

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 1884**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Tuesday, 25 November, 1884.*

Supply—resumption of committee.—Printing Committee.  
—Adjournment.

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

SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £47,800 be granted for Hospitals and Charitable Allowances, said there was a small increase in the item of hospitals generally. At one time it was the practice to enumerate the different hospitals, but as the endowment was given at the rate of £2 for every £1 subscribed it had since been considered unnecessary. It was proposed to place the Children's Hospital on the same footing as the other hospitals. The Lady Musgrave Hospital at Maryborough, which was a new one, was of the same kind as the Lady Bowen Hospital in Brisbane. There was an increase of £100 for the Benevolent Asylum at Rockhampton, and an increase of £200 for Lock Hospitals. He thought that after the proceedings of Friday last he ought to mention that he did not consider the resolution which was then carried, on the casting vote of the Speaker, should be regarded as an instruction to the Government to discontinue the operation of the Contagious Diseases Act, and therefore he asked for the full amount of £1,600. For the relief boards, there was an increase of £200 for Brisbane, and there were new votes asked for Charleville, Cloncurry, Muttaborra, and Normanton, of £100 each. There were no other alterations of any importance.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he was glad to know that the hon. Premier had intimated—or rather he did not suppose he could do anything else—that he intended to carry on the system of lock hospitals.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : So long as we have money voted to do it.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he hoped the Government would not be influenced in any way by the vote given on Friday night. Unfortunately he was not then able to be present ; but had he been he should have supported the Colonial Secretary in his opposition to the motion. They had all been under the impression, after the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary, that there were to be some amendments in the form of the Estimates ; but they could all see the clumsy shape in which that estimate had been put. There were side-headings and cross-headings, which had not the slightest meaning whatever. There was a cross-heading, " Relief Boards," which made perfect nonsense of the whole thing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I did not notice it.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said that no hon. gentleman, seeing that estimate for the first time, could make head or tail of it. It was simply carelessness to allow an estimate to be

put before the Committee in that shape. He could not congratulate the Government upon their Estimates; the present was the only attempt that had been made at economy that he had seen. There was not another department under the Colonial Secretary that had not been increased by at least 10 per cent., and in some cases a good deal more; but in the estimate for charitable allowances there was a decrease of 25 per cent. He could not congratulate the Government upon that effort towards economy. The hon. gentleman knew perfectly well that the amount of money now under consideration would be more than spent. To practise economy in that way did not say much for the researches that the Treasurer had made. There was an increase of £1,000 down for hospitals generally.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the cross-heading "Relief Boards" was certainly out of place, but he had not noticed it before. The hon. gentleman had said that there was a diminution in the vote for hospitals; but his criticisms fell very flat, because they ran counter to facts. The hospital buildings votes were this year placed in their proper place—in the Works Department. In that department, under the heading "Buildings," the vote for hospitals was included on pages 64 and 65. About £14,000 was asked for hospital buildings there.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he had taken that into consideration when he made his criticism.

Mr. ARCHER said he did not hear the explanation of the Colonial Secretary concerning the £400 that was not down this year for the Children's Hospital. The hon. gentleman had mentioned the matter, but he could not follow him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had stated that it was proposed to treat it in exactly the same way as other hospitals, and not vote a separate sum.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the estimate was not a new one, as it was adopted by the late Government. The instructions given by him were that children's hospitals were to be treated in exactly the same way as other hospitals.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said a fixed amount was voted last year and the previous year. After a change had been made in respect of other hospitals, the Children's Hospital stood alone, whereas it was entitled to stand on the same footing as other institutions.

Mr. SMYTH said he noticed a great many items for hospital buildings, and he wished the Gympie Hospital could have been considered. That hospital was crowded at the present time, and had been for the last twelve months, with typhoid fever cases. The railway was being extended towards Kilkivan, and they knew that with extension of railways came a great amount of sickness. They had found it necessary to appoint a resident surgeon, and he would like to have seen a sum of £500 put down for the Gympie Hospital, considering that Gympie was the centre of a large district, and that patients came into the hospital from all the surrounding districts. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would consider the claim of Gympie to an endowment for a suitable building. He would not ask for it if it was not urgently needed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that if it had been brought to the notice of the Government that money was specially wanted for additional buildings for the hospital at Gympie it would have been taken into consideration by the Government; but the case was not brought under the notice of the Government for a long time after the Estimates had been framed. As

he understood the hon. member, it was not so much because additional buildings were wanted as because a resident medical officer had been appointed.

Mr. SMYTH said that was the principal reason.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked if he understood the Colonial Secretary to say that if it was represented to him by the member representing any district that additional money was required for hospital purposes the matter would be taken into consideration? If that was so a supplementary estimate might be brought down, and he would then bring under the notice of the Government the requirements of the hospital at St. George.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had stated that every case would be taken into consideration, but how it would be disposed of depended upon the circumstances of the case.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he wished to know what course the Colonial Secretary would take in regard to the hospital at Geraldton? Money had been subscribed there, but it had not been considered by the Government sufficient. There was no place where a hospital was more required, seeing that it was a town situated in the midst of a dense scrub where fever was rife; and where the local residents were limited in number the tax for hospital purposes fell heavy upon them. The people had raised some money, but had not been met in a proper spirit by the Colonial Secretary. Seeing that in many other places hospital buildings had been erected without the local residents subscribing the exact sum required by the regulations, he thought Geraldton was being very badly treated.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said an application was made for the establishment of a hospital at Geraldton, and if a reasonable sum of money had been subscribed by the local residents the establishment of a hospital would have been authorised in the ordinary manner; but the total sum raised was not more than £200. He considered that double that amount should be raised in such a rich district. Half-a-dozen people could well afford a larger sum than that themselves; and, considering the district and the wealth of the people, he thought they might have put their hands into their pockets. The proposition made by the Government was a liberal one. He had said if a reasonable sum was raised the Government would supplement it by £2 to £1, and would at their own cost erect a ward for Polynesians, by whom the hospital would be chiefly used. That offer was declined, and it was idle to say that people on the Johnstone River and round about Mourilyan Harbour could not afford more than £200. The principle that the residents should subscribe a fair amount had never been departed from, and he did not feel inclined to depart from it in that instance.

Mr. ARCHER said he could assure the Colonial Secretary that the people were not as rich as he thought. They had spent enormous sums of money in developing the district and in buying machinery, and with very little probability of return for some time to come. So far from being rich, they were really poor. He knew of many instances in which hospitals had been erected without the people subscribing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said if the hon. member would search the records of his office he would find that that had occurred. They had frequently exceeded the regulations. He knew that the Colonial Secretary could enforce the rule if he liked, and he remembered, a few

years ago, the same rule being enforced in regard to schools. Every school in the North was obliged to subscribe the full amount before the Government gave any assistance, yet at the same time they were building schools down south where money was not subscribed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, with respect to schools, that since the Act of 1875 was passed the rule had been enforced. In many instances the Government had given money to hospitals without a corresponding amount being raised by local subscription, but there was no instance where a hospital had been started without the necessary subscription. It was undesirable to establish the principle that the Government should bear the whole cost. He had been very much surprised at the people of Geraldton not subscribing more than £200, and he repeated that he thought they were well able to subscribe more than that amount.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that the hon. gentleman stated that the people at the Johnstone River ought to contribute very much more than they did, considering their wealth. That statement had been very properly contradicted by the hon. member for Blackall, who put the matter in a proper light. If there was anything at all in the contention of the hon. gentleman, why did not the rich people about Brisbane contribute to the building of the hospital there? He supposed there were a dozen individuals in Brisbane, any one of whom was as wealthy as all the people on the Johnstone River, yet the Premier would not ask the people of Brisbane to build their hospital, every shilling of the cost of which had been paid by the taxpayers of the colony. He admitted that the Brisbane Hospital was in a singular position, because it received patients from all parts of the colony, and to a certain extent therefore it deserved extra consideration; but the argument of the hon. gentleman that the people of the Johnstone ought to contribute in the way the hon. gentleman spoke about would not hold water for a moment. The hon. gentleman knew well what happened when the people working on the line to Dalby were stricken with fever. Were they there told that they were rich enough to contribute towards hospital accommodation? No; the State at once, liberally and willingly, provided the money. A very much similar state of affairs existed at the Johnstone River, where new country was being opened up. Something like generosity—although he thought it was only properly dealing with the funds of the State—should be extended to outlying districts like that. The statement of the Premier, that the Government did not intend to put up a hospital in that fever-stricken district because sufficient money had not been subscribed by the residents, was monstrous; and the hon. gentleman ought to be ashamed of himself for having said so. He hoped the hon. gentleman would not receive the support of hon. members on the other side. It behoved everyone to do what they could to prevent further lamentable loss of life on the Johnstone. No one knew better than the Premier the loss of life that had taken place; and even if no money at all was subscribed, it was the duty of the Government to put up a hospital there, and for a time at least support it.

Mr. BLACK said the matter of assistance to hospitals was very unsatisfactory indeed. He had always considered that it should be placed on some certain basis. He had made application to the Colonial Secretary for additional aid to the hospital building at Mackay, which place had never received any assistance towards the erection of that building. The accommodation there was, as he had pointed out to the Colonial

Secretary, altogether inadequate to the requirements; and though other districts, he found, got considerable votes towards hospital buildings, Mackay was entirely ignored on the Estimates, certainly not from any want of energy on his part in bringing it forward. He would like to get some information as to whether the hospital buildings mentioned on page 65 were to receive votes proportionate to the contributions of the districts where the money was to be expended?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. BLACK: He noticed that Cloncurry was put down for £1,000. Were the people of that district contributing a proportionate amount? Then there was Charleville, £1,100; Charters Towers, £1,000 additional; Dalby, £500; Port Douglas, £200. He found that the Brisbane Hospital had had about £26,000 expended on it. He did not object to that at all, but he thought the time had arrived when there ought to be some distinct understanding as to what districts really were entitled to hospital accommodation. Bundaberg was put down for £1,000; Dalby had a previous £1,500; Port Douglas, £2,000; Toowoomba, £9,500; Warwick, over £4,000. Perhaps the Colonial Secretary would say on what principle aid was given?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the whole question was on a very unsatisfactory footing; there was no definite system at all about it. It had been the practice lately to a great extent to make grants to hospitals without any corresponding subscriptions from the residents. Of course, the annual vote was supplemented by subscriptions; but in addition, during the last five or six years particularly, the Government had given additional sums for buildings. For instance, in 1879-80, the House voted £1,500 for that purpose. In 1881 the only supplementary vote of that kind was an additional grant of £1,000 to the hospital at Maytown. In 1882 there were several large sums voted, including £1,000 to Hughenden, £250 to Roma, and about £890 to Townsville. In 1882-3 there was an increase. There was given to Brisbane, £1,000; to Toowoomba, £760; to Bundaberg, £600; to Townsville, £500; Maryborough, £500; and other places. In 1883-4, Warwick got £1,000; Cooktown, £120; Brisbane (Sick Children's Hospital), £300; Ipswich, £1,700; Cunnamulla, £1,000; besides other sums, such as £1,500 to Cairns, £2,500 to Herberton, and £2,500 to Townsville. Those amounts were voted specially. It was very desirable, no doubt, that the matter should be placed on some satisfactory basis. He had gone on this principle since he had been in office: that where it was really shown that a hospital was necessary in a district, and the inhabitants showed by their subscriptions that they were not trying to throw all the burden on the Government, assistance was given. The Hospital Act provided for the establishment of a hospital when it was proved to the satisfaction of the Governor in Council that the inhabitants had made provision for carrying it on.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that other places had been treated in a different way from that in which the Premier proposed to treat Geraldton. The people had subscribed all they were able to subscribe. The hon. gentleman seemed to have an idea that because a few wealthy selectors owned land there, on which they did not reside, the people should be able to subscribe more. The hon. gentleman was punishing the people who were the only residents of the Johnstone River—the working men employed by those rich selectors in clearing the land, planting the cane, and doing all the work necessary for bringing the land under cultivation. Those were the people who had

actually raised the money, with the addition of a few selectors who were actual residents. He was assured by the gentleman who communicated with him on the subject that they had raised all the money they could raise—£200 or £300, he was not sure which; he knew it was £200 some months ago. Yet, in the face of that, and knowing that the district was a fever-stricken one—more so, perhaps, than any other district in Queensland—the hon. gentleman stood upon a regulation which, by his own admission, had been repeatedly broken, and refused them any assistance. He was sure that if the hon. gentleman had thought for one moment of the actual necessities of the case, and got rid of the idea that the people were wealthy, the principles of humanity would actuate him to put a hospital there, even if it was only a small one. Timber was plentiful, and it would not take more than £1,000 to build a hospital—four or five times the amount raised at the outside—which would be the means of saving the lives of many valuable colonists. The district was a fever-stricken one, and would be much more so now the wet season was setting in.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was very much surprised that he had not received any communication from the people at Geraldton.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Because you refused them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the inhabitants had not given him to understand that they could not raise more money.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that they had communicated with him after their communication with the Colonial Secretary; and on his representing the matter to the Colonial Secretary he was told that more money must be raised.

Mr. BLACK said he should like to know the reason that the requirements of the Mackay Hospital had been ignored. The hon. gentleman had had a communication from the secretary of the hospital on the subject.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: When?

Mr. BLACK: Three or four months ago; long before the Estimates were framed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; long after.

