to the country ought to be remunerated for it. I was rather amused to hear the hon. member for Blackall say something to the effect that it was beneath the dignity of hon. members to vote money for themselves. Was it beneath the dignity of that hon. member to receive his £1,000 a year while he was a Minister? If it is beneath the dignity of private members to vote themselves £150 a year each, surely it is beneath the dignity of a Minister to vote himself £1,000! But no doubt one of the reasons why he opposes this Bill is that some day he expects to be a Minister again and receive his £1,000; and therefore he is not concerned about the private members. To be consistent we ought to pay members of Parliament for the time they are in the House. No hon. member would of course get that pay if he did not put in an appearance; but if he works here for the benefit of the country he has a perfect right to be remunerated for the time he spends on that work. The leader of the Opposition said he was not aware that during the last general election the question of payment of members was brought very prominently before any of the constituencies. I can only say I have been returned to the House three times

by the constituency I now represent, and that both at the last election and at the two previous ones it was one of the most prominent questions I put before the electors, and they have always expressed themselves strongly in favour of it. The House is at present entirely composed of men who have time to devote to the service of their country. But there are other men—working men, it may be—who are quite as capable of legislating for the country, and who may have more ability than many of us, who are debarred from entering the House, because they are not in a position to give up their employment in order to represent here the people who believe in them. The small amount of remuneration now asked for would enable men of that kind to come forward as candidates for election to Parliament. As a rule we are very generous. Year after year we vote large sums of money for other people. Only yesterday we passed a Bill, without very much grumbling, by which we give away £30,000 a year. Then we are constantly voting money away as gratuities and pensions, and we subsidise certain private members who attach themselves to each side of the House.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Well, it is said so, and they get the blame of it. It is far better that representatives in this House should be paid by the State. The electors then will have to pay, and if they are not satisfied it is very easy for the different districts to raise a hue and cry against the system; the Act will soon be removed from our Statute-book if it does not meet the wishes of the constituencies. I shall therefore support the second reading of the Bill. I have always done so, and always will do so as long as I have the honour to hold a seat in this House. The order of the day being not to make long speeches, as the subject is so well known, I will not detain the House any longer.

Mr. PALMER: Mr. Speaker,—This question of payment of members seems to assume the most extraordinary phases. It seems to me something like an epidemic of smallpox, and it comes in recurrent periods. From the Premier's statement it seems to have been a subject of dispute even in Aristotle's time, and from then down to the present it has been a continual source of debate. This House has affirmed and re-affirmed the system, and then has voted against it; and I suppose there is not a member who has not already made up his mind which way he will vote. I have very little to guide me on the question. I have always felt that a man who is qualified to fill the position of a representative of the people, when called upon to do so, should be willing to make some sacrifice for the honour. I consider it is an honour—the greatest honour, indeed, that the people can confer on a man; he should therefore be prepared to make some sacrifice for it, and not look upon it as a post of remuneration. I think also that payment of members will open the door to a class of men who may be undesirable representatives. There are men who never have worked, and are never likely to work, who are political agitators, or demagogues, or something of that kind, and I believe firmly that such men will lay themselves out for the position of members of Parliament. They will make promises quite regardless of their power of fulfilling them. I believe that conscientious men are not inclined to make promises which they fear they may not be able to carry out; but these men will not be deterred by any fear of that kind; they will promise anything and everything in order to assist their candidature. It was the ancient custom—in fact, it was coeval with representative government itself—for the constituencies themselves to pay the members; but

they considered it such an infliction that they refused to return representatives, and were disfranchised in consequence. It was in Elizabeth's time that the position of representative began to be considered such an honour that men were willing to accept it without payment, and then those boroughs that had been disfranchised claimed the right of not paying representatives. The ideas of payment that existed in those times were, however, much more modest than they are now. The wages for a knight of a shire who got into Parliament was 4s. a day, and for a citizen or burgess 2s. Even then some of the boroughs kicked at that, and petitioned to be absolved. It is said that Sir John Strange, the member for Dunwich, bargained to accept a barrel of herrings as a composition for his wages; proving that there were poor people in Dunwich even in those days. However, the time came when the honour of the position was thought quite sufficient. I notice that the Premier stated that we might look forward to the time when payment of members would be the rule in England; but, considering the amount of money that gentlemen are prepared to spend in elections there, I do not think that is ever likely to come to pass. I also notice another thing about the ancient practice which bears a good deal on the question. It was the rule in those days that a member was obliged to serve in Parliament. The writ bore upon it not only his name but the names of two sureties, who went bail for his attendance in the House. That was done in England not very long back. Here some members give a very poor attendance in the House. If all members did as some do—come into the House and stretch themselves on the seats for half-an-hour and then go away—we should have a peculiar state of things here. Do such members deserve the same payment as others who attend regularly? Under the ancient practice members were bound to attend—even the Crown could not exempt them—and I believe the House of Commons still has the power of enforcing the attendance of all members. To come down to modern times, and to some remarks made by the Attorney-General, I must say that he was more lucky in his election than I was, for he says it cost him nothing to be returned.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I did not say that; I said it cost me nothing but my personal outlay.

Mr. PALMER: I scarcely agree with the Minister for Works when he says the present rule is to return wealthy men, prepared to look after their interests and not those of the people. I look round this House, and see a number of any but wealthy men. I see men who, like myself, will look upon this £200 as of some significance; and I see a good many men who, like myself, are prepared to vote against payment of members.

Mr. LISSNER said: Before the question is put I should like to express my opinion on it. I believe that, as meeting the requirements of the North, the Bill is a very good one. I know, as stated by the Attorney-General, that payment of members was made a test question in the North; and with other candidates I pledged myself to vote for it whenever I had the chance. It is not only a democratic measure, but it will be most beneficial to the North generally. I think it is the best inducement to local men to come forward as representatives for the North, when there is so much complaining that the North is not as much represented as it ought to be. At the present time there are a good many Southern gentlemen representing the North, but there is not one Northern gentleman representing the South; and a Bill like this, which I hope will become law, may tend to balance the thing a little the other way; at least there will be a

better proportion of local representatives, especially if a Redistribution Bill should be passed. Then, instead of talking about separation, we shall have more like an annexation of the North to the South; and I therefore think the Bill is a step in the right direction. I am not supporting the Bill to get the few pounds which members are to receive, and I do not know whether hon. members have debit balances or credit balances—I suppose their bankers know how those things stand; but hon. gentlemen who think it is not a good thing to pass a Bill like this, and who consider that it would disgrace them to accept the refundment of their expenses—those hon. gentlemen should let the money go into the consolidated revenue, or hand it over to the hospital. If they do not know what to do with the money they may let it alone, and let other hon. members do as they like. I am not going to give a silent vote, because I believe the Bill will be carried; and I do not want to sponge on the majority with my vote. I shall vote for the second reading with pleasure, believing that the sooner the Bill becomes law the better it will be for the country.

Mr. DONALDSON said: I am unwilling to record a silent vote on this question; because it is one on which I have had conflicting opinions, I may say, for many years. I was a strong advocate for payment of members in Victoria many years ago before it became law there, and my reason was that I believed the country constituencies or districts would find it much easier to get local representatives if they were paid than if they were not. I knew of several gentlemen in the country districts of Victoria who were quite capable of filling honourable positions in Parliament, but who could not afford the expense of attending, and who were, for that reason, prevented from coming forward as candidates. After some years, payment of members became the law, and I regret to say that the opinions I held before were not verified afterwards. I found that in many of the country districts men of worth were unable to obtain seats, while young lawyers from town, on account of their fluency and their ability to make specious promises—which they had little idea of carrying out—were elected. That was a very great objection to the principle. And I believe the first few Parliaments, at all events, after payment of members became the law of that colony, were Parliaments that took a step backward. Since that time, however, the evil has died away, and the country has commenced to reassert itself. I believe the Parliament of that colony now compares favourably with any Parliament in the Australian colonies; in fact, I will go further, and say that I think the Parliament of Victoria at the present time has more able men in it than any other Parliament in the colonies. There is one thing I have found in regard to that colony—that the able men have not gone out of it, even though payment of members became law there. All the great men who were members previous to the adoption of the principle of payment of members, whenever they have come forward since, have been re-elected. It is very true that the early Parliament of Victoria was really one of the most able. I should think it had the most able men of any Parliament of the colonies; simply because in the early days of the goldfield mania a large number of able men came to that colony, and they generally took a forward position after constitutional government became the law in that country. We find that men like Mr. Justice Higinbotham, Sir William Stawell, Sir Redmond Barry, Mr. Justice Molesworth, and Sir Archibald Michie had seats in the early Parliament of Victoria. A

majority of them were members before payment of members became law, and some of them have been members since. Some of them have retired from the House since that time; but I do not think the payment of members, as far as I am aware, was ever the means of keeping any able man out of the House. I shall, as far as possible, speak fairly upon this question, and point out the conflicting opinions I have held at various times, and the experience I have gained from watching the Parliaments of the different colonies. In New South Wales they have not had payment of members; but I think no hon. member will have any hesitation in agreeing with me that the Parliament of that colony is very far behind the times. It is not only the slowest Parliament in the colonies, but I will venture to say it is the one which worst represents the people. I will not say that payment of members would have produced a better state of things, because I am not capable myself of giving the information; but I venture to state the case, and let hon. members form their own conclusions. The leader of the Opposition just now, when speaking upon the question, proposed that the constituencies electing hon. members should pay them; but if the hon. member will only reflect for a moment or two he will see that a member would be put in a most degrading position if he were paid by his constituents. What would he be? He would become a mere delegate; he would not be allowed to exercise his own judgment in his parliamentary duties. Opinions change repeatedly, and I venture to say that members who are thoroughly honest change their opinions at times; and why should members be tied down to certain opinions because those who pay them their screw—I think I may call it “screw” in this case—because they do not see fit to change theirs? I quite agree with the opinion that if a member does not represent the wishes of a majority of his constituents he should retire from Parliament; but I do not believe that a member should be a mere delegate. Another statement has been made with regard to corruption in various parliaments where payment of members has existed. At present there are conflicting opinions amongst scientists as to whether rainfall is the cause of forests, or whether forests are the cause of rainfall. There are many various opinions held on that question just now. I believe that if the people of America had not payment of members amongst their institutions it is very possible they would have the same amount of corruption. I do not think payment of members has added very materially to the corruption there. Hon. members will bear in mind that only a few years ago two members of the Victorian Parliament were expelled from that body because they had been guilty of corrupt practices. Their names were Jones and Butters. I must tell you that they were expelled previous to the passing of the Payment of Members Bill in that colony; and I believe that their expulsion did more in that colony towards causing the Bill to pass than any action that had taken place previously; in fact, it precipitated matters, and, if it had not been for that, perhaps it would have been a few years longer before there was payment of members in that colony. It has also been asserted that any Government having a majority of paid members sitting behind them are able to exercise such an amount of pressure that they are able to hold their position, perhaps longer than the constituencies are in favour of their so doing. It was said that Messrs McCulloch and Berry, in Victoria, were able to hold their position long after the constituencies of that colony ceased to have confidence in them. Now, sir, that is not quite true. It is very true that on one occasion McCulloch was defeated when he went to the country; but it

must also be remembered that he came into power at a late period of the Parliament that was then sitting. I think he held office about twelve or eighteen months. During his *régime* the iron hand was introduced; and that, I venture to say, was the cause of his downfall. As I feel very unwell I will only make a few more remarks upon this subject. I have endeavoured as fairly and as impartially as I could to express my views on both sides of the subject before the House. If left entirely to my own discretion I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I would vote for a Bill to provide for reimbursing the expenses of members of Parliament, particularly of those coming from country districts. I feel that without a measure of that kind the time will soon come when we shall not have any local representation at all. That might be an advantage to a certain extent, because the local men may not always be the most able men we can get; but at the same time they will be men of common sense, who although unable to formulate a measure, may at all events be able to criticise it; and they will be found of sufficient independence to vote for or against the Government of the day. In addition to that they will also have a knowledge of the local requirements of the constituencies they represent, and whatever they may lack in ability I daresay they will be able to make up in application. This Bill, as it stands, I have a good deal of sympathy with, but I certainly do not approve of the amendment which the hon. Premier proposes to insert in committee. Another objection I have to the Bill is this: I do not think we should perpetuate a measure of this kind by making it apply to all time. If we make it apply to the present Parliament—because from what I know of the opinions of hon. members in this Chamber, I believe the majority of them are in favour of payment of members—therefore I say, if we pass this measure to apply to this Parliament only, the constituencies in the future will be able to express an opinion as to whether they are in favour of a renewal of the measure or not. I may say that was once the practice in Victoria. In 1870 they had the system first in Victoria, and the Bill was passed for three years, or until the expiration of the first session of the next Parliament. It was then renewed in 1874, by a continuing Act. I may also mention that at that time payment of members included the Legislative Council as well as the Legislative Assembly. In 1878 the measure was rejected by the Council and the two Chambers came into collision, and with this result: that a measure was passed paying members of the Lower House only. That Bill was renewed in 1880, and in 1883, and is in force at the present time. I may point out that, in 1878, the measure was made for that Parliament only, and expired with it, and since then it was renewed, but with this provision—that it extends until the end of the first session of the ensuing Parliament, when it requires a continuing Act. That has been the practice in Victoria since 1870. I therefore think it would be wise for us, if this measure is to become law, that we should apply it to this Parliament only; and then at the next election, if the constituencies are in favour of payment of members, they can by all means express themselves to that effect. If we put upon our Statute-book a measure for reimbursing members' expenses—for such a paltry sum cannot be called "payment of members"—if we put upon our Statute-book a measure paying members, to apply for all time, I am afraid it will never be eliminated, notwithstanding the fact that a majority of the people might not be in its favour. Therefore I should like to see in

committee an amendment to that effect. I may state that my constituents are not in favour of the payment of members, but if I were left entirely to myself in the matter I should have no hesitation in voting for it. However, out of deference to my constituents, I shall take an unusual course upon this occasion, and vote against the second reading.