Mr. BLACK said in that case the Estimates must have been framed long before he supposed. He should be satisfied if the hon. gentleman held out any reasonable hope that the claim would be considered when the Supplementary Estimates were being framed. The Mackay Hospital had never received any consideration at all from the Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it seemed to be rather a singular way of looking at the matter, that because one town badly wanted money for a hospital it should be given to all the towns in the colony. Surely they were not to adopt the principle of dividing a sum of money ratably amongst all the towns in the colony! The Government must ascertain where money was wanted before they could allow it. The hon. gentleman had said that his (the Colonial Secretary's) attention had been called to the requirements of Mackay. The hon. gentleman had given him some information after the Estimates were on the table of the House; but that was the first intimation the Government had received on the subject. They had not an unlimited amount of money to dispose of, and they had to deal with the most urgent cases. If the Mackay Hospital had a good case to make out, of course it would be taken into consideration the same as any other. It was hardly the proper way to raise a question of that kind now for the first time.

Mr. PALMER said he wished for some information with regard to the relief boards. Four places that had not been on the list before were down for £100 each. He would like the Colonial Secretary to inform him what conditions were attached to the grant. There was no hospital at present at Cloncurry or Normanton, though he was glad to see by reference to page 65 that provision was made for building a hospital at each of those places. The subscriptions of the inhabitants showed that they were really in earnest in their desire to have hospitals. He thought they had subscribed nearly £600 towards the Normanton one, and also very liberally at Cloncurry. He would like to know the conditions attached to the £100 grants.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the relief board vote was really a poor vote. The money was entrusted to the hospital committee for distribution, and where there was not a hospital committee it was entrusted to the police magistrate to relieve cases of real distress which were always to be found in the colony.

Mr. MELLOR said that with regard to the vote of £100 for Gympie he hoped the Colonial Secretary would see his way clear to increase it next year. He had been assured that the whole of the funds there had been expended. As to the other matter of additions to the hospital, he trusted the Colonial Secretary would place £500 on the Supplementary Estimates, as he knew that it was very much required. The hospital had been full nearly the whole year, and they wanted additional accommodation, not only for the resident medical officer, but also to increase the ward accommodation, which was insufficient at the present time.

Mr. JORDAN said he trusted that after what had occurred on Friday night the Colonial Secretary would not entirely ignore the resolution passed by the House. He understood that the lock hospitals could not be dispensed with at once, and therefore it was not his intention to take any exception to the vote for that purpose. He was sorry that the only expression on the part of the Colonial Secretary had reference to the resolution passing by the casting vote of the Speaker. They had nothing to do with the fact that it was passed by the casting vote of the Speaker; it was now the resolution of the House. The feeling generally on the subject in the colony justified him in urging that the compulsory examination of the women should be suspended in the meantime, until there had been further expression of public opinion on the whole question.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he had stated distinctly, in moving the vote, that he did not see his way to act upon the resolution of the House. If a majority of the Committee decided to vote money for six months only they would take the matter out of the hands of the Government, but if they did not the Government would continue to carry on the lock hospitals on their present basis.

Mr. JORDAN said he wanted to be satisfied on the point whether the compulsory examination would be continued or suspended. After a similar resolution had been carried in the House of Commons the compulsory examination of women was suspended until the Repeal Bill should be passed.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he assumed that the law would be administered until the present Act was repealed.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they surely could not expect the Government to act on a resolution come to by the casting vote of the Speaker in a House in which only thirty were

present out of fifty-five members. He for one, had he been present after the speech of the hon. the Colonial Secretary in reply to the hon. member for South Brisbane, although his mind was not made up previously, would have voted against the resolution. The hon. the Colonial Secretary placed the matter in such a clear light that no person having the interests of humanity at heart could do otherwise than vote for the continuation of the lock hospitals. Was he to understand, in regard to the Geraldton Hospital, that if the people up there satisfied the hon. Colonial Secretary that they had raised all the money which they were able to raise, he would reconsider the case?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member apprehended him quite correctly. He had expected for some time past to receive a communication on the subject, and he would be glad to receive any communication from there.

Mr. FOOTE asked if there were no exceptions to the rule of giving a relief vote for distribution, unless there was a hospital committee or a police magistrate? There was a committee of ladies at Ipswich who had given their attention to that kind of work, and he thought the money might be safely entrusted to them for distribution.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there had been two exceptions in his time.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said they were often made before.

Mr. FOOTE said there could be no objection to making a third exception in the case he had referred to.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had not heard of an application being made from Ipswich in his time. Exceptions to the rule had been made in the cases of Brisbane and Maryborough.

Mr. FOOTE: And Toowoomba.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not quite sure, but any application would be considered.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he sincerely hoped no money would be handed over to a number of ladies in Ipswich to expend. He took it that the rule was that, under relief boards, where the money was not given to a hospital committee, it was given to the police magistrate for distribution. That was the case in Brisbane, and also in other places. He hoped the hon. Colonial Secretary would not entrust the expenditure of any money to ladies at Ipswich, however charitable they might be, who were not responsible, even if he had made an exception in two or three other places. The money in any case should be handed over to some body of which one member was a Government official.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said there was a vote for a new Lady Musgrave Hospital at Maryborough. Was that of the same description as the Lady Bowen Hospital at Brisbane?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not think the question of those ladies in Ipswich who had been referred to had been before the Government for a long time, and he hoped that the hon. Colonial Secretary would not give up his common-sense judgment in the matter in deference to the pleading of the member for Bundamba.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the hon. member for Bundamba had simply asked him if an application of that kind would be considered, and that he had said "yes."

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Mr. FOOTE said that an application had been made for a grant of money to those ladies at Ipswich to the previous Government, and that the application was made with the knowledge that exceptions had been made in the case of other places, and therefore they could not see why an exception should not also be made in the case of Ipswich. However, the late Government could not see their way clear to make the grant; he presumed they did not intend to see their way clear. The hon. the leader of the Opposition would like to obtain the promise of the Colonial Secretary that the matter should not be considered; but he must remember that he had lost his influence in the meantime, and that it might be some time before he got it back again.

Mr. GROOM said that a sum of £300 was dispensed by the ladies of the Benevolent Society at Toowoomba. That money had been transferred over to them at the request of the late Police Magistrate (Mr. Cribb), who desired to be relieved of the duty on the ground that he was not in a position to judge of the merits of the cases brought before him. The majority of the cases were of wives deserted by their husbands. So far as his experience went he thought the money was very well spent indeed. In addition to the £300 voted, they managed to collect about £100 from local residents, the whole of which they disbursed in a most satisfactory way. They were better able to judge the cases of distress brought before them than a committee composed entirely of gentlemen, on account of the greater freedom with which applicants for relief could make their cases known.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could quite understand Mr. Benjamin Cribb, or any other police magistrate, being desirous of getting rid of any work for the doing of which he did not receive any special emolument. It was never intended by the Committee of the House, in voting that £300, that it should be dispensed by an irresponsible body of ladies, who would, no doubt, be delighted to perform acts of charity at the expense of the State. Those sums were voted by the Committee, with the intention that the controlling power over them should remain in the hands of a body who were responsible for their proper expenditure. If there was anything in the argument of the hon. member for Toowoomba, why not make it apply to Brisbane? Had the Committee known that such a state of affairs existed at Toowoomba, they would not have so cheerfully voted the money.

Mr. GROOM: The change was effected many years ago.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the fact was now made known to the Committee for the first time, and he sincerely trusted the Premier would not allow such a state of affairs to continue. Probably the present Police Magistrate at Toowoomba would be both willing and able to undertake all the duties which his position devolved upon him. At any rate he hoped such instances would not be multiplied, and would insist that all relief grants should be dispensed by persons responsible to the Government.

Mr. GROOM said he had not quite correctly stated the case. The money was not placed absolutely in the hands of the Police Magistrate, but in the hands of the hospital committee, of which the Police Magistrate was chairman. The change was made at his suggestion, many years ago, and had ever since worked admirably. The money was not disbursed by an irresponsible body. The grant was sent half-yearly to the hospital committee, and by them transferred to the ladies' account in the bank, and for the disbursement of the money they rendered an account to the committee, who thus exercised

a check over them. They certainly made £100 go a very great way, and their labours in connection with the expenditure of the vote were worthy of all praise.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the case might almost be called one of misappropriation of public money. The money was voted for a definite purpose, to be dispensed by definite individuals, who had no right whatever to delegate it to another and an irresponsible body. The transfer had been illegal from the commencement. While not disputing that those ladies had been very careful and had distributed the money in a very proper way, still he could not help repeating that it enabled them to practise cheap charity at the expense of the State. They had not to put their hands into their own pockets. They had the patronage of £300 which the Committee voted to another and quite a different body, who, in the transfer, had all along been guilty of an illegal act.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the money was handed over to hospital committees for the relief of poor persons, but he believed that if the returns were called for it would be found that in the majority of cases it went into the general hospital funds. It was certainly never voted for that purpose, but in nine cases out of ten it would be found that that was the fact. A board of ladies would dispense the money a great deal better, and would make £100 go as far as others would make £200; and a ladies' committee for that purpose should be appointed in all places to which those grants were given. They would get far better value for the money than at present.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was beginning to see a little light thrown upon the question. The hon. member had just told them he believed that the money which had been voted for the relief board of Ipswich had gone to the general purposes of the Ipswich Hospital. Was not the hon. member for many years a member of the hospital committee there, and was it not a fact that he had recently been rejected from it? It was impossible that the hon. member should have made the discovery since his rejection, and he ought to tell the Committee whether what he had stated was correct, or merely a supposition.

Mr. FOOTE said the hon. member (Mr. Macfarlane) was for many years a member of the Ipswich Hospital Committee, and did very good service when upon it. He himself (Mr. Foote) had also a pretty good idea of how the money went, and it was very greatly owing to that reason that he had brought the matter forward now, and in previous sessions. During the time of the late Government many attempts were made to place the dispensing of the vote within the powers of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, especially as it was known that other similar bodies in the colony were receiving grants for charitable purposes. As to the ladies practising cheap charity at the expense of the State, nothing could be further from the fact. They collected funds, divided districts into wards for their special purpose, and by making careful inquiries into the cases of all applicants for charity were able to expend the money entrusted to them in the best manner possible. The Ipswich society held periodical meetings, at which reports were read showing how the money subscribed had been distributed, how many people were found in a state of destitution, and so on. The society there had been doing very good and valuable work, and, what was more, they had done it without one shilling of Government money. Application had been made to transfer the present vote to them, and he believed they were the proper body to be entrusted with the expenditure of it.

The vote was not intended to be applied to hospitals generally. The societies of which he had been speaking were acquainted with many cases of destitution that arose from different causes; some from drunkenness, some from sickness, some from accident, and some from other causes; and it was very necessary that institutions of that sort, instead of being spoken of deprecatingly, should be encouraged, and he did not see why they should not receive assistance. If the money were handed over to the ladies' benevolent institution, and a proper account rendered of it, it would give more satisfaction.

Mr. SMYTH said that, looking through the various items, he found that some towns were especially favoured. The town of Ipswich received £400 a year, while there were other towns of equal importance that did not get anything like that amount. He noticed that Rockhampton had a benevolent asylum that received £400 last year, and which was to receive £500 for the present year. For Maryborough, he found there was a jump of from £200 to £400. He thought that the basis of population ought to be considered in the matter.

Mr. FERGUSON said he could tell the hon. member who had just sat down that Rockhampton was differently situated from any other town in the colony; it was the only town that had a large district behind it, which was not supported by any relief fund, except through Rockhampton. Ipswich, Toowoomba, and Warwick received the money for their own purposes, but Rockhampton had to supply relief to a large district. He believed that the ladies' benevolent societies were the only ones which put the money to the right use for which it was intended by Parliament. The money used to go to the Police Magistrate at Rockhampton; but he never had time to attend to the work as it ought to have been, and it was now paid over to the Ladies' Benevolent Society, which had to meet regularly before any amount was passed. When an application came in, a committee of one or two was appointed to see if the relief applied for were really necessary, and unless it were assistance would not be given. With regard to Rockhampton, the public there were so well satisfied with the working of the society that they had subscribed £350. The hon. member for Ipswich was quite right in saying that the sum ought to be given to the ladies' benevolent societies.

Mr. BLACK said he wished to know something with respect to the reason why the vote for Maryborough was increased from £200 to £400.

Mr. ANNEAR said he considered that the vote for Maryborough was a very small one indeed. The hon. member for Gympie stated that the amount should be given on the basis of population. Maryborough was the second town in the colony so far as population was concerned. The hon. gentleman had referred to Rockhampton; but seeing that Brisbane was down at £1,600, Rockhampton received the very small allowance of £500. No doubt there was a very large back district there; but there was also a large back district at Maryborough, which only received £400, and when the money was handed over to the Ladies' Benevolent Society, which had been recently formed there, he was certain that the money would be well spent and not one shilling misappropriated. The ladies of the town had taken up the work warmly, and the money was better spent than previously. The hon. member for Gympie had no right to complain of the vote for Maryborough. The people of Brisbane, and those of Gympie, where there was a large mining population, contributed less than any in the colony towards hospital purposes. A few years ago the miners

contributed nothing whatever ; but lately, since special appeals had been made to them, they had been more liberal.

Mr. MELLOR said he took exception to what the hon. member for Maryborough had said with reference to Gympie. Gympie had always been to the fore in supporting hospitals. There was no institution better supported in the colony than the Gympie Hospital ; and an additional amount should be given. There had been an exceedingly heavy run upon the funds this year, and they had been completely exhausted.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, judging from what had fallen from the hon. members for Maryborough, Ipswich, and others, one would think they had better let a lot of old women come and deal with the question. They had been told by the hon. member for Toowoomba that they were very much better financiers and economists than men were, and would make 10s. go where a man would spend £1. They had better have an old woman as Treasurer—he was not saying they had not one at present—but perhaps the best thing would be to get an old woman from one of the benevolent boards to rule the finances of the colony. He maintained that the vote had been obtained under false pretences. He was sorry that in a great many cases the societies were sectarian bodies. The hon. member for Bundamba might deny it ; but he would repeat it.

Mr. FOOTE said the hon. gentleman did not mean what he was saying. He had just had a spell, and they must excuse him.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he wanted to know whether the Premier was not going to reply to what was stated by the hon. member for Gympie? Why should the amount for the relief board be doubled in the case of Maryborough when no other town received increases? On what system were those sums of money apportioned—if there was any system at all?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had been trying to get an opportunity to reply. Every town, he thought, ought to be rather proud of the smallness of the amount voted for the relief board. The amounts placed on the Estimates were according to what was understood to be required, and where there were changes it had been represented that the amount voted was really insufficient. They could not keep down pauperism, unfortunately ; but after inquiry as to the real amounts required for the purpose, the Estimates had been framed accordingly. He was glad to see that so many of the larger towns asked for so little.

Question put.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said before the amount was passed he would take the opportunity of saying a word or two with regard to the charges brought before the House in regard to the operation of the Contagious Diseases Act the other night. He had caused inquiries to be made as far as it was possible to identify the cases referred to. One case had been particularly referred to and could be clearly identified, and that was the case of two young girls who were charged with being prostitutes. He had received a memorandum from the Police Magistrate, and he had also the evidence taken in the case, which he would be willing to show to any hon. member. He might say that, at the conclusion of the case, the Police Magistrate said to the girls, "I consider the case against you fully proved, but as Mr. Stewart, the city missionary, has taken you in hand I will discharge you ; but let me inform you that the senior constable will keep a sharp lookout for you and bring you up again if you do not behave yourselves."

That was the case in which Mr. Stewart had intervened and engaged a solicitor to defend the girls, and anyone reading the evidence would see that it was as strong a case as could possibly be made out. The other case in which girls in service had been proceeded against was also reported on. They were brought up for the reason that they were seen by the police to frequent brothels. Whether they got out unknown to their mistress he did not know, but they actually frequented brothels. It was right that those cases should be mentioned again, because the rumour of the kind that had been mentioned was unfair to the police, and gave the outside public a wrong impression of the working of the Contagious Diseases Act.

Mr. MACFARLANE said a great deal of stress was laid on the cases mentioned by the Colonial Secretary, but to his mind the report he mentioned went for nothing. They knew that in many instances innocent girls had been persecuted in England and elsewhere, and where a policeman was once concerned in a case he did his best to prove it. That was well known. There were hundreds of girls who suffered through the anxiety of the police to prove their cases. He had intended to refer to the matter under the next vote, when the item for lock hospitals and fees to medical men was under discussion, and he would reserve what he had to say until then.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £3,645 be granted for Medical Officers. New officers had been appointed at Cloncurry, Muttaborra, and Normanton, and there was an increase of £50 to the medical officer at Cooktown. That was in consequence of the increased work. A greater number of vessels now came down the coast than formerly, and the medical officer at Cooktown also attended at the Leper Station. There were no other increases.

Mr. MACFARLANE said hon. members of the Committee would observe that the vote was under six different heads—namely, "Vaccination, medical attendance on gaols, immigrants, police, lock hospitals, and aborigines." He wished to ask the Colonial Secretary for information in regard to vaccination. The medical officers advertised that a charge of 2s. 6d. would be made to ensure a child being brought back again after vaccination. They charged 2s. 6d. besides the fee that the Government paid them, and he would like to know whether it was an extra. There was an allowance for attendance on gaols, but gaol-birds did not as a rule require much attendance ; and the police, he noticed, had a sum of £200 put down for medical attendance.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Those are places where there is no medical officer.

Mr. MACFARLANE : Then there was attendance on aborigines ; but, as far as he knew, very little was done in that way. The half of that vote, therefore, came under the heading of "Immigrants, vaccination, and lock hospitals" ; and as the whole of the vote for lock hospitals was for the purpose of examining the girls, he thought that, as a protest against that system and a continuance of the Act—although the resolution against that examination was only carried by the casting vote of the Speaker—a portion of the whole vote, say £500, should be left out. He did not object to the last vote, because he thought it was quite right that some allowance should be made for lock hospitals, in order that those girls should be restored to health ; but he objected to the examination, and therefore, as a protest, he should move that the sum be reduced by £500.



Mr. JORDAN said he would maintain his consistency on that question by voting for the amendment.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that surely the hon. member was not going to maintain his consistency to the extent of absurdity! The hon. member for Ipswich said he had no objection to the lock hospital, but he objected to the other thing. The hon. member would not gain his object by what he was doing. Out of the whole amount a very slight proportion went to the lock hospital; and to strike off the sum the hon. member named would throw the whole arrangements out. If the hon. gentleman wanted to take objection to anything in connection with the lock hospital, he should have done so on the last item.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he quite approved of the vote for lock hospitals; but the sum now before the Committee was for the examination of girls, which was quite a different thing. That was why he wanted to make a protest against it, and he thought that was the proper place to raise the question. If he could not succeed in reducing the whole sum, he would try to reduce the several items for the four largest towns where the Contagious Diseases Act was in force.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY suggested to the hon. member that, if his object was to test the question, he should take, at Brisbane, the salary of the medical officer, and move that that amount be reduced.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he had no objection to try with the Brisbane vote. He would therefore ask leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he saw that the amount for Brisbane was £500, and he would move that it be reduced by £100.

Mr. BEATTIE said he would point out to the hon. member that he would not attain his object by such an amendment. There was a large amount of work for the medical officer in Brisbane to perform, besides attending to the girls; and the hon. member would take away the opportunity that those unfortunate girls had of being cured. He hoped the hon. member would not persist in his amendment.

Question—That the item for Brisbane be reduced by £100—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 8.

Messrs. Grimes, Brookes, Mellor, Jordan, Annear, White, Higson, and Macfarlane.

NOES, 23.

Messrs. Norton, Archer, Sheridan, Miles, Dickson, Griffith, Groon, Macrossan, Black, Morehead, Lator, Isambert, Stevenson, Beattie, Kellett, Smyth, Foote, Lissner, Palmer, Ferguson, Bailey, T. Campbell, and Dutton.

Question resolved in the negative.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked the Colonial Secretary why it was that the salary of the medical officer at Cooktown had been advanced from £150 to £200, whilst that of the medical officer at Townsville remained £150?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he admitted that the salary of the medical officer at Townsville should not be less than that of the medical officer at Cooktown; but his attention had not been called to the matter when the Estimates were being prepared.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Will the hon. member rectify it on the Supplementary Estimates?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If there are any.

Mr. SMYTH called the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the inconvenience to which the travelling public were subjected by the quarantine regulations. In going to Maryborough he had been stopped on two different occasions in the river until the medical officer came down from Maryborough. With many of the passengers, if they missed the afternoon train to Gympie it would enforce a delay of two days; and he could not see why the examination should not take place within half-a-mile of the town instead of eight miles away. Of course it could not be expected that a medical officer with a salary of £200 a year could give all his time to waiting for the steamers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he saw no reason why the examination should not take place close up to the town; and, had his attention been called to the matter, instructions would probably have been given to that effect. He would have the matter attended to next day. The provisions which had been adopted were the same as those previously in force when smallpox was prevalent in the other colonies.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the point raised by the hon. member for Gympie suggested another matter in connection with the quarantine regulations. He had come from Sydney in the "Governor Blackall," which carried passengers for Maryborough, Bundaberg, and Rockhampton. On inquiry he found that, after having been passed at Brisbane, the boat was stopped for examination at each of those ports, a proceeding which seemed rather absurd. Surely after the ship had been passed as clean at Sydney and Brisbane, there was no necessity to delay the passengers at the other ports! Another inconvenience in connection with quarantine was exemplified on the same trip. The steamer came in twenty minutes after sundown, and was, for that reason, detained twelve hours. He was told—whether correctly or not he could not say—that in Melbourne and Adelaide passengers were passed by lamplight, and it might be possible to adopt the same system here. A detention for twelve hours at Lytton was never very pleasant, and it was all the more disagreeable to be stopped when one was so near his destination.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had always understood that examination for smallpox by lamplight was perfectly futile. With regard to the examination at several ports, it had to be remembered that the medical examination was not proof of the non-existence of disease on board, but only that it had not exhibited itself at that time. It might break out in the interval of a few days; and the fact that there was no probability of infection being conveyed to one port was no reason why every precaution should not be taken to prevent another from being infected.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he quite admitted that every precaution should be taken; but if there was any force in the hon. member's argument, seeing that the steamers ran pretty rapidly from Sydney to Rockhampton and back with the same crew, the same argument ought to lead to examination at every port on the way down.

Mr. BEATTIE said that the hon. member for Gympie had stated that he saw no reason why vessels should not be passed very much nearer Maryborough than they were at the present time. If that was necessary at Maryborough, where any of the vessels going there could go up to the wharf at any time, why should the same rule not be applied to Brisbane, where they were apt to be detained at the bar for twelve hours waiting for the Health Officer? Sometimes vessels coming up the river were detained by want

of water, and under such circumstances passengers could not of course get up; but it was different if they were detained to wait for the Health Officer. At any rate they might be examined nearer the town than at present, when although a vessel had plenty of water to come up the river she was compelled to anchor outside the bar, and through that delay sometimes lost a tide.

Mr. FERGUSON said the regulation was very annoying to shipowners, and to the public as well. For instance, at Rockhampton, where there was no bar to navigation, they had to anchor at Lake's Creek. Sometimes, when a steamer arrived, the Health Officer would be engaged elsewhere, and he knew of a case where the captain steamed on and blew his whistle for half-an-hour for the Health Officer to come on board. And when he did appear the Health Officer ordered the captain to steam back while he rode overland to Lake's Creek and met the ship there. A number of passengers were thus put to a very great deal of inconvenience, as well as the owners of the ship. If the Colonial Secretary would give instructions that all ships might be allowed to come up to the town and remain in the river till the Health Officer came on board, it would be a great convenience and no harm would be done.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would illustrate to the Colonial Secretary the absurdity of stopping vessels at such points of the coast as Maryborough and Rockhampton. Supposing that a man was anxious not to be inspected more than once or delayed, and that his destination was Maryborough or Rockhampton, and that his starting point was Sydney. He would come to Brisbane and leave the steamer there, and go on board another steamer whose point of departure was Brisbane. That vessel was not examined at Maryborough or Rockhampton, and yet he might be as dangerous as if he had come all the way in the steamer in which he originally started. It appeared to him that all steamers after passing Brisbane might be passed at the other ports.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that the examination of passengers by those steamers was more with the object of giving confidence to the public than actually with the expectation of keeping out disease. He said that from the way in which the examination was made. He had undergone the examination during the last two months several times, and a greater sham he never witnessed than that examination, both here and at Sydney. At Sydney, numbers of people did not know that they had been examined, as the doctor had simply walked past them and counted their number. The doctor here was perhaps a little more particular, but that was all that could be said. If the Government and the medical profession thought they could keep out smallpox by examinations conducted as those were to which he had referred, they were mistaken. He supposed it was to give confidence to the public, otherwise the examination might be dispensed with.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that that was news to him. Certainly the examination was made for the purpose of keeping out the disease. It was believed to be a precaution, but not an absolute prevention. It was the only one that they could take. He was very much surprised to hear what had been said regarding it. The last time he had been examined was by the late Dr. Challinor, several years ago, and it was very thorough. When the regulation was issued he had inquired of the Health Officer as to the nature of the examination, and that gentleman had described to him the procedure, which cor-

responded with what he himself had undergone formerly, and he had given instructions to the Health Officer to carry out the same system as had been done formerly.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had never been examined by Dr. Challinor, but certainly the same thing could not be said of the other officers.

Mr. ANNEAR said the public would have as much confidence if the examination were made half-a-mile from Maryborough as at Dundathu. At the present time Dr. O'Connor had sometimes to remain a whole day at Dundathu when four or five steamers came in in one day. Most of those steamers had passed at Brisbane, and he did not see the necessity of examination at Maryborough, because some of the passengers had previously arrived in Brisbane from Sydney. It was a great demand on the time of Dr. O'Connor, who only received £200 a year, whilst it would not pay him if he had £600, if he had to stay the whole day at Dundathu. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would allow the steamers to come up nearer Maryborough, say to within half-a-mile of the town.