Mr. BLACK said: I intend to vote in the same way as the hon. gentleman who has just sat down intends to; but I may say that my reasons are not the same as his. He suggests that payment of members should be made for this Parliament only, and not for future ones. I oppose this measure on totally different grounds; I say that if there is anything sound in this principle—and I am prepared to admit upon the arguments we have heard this evening that many sound arguments have been advanced—it would only become us as a House, returned without being in any way pledged to voting ourselves money, that if the principle is to be adopted it should decidedly not apply to the present Parliament, but to future ones; in the same way that the hon. Premier proposes that the Triennial Parliaments Bill shall not apply to this Parliament, but to the next one. When the principle of payment of members was brought before the House in 1882 I opposed it; I believe it was then contemplated to pay members £300 a year. I opposed it upon principle, because I did not think it a measure which was contemplated to improve the tone of the House. I may say that we have lately tried the old system without any payment, and I do not think we have succeeded in getting a House intellectually superior to what that old House was. It is proposed in this Bill merely to provide for the payment of the legitimate expenses of members; it is not a Payment of Members Bill, but a Bill to re-imburse members their expenses. One reason why I am inclined to somewhat modify the views I held to two years ago, is that I believe this will be a considerable benefit to the northern portion of the colony. I think that hon. members on both sides of the House will admit that Northern members who come down here and are compelled, from inability to get back to their homes, to waste—perhaps not waste but at all events to spend—a considerable portion of the year here, are entitled to some amount of consideration; and if any consideration is to be shown it should be in the shape of reimbursing them the money they are actually out of pocket; not to recompense them for having entered the political arena, but to reimburse them the money which it can be clearly shown they are out of pocket. Then again I consider that the North is at a great disadvantage in the almost impossibility of getting gentlemen to represent the different constituencies who have an interest in the part of the country that they are proposed to represent. It is a very much greater difficulty in the North to get members to come here than it is in the South. Hence what do we find? We find that at election time a lot of political "carpet-baggers" crowd into the northern portion of the colony seeking electorates to return them, and I am sorry to say that the majority of these political "carpet-baggers" are gentlemen of the legal profession; gentlemen who really cannot be expected to have the interests of the district at heart which they aim at representing. I do not think that the sum of £200, or the reimbursement of money out of pocket, will be considered a sufficient inducement for political adventurers; but I believe that it will be some inducement to men of a reasonable amount of ability to come forward in the different constituencies, and contest the seats that are almost certain, otherwise, to go to one class of candidates

—that is, those who have means and leisure to go and represent them in the southern part of the colony. On these grounds, I think there is a great deal in favour of the Bill. But we have been elected, and we are pledged so long as this Parliament lasts; we have not been returned on those principles.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Yes.

Mr. BLACK: I differ from those hon. gentlemen. I say we have not been returned on the understanding that we vote money to ourselves. On those grounds I object to the Bill. If the Premier will make the Bill apply to the next Parliament, the same as the Triennial Parliaments Bill, I will be with him. It was not a question of very great importance at the last election, and we have not been returned here to vote money for ourselves. On those grounds I intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill unless the Premier will make that concession, and I think hon. gentlemen on the Government side will show their independence of character by supporting me in the view I take. That is the best test of their sincerity. Let them say, "We do not wish to benefit by this measure, but let it apply to the next Parliament; and when that time comes and there is a general election, the constituencies will be able to say whether they are really in favour of it or not." I maintain that the constituencies have not given an opinion upon the subject, and I doubt very much whether, when it is submitted to them, they will be in favour of it; I think they will not.

Mr. ALAND: Mr. Speaker,—I have very little to say, but I cannot allow the remarks which fell from the hon. member for Mackay to pass unnoticed, as the same remarks have come from other members on that side of the House on a previous occasion. One was that the intellectual abilities of the present Parliament are not to be compared with the previous one. I altogether resent such a statement as that. I will not mention names, because it would be wrong to do so. I would ask hon. members sitting here just to call to mind some of the gentlemen who occupied seats in this House in the last Parliament, whose places are filled now by other members; and I think the comparison, when drawn, will be very greatly in favour of the gentlemen who sit here now. The hon. member for Mackay has also stated that this question was not brought forward prominently at the last election. We have had that statement made in reference to the Coolie question, and I am not sure whether we did not have it stated in reference to the Transcontinental Railway Bill. I believe that during the debate on that Bill, and also on the repeal of the Coolie Act, we were met with the cry that the question was not really placed before the electors. Such a statement as that has no foundation whatever. I would appeal to almost every member, on this side at all events, to say whether they did not in some way or another introduce the question of payment of members to their constituents, and they always pronounced in favour of it. Now, I would like to state that at the general election in 1878 this question of payment of members was put to me, and I then stated, and I do not go beyond it now, that I was not in favour of paying a salary to members of Parliament, but that I did think that a person giving his time to public affairs had a right to be reimbursed for any reasonable expense to which he might be put. I hold the same opinion now. Personally, I should have been better pleased if the Government had decided to pass the Bill as it was when it was introduced and read a first

time; but the opinion of the majority—at least I presume so from what the Premier has said—appears to be that it should be altered. Well, seeing that even with the alteration proposed it will not amount to anything like a sum sufficient to induce a class of professional politicians, I shall certainly vote for the Bill. I have not that squeamishness which the hon. member for Mackay has about voting this money and taking a part of it myself. Notwithstanding all that he has said, I maintain that the matter has been plainly put before the constituencies, and the constituencies which have elected the large majority of the present House are satisfied that we should vote a sum of money as proposed, and that we ourselves should become participants in it. I would like, before I conclude, to refer to one remark made by the leader of the Opposition in speaking of America. It has been the fashion, when this question of payment of members has been brought up, to point to America, and Victoria, and New Zealand—and some fifteen or sixteen other places, I believe, where that principle has been adopted—as shocking examples. Well, I do not know a very great deal about the state of society in America, but I do not think that it can be in that demoralised political state insinuated by the leader of the Opposition. When we look at the election for president which has just taken place, what do we find? Why, we find that the voice of the people is against a man who, when he was in a high office, encouraged bribery and corruption and all manner of misdoing, and that they rejected him, if I mistake not, on previous occasions. Now they have elected a man who perhaps is not so bright or brilliant as he in some respects, but who at all events holds a high social and moral character, all that is known against him being that he made some little slip in his youth. As I said just now, I am going to support this Bill, and I think if hon. members will look at this House, and see how the constituencies are represented, they will see that there is good reason for supporting it. What do we find? That the majority of those constituencies which are at a distance from the capital are represented by men who reside in the capital or near the capital. I am of opinion that, if possible, the representative of a constituency should be a man resident in the district. As was well pointed out by the hon. member for Warrego, he may not have the ability which the town gentleman possesses—and I am almost disposed to admit that as a rule that is the case—but he certainly knows more about the requirements of the district, and is more likely to give his attention to those requirements. I very much prefer this measure to members being paid by the constituencies themselves. I would not take a seat in the House if I had to be paid by my constituents, as I should consider myself to be in a very low sense the servant of my constituents. Such a position I would not care to occupy.

Mr. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker,—I cannot allow this question to go to a division without saying a few words upon it. I opposed the proposal for payment of members made in the House in 1882, but I think the experience of this session is sufficient to make anyone alter his mind. I do not look upon this Bill as payment of members at all; it is simply a measure to reimburse members the expenses, or a part of the expenses, they incur in attending Parliament. I do not, therefore, look at it in the light of payment of members. We have already affirmed the main principle of the Bill by paying the passage by steamer of members from the North. I myself get my passage paid from the North, and, like other hon. members, I have a railway pass, with which I can travel free over any of our railways,

Another argument in favour of the measure is that it will be the means of securing local representation in electorates which are not now in a position to get local representatives. We find, for instance, that north of Port Mackay there are five constituencies which are represented by gentlemen who live in Brisbane. There are the two members for Cook, both of whom live in Brisbane; the member for Townsville—though, perhaps, he is not an absentee; one of the members for Kennedy, and the member for Bowen. There are also four members for constituencies in the Central district resident in Brisbane—namely, the representatives for Normanby, Clermont, and Leichhardt. None of those gentlemen ever go to see the electors except at times of election. It is difficult to secure a local man in many places, because of the enormous expense he has to incur—the expense of his election and of his attendance at Parliament. The Northern members will be at least eight months away from their business this year. They must start a week before the date fixed for the assembling of Parliament, and the return journey will occupy another week, so that altogether they will, as I have said, be absent from their business for a period of eight months. I do not think the constituencies would expect any member to give two-thirds of the year to the country without any remuneration. I may say it matters very little to me whether members' expenses are paid or not. I speak for the northern part of the colony; and I am satisfied that if this Bill is passed we shall have local representatives elected by all the Northern constituencies. The principle now advocated is not a new principle. I notice that a sum of £500 is put down on the Estimates for the Central Board of Health. The members of that board will probably give a couple of hours a week to the business of the board, for which they will receive a couple of guineas. Their work is nothing compared with the services rendered to the country by members of Parliament. Directors of all institutions receive payment for their services, and we know that if they are not paid their work is not done so well. The small amount provided in this Bill will induce men to stand for election who cannot do so at the present time. The principle of this Bill has been affirmed by the Queensland Parliament in four successive sessions—1872, 1873, 1874, and 1875—so that it is not a new thing at all. It was each time thrown out by the Upper House; and that House may treat it the same way again, but, by passing the Bill, we shall show that we approve of the principle. The speech of the hon. member for Warrego was a most extraordinary one. He supported the Bill in one of the strongest speeches delivered in its favour to night, and concluded by saying he should vote against it. I am not going to be a hypocrite at all. I opposed the Bill before, but I have altered my opinion, and I shall vote for it if it comes to a division.

Mr. GRIMES: Mr. Speaker,—Sir, I agree with the hon. member who has just sat down that the Bill cannot be regarded as one for the payment of members. The sum to be received by any hon. member, even if it attained the highest amount set forth in the Bill, could not be considered as payment; but, if the Bill went further and actually provided for payment of members, I do not see that there would be anything inconsistent in members supporting it. We have had the exhibition of a deal of mock modesty amongst us this evening. I take a common-sense view of the matter. No hon. member in this House would wish that any of his employes who honestly earned money for their services should not receive their remuneration, and I think it is mock

modesty on the part of any individual, after serving the country faithfully, to refuse to accept the reimbursement of his expenses. I begin to think that some hon. members opposite are looking back at their past career, and are thinking that they have not deserved to be reimbursed their expenses. Perhaps they have been led to see that they have cost the country more than the value of their services, and therefore, perhaps, honesty prevents their accepting money which they feel they have not earned. I am rather surprised at the remarks made by the hon. member for Mackay. He says, "We have tried the old system of non-payment, and it has succeeded very well." I deny that in the past we have tried non-payment of members. I say we have had payment of members, but it has been a back-handed system, not straightforward payment. The members of a legislature are generally divided into classes. There are some who are honestly paid by the State; there are others who pay themselves; and others again are paid by their constituents. I think that, barring payment by corruption, the system of payment by constituencies is the most pernicious of the lot. When I first made my appearance in this House I was opposed to payment of members, but what I have seen since then has led me to change my mind. We find that payment by constituencies leads to class legislation. An individual receiving money from his constituency feels bound to attend more particularly to the interests of those who are the greatest subscribers to the fund. I do not care whether this payment by a constituency takes the shape of a purse, or reimbursement of expenses, or compensation for loss of time, or any other form, it is payment of members, and it induces them to pay more attention to the class of individuals who have paid them than to the best interests of the community at large. I am astonished that the hon. member for Mackay should be so inconsistent as to come forward and say that he is opposed to the payment of members, when he knows very well he is receiving pay for his services in this House. I know—

Mr. BLACK: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to call the hon. member to order. He has stated what is positively false. I might say he has stated what is a lie, but I believe that would be unparliamentary. I say he has stated what is positively false, and I have every reason to believe he knows it is false.