Mr. HIGSON said he hoped the concession would be given, for he did not see what difference there could be in having the examination in the river at Rockhampton and at Lake's Creek.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that when the matter was brought to his notice some time ago the disease was believed to have been stamped out, and the examination was on the point of being discontinued, so that it was thought scarcely necessary to make any change. When it appeared again the same system of precaution was adopted, but he intended to take immediate steps to alter the present system.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £650 be voted for the service of the year for the Central Board of Health. Hon. members would see that there was an increase in the Estimates for fees to the extent of £200. That had been rendered necessary by the passing of the new Health Act. The Health Officer at Brisbane, Dr. Wray, who was also Inspector of Orphanages, had been appointed Secretary to the Central Board of Health at a salary of £400 a year; and an Inspector of Orphanages had been appointed who would devote the whole of his time to the duty, which would be very onerous. If the subject of health was to be dealt with in a satisfactory manner it was quite clear that there should be some competent officer of the board, who should collect information and give assistance to the local authorities. Dr. Wray had been relieved of his duties as Inspector of Orphanages; and it was thought that the proposed arrangement would work satisfactorily. The work connected with orphanages had largely increased, and required a separate officer to take charge of it. The salary intended was, as he had before stated, £400; but the amount asked would cover the expenditure until the expiration of the current financial year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that would be a convenient time for asking the Colonial Secretary whether the rumour was true that Dr. Taylor had been sent home at the expense of the State on some special mission, and if so, what that mission was?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that before Dr. Taylor went home he called upon him, and offered to collect certain sanitary information for the Government in England. He (the Colonial Secretary) told him he should be extremely obliged for any information he might

collect, and he believed he wrote him a letter requesting him to do so. That was the extent of the accuracy of the rumour.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Has he received any emolument?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that nothing was said on the subject of emolument, although no doubt if Dr. Taylor were put to any expense he would probably make some claim to the Government.

Mr. BEATTIE asked the Colonial Secretary if he would kindly take into consideration the case of the late Secretary to the Board of Health, whose services had been dispensed with in consequence of the changes in that department. That officer had been secretary to the board for twelve years, and he had never heard of any complaint against him in that capacity. It would be a pity to put him out of employment after such a length of service.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that the matter was under consideration, but at present there was not a suitable vacancy available.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £3,250 be granted in aid of Public Institutions. He proposed to omit the last item, "School of Arts, Thursday Island, £400." Some time since, he promised a deputation from Thursday Island that he would place that sum on the Estimates for that purpose; but, more recently, application had been made to establish a State school there. That building would cost £1,000, of which £200 had been subscribed by the inhabitants. Considering the very small number of children on the island, the school building might very well be used for the purposes of a school of arts in the evenings. The item of £250 for the School of Arts at Bowen was asked for under exceptional circumstances. The former school of arts was blown away by a cyclone, and the people there asked for a special vote to help them to erect another, which he gladly promised them.

Mr. PALMER said Bowen seemed to have been treated with exceptional favour. Why should not another £100 be given to the Normanston School of Arts?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has not been blown away.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Raise the wind!

Mr. PALMER said he could not understand a building being blown so entirely out of existence that no part of it could be utilised.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was nothing left of it; it was blown clean away.

Mr. PALMER asked if any gratuity could be given for the purchase of books for schools of arts, supposing extra local subscriptions for that purpose were raised, even if the original grant exceeded £200?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was especially stated in the foot-note that no grant should exceed £200.

Mr. NORTON said he could not see why Bowen should get a grant of that kind more than any other place. At Gladstone, for instance, the people were suffering from the effects of as bad a drought as there had been in any part of the colony. They had not even a school of arts, but used for the purpose a part of the Town Hall. Gladstone was entitled to extra help as well as Bowen.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked if the amount of the vote—£250—would not be £1 per head for every man, woman, and child in the place?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the population must be greater than that, judging from the number of children who attended the public school there.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that Bowen had not been very well looked after by former Governments, and as the place had been twice devastated by cyclones, he thought the vote might well be allowed to pass without opposition.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it should be a *sine qua non* that the new school of arts should be built cyclone-proof. Bowen had been visited three times during the last fifteen years by cyclones, and it might be visited again, for the place did not seem specially popular with Providence. He hardly agreed with the vote, although he did not intend to oppose it.

Mr. FERGUSON said that, in giving Bowen £250 because its school of arts had blown down, they were establishing a bad precedent. If an accident occurred to any other school of arts, the supporters of it would have a right to ask the Government for a grant for the erection of a new one. He did not think that because a school of arts was blown down it was any reason why the Government should give an extra sum. There were towns in the colony where there had never been a school of arts at all, which had just as much right to have one as Bowen; it would be establishing a bad precedent.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £30,100 be voted for Miscellaneous Services, said that the first item of £5,000 was an additional sum for the steamer to replace the s.s. "Kate." They had already voted £13,000; the contract being £18,000, which would cover all the expenses that would be incurred. The lowest tender that came in, in accordance with the specification which was sent home, was £25,000; but he believed they would get a very good vessel, with a speed of eleven knots, for £18,000; she ought to be sailing at about the present time. There was an additional sum of £7,000 asked for the gumboats, £60,000 having already been voted for them. The amount for fire brigades was the same as usual; for foreign interpreters there was a slight increase. The expenses of elections were very much less, as there was a general election last year. The sum of £3,000 was asked for European telegrams, and the amount for horticultural and agricultural societies was increased by £1,000. The votes for the Acclimatisation Society, loans to cemeteries, relief of aboriginals, and to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals were the same as last year. In addition to the items he had mentioned there was a sum of £1,000 for a memorial to Captain Cook at Cooktown. It was well known that Cooktown was the place where Captain Cook beached the "Endeavour" on the wonderful voyage he made round the world. If any hon. members had taken the trouble to look at the book of his voyages they would see an admirable drawing of the Endeavour River; and the spot where the ship was beached could easily be identified. They ought to erect a monument there. In New South Wales, they had one at Botany.

Mr. MOREHEAD: A large amount of the money was subscribed by the public.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that there ought to be some mark set up before the place was occupied in any other way, and if hon. gentlemen thought £1,000 was too much he was willing to reduce it. He thought it was a very small amount, and they ought to be ashamed of themselves for not having done anything already. He knew some hon. gentlemen opposite had no æsthetic tastes,

Mr. MOREHEAD : I don't admire yours !

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he also asked for £1,000 for Mrs. Macalister.

Mr. MOREHEAD : Does the Minister for Works support that ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Parliament voted a pension to the Hon. A. Macalister of £500 a year ; but he drew it for only two years. The services he rendered the colony were well known, and he left absolutely nothing behind him.

Mr. BLACK said he would ask the Colonial Secretary if the Government had any scheme for a memento to Captain Cook ; what was it to consist of—was it to be an obelisk or a statue ? The vote was altogether insufficient for the purpose of putting up a memorial commensurate with the requirements the Colonial Secretary sketched out. He trusted it would be an embodiment of the æsthetic tastes the hon. gentleman referred to, and would not take the shape of the monument they might see outside the window.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was afraid the hon. gentleman did not do justice, when he referred so disparagingly to that statue, to one who was, to the time of his death, one of the greatest sculptors of the day. For the amount that was asked no very elaborate monument could be erected ; but he thought a substantial obelisk might be obtained.

Mr. ARCHER said the Colonial Secretary had asked if anyone had taken the trouble to read "Captain Cook's Voyages"—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : That part of it.

Mr. ARCHER said that anyone who did not read them must be differently constituted from most people, for anything more interesting was almost impossible. He had not only followed Captain Cook's footsteps in Australia, but in other parts of the world as well. He did not, however, see why £1,000 should be voted just now. If the Ministry could show a surplus next year, he should be glad to vote five times that amount, and they could have a memorial that was worthy of the man. He did not only look upon Captain Cook as the greatest navigator, but also as one of the greatest men who ever lived ; but the matter of the monument had better be postponed until they could do something worthy of the man.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could not think that the Colonial Secretary was in earnest in putting the item on the Estimates. He must be joking with the Committee. Surely he did not believe for one moment that there was any necessity for putting up a statue to Captain Cook so long as Australia lasted ! Surely Australia was a monument without spending £1,000 on a paltry obelisk ! The thing was absurd, and it was childish to ask the Committee to vote a sum of money for any such purpose. Would it raise Captain Cook in the estimation of the world ? The continent of Australia, and a large portion of Oceania, was a living monument to that man ; but if it was insisted that they should spend £1,000 on a monument, perhaps some sculptor could chip the statue in front of the building in which they were sitting into some representation of the great navigator. But the whole thing was a farce. The reason that the statue of Captain Cook was put up in Sydney was because it was the oldest settlement in Australia ; and further, it was not a movement in any way initiated by the Government. It was initiated by Sir Alfred Stephen and others who raised subscriptions, which were afterwards supplemented by the Government. If people

were desirous of erecting a monument to Captain Cook, let them do so ; but he did not see that the State should be called upon to expend money in that direction. He fully agreed with the hon. member for Blackall, in saying that Captain Cook was the greatest of all navigators and one of the greatest men that ever lived ; but to spend £1,000 on a statue to perpetuate his memory seemed to him absurd, as everyone knew all about him. As to whether members of the Opposition were æsthetic or not, that was a question upon which the Colonial Secretary was not competent to judge.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he thought the fact of the landing of Captain Cook was a matter of very great interest in the history of Queensland, and a statue, he thought, should undoubtedly be erected to his memory.

Mr. MOREHEAD : But not at Cooktown.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member's argument amounted to saying that all statues were objectionable, and perhaps pictures also.

Mr. MOREHEAD : The hon. member is assuming too much.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member's argument led to that. He said that everyone knew all about Captain Cook, but he (the Colonial Secretary) did not think they did, and it would at all events be desirable to mark the fact of his having landed at Cooktown. People seeing Cooktown for the first time might regard it as an out-of-the-way place, but seeing the statue there would be reminded of its historical interest. There was no place in Queensland that possessed such an amount of historical interest for Queenslanders to be compared with the place where Captain Cook landed. Was it worth while to mark that place ? He thought they might spend £1,000 very wisely in that way, but other hon. members thought differently.

The Hon. J. M. MCCROSSAN said he agreed with the Colonial Secretary in thinking that they ought to do something to commemorate Captain Cook's landing at Cooktown, but he did not think £1,000 was sufficient. They could get nothing for that sum worthy of the man or the colony. It was a paltry sum, and would not carry out what the Colonial Secretary had in his mind. If they wanted to erect some monument to Captain Cook he thought they ought certainly to mark the spot on which he beached the "Endeavour," if possible ; but if they wanted to really mark his landing at Cooktown as an historical event of Queensland they ought to erect an obelisk on Mount Cook, which would be seen by every vessel passing down the coast. Quite independent of the circumstance mentioned by the hon. member for Blackall, he thought any probability of a deficit next year should not affect their vote this year. He believed a larger sum than £1,000 should be voted, but he should support the vote asked for.

Mr. ARCHER said he had stated that if there happened to be a large surplus next year a much larger sum might be voted. No man was more anxious than himself to commemorate the landing of Captain Cook, or do honour to his wonderful voyage. He would recommend the Colonial Secretary to bring in a Bill to prevent people altering the names that Captain Cook gave to the various places he discovered. That was a thing he was happier in than any other—the appropriate names he gave—Cape Capricorn, for instance, which was just under the line, and Great Sandy Island. Now they had wretched paltry names substituted for

those places, and Great Sandy Island was called Fraser's Island. If the names given by Captain Cook could be preserved, that would indeed be a monument to him which would last for ever.

Mr. NORTON said he could see no reason for voting the money this year. He quite admitted what had been said about the greatness of Captain Cook, but he could not see why they should erect a monument to his memory at the present time. A worse time could hardly be chosen. The country had been suffering for many years past; all branches of industry had been affected, and were now existing under very great disadvantages. A thousand pounds was therefore a matter of some moment under the circumstances. The present was one of those times when it was necessary to cut off all unnecessary votes from the Estimates; and that, he considered, was an unnecessary vote. Whilst he agreed with the propriety of at some time erecting a monument to Captain Cook, he did not think it should assume the form proposed. What would Captain Cook, or any other great navigator, desire that his memory should be perpetuated by? Would he not rather prefer a lighthouse to a stone monument? He (Mr. Norton) thought, if a monument should be erected at all, there could be no more fitting monument than a first-class lighthouse. Let them have something like that; but unless the lighthouse was wanted at the present time he should vote for the omission of the item from the Estimates, and before sitting down would move that the vote be reduced by £1,000.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he did not by any means intend to say that for £1,000 a statue to Captain Cook would be erected; but he thought they ought to mark at Cooktown—the place where he landed and remained for a considerable time—that he was the discoverer of that portion of Australia. He admitted that the sum was inadequate; but he hoped that a much better monument than the one now proposed would in time be erected. The proposed memorial would show that Cooktown was the place which Captain Cook, having been wrecked inside the Barrier Reef, succeeded in reaching, and there repairing his ship, and being enabled to get home. Had he been unable to find that port, there was no doubt he would never have been heard of again.

Mr. ARCHER was understood to say that he was glad the Premier acknowledged that the sum was inadequate for a fitting monument. There was already a monument in the South Seas recording his death, so that if the proposed memorial were erected there would in one part of the world be a monument to his death, and in another part a memorial of his life. He thought the item had better be omitted this year at least.

Mr. SMYTH said he thought it would be a mistake to bury £1,000 at Cooktown by erecting a memorial where it would never be seen. They should erect the memorial in Brisbane, if anywhere, so that all visitors to the colony would see it. In New South Wales they had placed Captain Cook's statue in Hyde Park, and not at Botany, where he landed, and where nobody would have seen it. It would be better to erect a memorial hospital, or found a Cook's College; to put up a statue at Cooktown would simply be throwing money away.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. BEATTIE said he saw an item—"Two gunboats—additional sum, £7,000." He was not going to raise any objection to that; but he wished to have a promise from the Premier that money would be put on some

estimate to provide for the naval brigade which it was proposed to introduce. He understood that when the Defence Bill passed it was the intention of the Government to take steps to organise a naval brigade, and he wished to point out to the Colonial Secretary how easily that would be accomplished. On the previous night an invitation had been issued through the Press to young men willing to join the brigade, with the result that, in one day, there were about fifty applications. Thirty-five men had put their names down at a meeting, and fifteen sent apologies for non-attendance. He was sure it would be very satisfactory to the hon. the Colonial Secretary to see that he would have no difficulty in getting the requisite number of men. A naval brigade would be of very great advantage to the colony, and he hoped the Colonial Secretary would give the Committee an assurance that the money would be provided. The matter was one of vital importance at the present time when the defences of the colony were being discussed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already given an assurance of the intention of the Government to make provision for the establishment of a naval volunteer force. He was very glad to learn that so many persons were ready to join the force.