Mr. GRIMES: Sir,—I said that I looked upon it as payment of members, whether a person received a purse as a testimonial for his efforts for the constituency, or whether he received it as reimbursement for his expenses. The hon. member denies that he has received payment; but will he deny that he received £854 in a purse on his return from his work in Parliament? If the papers in Mackay tell the truth, he has received more than one such amount as remuneration. Now, sir, I think we have in him an instance of the evil effects of this kind of payment. I venture to say that the effect of the hon. gentleman being in this House has been a loss to the country of more than ten times the amount that has ever been given to him in the way of a purse; and we have a striking illustration of the legislation we shall have if payment of members by constituencies becomes the rule. I am sure we should never have had so much talk about the sugar industry if it had not been for the support of the sugar-planters in the North. That has been the secret of all this talk about sugar, sugar, sugar—nothing else but sugar, and those connected with the manufacture of sugar. That is the result of members being paid by their constituents. I trust that this Bill will pass. I believe it is a fair one,

and I shall not assume so much mock modesty as to consider it beneath my dignity to receive some reimbursement of the expenses I have incurred in attending the House. I believe the labours of every hon. gentleman in this House have honestly earned five times the amount set forth in the Bill, and if they have faithfully attended to their duties they have saved the country more than that.

Mr. BEATTIE said: Mr. Speaker,—I did not intend to speak on this matter, because I have voted for a similar measure three or four times, and, therefore, I intend to vote for it again. I am sorry that my hon. friend the member for Oxley should have made the remarks he did with reference to the hon. member for Mackay. I do not look upon it as payment to the hon. member. I could quite understand that if, at a meeting of his constituents, it was decided to subscribe sufficient money to send him down here at a salary, it would be payment; but I think it reflects credit upon his constituency if they, knowing that he has rendered faithful service, at the end of his term of service, presented him with something. I think this is a matter that ought not to have been brought before the House, and I am sorry that it is; because remarks of that kind do not tend to that good feeling which ought to exist amongst members of this House. I intend to support the Bill, because I watched the last elections closely, and I found that, with very few exceptions indeed, one question asked of the candidates by the constituencies was whether they were in favour of the principle of payment of members, and that in nearly all cases the candidates pledged themselves to support a measure of this description, and to do all they could to have it passed during the present Parliament. I gave such a pledge to my constituents; and it was the general wish of the electors that some system of payment of members should be introduced for the purpose of enabling constituencies at a long distance from Parliament to have local representation. I should certainly break the pledge I have given to my constituents if I did not support the Bill; and I shall therefore vote for the second reading.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman who has just sat down says he pledged himself to support a measure of this kind. Well, I am one of those who pledged myself to oppose such a measure. In addressing my constituents, I think that was the only point on which I differed from my hon. colleague the Minister for Works. That hon. gentleman said he would support a measure of this kind, and I said I should oppose it; and, although this is not a Payment of Members Bill, it is one to pay the expenses of members, which I consider is next door to payment of members.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: It pays them for their time.

Mr. KATES: In my opinion, sir, there are a great many constituencies which the introduction of this measure will injure—in fact, I may say, will give a deadly blow to the Liberal party. There are a number of electorates in the colony in which there are from fifteen to twenty polling-places, some of them distant 100 miles from each other; each of these polling-places will nominate a candidate of their own—a man with a circle of friends of his own; you will find coming forward a lot of broken-down commission agents, perhaps lawyers—briefless lawyers; each of them will receive a certain number of votes, which will so split up the whole number that I am satisfied the Conservative or Tory candidate will be elected by being supported by his own class to a man. We are all returned here, I believe, for the honour of the

thing. I look upon it as a great honour to be a member of this House, and I think, sir, that to receive money would in some way taint that honour. The money offered is very trifling. It would not pay or compensate me for the sacrifice I make to come down here, nor would ten times as much; and I think that when a member returned is poor it would be no disgrace for his constituents to collect money to pay him, and enable him to attend here, to represent them. I am almost of the same opinion as the hon. member for Mackay. I do not think we have been returned here in expectation of being paid. I have promised my constituents to oppose payment of members, or anything approaching it; and I do not wish, when I go before them again, to be accused of having broken my promise. Under these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, although I very much regret voting against my party, I feel compelled to oppose this measure.

Mr. MIDGLEY said: Mr. Speaker,—The position occupied by the hon. member who has just sat down, and the other hon. member for the same constituency, must be a very peculiar one—a sort of Siamese-twins arrangement in which—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You had better correct that.

Mr. MIDGLEY: It would appear that, in order to ensure impartiality and good all-roundness, the constituency has pledged one member to do one thing, and the other to do another thing, so that between the two they ought to be pretty well served and well satisfied. I was under the impression, until I received the notice-paper this morning, that this matter had already passed its second reading; so that I had no thought or intention of inflicting anything in the shape of a speech on the House on the subject. But, now that we are in for a night of it, I may as well participate in the general diversion, as the probabilities are there will be nothing else proceeded with to-night. It seems to be a matter of individual testimony as to whether this subject received special prominence during the last election. I was one of those candidates who, having a large amount of that mock modesty which was slightly alluded to by the hon. member for Oxley, refrained from alluding to the subject generally at my election meetings until it was forced upon my attention by questions put by parties at those meetings. I found at every meeting the question was asked; and at every meeting my reply was that I was thoroughly in favour of some sort of refundment of members' expenses, or some kind of payment of members. This reply elicited the marked approval of those whom I addressed; and I feel perfectly confident in my own mind—because I read a great many election addresses and speeches—that there were few subjects—perhaps no subject at the last election, with regard to what was to be done, apart altogether from what was to be prevented from being done—upon which candidates more emphatically and more clearly expressed their opinion. In fact, it was one of the platforms of the Liberal campaign. The hon. member for Mackay seems to entertain the idea that if we were to do this now we would be doing it prematurely, and that it would be more graceful and better to refer the subject again to the constituencies. I hold a totally different view, Mr. Speaker. We were—or those who are called Liberal members were—elected to do certain things. They were expected to do them thoroughly and promptly when they got the opportunity and the power; and it would be exceedingly unwise and impolitic, now that the party is in

power, to defer to the uncertain future those matters which the majority of the people expect to be dealt with immediately and satisfactorily. I will just say in passing that we have a right to expect that the Government will be thorough and prompt in this matter. I believe that they have every intention of being so; and the introduction of this Bill for the payment of members is another evidence of the thoroughness and the determination of the Government to abide by the pledges and the platform of the last electioneering campaign. Now, I regard this Bill as being in its nature a measure of electoral reform, just as much as a Redistribution Bill, or a Bill for the extension of the franchise, or for the establishment of Triennial Parliaments. I regard this measure as being as I say—a measure of electoral reform—and I expect it to accomplish great and good results in the future of this colony. I hope to live to see the day, Mr. Speaker, when this—which is only an instalment, only a beginning—will be followed and succeeded by other measures of a like character, so as to make the whole matter as complete as possible. I should like to see the day, and I believe I shall see the day, when the proceedings connected with election petitions will be taken out of the arena of politics and of this House; and I hope to see the day when the proceedings connected with an impending election will be taken out of the hands of a defeated and virtually defunct Government. I have been listening with my usual attention to the arguments for and against the Bill, and they have pretty nearly all been in favour of the measure. There was a time when it was asserted that the whole thing was wrong—that it was bad and impolitic, and would be injurious to the State; but other colonies and other people have tried the experiment, and I consider the result is in favour of the conclusion that this is a right course to pursue. I have read an old story of a priest who used to get his worn-out hat in front of him, haranguing it, jawing at it, and knocking it about under the impression that it was Martin Luther, and when he had knocked it about and hammered it sufficiently he would turn to his congregation and say, “Just see the audacious rascal; he has not a word to say for himself.” Now, the experience in our case is just the very opposite to that. The representatives of the people have something to say on this subject, and the arguments and facts and figures are all in favour of the measure we advocate. I should like to say that I admit this is only a partial provision for the reimbursement of members' expenses; but the Bill is entitled “A Bill to provide for the payment of expenses incurred by members of the Legislative Assembly in Queensland.” Mr. Speaker, there is another subject connected with this matter, and yet only indirectly connected, of which I should like to speak. Members, in order to obtain a seat in this House, though they may be impelled so to do by a sense of duty, have to submit to an infliction which many of the candidates at the last general election had to submit to; they have to submit to a great deal of unnecessary expense in obtaining their seats. I do not want to be personal; and I regret as much as anyone the speech that was delivered by the member for Oxley. I shall not indulge in personalities of that kind, but I maintain this: that at the last election candidates were put to a great deal of unnecessary expense, and I think it would be a good thing for any Government to take into its careful consideration whether it would not be wise and right at election times to make provision for preventing the evils which private individuals have to watch against, and pay to guard against, in order to secure the electoral victory that they may win. It

ought to be no part of the expenditure of a candidate, in seeking for a position in this House, that he should have to pay for couriers going from place to place in order to prevent persons from indulging in personation and double-voting. That is machinery which ought to be supplied under law and by the Government and Executive for the time being. At the last election I had to take means which I shall be credited with just as I am known, or not known, to prevent what I have mentioned, and I had to submit to a great deal of expense and outlay in order to checkmate the evils which were resorted to on that occasion. Now, that ought to be no part of the expenditure of private individuals; they ought to be placed beyond that, and by a Bill of this kind we may, in some measure, reimburse ourselves the actual loss and outlay which we suffer in our attempts to serve the people of the colony. I have read of an American sailor who was so patriotic that one day he leaped from the mast into the sea, exclaiming, as he did so, “I die for General Jackson.” People looking upon such a man would be disposed to think him either a lunatic or a fool; and a good many people look upon a man as a fool and idiot who tries to attain, at the expense of his time and money, a seat in Parliament. I just want to have a hit at a certain man; not any individual here present, because I should probably come off second best, but an individual whom we all know, and whom we all abhor—the man who personates, or the mean, contemptible cur called a double-voter. A man who resorts to double-voting is the meanest and most cowardly ruffian, and the blackest-hearted villain in the State—a traitor to the sacred trust reposed in him—a traitor to his country and his cause. He is a coward, and a sneak, and a deceiver. He goes about from one polling-place to another, plying his dirty trade, on his own horse if he has one; and, if he has not one, he is just the kind of man to steal one. He is a man who, by every mean, contemptible, and hateful act, attempts to dictate to the people who shall be their representative, and who thinks himself so much better a man than anyone else, that he should have two or three votes to his neighbour's one. I would put every one of these men in St. Helena, and keep them there, and I would put the candidates who connive at their acts in the same place. I may say, in conclusion, that I am exceedingly gratified with this Bill. I have, perhaps, looked coldly—and sometimes suspiciously and hesitatingly—at some of the Acts of the Government from time to time, but I am gratified that the Government have brought forward this measure, which is another evidence of the sincerity they have displayed since they have come into office of carrying out the promises they have made.