Mr. STEVENS said that, in connection with the item of £300 for interpreters, he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary whether an interpreter had yet been appointed for the Beunleigh district?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that none had yet been appointed.

Mr. STEVENS said that the last interpreter resigned some months ago, and the inhabitants of the district were anxiously looking for the appointment of someone to take his place. There were a great many Germans in the district, many of whom spoke very little English, and they suffered great hardships when they had cases at the police court. There was seldom a German magistrate on the bench, and when a sharp lawyer was employed they were completely at his mercy. Great failures of justice sometimes resulted from there being no one to make the magistrates understand the case. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would not let much more time elapse before appointing an interpreter.

Mr. NORTON said that there was another item of which he intended to move the omission—the grant of £1,000 to the widow of the late Hon. Arthur Macalister. At the time when it was proposed to grant a pension to Mr. Macalister he was one of those who opposed it. He did not believe in his receiving a grant at all; still less did he believe in making a grant to the widow. He did not mean to say that he had no sympathy with the lady; but he thought the time was come when there should be an end to grants of that kind unless some good reason could be shown for making them. He did not think any good reason could be shown why the grant should be made. He did not believe in the manner in which Mr. Macalister had obtained the appointment of Agent-General, nor in the way in which he conducted the business of that office. He did not believe that his acts were such as to induce members of the Committee to make a special grant in recognition of his services. He did not think Mr. Macalister had rendered any special services to the country, and there was no reason why the Committee should make a special grant. He proposed the omission of the item—"Grant to the widow of the late Hon. Arthur Macalister, C.M.G., £1,000."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not believe as a general rule in making grants to

persons from the public funds. But whenever they found a case like that of the late Mr. Macalister, who for more than twenty years had served this colony with the result of entirely impoverishing himself, and leaving absolutely nothing for his family, he thought Parliament would not do any harm if they followed the example proposed to be set that night. The case was one not likely to arise very often. It was in 1860 that Mr. Macalister first became a member of the Parliament of Queensland, and before then he had been a member of the Parliament of New South Wales. During the whole of that time he had occupied a very distinguished position—first, as a Minister in 1863, and from that time to 1876 he was either in the position of the leader of the House, or Opposition, or holding important office. They all knew that Mr. Macalister had rendered many great services to the country, and that no man had suffered so much in his own private and pecuniary affairs as he had done, because of those services. All that had been pointed out less than two years ago, when a pension had been voted to Mr. Macalister and as they would have willingly paid that pension for years to come, so he hoped they would grant the sum now proposed to his widow.

Mr. NORTON said he hoped he would have some help from the other side of the Committee in preventing the passing of the vote. Were they going to grant a pension or allowance to every man who had occupied a prominent position in the House, or to his widow? During a great portion of the time that Mr. Macalister occupied that position he was well paid for his services. It was quite true he might have lost by giving up his private business to enter the House; but he (Mr. Norton) did not know that the country was now bound to recognise that. He believed that was the chief ground on which the pension was voted after Mr. Macalister's retirement; but surely that was no reason why they should now pass a vote to Mrs. Macalister! If Mr. Macalister chose to give up his private practice to occupy a position in Parliament, there was no more reason why they should recognise his services in the way proposed than they should recognise the services of other men who had occupied similar positions for several sessions of Parliament. Mr. Macalister, it was true, served long as a Minister, but for the whole of that time he received a salary as such, and at the time when he probably thought he was about to lose that position he appointed himself Agent-General. In doing so he thought Mr. Macalister had shown that if he neglected his private business in entering Parliament, he was, when the time came when he must retire, very well able to look after himself. He (Mr. Norton) objected to the vote, and he hoped he would have help from the other side of the Committee in expunging it from the Estimates. If he received any support at all he intended to carry his amendment to a division, and he trusted it would be carried.

Mr. JORDAN said he hoped the hon. member for Port Curtis would not get a vote from that side of the Committee. He did not think so. Than the Hon. Mr. Macalister no man had rendered more valuable services to the colony. They all knew that he did so at a sacrifice of his private practice, which was very lucrative, before he devoted himself to the services of the country with an arduous and disinterestedness which distinguished him almost beyond any man who had had anything to do with the public affairs of Queensland. He (Mr. Jordan) had had the honour of being a member of Parliament the first session when Mr. Macalister also sat there, and he had remarked the consistency and

firmness of his conduct of public affairs, and his self-sacrificing devotedness to the interests of the colony. He did not think that Mr. Macalister had appointed himself as Agent-General. He was appointed under very peculiar circumstances. His health had failed because of his devotion to the interests of the colony; he had become a poor man, and when he was told that he must remove to England or to Europe for a year or two he was appointed Agent-General; and a worthy representative of the colony he had made. When the House granted him a pension he might have been spared for a number of years, but he died shortly after, and now they were asked to grant Mrs. Macalister £1,000. He sincerely hoped no member on his side of the Committee would support the hon. member for Port Curtis in moving the rejection of that grant.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he thought that Mr. Macalister's case deserved much consideration. That gentleman had been a prominent man in the House when able men were very scarce. The population was very small, and it was not over-burdened with public men of talent, and yet Mr. Macalister had sacrificed his business and devoted himself to the service of the public. For that reason he had voted very gladly for the pension. When the colony of Victoria started into existence as an independent colony, with a representative Parliament, one of the clauses of the Constitution set apart £5,000 for the first members who would serve for two years as Ministers; and a portion of that money was still being drawn. It was nothing unusual in the colonies to recognise the services of men who had been a long time in office, and who had, to a certain extent, been remunerated by salary. No doubt they would have cheerfully paid Mr. Macalister's pension if he had lived for many years, but unfortunately he died immediately after the pension had been voted. He did not think that they were doing very much wrong to the country, or establishing a very bad precedent, by voting £1,000 to Mrs. Macalister. He did not think she could have been left very well off, and the Committee might very well and very gracefully vote the sum. So far as he was himself concerned, he would have voted for a larger sum.

Mr. GROOM said he could not quite go so far as the hon. member for South Brisbane in the eulogium he had passed on Mr. Macalister, because the facts of that gentleman's political career did not fully bear it out. But there was a well-known proverb which told them to speak nothing but good of the dead, and he intended to bear that in mind on the present occasion. It would be a very graceful act on the part of the Committee to recognise in that way the good Mr. Macalister did to the colony, and it would come with a still better grace if the item were voted without opposition. He hoped the hon. gentleman would withdraw his amendment, or, if he did not do it spontaneously, that the amount of support given him would be so small as to induce him to withdraw it. That Mr. Macalister did good service to the colony everyone would admit, notwithstanding that, like every other public man, he committed great political errors—errors arising from defective judgment rather than from any other cause. The amount was a comparatively small one, and it might very well be voted without opposition.

Mr. NORTON said he saw no reasonable grounds why the vote should be passed. Mr. Macalister, shortly before leaving the colony, was told by his medical men that he required change of air, and must go to Europe. Mr. Macalister did so, and appointed himself Agent-General while at home.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : No.

Mr. NORTON : He appointed himself Agent-General before he went.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : No, no !

Mr. NORTON said he might be wrong as to the details, but that was the actual result of what took place. Of course Mr. Macalister could not appoint himself ; but still the appointment was made in such a way as to justify people in saying so at the time. The colony did not want men in ill-health to serve it in that capacity, but men of activity and strength. Not long ago, a number of hon. members on the other side expressed their intention of voting against a number of increased items on the Estimates. The one now under discussion was a totally unnecessary item. He was not swayed by the speeches of the hon. members for South Brisbane and Toowoomba. He had formed his judgment on the matter long ago, and had seen no reason to alter it. It was argued that the grant should be given because Mr. Macalister had for a long time occupied a public position ; but were they going to form a precedent which would lead to similar treatment being accorded to every man who had occupied a public position in the colony ? There were men in the House now—and he said it without the slightest hesitation—who had done just as good services to the country as Mr. Macalister. Even if his own friends felt they could not support his amendment, he expected that hon. members on the other side, who were so anxious to keep down the expenses of the colony, would give him such help as would enable him to carry it.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he understood the position of the late Mr. Macalister to have been, that at an early period of the history of the colony he entered political life, and ultimately attained a position of prominence as a political leader. There had been men who had entered the Queensland Parliament in years gone by, who had rendered good service to the State, but who had never been in office, nor ever received any remuneration for their labours. Probably it was as great a tax on their private means to render those public services as it ever was to Mr. Macalister ; but there had never been a proposition made to grant pensions to those men, or to make provision for those whom they left behind—probably equally as needy. The special reason urged in favour of the grant was not one that had much weight—that was, that Mr. Macalister only drew his pension for a very short time. On page 3 of the Estimates there was a long list of pensions which the country was paying to a number of individuals who seemed likely to live almost for ever, and those pensions were likely to come to a very large amount in the aggregate. He noticed there the name of the Hon. W. Thornton. Mr. Thornton only drew his pension for two years, yet there was no proposition made to give his widow a grant of £1,000 on that account. The facts of the case with regard to Mr. Macalister had not been fully stated. That gentleman took the position of Agent-General when the salary was £1,000 a year, and he had not held it long when it was increased by 50 per cent. He should like to vote for the grant if he possibly could, but he saw no justification for it. If anything was to be voted at all it should take a different shape. It would be better to make some permanent provision for Mrs. Macalister in the form of a small pension. If the item went to a division he should vote against it.

Question—That the item of £1,000 be omitted—put and negatived.

Mr. PALMER said he wished to make a few remarks with regard to what was said by the hon. member for Mackay about the extraordinary

way in which the Estimates were made up. He could not fathom them. There was one item, "Repairs and additions to country court-houses and police buildings," and on referring to page 65 he found the same work was carried on by another department. Why could they not be put in one list, so that people could understand ? The amount asked was only £2,000, however.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the reason why the Estimates had been prepared in that way for many years was, that all applications for repairs to court-houses and police courts came to the Colonial Secretary's Department, whilst all important buildings, such as those which had to be supervised by the Colonial Architect, were under the Works Department. A great number of small things were coming in from week to week, which it was not considered worth while to trouble the Works Department with ; they were frequently done by the police. Therefore, it had been the practice to take a general vote in the Colonial Secretary's Department to cover those small items. In one place, painting was required ; in another, fencing ; another, spouting, and so on.

Mr. NORTON said, with regard to the last vote, that he had intended to put to a division the amendment he proposed. He had expected that there would have been a better expression of opinion from the other side of the Committee, but as there was only one member in favour of the amendment who spoke, he did not think it worth while to waste the time of the Committee by calling for a division. He was sorry that those gentlemen who professed to be so anxious to economise should exhibit the same spirit of increasing the expenditure of the country as the Government did. With regard to the loans to cemeteries, he would ask the Colonial Secretary if it was the custom of the trustees of cemeteries who had borrowed money from the Government at different times, to repay that money in instalments as they were supposed to do ? He wished to know if the money were repaid at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he made the same inquiry a little while ago in the department. He believed the trustees of cemeteries had been very irregular in their payments, and no strictness had been exercised. A circular had been sent calling upon them to repay the loans, as they had undertaken to repay them, and he believed some of them intended to do so.

Mr. NORTON said he understood that as a matter of fact the loan was equivalent to a gift.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : No.

Mr. NORTON said that, if the trustees did not choose to pay up, the money might as well be given at once. Although the trustees might be willing to repay it, in most cases they had not done so. All the money they received had to be expended in other ways.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : There are some cases, I know.

Mr. SMYTH said the hon. member for Port Curtis stated that his amendment had received no support from the Government side of the Committee. The hon. gentleman would have found more than one member who would have supported him had he gone to a division. The hon. gentleman might state that he had received no support from his own side, as the only member who spoke from that side spoke against the amendment.

Mr. NORTON said the hon. gentleman was quite right. He had intimated that although he might not receive support from his own friends he was entitled to some from the other side.

Mr. ARCHER said that he had only once had anything to do with cemeteries, and that was when he asked for an advance of £80 ; but

his friends were so honest that they refused to sign a bond, because they knew they would never be able to pay.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that last week he received a letter accompanied by a cheque, which was the result of the circular.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not see how the trustees of cemeteries could pay that money back again. All the money they received was from fees for burials, and the more unhealthy the district the more chance there was of its being repaid. The money ought not to be expected to be repaid; it was only imposing upon the consciences of people, such as the hon. member for Blackall referred to, who were so honest that they did not wish to sign a bond that they could not pay. It was a good thing that they were not able to pay, because there were fewer burials.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the money was borrowed under the provisions of the Cemeteries Act.