Mr. CHUBB said: I had intended to have given a silent vote against this measure in accordance with the views I have always held on the subject of payment of members, but perhaps it is well to say a few words, and I may say that the arguments of hon. gentlemen opposite have not convinced me that I am doing wrong in voting against the Bill. I am one of those who at the last election expressed myself against payment of members, and I see no reason to change my opinion now. After all it is a matter of opinion. There is much to be said in favour of the principle, and quite as much, if not more, to be said against it. It is one of those debatable subjects upon which you may argue for years, and still not arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. For myself, I have not been convinced either by the speeches I have had the pleasure of listening to nor by the arguments of the Premier, as they were referred to by the Attorney-General. From

that hon. gentleman I infer that the tenor of the Premier's speech was, "If you will read the speeches I made on this question in past years you will find there my arguments." If that was the way in which a measure of this kind was introduced it was wrong. It is this House which has to deal with the Bill, and which requires to be convinced by the arguments of the hon. gentleman in charge of it. It was not complimentary to hon. members to tell them, "If you read my speeches of years ago you will find my arguments."

The PREMIER: I did not say that.

Mr. CHUBB: The hon. gentleman's colleague intimated that that was so, and as I did not hear the hon. gentleman himself address the House, I took the cue from the Attorney-General. That hon. gentleman also made use of an argument, which seemed to me rather inconsistent, and which also appeared to prove incontestably the proposition that if the Bill becomes law he ought no longer, and will no longer be entitled, to represent the Kennedy. The hon. gentleman told us he went to the Kennedy because he was invited to go there, as they could not get a local man to represent them. The inference from that is that a local representative is the best, and the hon. gentleman proved, as I said before, that he ought no longer to remain, and certainly should not offer himself again, a member for that electorate. It was rather an inconsistent speech in support of the Bill. There was one remark made by the hon. member for Mackay, which was, to a certain extent, echoed by the hon. member for Oxley—a remark in reference to lawyers—and being a member of that profession I am bound to defend them. A lawyer has as much right to offer his services to the country as any other person. If the hon. member reads his constitutional history he will find that at every great crisis—in the history of our State, at any rate—lawyers have always been first and foremost to stand up in defence of the liberties of their country. If you look through the colonies you will find that in many instances lawyers are at the head of the Government. We have one here; there is one in Canada, and lately there was one in New Zealand. The past history of this colony shows that lawyers have played a not unimportant part in the government of the country. It may possibly be that those lawyers who went north, and offered their services to the Northern constituencies, found more appreciative people—people more able to value their services—than those in the South. I say, therefore, that a lawyer has as much right to offer his services to the colony as an auctioneer, a commission agent, a squatter, a sugar-planter, or any other person. I do not agree fully with the argument of the hon. Premier that all constituencies should be represented by local residents. If that were so—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You would not be here.

Mr. CHUBB: That is beside the question; but many able men who now find seats in representative assemblies would never be elected. What place does Mr. Gladstone, for instance, represent? Not the place where he resides, but a Scotch constituency. And I might instance many more cases where some of the ablest public men in Great Britain represent constituencies where they have neither estate nor interests beyond that of being a member of the general community. There is really nothing in that argument. It may be said that if this Bill becomes law there will be a possibility of having local representatives. I do not dispute that for a moment. If wealthy lawyers and others can go north now, carpet-bag in hand, to woo the electorates, and pay all the expenses out of their own pockets; a sum of £150 or £200 appropriated by

Parliament to pay expenses of members would not deter them from contesting those seats. It may, in one or two cases, enable a local man who is poor but extremely popular to succeed in winning a seat. But if an outside candidate is prepared to spend plenty of money he might succeed in getting returned, without the aid of double-voting or any other impropriety alluded to by the hon. member for Fassifern, in spite of this Bill. In fact, it by no means follows as a settled thing that this Bill is to give every constituency a local representative. I do not propose to go into the merits or demerits of the question, which is a very large one. Up to the present, at all events, I have not been convinced that the views I have hitherto held upon it are wrong, and until I am I shall oppose any measure of this kind.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: I do not intend to give a silent vote on the second reading of this Bill, especially as I have been in favour of payment of members for many years; not only during my residence in this colony but also in Victoria. And talking about Victoria, where payment of members has existed for some years, I fail to see that its Parliament will not compare favourably with any other Legislative Assembly in the Australian colonies. It has been stated several times that this question was not one of the test questions at the late general election. I do not know what may have been the case in every electorate, but in my own I held nearly twenty meetings, and at almost every one of them I was asked whether I was in favour of payment of members; to which I replied that I was. In fact, I have been in favour of payment of members since the beginning of my colonial career, now something like twenty-five years ago, and I have seen no reason to change my opinion. It was said by the hon. member for Burke that if the Bill becomes law it would lead to a lot of loafers and "carpet-baggers" becoming candidates for seats in Parliament. I deny that that will be the case. The highest amount that can be paid to a man during a whole year is only £200. That amount is anything but excessive; and the Bill can scarcely be called a Payment of Members Bill. For these reasons I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said: I do not suppose I can throw much more light on the question than has already been thrown on it by speakers on both sides; but for the reason given by several hon. members—that they do not wish to give a silent vote upon it—I feel it my duty to say a few words. It was said by the leader of the Opposition that this was not made a test question during the late general election. I can speak most positively as to the very emphatic feeling displayed in my own electorate on this very question. The Cook is one of the largest electorates in the colony; it has thirty-one polling-places, and I think I held over twenty meetings; and there was not a single meeting in which I appeared that I was not asked the question whether I was in favour of the payment of members. I took care at that time to qualify my answer in the affirmative in this way—and I have held that opinion always: that I did not think payment of members was a good thing—payment of members in the ordinary sense of the term, giving them a lump sum during the year, whether it was £300 or £500. I said I was in favour of payment of members in this modified form: that the member who worked for the public, and did public work—putting it on broad general principles that any man who worked in this House ought to be paid. I said that if a member was reimbursed all reasonable expenses, and was paid a fair sum to enable him to live

in the metropolis during the session, it was all he could expect. I remember the meetings were with me on every occasion. I will turn for a moment from this to notice the hon. member for Mackay. I did not think he felt so sore over the old contest between him and myself, which I thought at the time was very amicably conducted indeed. He is generally credited with being a man of very strong feelings and antipathies, and he has an equally strong way of expressing them. I will point out that there are two sides to the question, and when the hon. gentleman chooses to hurl epithets of that kind he forgets the retort is open to other hon. members as well as to himself; and at the risk of being called a liar by the hon. member for Mackay—and he has used that word in the House to-night—

Mr. BLACK: I meant it!

Mr. T. CAMPBELL: I reiterate the statement. It is an open secret. I heard it repeated that the hon. member was a delegate from a small class—certainly an influential class, and in my opinion an estimable class. He was sent here to act for one particular class of persons, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, because you have been in the House during his whole parliamentary career, has not every vote he has given, and every speech he has made, shown that he was thoroughly identified with one small clique, and that he could not look beyond that? I daresay, Mr. Speaker, in the course of your reading, you have come across that familiar novel, written by Dickens, called "David Copperfield," and you remember the old gentleman who could never get King Charles's head out of the story. The hon. member is in the same character as that gentleman, for to him the sugar question is like King Charles's head. Now, Mr. Speaker, is it not reasonable that—taking his speeches, and watching his actions, and when he uses such insulting and offensive expressions—we should not feel nettled, and throw the epithet back at him? I tell him it is hardly the way to conduct himself amicably and courteously towards hon. members. He seems to be a stranger to courtesy in this House. I do not wish to be offensive in any way, but I have heard him endeavour to prove—from a private conversation with a gentleman who holds a foremost place in the House—that he was a liar. The word "liar" seems to be sweet on his lips. I will warn him not to use it too often; and that when he talks about "carpet-baggers," to remember they bear very favourable comparison to King Charles's head. I do not wonder that this Bill should receive opposition from hon. members on the Opposition side of the House. There is no doubt that many hon. members who have spoken have given very good reasons for their opposition to the Bill, and I think that any hon. member who holds that opinion is certainly right in voting according to his conviction; but to say that this question was not before the country—to say that it was not a test question, and to say that a great deal of the elections did not turn in a minor way upon it—is simply saying a paltry thing. Now, Mr. Speaker, there was a great deal said in the early part of the evening by many of the speakers with regard to jobbery in the United States and Victorian Legislatures. We know we have that statement only on second hand. Those are the two countries held up to be the great examples of political jobbery arising out of the payment of members. The hon. member for Warrego gave a very pertinent illustration when he said it was a debatable point among scientific men whether rain produces forests or forests produce rain. Is it not a strange or a remarkable coincidence that those two countries are the two most prosperous in

the world! I think, of all the Australian group, Victoria is the most progressive and go-ahead; and certainly the United States has shown more progress, activity, and political and social energy than any country in the world. I think that reflection is enough to get rid of that argument. There was an argument used in the early part of the evening of an attempt at jobbery in our own House. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to shirk a question of that kind at all. I have always been of opinion that epithets of this kind, or imputations of motives of this kind, should be carefully avoided, unless, indeed, it would be to the interest of the State or the whole colony to make them public. I should be very sorry—and I deprecate it as much as any hon. member of this House—to level any epithet at an hon. member because he was a political opponent, which would be dishonourable. I should pause very much before I would do so, and I think it is the duty of any hon. member who speaks from either side of the House to be very cautious before imputing dishonour or want of proper conduct to another hon. member. We know that in the heat of party feeling it is often done; and the hon. member for Mackay is an apt illustration of that very thing. The hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Lissner, has added his testimony, as far as it refers to Northern members, that payment of members was a test question in the Northern electorates. I think he told us it was a question on which a good deal of the success of election depended, and he himself has admitted that if he had said he was not in favour of payment of members, possibly he would not have the honour of a seat here now. In the face of this statement, how can the hon. gentlemen on the Opposition side tell us that little of the whole elections turned on this matter? With regard to representing a Northern constituency, I may say I gain no profit from the matter; in fact it is a great loss, and I daresay the hon. member for Mackay will admit that there is very little profit in one going north, and spending a large amount of money; but, unfortunately, it is necessary for it to be spent. If you enter upon an electioneering campaign you do not like to be beaten, and the money must be spent; and in contesting a large Northern electorate, Southern members have little idea of the trouble, fatigue, and money it costs. I think this Bill is a step in the right direction. I think it is only fair that the ordinary expenses incurred by a member—I do not say his election expenses, but the expenses to and from his electorate—and the reasonable expenses attending the House to perform his parliamentary duties, should be reimbursed. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I shall be happy to support the second reading.

Mr. JESSOP said: Mr. Speaker,—A large number of hon. members have given their reasons why they are going to vote for and against the second reading of the Bill. I did not intend to say a word about it, but I take this opportunity to give my reasons too. The reason I am going to vote against it is not because I am pledged to do so; but I am voting against it because I do not believe in the principle. I think the system is bad, and will be the means of introducing a lot of professional politicians into this House, and men who will do less for the country than for themselves.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—After the able way in which the hon. the Premier introduced the Bill this evening, I do not think it requires very much to be said by me to explain it to this House. I never heard any measure introduced so plainly and so straightforwardly as the measure was introduced by the hon. the Premier. The hon. the leader of the Opposition referred to it, and asked, why should members of

Parliament require to be paid any more than aldermen? Well, Mr. Speaker, before a man can become the mayor of any municipality he must be an alderman. Nearly all the mayors of the different towns of the colony either receive a salary, or they receive the expenses which are incurred in the carrying out of their office.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. ANNEAR: Mr. Speaker,—I shall not say a word about the last general election; but I know something about it, and I know that in the town of Maryborough and in the Wide Bay district this was the test question before the electors—whether members' expenses should be paid during the session or not. I am the youngest member of the House, and when the question was put to me, "Are you in favour of payment of members?" I said "No; but if you elect me I will vote for the measure introduced by the Premier for recouping members their expenses during the session." That is the measure we are debating now. I understood the hon. member for Mackay to say that, when he voted against the system on a previous occasion, the question was different from what it is now; but I maintain that this Bill is precisely similar to the resolution that was introduced in 1882. That resolution read as follows:—

"That this House will, on Thursday next, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

"1. That members of the Legislative Assembly ought to receive payment out of the consolidated revenue for their expenses necessarily incurred in attending Parliament.

"2. That such payment should be at the rate of £2 2s. per day for every day for which a member is necessarily absent from his usual place of residence for the purpose of such attendance, together with his actual travelling expenses, but not exceeding in all £200 per annum."

That, I say, is precisely the same as the measure now before the House. I maintain, from what I have seen in the colony, that a great many members have been elected, from time to time, because they had means sufficient to enable them to leave their places of residence and come and live in Brisbane; while other men of far more intelligence—because I have yet to learn that wealth gives any man brains—could not do so. I was very much amused at a remark made by the hon. member for Leichhardt. He referred to a time—twelve years ago—when a similar measure was before the House, and he voted against it; and said that from that time up to the present he had been consistent. But he gave no reason whatever for his consistency; he did not say whether he did or did not believe in the Bill, but said he would vote against it because he would be consistent. Does not the hon. member know that some of the ablest men of the day have changed their opinions? The late Earl of Beaconsfield commenced his political career as a Liberal, and died a Conservative. The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone commenced as a Conservative, and is now a Liberal of the most pronounced type. When such prominent men as these change their opinions when they see they are in the wrong, I do not think any man should be twitted with doing the same thing and voting accordingly. A remark has been made to the effect that a lot of "carpet-baggers" and men of that kind will find their way into the House if this Bill becomes law. Now I look upon that remark as an insult to the electors of the colony. The wealthy men will still go before the electors, but the men of ordinary means and the men of no means at all will also go too. It will then be for the electors to choose which they will have. Will the payment of two guineas a day to each member of the House interfere in any way with the intelligence of the electors? I say most decidedly not. The hon. member for Port

Curtis referred to the Attorney-General having promised to vote for the Houghton Gap Railway, but that, being a resident of Brisbane, he was afraid to carry out his promise. I wish to refer to what took place when the gentleman who is now Mr. Justice Cooper represented Bowen. When he first went to Bowen he painted to the electors a very beautiful picture. He said, "You have a grand harbour, and if you elect me you will in a very short time see it crowded with sailing ships from every part of the world." I do not think a ship went there after he was returned. I believe that if payment of members had been the law then the people of Bowen would have found a local representative who would have better represented their interests, because he would have known more about them than the gentleman who was returned. I am confident that if this measure becomes law it will have no effect whatever in deteriorating the debates in this House or the measures that are brought forward. America and Victoria have been referred to to-night. America was, perhaps, corrupt in former times, but I maintain that it is now almost equal to any nation on the earth. And what do we find in Victoria? It has been said that if this Bill is passed, any Government will be able to retain its position, but instead of that there are far more dissolutions in Victoria than in any of the colonies except New Zealand. We have also been told that we ought to adhere to what took place here in 1882; but in 1882 there was a different Parliament and a different Government to those which exist now; and a great many things that were done then have been retracted and repealed. I am sure that under this Bill the intelligence and ability of the members of this House will be quite equal to what they are now; and that the electors will be quite as able to send men into the House who will worthily represent them.

Mr. FRASER said: I may say the same as some other hon. members this evening. On a former occasion I voted for a measure of this kind, and, though I confess that I frequently doubted whether my convictions were right, I have investigated the matter as much as I could and collected all the evidence I could, and I can see nothing to justify me in changing my opinions. I simply rise on account of the fact that prominence has been given to the statement that this question did not occupy any important position during the last election. I have the honour to represent a very large and a very important constituency; and I can say that the question was a prominent one during the last election, and that I did not hesitate for a moment to say that I should be prepared to support a measure of this kind; indeed I should have been prepared to support a much more thorough measure. I should have gone in for payment of members if a Bill for that purpose had been brought before the House. I believe it is thoroughly sound in principle; and if a man is convinced that a thing is sound in principle, then he need not fear any injurious consequences arising from it. It has been said that this will open the door to a class of adventurers seeking admission to the House, but for the life of me I cannot see that the remuneration that it is now proposed to give will be any inducement whatever to such men to come into the House. The Bill simply proposes to reimburse members for the expenses incurred in coming to the House. I regret that during the course of the debate anything like personalities should have been introduced, and that any degree of warmth should have been shown. This question ought not to be considered as a party question at all; it ought to be discussed purely on its merits, without introducing anything like heat or unkind feeling.

Allusion has been made to the House of Commons; but surely we can see at a glance that there is no analogy between the House of Commons and the Parliaments of these colonies. The only analogy is that they are all based on constitutional principles; for the circumstances of Great Britain are so entirely different from any we have in the colonies that there can be no analogy in any other respect. I agree with the hon. members who have expressed the opinion that it is very desirable that members coming to the House should have some identification with their constituencies, and that they should understand and know their wants, so as to be able to give expression to those wants in this Chamber, for that is the only way in which we shall be able successfully to legislate for the various interests and districts of the colony. In England it is quite different. I know perfectly well that it is from the great centres of population in England that representatives are found for almost all the outside districts; but the circumstances there are different, for a man can go from one end of the country to the other in twenty-four hours. In moving the second reading of the Bill, the Premier said that in all probability the day was not far distant when payment of members in the English Parliament would be a fact; and several hon. members have combated that idea. But I do not know that it is improbable. I think that if we review the course of events in England, from the passing of the Reform Bill up to the present time, we shall see that the ruling power is getting more and more into the hands of the people—the masses—and I see nothing improbable in supposing that in the course of a very few years we shall have a large number of intelligent working men occupying seats in the English Parliament, and paid for their labour. And there is this to say, Mr. Speaker: that the working men who have already got into the House of Commons have proved themselves to be as competent and able, and in some respects as influential, as any member who ever had a seat in that House. I need only refer to Burke, Macdonald, and Broadhead as examples of such members. And in view of the course of events in England for some time there is no reason for considering it an extravagant opinion that the day is not far distant when we shall see the House of Commons occupied by a larger number of those men who are paid for their services.

The Hon. R. B. SHERIDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I feel it a duty I owe not only to myself, but also to my constituents, to say a few words on this most important Bill. During my candidature at the Maryborough election, the question was put to me several times—“Are you in favour of payment of members?” And I may tell you that on all occasions my reply was, “Certainly not.” Nor have I yet changed my opinion on that subject; and if the measure now before the House was one for remunerating hon. members for their services, I may tell you that I would vote against it without hesitation; but as it is merely a measure which provides for the payment of their expenses all I can say is that it shall have my support. I notice, sir, that whenever I stand up I do some good service to this House, because I occasion a slight exodus. Indeed, I think that, for the future, if this lasts much longer, I shall frequently stand up. I think it produces a salutary effect, and I shall have done something for the colony at large.

Mr. WHITE said: I wish to see, sir, the electors of this country not confined in their choice of members to those who can afford to buy the position. I shall vote for this Bill; at the same time I should like to have seen a measure dealing with election expenses. On account of the organised system of double-voting and persona-

tion in my electorate, adopted by the other party, my expenses would have been something to frighten me out of the country if it had not been for the energetic assistance of the electors themselves. I did not get off so easily as the Attorney-General. In one corner of my electorate there were a few electors—intelligent, decent men—that made up their minds to go to some expense; and it appears that they spent pretty well; but after it was over they did not seem to agree about paying for it. They had spent without authority, on their own agreement, and a bill was left unpaid for a considerable time. I went to those electors; and one of them, who was representing the others apparently, smilingly told me that a man should pay for his honours. I distinctly told him that if they wanted a man to buy the honour they must find somebody else, for I declined to pay for honour. There has been some allusion made by hon. members opposite to the English Parliament. I shall just read an extract from a speech by a very prominent member of Parliament at home addressed to his constituents. The member is Mr. Cowen, a gentleman who is well known to the Hon. Sir. T. McIlwraith. He is an original thinker, a man whom Sir T. McIlwraith terms a genius; and speaking about electoral corruption, he says:—

“The root of the evil is imbedded in the custom which leads us to treat a seat in Parliament as a position to be paid for. Electoral corruption will never be eradicated till we prohibit all expenditure by candidates. Why should a man be mulcted in heavy penalties for offering to undertake an onerous public service? Can you wonder that needy and ambitious men try to recoup themselves, in office, dignities, or social distinction, the money, not voluntarily given, but extorted from them?”

That is an extract from a speech made by Mr. Cowen, and I think it points very clearly to a meditation of making some change there—in fact they have been making a radical change, I believe, in the matter of election expenses in England. I have been very frequently asked of late about my experience in this House—about the wheels within wheels of the Government, and whether I did not think that a member ought to be—to speak plainly—a cheat—a deceiver—a diplomat? I have been asked whether I had not come to the opinion that a member should be a sort of rogue. Of course I have not seen that, and I do not see why a member should be a rogue, unless the Government is corrupt. I am watching closely, but I have seen nothing of that sort yet. I think the members of the Opposition will watch very closely, will be more acute than I am, and will soon see if anything is corrupt or wrong, and will soon give expression to their opinion upon it. A curious thing is that my friends—my political supporters—brought me out of obscurity and made me a member of Parliament. Now, some of my political opponents—and I have been seeking information freely amongst them, have come to a conclusion that actually raises me to the highest pinnacle of my ambition; they have declared that I am too honest for a member of Parliament. That is the declaration of my political opponents, from what I gather from them. I am personally acquainted with a great many of those who opposed me, and that is the conclusion they have come to. With the permission of this House, I have something to say to the *Hansard* reporters. In my speech on the second reading of the Land Bill, I was led to believe that I had succeeded, with one or two exceptions, in making myself moderately well understood, but on the following day when I came to read it in *Hansard* I was positively ashamed of it. In several parts of it words were substituted that made it stupid. I shall give you just one word as an example of the way that it was rendered

stupid. I was speaking at the time of the selector looking with pride across the bounds of his small forty-acre or eighty-acre farm, and he congratulated himself that he owned all the space "upward." An hon. member opposite said "downward," and I repeated again "all the space upward." The newspapers altered the expression, but they preserved the meaning. They had it "all the space above." But what, sir, did the *Hansard* have it? "All the space *alone*!" Was that a sneer at the lonely position of the selector? I have no excuse for the reporters of *Hansard*; and the idea crosses my mind that "too many cooks spoil the broth." I did once know something of phonetic shorthand; in fact, I studied it for three months as a pastime, when I was a young man, and I made such progress that I could make sure of taking every word of a slow speaker without any mistake. I only spent three months in by-hours—spare hours—and I found there was no difficulty. I got a long way into abbreviations, and I found it was perfectly correct. There was no mistake about it; they could make no mistake; therefore if they are not allowed to improve a member's speech by putting in a word to elevate the idea or sentiment, why should they take the liberty of either negligently, or from wantonness, or any base motive, substitute a word or words to obscure the sense or destroy the meaning of what a speaker is labouring to explain?

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 29.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Griffith, Dickson, Dutton, Sheridan, Brookes, Fraser, Annear, Alaud, Smyth, Mellor, Isambert, Jordan, White, Kellett, Foxton, Buckland, T. Campbell, Bailey, Grimes, Salkeld, Macfarlane, Beattie, Macdonald-Paterson, Lissner, Moreton, Midgley, and Horwitz.

NOES, 8.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Norton, Chubb, Nelson, Black, Kates, Palmer, and Jessop.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the consideration of the Bill in committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received the following message from the Legislative Council:—

"Legislative Council Chamber,

"13th November, 1884.

"MR. SPEAKER.—The Legislative Council, having this day agreed to a Bill intitled 'A Bill to enable the Townsville Gas and Coke Company (Limited), incorporated under the provisions of the Companies Act of 1863, to light with gas the town of Townsville and its suburbs, and for other purposes therein mentioned,' now beg to return the same to the Legislative Assembly without amendment."

SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £5,475 be granted for salaries and contingencies, Colonial Secretary's Office, said there was an apparent increase of £340 in the vote. There was an increase of £50 in the salary of the accountant, and the reason for it was that in all the other departments of the Public Service the accountants received a salary of not less than £400, while some received more. The accountant in the Colonial Secretary's Office had to keep account of the expenditure of over £400,000, which was a very serious responsibility. On the next line there was an increase to a clerk

of £25. That clerk had been in the service for more than twenty years, and it was seven years since he had received any increase. On the next line there was an apparent increase of from £350 to £500. It was not a real increase. There was a new clerk who received £100, which was found necessary; two recently appointed clerks were receiving a smaller sum than was on the Estimates. There was also an increase proposed for the telegraph operator and clerk of from £150 to £175; an increase of £15 to the assistant messenger; and an increase of £100 in the general expenses.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted a sum of £7,982 as salaries and contingencies for the Registrar-General's Department, and said there was a change in those Estimates consequent upon the establishment of the office of Registrar of Titles. The vote he was now moving included three months' provision for the Real Property branch of the Registrar-General's Office. Since the 1st of October that had been established as a separate office under the Registrar of Titles.