Mr. GROOM said he was going to point out that no provision for loans was made in the Cemeteries Act. The Act simply said that the provisions of the Act should be administered by trustees appointed by the Government, and that provision would be made, out of the consolidated revenue, for carrying out the duties imposed upon trustees. By the Act of 1880, passed by the hon. member for Mulgrave—the Local Works Loan Act—the trustees of cemeteries received those sums annually from Parliament, and provision was then for the first time made for repayment. Before that time—in 1879—owing to the position of the colony, it was proposed to strike out all grants to schools of art, agricultural reserves, and cemeteries, and it was on a motion made by himself that some of those votes were restored in a modified form after the matter had been fully discussed in committee. It was not until 1880 that it was suggested that all loans to cemeteries for the future should be brought under the Public Works Loan Act. Prior to that Act passing, grants were made continually, and trustees were neither asked to pay nor called upon to pay, nor had they paid any sums prior to that date. Speaking of the cemetery in his district, he might say that they borrowed money prior to 1880, which they had never repaid, for the reason that the hon. member for Townsville pointed out. They were not in a position to repay. How were they to repay unless they had some great epidemic in the district that would give them an increase of revenue? He entirely agreed with the hon. member for Townsville, that, as prior to 1880 a great many who borrowed had not been called upon to pay, all trustees should now be exempt. In all English communities some respect was shown to the last resting-place of the dead. God's-acre had always been regarded as a most sacred spot; and he thought small sums could well be granted for fencing in the ground and for other purposes, so that stray cattle, dogs, etc., might be kept out. If the Colonial Secretary would name the cemeteries from which repayments had been made, it would be found that higher charges were made for erecting tombstones, or else that the places were extremely unhealthy. There was some force in what had been advanced by the member for Townsville that those sums should be gifts.

Mr. NORTON said he was glad to hear the hon. member speak as he had done. If Toowoomba was not in a position to pay, no other part of the colony could. Last year the death-rate at Toowoomba was greater than in any other part of the colony; and therefore, according to the hon. member's showing, there ought to be a good income,

Mr. GROOM: We have an expenditure.

Mr. NORTON said he thought the hon. member was quite right; but when gifts had been made, the trustees should not be expected to repay the money. He had an interest in putting his question a short time ago. He asked the Colonial Secretary to give £100 towards a cemetery in his district, the trustees of which wanted to fence in their ground. He thought he could get it as a gift, but was assured by the hon. member that it could only be advanced as a loan. He was aware of the fact that a great many did not repay borrowed money; but in writing to his constituents to say that the hon. gentleman had promised £50 on loan he did not like to tell them that other people were in the habit of not repaying. Under the circumstances, when some trustees repaid and others did not, he thought they might as well wipe out all debts. In the case he mentioned, although the sum was so small, he was sure, if the money were to be repaid, it would not be from the cemetery itself; it would have to be raised by private subscription among the people.

Mr. MACFARLANE said there was an item of £100, for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, down on the Estimates. He did not intend to say anything against it, but as the sum was for Brisbane alone he would like to know whether other societies would be treated in a similar way. Then, again, the vote was only for the protection of the lower animals. But if a society was formed for the protection of the higher animals, such as women and children, would aid be given to it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not see the necessity for the establishment of a society of that kind, and he hoped it would never be necessary. If it was it would be the duty of the Government to take the matter up through the Police Department. It would be a lamentable thing if a society had to be formed for the protection of human beings. As to the other matter, there was at present only the Brisbane society in existence. The Government would take the matter into consideration when other societies were formed.

Mr. GROOM asked if the Colonial Secretary would explain the item of £500 for relief of aboriginals. How was it expended?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it depended upon circumstances. It happened occasionally that owing to drought and other causes the aboriginals became nearly destitute. At Thornborough, quite recently, the aboriginals were in a state of starvation, and provision had to be made for feeding them. It was for cases of that sort the vote was asked.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) moved that a sum not exceeding £6,240 be granted for Law Officers of the Crown. Hon. members would observe there was an increase of £250. That was brought about by the appointment of an additional clerk at a salary of £100 a year, by an increase of £25 each to the clerk and accountant, and another clerk who was in receipt of £175. There was also an increase of £50 in the amount for fees for defending aboriginals and Polynesians. One of the clerks who received increases had been nineteen years in the service, and with the enormous increase of the work of the office brought about by the extension of the railways, necessitating numerous transfers and conveyances which had to be prepared, that amount of money which it was proposed to give those officers was not more than enough; they not only zealously performed their duties in office-hours, but the great pressure of business necessitated their frequently remaining very long after the office closed,



Mr. MIDGLEY said there was a striking difference in the language made use of in the Estimates when they got into the legal element. He did not know whether it was compulsory by law that that kind of language should be used, but he did not find it anywhere else on the Estimates. He alluded to the heading on the 36th page, "Their Honours the Judges." He thought that in a document of that kind there ought to be no titles or honours.

Mr. NORTON: The Estimates speak of "the Hon. Arthur Macalister."

Mr. MIDGLEY: The Colonial Secretary, who was also provided for in the schedule, was called simply "the Colonial Secretary"; and he (Mr. Midgley) considered the Colonial Secretary was as good a man as any of the judges. Why should they not be called "Supreme Court Judges," without the additional description, which was out of place in a document of that kind?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not think anyone would grudge the distinction which was very properly given to the gentlemen who occupied the high position of judges of the Supreme Court. The hon. member would be glad to learn, when he came to "District Courts," that the simple title of "Judge" was put down. The judges of the Supreme Court occupied a position quite apart from that filled by the gentlemen who administered the various public departments. Ministers were only "Honourable" for the time being, except where they had been privileged to retain the title in perpetuity for long services. It was only just that the judges should be referred to in a way which showed the appreciation of that House of the dignity and responsibility of the positions they occupied.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that £6,223 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Supreme Court. There was an increase in the vote of £360. It was proposed to increase the salary of the Registrar of the Supreme Court by £150, making the salary £700. The principal clerk in the office of the Registrar was increased to £250, and there was an increase of £150 to the travelling expenses of their honours the judges when on circuit. The gardener, also, whose nominal salary had been £100, but who had actually been paid 6s. 6d. a day, was put down for £110, which covered what had long been really paid him. With regard to the increase to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, he might mention that that officer had been in the public service twenty-two years. The position being necessarily occupied by a professional man, was one to which a larger salary ought to attach than had hitherto been paid. The officer had certainly not less responsible duties than the under secretaries of various departments, all of whom, with the exception of the Under Secretary to the Treasury, who got £700, received £800 a year. The income of the Registrar's Department had greatly increased during the last few years. In 1881 the revenue derived by fees was £2,750—that was for fees and other charges which were payable under various statutes—and it had risen gradually until for the ten months of the present year the amount was £4,127. That was an increase in the amount of business done of nearly 50 per cent. The amount of revenue in 1883 was £3,708. The Registrar performed a number of other important duties. Not only was he taxing-master of the court—and it was of the greatest importance to suitors that an efficient professional man should occupy that position—but he was also registrar of insolvency, stamp commissioner, registrar of

joint-stock companies, and held other positions. It would not be possible, he thought, to get a competent professional man to accept the position of Registrar of the Supreme Court for the salary now paid.

Mr. NORTON: Who is he?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Mr. Bell. He had not been Registrar many years; but during the tenure of office of some of his predecessors, while he was subordinate to the Registrar, he did the whole of the actual work of the office, some of his predecessors being invalids, or being otherwise unable to perform the duties. He might say that among those who were competent to form an opinion, there was only one feeling with regard to the valuable services which were rendered by Mr. Bell. In the performance of his important duties he had always gained the entire approbation of the judges of the Supreme Court, under whose immediate cognisance his work specially came. He thought the time had arrived when the salary should be raised to £700.

Mr. NORTON: Why is his name not in the schedule?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that was because he was not one of those officers whose salaries were augmented by fees, as the salaries of clerks of petty sessions were. And he would point out that there were clerks of petty sessions—a position which did not require to be filled by a professional man—who were actually receiving something like £800 or £900 a year in some cases; whilst the salary of Mr. Bell, who was a professional man, was only £550. It was not in keeping with the fitness of things that such a state of things should exist. The present occupant of the office was a commissioner for affidavits, but was only allowed to receive fees for affidavits sworn after office-hours. There were twelve other commissioners for affidavits within the walls of the Supreme Court building, and it could be readily imagined that when they had taken affidavits during the day, there were very few to be taken afterwards. In fact, the Registrar would very seldom be called upon to take an affidavit except in cases of emergency when persons called at his private house. Under the 4th section of the Stamp Duties Act of 1866, Mr. Bell, being Registrar of the Supreme Court, was entitled to receive a salary of £50 a year as stamp commissioner, but neither he nor his predecessors had ever received it. The other commissioners were the Registrar-General and the Under Secretary for the Treasury, and when an increase of salaries was made shortly after the Act passed, it was understood that the participants in the increase should forego their claim to the £50 a year under the Stamp Act. The Registrar of the Supreme Court did not participate in the increases; but he had to forego his £50 a year, so he did not receive what he was entitled to have by statute. With regard to the other items, it would be remembered that the number of courts had been increased. There were now circuit courts at Roma and Mackay, and there was necessarily an increase in the travelling expenses of the judges.

Mr. NORTON: Does the Registrar get any fees?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Sometimes in connection with the Vice-Admiralty Court; but they are very small. The court perhaps does not sit once in a year.

Mr. BLACK asked if the Attorney-General could give any idea of the total amount of the fees? He said that the Registrar held other offices, which he supposed were not honorary.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said they were all honorary. The only duties to which fees were attached were those in connection with the commissionership for affidavits—those fees did not amount to more than a few shillings in the course of the year—and the duties in connection with the Vice-Admiralty Court. Those were fixed by Imperial statute, and were very insignificant. Until last year, there had not been a suit, he thought, in that court for some years.

Mr. NORTON said he thought that if they laid down the principle that no officers should receive fees, they should carry it out even if the fees were small.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the Government could not interfere with the fees received by the registrar of the Vice-Admiralty Court. It was an Imperial Court established by Imperial statute, and the fees, small as they were, were paid under the authority of that statute. The Chief Justice was the judge appointed by the Act, and he had certain powers with regard to the appointment of other officers. The fees payable were all specified by the statute—those paid to the registrar as well as those paid to the judges when duties were discharged by them in connection with the Vice-Admiralty Court suits.

Mr. GROOM said that when the Estimates were under consideration last year, he had occasion to call the Attorney-General's attention to one of the duties that officer was supposed to perform. Amongst the offices he filled was that of Registrar of Friendly Societies. Now, the Friendly Societies Act was passed in the year 1876. In England it was brought in and carried by Sir Stafford Northcote, who had since introduced an amended Act, the result of the working of the primary Act. It had been one of the most valuable Acts ever passed by the Imperial Parliament. It had been an immense protection to the working classes of Great Britain by securing that their savings were properly protected and invested in the very best securities; and yet the Act had never yet been put in force in this colony. The societies were increasing in number; the membership had reached some thousands; and they had a right to the protection of the House—to know that their savings were properly taken care of, and that the investments were being made in accordance with the Act. Another session had now passed round, and the Registrar of Friendly Societies had not fulfilled his duty of laying before Parliament the annual returns each society was supposed to provide. The friendly societies were required under the Act to supply to the Registrar an annual return of their receipts and disbursements, and all their assets; and the whole of them were to be embodied in a return and submitted to Parliament for publication, in order that the outside world might know how the funds were being disposed of. In addition to that there was one particular section which in England a short time ago—no doubt hon. members had seen that the Act was also in force in the colony of Victoria—had brought about an extraordinary revelation. Some of the societies which had been receiving the earnings of the industrial classes for many years were absolutely insolvent, the moneys having been disposed of in a way not justified by the Act. One of the subsections of section 12 of the Act provided that the Registrar of the Supreme Court should have power to call in an experienced actuary, and make an annual valuation. He would read the section, in order that hon. members might see the importance of the matter. Every registered society should—

“Once at least in the five years next after the commencement of this Act, or the registry of the society,

and so again within six months after the expiration of every five years succeeding the date of the first valuation under this Act, either cause its assets and liabilities to be valued by a valuer to be appointed by the society, and send to the registrar a report signed by such valuer, and which shall also state his address and calling, or profession, on the condition of the society, and an abstract to be made by him of the results of his valuation, together with a return containing such information with respect to the benefits assured, and contributions receivable by the society, and of its funds and effects, debts and credits, as the registrar may from time to time require or send to the registrar a return of the benefits assured and contributions receivable from all members of the society, and of all its funds and effects, debts and credits, accompanied by such evidence in support thereof as the registrar prescribes, in which case the registrar shall cause the assets and liabilities of the society to be valued and reported on by some actuary, and shall send to the society a copy of his report and an abstract of the results of his valuation.”

The Act also provided that the funds of the societies should be invested—

“In a Government Savings Bank; in Queensland Government debentures; in the purchase of land, or in the erection or alteration of offices or other buildings thereon; or upon any other security expressly directed by the rules of the society, not being personal security, except as authorised with respect to loans.”

Now, with reference to the returns of the various societies to the Registrar from 1876 down to 1884, that had never been done on any one occasion, nor did the industrial classes of the colony know whether the societies in which they had invested thousands of pounds were in a solvent condition, and whether their money was invested as provided by the Act. The Attorney-General had promised last session, when he (Mr. Groom) brought the subject up, that he would endeavour to see, during the recess, if something could not be done to give effect to the Act. The machinery of the Act was very plain and simple. There was an extensive Government Printing Office where the blank returns could be printed and sent to the societies, and the Act put in force. He thought it was of the highest consequence to the industrial classes of the colony that there should be satisfactory evidence that the provisions of the Act were complied with, that their money was secured, and that such sums as they had invested in the societies were sufficiently protected. At present there was nothing to show that that was the case. He should be very sorry to question the solvency of any of those societies; but it was of the utmost consequence that, where they had an Act to guard the savings of the industrial classes, something should be done by the Attorney-General and his department to carry out that Act with effect. He should like to have an assurance that, if they increased this proposed salary from £550 to £700, the hon. gentleman would in the future see that the Act was thoroughly administered, and that the House would be supplied with information as to the position in which these societies stood.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that when the hon. gentleman mentioned the matter last session he had communicated with the Registrar, who, it was his duty to state, had been collecting all the necessary information to enable the Government to deal with the question in a way it deserved. It was a very large question, and the Registrar had placed certain information before him, but it had been impossible for him to go into the matter during the late short recess. The Registrar had, however, placed before him all the necessary materials for going into the question in a way that would be satisfactory to the hon. gentleman and to the members of the House. The matter was not lost sight of, and would not be lost sight of, and the Registrar had been particularly industrious with reference to it.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said if the Attorney-General had told them what the

Registrar had done in order to present the statistics to the House it would have been better and more satisfactory. But the Attorney-General had not now given them any more information as to the working of the Friendly Societies Act than he did last year. He had not touched at all on the difficulty of the Registrar's inquiry or of making up the statistics to be placed before the House. If the money was voted they should have the statistics. It required a special staff quite beyond the ordinary staff of the Registrar, and unless the money was given the statistics could not be got. He (Sir T. McLlwraith) did not want to interrupt the debate, but he quite sympathised with the hon. member for Toowoomba in his endeavours to get the Friendly Societies Act effectively administered. It was high time they had it administered, but it was the wrong way to commence by increasing the salary of the Registrar, as next year they would be asked to give him another amount of money for doing a particular work.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Yes. What was the reason for giving Mr. Bell an increase of from £550 to £700 as Registrar of the Supreme Court? He was paid an increase last year of £50; and what was the reason which the Attorney-General gave now for the proposed increase? It was, he said, that the Registrar was a professional man, and that it was difficult to supply his place by another professional man. Mr. Bell was clerk to the Registrar. His services had all been acknowledged, and were now paid at the rate of £550 a year, which it was proposed to increase to £700 a year. He (Sir T. McLlwraith) could not conceive that it was from the technical fact that he was a barrister.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: An attorney.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked if it was an intelligent reason that the work of the court had increased so much. It was not the case that the work of the court had increased so much as to justify such a large increase of salary as that proposed. The work had increased last year when the whole matter was considered, and taking into consideration the work under the Friendly Societies Act, he was granted £50 additional salary. And now they were asked to grant £150 more. There was not a single salary in the Estimates in favour of which less had been said than the increase asked to be voted now. There were some salaries constantly increased by every Government, especially those of certain lawyers. Mr. Bell had been constantly shoved before them, either by the judges or by the Attorneys-General. He (Sir T. McLlwraith) knew that £700 had been proposed for Mr. Bell by the Attorney-General under his administration, but it was not supported by any other Minister. And here was Mr. Bell again trying to get an increase, though he was very well paid as he was. He could point to men in the Railway Department, who did a great deal better work, and whose services ought to be rewarded, but whose salaries could not touch that of Mr. Bell. But here was a man who, simply because he was a lawyer, and because they could not supply his place—as was said—was to get an increase of £150. They could not possibly object to any other increase if they did not to that one.

The PREMIER said that last year it had been proposed to increase Mr. Bell's salary from £500 to £700, but when the Estimates came on early on a Friday morning in a thin House, the full increase had been lost by the casting vote of the Chairman, and only £50 had been voted. The Government felt bound to renew the proposal this year, and

had fixed the salary at £700 on the ground that it was a fair remuneration for the work to be done. They could not get a man competent to do the work for a less sum. The fact was—though he did not want to speak unkindly of those who were gone—that for a great number of years in the colony the work of the Registrar's office was never done at all; and nobody ventured to increase the salaries because it was known the officers did not deserve more than they got. And so the one thing reacted on the other. And when there was a vacancy there was no more than the old amount available; and they could not get a man worth more. And for twenty years they had not a competent Registrar in the Supreme Court, and the result was enormous increase of expense to the public. An important duty of the Registrar was to hold inquiries. He was in fact a judge, although those duties as such were not performed for twenty years. All that was done was merely clerical work, which a junior clerk could have performed. He remembered bringing the matter under the notice of the late Government when the last vacancy occurred, and suggesting that a salary of £800 should be offered so as to secure the best man. They had a competent man now, and they ought to pay him a fair salary.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said it was pleasing to hear the lawyers defending members of their profession. There had been several vacancies in the office. First, Mr Fowles was appointed, and he was a much better officer than Mr. Bell, who had great influence brought to bear on his behalf. Then they had Mr. Crawford; and when he fell ill the lawyers in the House did not see how his place could be supplied. It was almost a question of giving a pension to his widow on account of the valuable services he had rendered to the colony as Registrar. And now it seemed that was mere fudge on the part of the lawyers, and that no work but clerical work had been done in the department for years and that that work had been done by Mr. Bell. Mr. Bell had formerly a salary of £350, then it was increased to £400. Great political influence was brought to bear to make Mr. Bell Registrar, but he was not a lawyer at that time, although he believed he had become one since. Mr. Bell was simply a clerk, and his salary was increased as the Registrar's clerk. The work was done during Mr. Crawford's time as well as it had been done since, for they had not yet got those friendly societies statistics, the want of which was the only fault brought against that office. He believed the appointment was due to Mr. Bell, and that was recognised by his being appointed at £500, afterwards increased to £550. Now the Committee was asked to make a jump of £150, because Mr. Bell had become a lawyer. There was no speciality in the law business because of which a man should be paid higher than in any other of the departments. The mere fact of a man being called to the Bar while in the service of the Government did not make him of much more value to the State. As to the question of fees, that matter ought to have been referred to in the schedule. To say that he was entitled to fees under the Imperial Act had nothing whatever to do with the question, because the pay came from this colony, not from the Imperial Government. Apart from the question of fees the amount put down was simply an increase to an officer who was no more entitled to it than any other officer in the service. There was nothing special about it, except that Mr. Bell was a lawyer and had got the lawyers to defend him.

Mr. FOXTON said the hon. gentleman's opinion about lawyers defending lawyers would

not prevent him from expressing his opinion with regard to Mr. Bell. He had always been of opinion—both before and since Mr. Bell became a lawyer—that that gentleman was a very excellent Civil servant. The hon. gentleman asked why the department of which Mr. Bell was the head should receive a consideration that was not given to the other departments. His (Mr. Foxton's) contention was to give it the same consideration—to give the man, who occupied in it a position similar to that of under secretaries in the other departments, a salary equivalent to theirs. Non-ministerial heads of departments were receiving £800 a year, and yet it was assumed that because Mr. Bell was a professional man he ought to do the work for £250 a year less. As to the argument that Mr. Bell had become a lawyer while in the Government service, it was really no argument at all. Mr. Bell had passed certain examinations which were a certificate of his qualifications for the office, in some respects, though, of course, not in all. He was surprised that Mr. Bell consented to retain the office at his present salary; for, as he had said on a previous occasion, he believed that if Mr. Bell were to go into private practice his income would be doubled. It would certainly be impossible to get any competent professional man of sufficient standing for the same salary. It was absurd to say that lawyers made a point of always defending one another. What difference was it to him, as a lawyer, whether Mr. Bell got £500 or £550 a year. It was merely with him a question whether the officer was paid a fair salary for the work done. The work performed by the Registrar was of really more importance, in civil matters, as far as the public was concerned, than that performed by the district court judges. The jurisdiction of the latter was limited to £200, while, virtually, that of the Registrar was unlimited. It was unreasonable to expect that a man occupying the position of the head of the Supreme Court Department should not receive a salary equivalent to that received by men holding what he asserted to be inferior positions as heads of departments.

Mr. NORTON said he was unacquainted with Mr. Bell, but he had always understood that he was a very careful officer, and one who deserved great credit for the way in which he performed his duties. Although true, that was no reason why they should be asked to grant the large increase. The real reason why it was asked for they had just heard from the Premier. The Premier got up and told them that the reason for proposing the increase was that it had been proposed last session to give Mr. Bell an increase of £200, and a majority of the Committee voted against it and the increase was reduced to £50. That increase was carried in a thin House on a Friday morning. He pointed out that during the time Mr. Bell occupied the office of chief clerk, the position of Registrar became vacant, and Mr. Bell always aspired to fill it, and very properly too. At the time he accepted the office the salary was £500, and when he received the promotion he presumed he was well satisfied with that salary. But was it any argument to put forward that, because having been satisfied to receive that, he was to have an increase of £200? There was no reason in that. There was another matter he would refer to. Mr. Bell was a commissioner of stamps; did he receive any remuneration for that?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He is entitled to it by the statute.

Mr. NORTON said that there were three commissioners who were entitled to receive £50 a year; did Mr. Bell never get it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The Registrar never received it.

Mr. NORTON said the Under Secretary for the Treasury never put in a claim for it, and he understood that Mr. Drew never claimed it. Did Mr. Bell also withdraw his claim?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that Mr. Bell had never put in a claim; but he did not know whether any of his predecessors did. He believed that the other two commissioners, immediately after the Act was passed, did receive the £50 per annum; but subsequently, when their salaries were increased, there was an understanding that they should not receive that £50 to which they were entitled by the statute. Mr. Bell was in the department for many years as a subordinate officer, and during that time he did the actual work of the office; and, when a vacancy occurred in the registrarship, it was only natural that the man who had been doing the actual work should receive the appointment; so Mr. Bell applied for the position, and obtained it. With reference to Mr. Crawford, he did not wish to say anything against his competency for the position; but it was well known that he was an invalid and, unfortunately, died not very long after he accepted the office; and his belief was that, had Mr. Crawford been a physically strong man and not in the condition he was, requiring to come to Brisbane for the best medical advice, he would never have thought of accepting the position of Registrar with the salary that was attached to it. Since he had been in the office there had been some young men who were subordinates in the office, and one had passed as solicitor; as soon as he had done so he sent in his resignation, and would not condescend to continue there on a salary of £400, with a prospect of succeeding the Registrar at £500. But he was a young man, and had no wife and family tugging at his coat-tails. If Mr. Bell had been a younger man he would not have accepted the position. He was not saying that because he thought Mr. Bell was not equal to something better; but it was because he was not a young man. The hon. member for Mulgrave said that the judges had recommended the increase, and previous Attorneys-General had recommended it. Were there any persons more competent to recommend it? They knew what the duties of the Registrar were, and the talents and attainments that were necessary for the office. It showed that it was not an effort on the part of the Government to give an officer a salary to which he was not fully entitled.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said he did not rise for the purpose of defending Mr. Bell, but he wished to draw attention to the differences between the salaries paid to the officers of the Supreme Court here, and to those of the Northern court. He did not suppose that the salary upon the Estimates for Mr. Bell was too much, but he would draw attention to the fact that the Registrar of the Supreme Court at Bowen received only £350 per annum, or just half of what was proposed to be given to Mr. Bell. The associate to the Northern judge at Bowen received the same as those in the Southern court—£300 a year. But a fair proportion ought to be preserved. The tipstaff at Bowen received the same as those in Brisbane, when it was known that living up there cost far more than in the South. The Attorney-General should take that into consideration. The clerk of the Supreme Court, Brisbane received £400 a year, whilst the clerk in the Northern Supreme Court only received £180. He did not say that those gentlemen in Brisbane did not deserve the salaries proposed for them, but asked why the gentlemen in the North, who

performed exactly similar duties, although perhaps not so onerous, should not be down for a larger salary.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he thought the officers of the Northern Supreme Court were well paid considering the amount of work they had to perform. There could be no comparison between the amount of work done up there and the work done in Brisbane.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Attorney-General supported the increase on account of the judges and previous Attorneys-General recommending it. He (Sir T. McIlwraith) spoke from long experience, that the lawyers had not the slightest conscience when it came to the payment of men engaged in the law. He spoke from experience of two or three Attorneys-General. The first thing he had to do was to cut down the extravagant salaries that everyone engaged in the legal profession was recommended for. That was what they found in the present Estimates. The member for Carnarvon asked, "Why should this man be punished because he is a professional man?" and said he ought to be paid a higher salary because he was a professional man. That was the contention of the Attorney-General as well. He (Sir T. McIlwraith) said the Registrar learned his profession the same way as any other Civil servant. The Committee would not regard with much sorrow the possibility of Mr. Bell leaving. He thought the position of Mr. Bell ought not to be a much better position because he was a professional man. On the contrary, he believed the difference made between him and other Civil servants was wrong. Take a professional man in the Railway, or Works, or Lands Department. Those men were bound to their position, and they could not move unless the Government recognised their position. They were bound to stick to the Civil Service, but Mr. Bell could leave and improve his position by leaving. Let Mr. Bell leave the Government service, but they should not unduly raise Civil servants' salaries to the detriment of other Civil servants. It had been attempted to put the Registrar on the same footing as the Registrar-General, but he could see no comparison between the two men. And then again it had been tried to put him in the same position with under secretaries, and he saw no comparison there either; and the fact of the duties having been performed for so long for £300 a year proved his case.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said one of the reasons urged for the increase was that the gentleman held a position analogous to an under secretary. Well, if that was the case, why did they want two under secretaries? In increasing the salary of the secretary to the Crown Law Offices, the Attorney-General had urged that he was an under secretary. He did not think it was a good thing to have two gentlemen with the same title. No one was disputing Mr. Bell's ability, but he observed that nobody on the other side, except the lawyers, defended the increase. He was sure that if the question came to a vote all the lawyers would be found on one side, as they had seen them always in the House whenever the interests of one of the profession were in danger. Why should Mr. Bell as Registrar of the Supreme Court have such a salary when the Registrar of the Supreme Court of the North only got £350?