Mr. ALAND said he would point out that when the Registrar of Titles Bill was passing through the House hon. members were informed that very little or no extra expenditure would be caused thereby, but he now found that instead of the Registrar-General's Department costing £11,420 as it did last year it was to cost £12,894, which was an increase of something like £1,150. He thought that was rather too great an increase for that department; and was sure that if the House had been informed that the change would involve that additional expenditure the Bill would not have been passed as readily as it was, because he remembered distinctly when speaking on the measure he thought what a good arrangement it was, seeing that it would cost the country nothing extra, scarcely. He understood that the same clerks would do the work, and that the only difference would be that the two branches of the department would be under different heads.

Mr. BLACK said he understood that the Estimates informed the Committee of the actual salary that the various Government officers were receiving now that all the fees had been abolished. He noticed that the Registrar-General was in the receipt of £730 last year, and that he was now getting £700. In the schedule supplied with the Estimates it was stated that he had a salary of £700, and that for marriages performed he received fees to the amount of £30, making a total income of £730. Were the Committee to understand that those fees were abolished?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. BLACK: And that the Registrar-General loses £30 by the transaction?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he understood the Colonial Secretary to inform the Committee previously, that the reason for the many increases that would be found on the Estimates was that fees had been abolished. The hon. gentleman stated that it was a matter of justice that officers who had been paid partly by salary and partly by fees should have the amount of the fees they were in the habit of receiving added to their salaries. Then why should there be any exception to that rule? Why should the salary of the Registrar-General be reduced from £730 to £700?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the amount received from fees was an uncertain amount. It appeared that the total amount of fees received last year was £60, which,

by arrangement, was divided between the Registrar-General and the Deputy Registrar. It was not considered necessary to increase the salary of the Registrar-General. The amount from fees was purely a contingent amount; it might be £30 one year, and £10 or £5 another; and the duties of the Registrar-General were considerably lighter now than they were previous to the Registrar of Titles being made a separate office.

Mr. JORDAN said the fees for marriages, which were paid under the Registration Act, had during the last nine years been divided between the Registrar-General and the Deputy Registrar. The reason the division was made was that the duty was generally performed by the Deputy.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the explanation of the hon. member was not required, because it was stated in the papers before the Committee. The Colonial Secretary said it was not considered necessary to raise the salary of the Registrar-General. Then why was it considered necessary to diminish the salary, especially as the hon. gentleman had informed the Committee that the fees received by officers having been abolished, it was only right that they should be added to their salaries? The reason given, that the Registrar-General had been relieved of a certain amount of duty, was not sufficient; as he had been relieved of almost all the duties attaching to the office of Registrar of Titles before; and as a matter of fact his duties and responsibilities were increasing every year. The £30 was just as much a part of his salary as the £700.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the fees happened last year to be £30. Perhaps the year before they were £5, or they might have been £10. But, because an officer received £30 in fees last year, that was no reason for raising his fixed salary by that amount; if that was done in every case, it would be a bad bargain for the country.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the hon. gentleman had informed the Committee that, where an officer was paid partly by salary and partly by fees, the loss of the fees which were now paid into the consolidated revenue should be made up by an increase in salary. The fact that the fees might be £30 one year and £10 the next, was no reason why he should reduce the salary of any officer.

Mr. JORDAN said the Premier had been misinformed, and was mistaken with regard to the amount in question. It did not vary in that way; it had been very nearly equal for a number of years. A year ago there was about £60 to divide between the two officers. The amount had been increasing slightly and gradually for several years, and there was never any very great difference between two consecutive years. The average for the last eight or nine years would probably be £50 or £55 a year. He regretted himself that it should be kept from the Registrar-General. Although that officer had been relieved from a great part of the duties he formerly performed, still the increase of his duties as statistician of the colony, arising from the rapidly increasing population, gave him quite enough to do. The work could only be properly performed by a man of ability, and the occupant of the office was a very able man. It was a mistake on the part of the hon. member for Mulgrave to say that the Registrar-General had not any particular duties to perform in connection with the Real Property branch of the office—a mistake which had been made previously by the Premier, and by many other members of the House. The Registrar-General sometimes opened with his own hands, in that office, 200 letters a day,

read them, and gave his instructions concerning them. He (Mr. Jordan) rather regretted that Mr. Mylne was not to receive more than £100 addition to his salary. As Deputy Registrar-General he received £550, and now as head of the office he was only to get £650. It was natural he should feel some interest in those gentlemen, because he had been for so long closely associated with them; so he hoped the Committee would excuse him if he was not so economically inclined in that part of the Estimates as other hon. members.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he was not aware that the Committee had assented to the principle that the amount of fees any officer had been receiving should be added to his salary as a permanent increase. He understood that the fees were regarded as an abuse, a mischief, and an evil; and that the Government were abolishing them, while carefully taking into consideration the amount which was a fair salary for each Civil servant.

Mr. JORDAN said the fees in connection with the Registrar-General's Department had not arisen by way of abuse. They were provided for by the Registration Act, and the Registrar-General had a claim to them by law.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he was not alluding to those.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted a sum of £4,912, as salaries and contingencies for the department of the Registrar of Titles. He said that office had been organised on the 1st October last, and the amount asked for was for nine months. The Deputy Registrar-General in the Real Property Office was appointed Registrar of Titles, with a salary increased by £100, which was thought to be a fair advance. The salary of the Master of Titles remained as before. It was necessary to have two Deputy Registrars. The first had been a clerk in the office for a very long time, and as Chief Draftsman had received £400 a year, and would have had an increase last year but for an inadvertence on his (the Colonial Secretary's) part. He had had very long experience in the office, and was specially competent for the position. It was proposed to give the Second Deputy Registrar an increase of £50. He might mention that the office was entirely self-supporting, the receipts covering all the working expenses and the interest on the buildings. The salary of the Chief Draftsman was put down at £350, which was a reduction from the amount previously voted. That, he was sorry to say, was a mistake. He had been under the impression that a chief draftsman might be obtained at a less salary than £400, but he found it was not so. He had secured the services of a very efficient chief draftsman, who was a licensed surveyor with a large practice, but he had to promise a salary of £400, which was not too much for a licensed surveyor.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: Who is it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Woodward. The Second Draftsman's salary was the same as it had been before. With respect to the clerks, their salaries had been slightly remodelled, but none of them had been given an increase of more than £25. The office had been started on a fairly satisfactory basis. There was an increase on the total vote of £1,474. £660 of that was made up by an increase of £330 in the item of district registrars' fees, and £330 for contingencies. The items for clerical assistance, and contingencies in the Real Property branch, made altogether for last year £1,470. During this year, as far as he had been able to ascertain, £1,800 would have to be spent

to do the work, which was rapidly increasing, but yet not so certainly increasing as to justify them in appointing permanent clerks to do it. That was how the amount was fixed, after consultation with the heads of the department; and such a step was given to the different officers as might reasonably be expected on their being placed in a more responsible position.

Mr. JORDAN said the work of the district registrars was increasing every year. It had increased very much during the last two years in consequence of the rapid increase of population. The district registrars were not paid a fixed salary, but by fees—3s. for each registration. That accounted for the rapid increase of the vote required to cover the expenses of those officers. He might say that he made a mistake a few minutes ago, when he said that the Registrar-General received and opened 200 letters a day. The 200 included letters received and sent out; but the letters received sometimes reached 120 in a day.

Mr. ALAND asked the Colonial Secretary whether clerks of petty sessions who were acting as district registrars would, in future, receive the fees they had been accustomed to receive as district registrars?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there seemed to be some misunderstanding on that point. In fact, when he moved the second reading of the Bill, providing that in future all fees received by public officers should be paid into the consolidated revenue, the fees paid was almost a sealed book to members of that House. It took a long time to find out what fees were paid to officers in the Public Service; and what were described as fees to district registrars were really allowances to those officers at the rate of 3s. for every entry. The £2,700 on the Estimates was the amount that was disbursed in that way—3s. for every entry. It was not a fee received under any Act of Parliament; and, upon mature consideration, it was thought better not to interfere with it at the present time. In fact it would be very difficult to deal with it without doing great injustice, as would be seen by referring to the table showing the fees received by different clerks of petty sessions. Some of them received very large sums indeed. To strike off those fees would, in some instances, amount to a reduction of £200 a year; and upon consideration the Government did not see how they could do such a thing without much more mature consideration than it was then possible to give it, and they therefore decided to let it stand as it was. The £2,797 was not included in the item now before the Committee, having been passed in the previous item; and it would be expended as hitherto—in paying the allowance of 3s. for every entry made.

Mr. BLACK asked if the £2,797 for "District Registrars" was for fees? If it was, they appeared to be voting the money twice over, because at page 37 of the Estimates he found a whole list of items of £30 and £50 for registrars of district courts. It was apparently the same thing, unless he was wrong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The item we are discussing applies to district registrars of births, marriages, and deaths.

Mr. BLACK asked if the system of fees to registrars and clerks of petty sessions was to be perpetuated so far as the district courts were concerned?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they used the term "registrar" in connection with so many things in the colony, that confusion was likely to arise. There were registrars of petty sessions, of births, marriages, and deaths, of

districts courts, and so on. The fees received by registrars of the district courts had always gone into the consolidated revenue. Moneys received by clerks of petty sessions used to go into their own pockets, but that was now abolished, and those fees were paid into the consolidated revenue. The sum paid, not by the public, but by the Government, as a remuneration for performing the duties of district registrars at a fixed price per entry, was proposed to be continued, at any rate, for the present year, or until the Government were in a position to deal with the matter in such a way as not to do injustice to individual officers, without proposing permanent increases to their salaries.

Mr. SALKELD said he had been informed that parties who had gone before commissioners for taking the acknowledgments of married women would have to pay a fee of 10s. 6d., and that when they lodged the documents in the Real Property Office they were again charged 10s. He would like to know from the Colonial Secretary if that was correct?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was some confusion about the matter. Some time ago, on inquiring into it, he found that various opinions had been given by learned gentlemen who had held the office of Attorney-General. One was given by Mr. Justice Pring, another by his learned friend Mr. Chubb, and another by the present Attorney-General, who, he thought, agreed with Mr. Justice Pring. On looking further into the matter, however, it occurred to him that they had all gone upon a wrong basis, and that no fees at all were chargeable for taking the acknowledgment of a married woman under the Real Property Act. Upon reconsideration, his hon. colleague, the Attorney-General, agreed with him that no such fees were chargeable. There was no doubt that that was correct, and a notification to that effect had been published in the *Gazette*; and that rule had been followed ever since. In cases of acknowledgments under the old system of registration—of which there were now very few cases indeed—a fee of 10s. 6d. was payable to the Real Property Office. That was the conclusion arrived at by his learned friend, the Attorney-General, and himself; but cases of that kind did not occur more than once in a hundred, or perhaps five hundred, instances.

Mr. SALKELD said the hon. gentleman's explanation was satisfactory so far as it went, but he should like to know from the hon. the Colonial Treasurer whether, seeing that the fees he referred to had been charged without proper authority, there was any intention of refunding them? Not very long ago, upon producing certain documents, he had to pay a fee of 10s. 6d. for every one of them, and he would like to know whether he could get the money back, as it was improperly charged? He believed there were a great number of people in the same position.

Mr. JORDAN said it was held some time ago by the Auditor-General that the Registrar-General ought to have collected the fees referred to. The view held by the Registrar-General was that he had no right, under the Real Property Act, to collect such fees, because they had already been paid to a commissioner for taking affidavits. But the Auditor-General held a very decided opinion opposite to that, and went so far as to surcharge the Registrar-General for not collecting the fees. That officer, however, was not obliged to pay them out of his own pocket, because he was able to show the Colonial Secretary that the view held by the Master of Titles for a number of years was that they should not be collected,

and that they had not been collected. It was disputed once between learned gentlemen of the law whether that ought to have been collected or not, but the department had not to pay the item, and were surcharged. Those fees, it must be understood, went into the general revenue.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that the sum of £133,837 be granted for the service of the Police Department, said the estimate showed an increase of £11,000 on the preceding year, which was perhaps rather alarming; but if hon. members knew the demands that were made for increased police protection they would wonder at the increase being so small. It would be observed that there was an increase of fifty constables. That would not nearly supply the demand for extra police protection throughout the colony. Scarcely a week passed that he did not get a requisition for more protection, either against the blacks or on account of increased settlement. He thought fifty constables would be required, and that accounted for £6,000. £5,000 was accounted for by the increase in the contingencies (subdivision). With respect to the minor increases, it would be observed that there was an additional clerk at £150 a year, and there was an increase in one of the salaries of £25. Last year the work of the additional clerk was done by a constable, but it was not considered convenient, for many reasons, that a constable should be in the office and know all that was going on there. It was also proposed to increase the number of second-class inspectors by one. With the additional number of police constables, additional officers would be wanted, and one of the senior sub-inspectors would be appointed second-class inspector. In the contingencies there were several increases. There was a large amount for forage expenses, but, as was well known, forage had been very expensive this year, and that was known when the estimate was framed. The increase in the item of allowance in lieu of rations was explained by the same circumstance which caused the increase in police constables. Then there was an item for fencing in police paddocks, a large number of which remained unfenced; and that would cost a considerable sum. There was an item of £500 for allowances to witnesses, and there were undoubtedly many cases in which such allowances should be made. There was also an item of £150 as a gratuity to the widow of Constable Dwyer, who was killed in 1882 while in the execution of his duty when attempting to arrest a man named "Toby." Owing to the short time Constable Dwyer had been in the service, his widow was not entitled to anything more than a very small allowance, and after consideration it was thought fair to make some such allowance as would have been made if the constable had been somewhat longer in the force.

Mr. MIDGLEY said there were some items on which he was not competent to express an opinion, but the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary with reference to the £1,300 for forage was not borne out by facts. Forage was really cheaper now than it was twelve months ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not all over the colony.

Mr. MIDGLEY said the department spent a very considerable amount of money upon forage, and he thought tenders to supply it should be called for. There were many departments in the Public Service in which tenders were called for little pettifoggish things; and he thought a considerable sum might be saved to the country by

applying the same system to the Police Department. It would be a much better and more economical plan.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said the gentleman who had just sat down did not understand the circumstances of the country outside. They knew that the police were distributed all over the colony, and forage was very expensive in the outside districts. A friend of his, who had lately arrived from the West, told him that 6d. per pound was being paid for forage, with a probability of it rising to 9d. The Police Force had to go into the market the same as other people, and the increase appeared to him to be a very moderate one indeed. No doubt the costliness of the forage was caused by the difficulty experienced in bringing it from the railway terminus to places where it was required; but he thought, on the whole, the increase was very moderate.

Mr. PALMER said the increase in the number of constables was very necessary, and was caused by the increase in the population. He supposed the new men would be pretty well scattered over new settlements.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. PALMER said there was an item of 128 native troopers and 72 native trackers. Perhaps the Colonial Secretary would tell the Committee what was the difference between the two classes of men, and whether they were shifted out further as settlement developed. He noticed, too, that there was an amount of £3,000 for remounts, and the same sum was voted last year. Was the vote annually expended on horses, and in what way were the horses sold accounted for? The reason for the increase in the amount for forage was easily understood. While speaking on that subject he would observe that a great deal of credit was due to the Commissioner of Police for the manner in which he selected his men for service in the outlying districts. They were a fine body of men, possessed a peculiar aptitude for their work, and were remarkable for discipline and civility, no matter how far from the centres of control they might be found.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, with regard to forage not being called for by tender, a great deal of it was required for country districts, and it had been found that the best and cheapest way of procuring it in those districts was to buy it at market price from time to time. In many places it would be impracticable to make contracts for the supply of forage. With respect to the question of the hon. member for Burke as to the distinction between native troopers and native trackers—native troopers were native police, in camp, in charge of white officers; native trackers were not troopers; there were odd ones here and there attached to an ordinary white police camp for tracking purposes. That had been the arrangement for a good many years.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked whether the additional fifty constables were required, not so much in consequence of the increased population, as in consequence of the increased number of country public-houses? It was generally found that where a public-house was planted in a country district it required one or two policemen to watch it. The license for a country public-house was £10 a year, and the cost of two constables to watch it was £244. With local option that amount would be saved to the country.

Mr. NORTON said he wondered whether the hon. member had ever calculated how many more policemen would be required to watch the sly grogshops if there were no public-houses. In his opinion it would require far more.

Mr. MACFARLANE: The sly grogshops could be easily put down.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was no doubt a great deal of truth in the statement that wherever there was a public-house police protection was required. But a public-house was opened in consequence of settlement; it was necessary in centres of settlement that there should be some place of accommodation. None of the fifty extra constables had yet been appointed; but the applications already received would absorb the whole number, and more if they had them to dispose of.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he hoped that some of the extra constables would be disposed of so as to afford additional police protection to the suburbs of the city. That had become necessary owing to the vast increase in the population, and he hoped a proportion of the men would be told off for that purpose.

Mr. MIDGLEY said that in the contingencies and subdivision there seemed to be a liberality and a prodigality which were not often found in estimates of that kind. There was an increase of £1,000 on last year. There was a very large increase in the item for fencing police paddocks, and for allowance in lieu of rent. The one item in which there was a decrease—although there were fifty more constables—was that for medical attendance and medicines, which last year was £300, and this year £200. That should be capable of some explanation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, with respect to the suburbs of Brisbane, the fact was that Brisbane was rather short of police, and so were other towns, because they had been compelled to send men away to form new stations. At present there were proposals for eleven new stations, while five had only recently been established, making sixteen for the present financial year. Add to that the number required owing to increased population in the settled districts, and it would be seen that fifty extra constables would not go very far. When the new stations were provided for, only eighteen men would be left to be distributed in the settled districts. With respect to fencing police paddocks, that was compelled to be done; and this year there were rather more than usual, principally on account of the new stations.

The Hon. B. B. MORETON called the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the fact that the fence of the police paddock at Gayndah had been down for years, and that, although application had been made over and over again to have it re-fenced, that had never been done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he had never heard of the matter before, and he could not give an answer until he had inquired into it. It might be more economical to do without it, but it was a matter to be inquired into.

In answer to Mr. KATES,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the allowance for rations to native troopers and trackers was at the rate of £35 a year.

Mr. MIDGLEY said that, seeing the way in which those moneys were voted, and being told there was to be granted not more than so-and-so, and that the money would not be spent altogether, he would suggest that the item of £200 for medical attendance and medicines should be increased.

Mr. FOXTON said he would draw attention to the item "Additional pay to sergeants and constables over five years' service, at £10 per annum." He saw that the same amount was voted last year for that object, and yet there

were not 600 men in the force altogether; and it meant an increase of more than £10 for every man who had been in the force for two years.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that men were continually coming into the force and going out of it, and as time went on, of course, the number of men who had been the whole five years in the service increased—that was to say, each year a certain number of men were added to that list, or became entitled to the additional £10 per annum; and a number went out, having served their time and become entitled to their retiring allowances. That was not additional pay. The man who got £10 one year did not get another £10 the next year. That sum of £3,000 was for 300 men who had been in the service for more than five years last year.

Mr. FOXTON said he had understood the allowance applied to 600 men.

Mr. BLACK said there was no doubt there was a very large increase in the vote this year—an increase of over £11,000—but there was one point that hon. members had not taken any notice of at all. It was the enormous increase in crime which was taking place, according to the report of the Commissioner of Police for last year. He thought it was deserving of some notice that evening, and the Colonial Secretary might possibly be able to explain the reason of it, and state whether steps were being taken by the organisation of the Police Department to endeavour to check that very great increase. He noticed that in the report it was said the whole number of arrests for the past year was 8,402, as against 6,306 in 1882. That was an increase of 30 per cent. in the crime of the colony, which, he thought, hon. members would admit was a very great and excessive increase, unless it could be satisfactorily explained. He would read what the Commissioner of Police said on the subject, and it would be for the Committee to consider whether they thought that the reasons there assigned were sufficient, or whether, perhaps, there might not be something wrong in the organisation of the Police Force. He did not wish to say there was, but he thought it was a matter to which the attention of the Committee, at all events, should be directed. It was all very well to keep on voting annual increases in that department; but they should have some assurance from the Colonial Secretary that the efficiency of the force was being studied as far as possible in his power. The Commissioner said:—

"On reference to the attached criminal statistics return it will be seen that there is an increase of crime during the last twelve months under nearly every heading. This increase is, however, slight in offences of a serious description, but in those that are chiefly comprised under the popular denomination of 'larrikinism,' including common assault, assaulting and obstructing police, drunkenness, obscene language, and other offences under the Vagrant Act, the growth is very large; arrests under the heading named giving a total of 1,036 over those of the preceding year. Fines and imprisonment have no deterring influence on the class known as 'larrikins'; they subscribe to pay the fines, and look on short terms of imprisonment as a joke. They are cowardly blackguards, who watch their opportunities and never attack those who are able to defend themselves. Nothing but corporal punishment will effectually put a stop to this nuisance, and it is to the influx of this class from the South, whence they have been driven by the lash, that I attribute the increase of the offences I have named above."

He thought the Committee should have an assurance from the Colonial Secretary that some notice had been taken of that report, and should know whether he had requested the police magistrates, under whose jurisdiction that class of offenders came, to be more severe in their way of dealing with them. He did not mean to say that the whole of that increase was all in the larrikin class; but

he was glad of the opportunity to point out to the Committee the very large and serious increase which appeared to have taken place during the last twelve months. There was another matter he noticed a little lower down in the report in connection with the police themselves. It said:—

“Some dissatisfaction is, however, caused by the uniformity of pay throughout the colony, owing to the very much higher cost of living in the western and northern districts.”

He took it from that that the pay being uniform, and the expense of living in the northern districts being very much higher than in the southern, the efficiency was very likely not secured to the same extent in the North as it was in the South. He thought, if it was understood the expense of living was very much greater, that an increase should be allowed to those constables who were suffering in the outside districts by being away from the capital.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is an item on the Estimates for allowance in lieu of rations in outside districts.

Mr. BLACK said that was satisfactory, and he was glad the Colonial Secretary had taken notice of that paragraph in the report of the Commissioner of Police; and he should be glad to hear that he had taken steps to check the increase in crime which was referred to in that report.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had had no time to consider the matter carefully or to make any inquiries into it. He regretted, of course, that there had been any increase in crime, but he did not think it was very serious after all; except with regard to what was called “larrikinism.” In respect to other crime, he did not think the increase during 1883 was more than could be expected considering the increased population and the position of the colony. It was very unfortunate that there should be such a large increase of larrikinism; but he did not know that anything could be done about it, except, perhaps, to increase the Police Force, as had been found necessary in some of the suburbs of Brisbane. He would be loth to insist upon the stringent remedies adopted in some of the other colonies; but if there was a tendency towards an increase of that kind of offence, no doubt they would have to deal with it in a much more summary manner than the law allowed now.

Mr. BAILEY said there was another matter which had escaped the attention of the Committee. There were hundreds of men travelling the colonies, living entirely by plundering and swindling innocent and ignorant people—very often country people—and who had they to look after those people? They had actually eight detectives in Queensland to protect people against that clever plundering class—to protect them against being robbed in the way they were robbed. He believed that on every day in the week crimes of that kind were committed of which they heard nothing, or were likely to hear anything. Let hon. members consider the position of the detectives. They were divided into classes. The first class received £180 a year; the second class, £140; and the third class, £120. They had to have several suits of clothes; they had to go to all places of public resort; they had to pay their way as they went along; they had to know thieves, and swindlers, and plunderers, and they had to pay for information that they wanted. Why, considering their salaries, it would pay them much better to shut their eyes to a good deal of crime, or to share in the plunder, than to depend on the paltry wages they were paid. Men employed in such a responsible position—one that required great shrewdness and

tact, and one that involved a good deal of expense—ought to be paid something more than the labourers’ wages they now received. They were only tempting those men to join in the swindles for the purpose of plundering the public. It was a temptation which very few men could resist. They had to associate with swindlers, and to know their tricks; but how could they be expected to do that, if they did not get enough to live upon? He hoped that in future Estimates a much more liberal provision would be made for them.

Mr. SMYTH said he noticed that there were six first-class inspectors, six second-class, eight first-class sub-inspectors, and fourteen second-class sub-inspectors. The district he represented had a very large population, and yet it had not one of those officials. The Police Force at Gympie was presided over by a senior-sergeant. Considering the fact that he had to conduct cases in the court, and that he had charge of the Wide Bay district, he thought the importance of the position should be better recognised than it was at present. That officer, if he was fit for the position, ought to be promoted as an inspector; if he was not fit for it, then it should be given to an inspector. He thought the district had been long enough without an inspector or sub-inspector. Very important cases were sometimes brought before the court, and some of the police who conducted their own cases were as good as lawyers. He hoped, therefore, that the Colonial Secretary would recognise the position of the head of the police at Gympie, and put it on a proper footing. The hon. member for Wide Bay had referred to the “spielers,” and to the position of the detectives; but there was another class that ought to be looked after. Brisbane had the reputation of being the lowest town in the colonies as regarded prostitution; and some time ago a public servant was fined for being the owner of some houses that were let to prostitutes. Landlords like those ought to be punished for letting such places. Then he thought the lash ought to be administered to those larrikins who lived on those unfortunate women. Those were classes that the police ought to look after.

Mr. BAILEY said he would like to hear from the Colonial Secretary whether he would take the Detective Force into consideration, and see that the men got proper pay for the services they had to perform. He (Mr. Bailey) had considered the matter for two or three years; and he was convinced that it was perfectly ridiculous to expect them to do their work properly for the remuneration they received. A great temptation was held out to the men to perform their work backwards instead of forwards. If they wanted detectives, let them be paid properly; if not, let them be made common policemen at once.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member, in becoming an advocate for the detectives, had spoken of the large amount of crime in the colony; but he did not think there was anything like the quantity of crime the hon. member would have the Committee to believe. He certainly had not shown any necessity for any increase to the Detective Force, or to the salaries of the members of that force. There was no place where crimes against property were so rare as in Queensland. He did not say that was altogether owing to the honesty of the people, because one of the principal causes why there were few crimes against property was the difficulty of disposing of it after illegally getting possession of it. The hon. member for Mackay had drawn attention to a very important part of the commissioner’s report, where it was stated that the results of larrikinism—and larrikinism itself

was very much on the increase—and the increase was caused by the influx of larrikins from the other colonies. If that was a fact, it was time to look after them, and see that the law was administered in such a way as to send them further if possible. The Commissioner stated that nothing but corporal punishment would put a stop to that class of crime; and if that was a fact, some drastic remedy should be administered to cure the evil.

Mr. BAILEY said he thought the leader of the Opposition would recognise the fact that in Brisbane alone there were some scores of men who got their living by habitual plunder. They employed a detective force to detect the offenders and bring them up for punishment; but they only paid those men policemen's wages. Instead of that, they ought to pay such wages as would induce the men to detect crime, and at the same time remove from them the temptation to connive at it.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the logic of the hon. member was very bad. He said that a great deal of crime in Brisbane was not detected because the detectives were not paid more money. Would an increase of salary cause a detective to detect crime to a greater extent? He (Mr. Macfarlane) thought the Commissioner of Police was the best judge as to how the men did their duty, and whether they ought to receive increases. Those detectives who showed themselves worthy should be the men to receive increased pay.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not aware of any marked prevalence of crime in Brisbane; he thought it was the other way. As to the cause of the increase in larrikinism, and the remedy to be applied, he thought it better to wait a little longer—it did not do to diagnose a disease too rapidly.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said that some time ago an application was made by Mr. Bauer, a planter on the Bloomfield River, for the formation of a police station there. The population amounted to 400 or 500, but the application was refused, and on being referred to he advised Mr. Bauer to make another application, but he had not heard the result, and he hoped the Premier would give him some information on the subject. He would now take the opportunity to refer to some letters which appeared in the Brisbane papers with regard to the administration of the Police Department, in connection with which there seemed to be a great deal of dissatisfaction. Constables had to find their own helmets; and after white helmets had been distributed on one occasion the men afterwards had to get black ones. That struck him as very singular. Of course he only knew what he saw in the papers, but it seemed to him that there was a sort of ironclad administration—in fact, he might say a Bismarckian administration—of the Police Department. He would now relate a circumstance, which was only an example of what he believed frequently took place. Under the police regulations, before a constable could get married he must have the sanction of the police authorities. A certain constable asked permission to marry; and after his application had lain in the office for some time, and he had got no answer, he went up to the office and saw a gentleman in authority there, and whom one would expect to be conversant with the case, and to be aware of the correspondence. As he understood, this man replied to the constable to the effect that if the permission was not given it would be given, and that it would be all right. He supposed the constable was in a hurry to marry, and he went next day and got married. When the authorities got knowledge of the affair the constable was suspended, and, he thought, called upon to show cause why he should not be

dismissed from the force. He (Mr. Campbell) wished to examine into the matter, and he asked why that rule was carried out so very rigidly, and he was told that the wife was not up to the standard that the Commissioner thought she should be. He made further inquiries then, and found that she was a very respectable girl, and had been in service for seven years in a most respectable house in the town and had conducted herself well during the whole of that time. He brought those facts before the Committee, because he thought it right they should know them, and if they were true it was a crying shame and great injustice. The police as a body were entitled to the protection of that House as well as any other body in the colony; and if the administration of the Police Force was carried out in that way the sooner some change was made the better.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not think the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary to the hon. member for Mackay, wherein he referred to the item "Allowance in lieu of rations outside districts," as being an allowance of a certain amount of money in addition to their pay, to the troopers in the northern and western parts of the colony, was satisfactory. If he remembered rightly, that allowance was for inspectors, sub-inspectors, and sergeants, and did not reach the men at all. So far as he remembered, those outside men did not get any allowance out of that amount at all. However, the Colonial Secretary would be able to explain that. He thought the report of the Commissioner of Police was a very valuable one. He would refer again to the part read by the hon. member for Mackay:—

"Some dissatisfaction is, however, caused by the uniformity of pay throughout the colony, owing to the very much higher cost of living in the western and northern districts. An attempt has been made to remedy this by making small allowances in addition to the pay of those constables stationed inland according to the distance from port, and by allowing three years' service in the Cook and Palmer districts to count for four years towards pension; but this does not appear to be sufficient to place the men on an equality with those in the south, and applications for an increase of pay or allowances are constant, and some difficulty is found in filling vacancies in outside places."

There was no doubt about the truth of that report, and a remedy ought to be found for it, if the efficiency of the police in outside districts was to be kept up. There was no question that the Northern police were not placed on an equality with the Southern police; and there was no question, also, that they were losing good men in consequence of that, because they found they could do better outside the force. He believed the matter ought to be attended to; otherwise he was quite sure the police would deteriorate in the North, and reasonably so too, as they were not paid in proportion to the police in the South, or in proportion to the wages to be obtained in the North outside of the force.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was quite correct in what he said in connection with that item. The item "Allowance in lieu of rations" was a special allowance to constables in the northern and western parts of the colony. As to whether the allowance was sufficient, or whether there should be a further allowance, was a matter for consideration. The item was a large one, and he did not feel justified, nor apparently had his predecessors felt justified, in increasing the expenditure more than was absolutely necessary. It was very easy to suggest how much better it would be to spend more money on these things; but the Government had to look further, as they had to find the money. The matter had to be considered from both points of view. There were no instances of the kind brought under his notice of dissatisfaction

on the part of men in the northern parts of the colony, and he was sure they could not be very numerous. Every effort should be made, of course, to do what was necessary; but at the same time they should exercise economy. The hon. member for Cook, Mr. Campbell, referred to three matters. The first was whether there was to be a police station at Bloomfield. There had been an application put in for a police station at Bloomfield, and it was one of those under consideration at present. Before finally determining the matter, certain inquiries had to be made; and if the answers which were expected came in, there would be a police station formed there. Another matter the hon. gentleman referred to was a change in the helmets of the police. That occurred some twelve months ago; he was not in the department at the time, but he understood there was no hardship at all in the matter; the helmets which had been changed had been used for a considerable time; and there was no hardship at all beyond the change. With respect to the case of the constable being allowed to resign who had married without leave, he did not care to go into the circumstances of the case—he took the responsibility of it himself. It was quite clear that the constable had married without leave. The statement made that an officer in the department had said that it would be all right was a matter which probably should be inquired into; but leave had been applied for and it was not granted, and the constable then married without leave. That might have been overlooked; but there were other circumstances connected with the case, and which were set forth in the report laid before him, and he felt bound to give the man the option of resigning. He did not intend to refer to the particulars of the case in committee; but the circumstances of the case, as reported to him by officers on whom he placed reliance, were such that the man in question could not, in his opinion, usefully continue to hold the position.

Mr. ANNEAR said there was one matter he would like to bring under the notice of the Colonial Secretary. A policeman in uniform and two policemen in plain clothes had exercised an amount of officialism which he considered they should not do. He was a passenger by the "Derwent" steamer, from Brisbane to Maryborough, and, while on the wharf at Brisbane, a Mr. Bugden, a respectable citizen of Rockhampton, came down to the wharf in a cab. The cabman demanded 8s., and Mr. Bugden said he would not pay him as he had only driven him for an hour, and all he would pay him was 6s. The policeman in uniform, whose number was 123, came on to the wharf, and, with the assistance of the two men in plain clothes, took Mr. Bugden off the "Derwent" at the wharf and handcuffed him. Mr. Bugden told them his name, and where he resided, and where he could be found, and he tendered the 6s. to the cabman in his presence and in the presence of several other gentlemen who were there. He would like to say a few words on the matter referred to by the hon. member for Wide Bay. He had read up the statistics of the other colonies, and he found that the Detective Force in every branch were paid 30 per cent. less than in the other colonies. He knew some of those men, and he could say they were very respectable men. They travelled very often on the steamers, and they got nothing but a steerage ticket. They had, of course, to associate with certain classes of people, and it was sometimes necessary that they should be in the cabin to detect cases. He knew, also, that there were a great many ornamental members in the force who received very large salaries and who did no work. He hoped the Colonial

Secretary would look into that matter, and see that the men who rendered services to the colony and did the work should be paid. He had referred to the case in connection with the arrest of Mr. Bugden, at Mr. Bugden's request, and at the request of some gentlemen living in Rockhampton. He knew there was no use writing to the Colonial Secretary about it, as that would take too long. What he had stated were facts, and could be borne out by the other gentlemen who were present.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman was quite wrong if he thought that the proper way to make his complaint was to bring it forward when they were in Committee of Supply. If the hon. member would write a letter he would let him know all about it in a couple of days. That was the best way, as the complaint would be immediately attended to. He could give the hon. gentleman no information.

Mr. BLACK said he thought the plan of putting down a lump sum of £3,000 for allowances in lieu of rations was a very bad one indeed, as it put too much power in the hands of the head of the department. There should be a fixed rate. They found that boatmen received £96 here and £108 in the North. He wished to know from the Colonial Secretary what additional pay constables received in the North in consequence of the increased cost of living? That £3,000 was entirely under the control of the Commissioner of Police, and he could well understand that it was quite possible that there might be some favouritism shown, and that men who were honestly entitled to it did not necessarily receive the allowance.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the pay of the police depended upon their standing; police received the same pay all over the colony as constables, or senior-constables, or sergeants, and so on. The extra remuneration was at a fixed rate, according to the place they were in; he thought Boulia was the dearest, and it varied according to the want of means of communication; when the means of communication became easy, and the cost of food became less, the allowance was reduced. He was not prepared to give a schedule of the different allowances; but they were all at fixed rates, as was well known in the department, and he could get the information at a moment's notice.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £9,929 be granted for Water Police and contingencies, said that the estimates for Lytton and Thursday Island were together. There was an addition of £10 to the amount for additional pay to boatmen of over three years' service; and £100 for an extra boatman at Thursday Island. The object of that was that the men were mostly on the water, and they had to keep two men for work on shore.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, said that on Tuesday next the Government proposed to deal with the Members Expenses Bill in committee, and then proceed with Supply. He did not know whether there was any desire to do much private business to-morrow. If there was a House the Government desired to bring down the Loan Estimates, and also a message recommending an amendment he mentioned that afternoon in respect to the Members Expenses Bill. He did not think there was a desire to do much business afterwards.

THE HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Government had so mis-managed their business that the House were asked to meet on Friday for no other business than to get the Loan Estimates. After waiting so long they might have received them without inconvenience. They must either wait till Tuesday for them, or else meet to-morrow. It was not treating the House with very much courtesy.

THE PREMIER said it was only a short time since that he was informed there was a desire that there should be no House to-morrow. He was under the impression that there would be a House, as there was some important private business on the paper. He had since been informed that there would be no business done.

Mr. ALAND said he was not disposed to agree with the Colonial Secretary. He had some very important private business on the paper, and was anxious to get on with it; but he was informed that it would be better if he allowed it to go by for a week, and he was satisfied to do that. He thought it would be better if they adjourned till Tuesday. He was anxious to see the Loan Estimates; but he could bottle up his anxiety, and so could other hon. members.

THE HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said it should be understood whether there was to be a House to-morrow or not. If the Government supporters were not coming there would be no House.

THE PREMIER said he thought he would be consulting the general wish if he amended his motion by moving that the House adjourn till Tuesday.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-one minutes to 11 o'clock.