The PREMIER: He gets £450.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: That is £100 less than Mr. Bell gets now.

The PREMIER: He has about a fifth of the work to do.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said it was a question of living as a gentleman ought to live. The man who occupied the position in the North was a gentleman, and it did not matter whether he

had less to do or not, his time was all occupied in the service of the State, and he got less than the other man. The judge got the same salary in the North, and so did the tipstaff. Why the unfortunate Registrar and the chief clerk should get such low salaries he did not know, and the only reason given by the hon. gentleman was that those men were well and highly paid. That was no reason at all, because they could not live as well on £450 as gentlemen in the South who received £550 or £700. The hon. gentleman must admit that the cost of living in the North was much dearer than in the South, and instead of giving a proportional increase on account of the cost of living, there was an actual decrease to a very large amount. Now, he would like to point out that in the Railway Department there was an increase in the pay of the several classes of servants, in proportion to the distance from Brisbane, and the cost of living. Certain classes of servants on the Central line got more than men in the same class on the Southern line, and they got more again on the Northern line than on the Central. Yet now the Attorney-General said he thought the Northern officers were highly paid.

Mr. KELLETT said he was one of those who thought the jump was too big: from £550 to £700 a year. It was only a short time since Mr. Bell was receiving £400 a year, and his salary was raised to £500, and then £550. He did not know anything of Mr. Bell, but he thought the lawyers looked after their brothers in the trade very well. He noticed that in the item of travelling expenses for the judges an extra £100 was provided. Was that to pay off old accounts, or were there more judges. All round, there was no doubt about it—the lawyers went for the dollars.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the Committee voted the other night the salary of a Registrar of Titles, £650. Years ago Mr. Bell was that officer's senior in the Registrar-General's Department. Mr. Bell was transferred from the Registrar-General's Department at the suggestion of Sir Arthur Palmer, who was then Colonial Secretary; and he was given to understand, he (the Attorney-General) believed, by Sir Arthur Palmer that he would better himself by the change—that was, the change from the Real Property Office to the Supreme Court Department. Mr. Milne, now the Registrar of Titles, was voted £650, the other evening, while Mr. Bell, who had since added to his qualifications, was only getting £550. There could seriously be no comparison between the remuneration demanded by the Registrar of the Northern Supreme Court and the Registrar of the Supreme Court in Brisbane. In the interests of the general public it was necessary that there should be a first-class man in Brisbane. Important questions relating to matters before the court in equity were referred to him by the judges, and on his report the judge gave his decision; so that the functions of the Registrar were of a most responsible character. It was making light of a most responsible officer to suggest that he was well paid. With regard to the under secretaries, the Registrar was not an under secretary to the Attorney-General; but he was rather a sort of under secretary to the Supreme Court, an institution which to a great extent stood by itself.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member for Stanley had challenged the increase to the vote for travelling expenses of their honours the judges. Was it to be understood that the judges were getting more extravagant? What was the reason for the increase?

The PREMIER said that question was brought up the other day by the hon. member for Burnett, with reference to a sum of over £300

expended by one of the judges while on circuit, which was a very remarkable sum. After the expression of opinion in the House on that occasion, he had anticipated that there would be no reason for further complaint; but he regretted to say that that day he had received from the Treasury memos, showing that the same learned gentleman, while on the circuit on which he was at present engaged, had already expended £200. How much more he was going to expend before he returned to Bowen he (the Premier) did not know; but looking at the circumstances, and considering he was the proper person to do so, he intended to communicate with the gentleman on the subject. He was informed that the £650 on the Estimates was already spent, and the first six months of the year were not yet over.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH asked whether the Committee were to understand that the amount voted for travelling expenses of the judges for the whole year had been spent in the last six months?

THE PREMIER: I understand so.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: And that the Government have no control over it?

THE PREMIER: No.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Was that the kind of economy that was going to be practised to confine the expenses to £650? What amount had been spent for the judges' expenses? The Committee should know exactly what they were doing.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the amount spent last year was £732. Two new courts had been established—one at Roma and another at Mackay; and the Government thought £150 added to the £500 previously on the Estimates ought to cover the extra expenses of visiting those places. At the time the Estimates were framed the amounts of the vouchers for the expenditure up to that time were not all in; and they did not know what the expenses would be. It had always been left to the honour of the judges to say what the expenses were. Since the discussion which took place in the House the other day, it had been represented to him that in the North—in Cooktown and Townsville—the judges were considered fair game by publicans and others.

MR. NORTON: Not in the South.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not know what the Northern judge was expected to pay at those places; and how he was to account for the large amounts he could not say. But the matter was of such a character that some communication would be made from the Government with regard to those expenses.

MR. NORTON said that surely the judges were not going to be "plucked" by the publicans in that way.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We do not want them to haggle about an hotel bill.

MR. NORTON said there was no necessity to haggle about it. A fair thing was a fair thing, and there should be no haggling. Because a man was a judge, he surely ought not to pay more than anybody else. He would undertake to say that if the judges had to pay their own expenses they would not pay double. Nobody would know better how to keep down the expenses; they would not allow the publicans to charge them more than they charged anyone else. He did not see why the judges' expenses should be paid in a different way from those of other men. Why were men to be looked upon as something so superior when they became judges, that they were to be allowed to spend whatever they liked, while other public officers were limited to so

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much a day? When the Attorney-General told them that judges were looked upon as fair game by hotel-keepers, he had furnished the best possible argument for allowing the judges a certain fixed sum instead of continuing the present system. Let them have a couple of guineas, or even three guineas a day, but let Parliament know what they were getting. They were only ordinary men, and there was no reason why the Committee should treat them as something quite beyond ordinary people. Then, he believed judges were rather fond of special trains. Of course no one wished to say that they should not have special trains when it was for the advantage of the country; but he had heard on good authority that sometimes they took lawyers with them, who, otherwise, would have had to pay their fares. He thought it was quite time a change should be made, and judges limited to a certain rate per day. He would like to point out that what was alleged to take place at Cooktown and Townsville probably took place elsewhere; if judges were considered fair game in those places, they would probably be considered fair game everywhere else.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that, during the time the present Government had been in office, only one judge had had a special train, and that was under very special circumstances. The Chief Justice was away on leave in England, and Mr. Justice Pring, at the beginning of the present year, fell seriously ill in Sydney, and was unable to go to Roma, Toowoomba, and Ipswich—the circuit for which he was put down. Mr. Justice Harding, the Acting Chief Justice, was consequently the only Supreme Court judge in the colony, and he very kindly undertook, at very great inconvenience to himself, to do treble work—to do all the hard work down here, and then start off immediately on circuit. To enable him to do that it was absolutely indispensable that he should have a special train to go to Roma and back, and he left Brisbane on Saturday night. Almost up to the hour of his departure, he was engaged on most important Supreme Court work in Brisbane. That was the only case in which the present Government had placed a special train at the disposal of any judge, and in that case there was no alternative except to postpone the court, or appoint an acting judge. With regard to travelling expenses, he had never heard of any unreasonable charge being made in any of the southern towns. The only cases that had come under his knowledge of anything of the kind were in connection with the Northern Supreme Court. As an illustration he might mention a circumstance that had been stated to him respecting the late Mr. Justice Sheppard. Mr. Justice Sheppard was not regarded as an extravagant man. On one occasion at Townsville he complained of some charges that were made, and the landlord politely informed him that he was welcome to go somewhere else next time. That was what he (the Attorney-General) was told, and he believed Judge Sheppard did not stay at that hotel any more. That was the kind of thing the judges had to put up with in the North. He had not heard of anything of the kind in the South. Perhaps they did not often have any very fine sights in Cooktown, and when a judge went there they made the most of it.

MR. MACFARLANE said he was not going to walk into the judge for spending so much money; he would rather walk into the Minister for appointing that judge. It must have been a very bad appointment. He should be glad if the Attorney-General would tell them whether the judges were fond of gambling; there must be

something very wrong when they spent so much money. The hon. gentleman had told them that during the year one of the judges was away, and one was on his back, so that there was only one Supreme Court judge in the colony. It seemed that there were only two judges travelling last year, and he wanted to know if their expenses were greater than this year when four travelled on circuit.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it did not matter whether two or three judges were capable of travelling. There were a certain number of circuits fixed by the judges which had to be performed in the year, and if a judge appointed to take a circuit was ill, or absent, that circuit had to be performed by another judge, so that there was no difference in the actual expenses whether one or two judges were incapacitated.

Mr. KELLETT said that from the explanations they had got from the Attorney-General and the Premier, it was high time some consideration was given to the expenses of the judges. He was informed that the district court judges got a fixed amount for expenses—25s. a day, and he wanted to know if the judges of the Supreme Court could spend in eating and drinking more than the judges of the district courts. If their Honours of the Supreme Court were bigger men or drank more liquor, let them be paid two guineas a day. It was high time that some alteration should be made, and he did not see why they should not be put on the same par as to travelling expenses as, say, the railway officials. Let them have all expenses necessary for the dignity of their office certainly, but it should be a fixed sum, and they should be allowed to spend no more.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he would not say that the effect of the discussion in the Committee with reference to expenses might result in a less extensive expenditure by the Northern Supreme Court Judge in future. If it did not he dared say that the head of the Government would see that something was done. But there was a difference between the Supreme Court judges and the district court judges, not only in the colony, but in England and every English-speaking country. They did not receive the same salary, though for his own part he had always contended that the district court judges did not get sufficient recognition. The salary of the Supreme Court judges was £2,000 a year with a pension, and of the district court judges £1,000 and no pension. There was, therefore, a disparity between them in salary and position; and it would not do to place the judges of the Supreme Court on an equality with those of the district courts as to travelling expenses. Until lately they had never had any complaint with regard to those expenses, and he would fain hope, after what had been said, that there would be no more reason.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked what action the Government had taken when they found a voucher sent down for £300 for one month's expenses, and another for £200 for another month's expenses?

The PREMIER said that the £300 had been discussed on the Hon. Mr. Moreton's motion some time ago. The Attorney-General had explained that they had not taken any action in the matter. It was hoped that some explanation would have been made, but none had been so made. Now another sum had come under the notice of the Government, and he thought it was quite time that explanations should be asked for. The matter only came under the notice of the Government that morning, and he had resolved to communicate with the judge as soon as he had time to do so.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he hoped the Premier would tell them what power he had in the matter. He had always understood that the judges were completely outside the power of the Ministry so far as expenses were concerned, and he had heard of gentlemen who occupied the position of Attorney-General speaking of the judges as demigods, and as if no man were even to look at them.

The PREMIER said he felt quite equal to looking at them. It had never been the practice of any Government to interfere in a matter of that kind; nor had any occasion ever before arisen for interference. The judges had never shown themselves unworthy of confidence up to the present time. He expressed no opinion as to the matter under discussion, because there might be some perfectly sufficient explanation to be given; but still the matter seemed so extraordinary that he should ask for such an explanation. The Government had no control whatever over the judges, but they, as the Government, were entrusted to expend the public money, and they were entitled to know how it was expended. He could not believe that any officer in the Public Service—however high—would refuse to give an explanation; and if he did, he (the Premier) had no doubt he would be dealt with. But until it arose he saw no reason why they should deal with the contingency.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said there was a way of doing so. Let the Committee vote £500, putting £125 to the credit of each judge, and when that money was expended let their cheques be dishonoured. That was the proper way to do it; that was done before.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No, no!

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the thing had happened in the colony, though he did not suppose it actually went so far as to refuse to cash the cheque. He knew it had been proposed. If the Committee granted £650 let it be understood that that sum would be paid and no more. That was quite sufficient for the year. There was another point in regard to the judges themselves. It was quite unfair for the Attorney-General to give them to understand that they were going to condone all those offences, and in effect to say that they had done perfectly right. For the protection of the judges and themselves they ought to let them understand how much they might spend. For if the publicans up north came to understand that the Government were going to pay any bill a publican sent down, there would always be big enough bills.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not think it was quite fair to throw all the blame on the publicans up north. The publicans up north were not one whit different from the publicans down south, and he hoped the Premier would not take the rapacity of the publicans up north as an excuse.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that £4,630 be granted for the Sheriff's Department. There was an increase in that branch of £300. The salary of the Under Sheriff was put down at £450, and a junior clerk in the Sheriff's office had been advanced from £75 to £100. An additional bailiff had been appointed at a salary of £50. The salary of the Northern Sheriff had been increased from £100 to £150. That officer had been many years at Bowen, and had to perform increased duties in consequence of the extension of the circuit, and was besides a most deserving officer. There was also a bailiff's salary provided for Mackay, where a circuit court had been established; and there was an additional

amount of £50 for premiums on fidelity policies of bailiffs appointed under the Sheriffs Act of 1875. With reference to the Under Sheriff, that officer had been sixteen years in the Public Service, and it was nine years since he had received any increase to his salary. Twenty years ago the occupant of that position was receiving more than the present Under Sheriff would receive, even if he got the increase put down on the Estimates for him.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked whether it was intended, on the completion of the railway, to extend the Supreme Court to Hughenden?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL replied that when the railway was completed there would be very little difficulty in suitors coming to Charters Towers. A district court had lately been established at Hughenden, and that, he thought, would meet all the requirements of the district for sometime to come.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the answer cut both ways. The railway would also be the means of conveying the judge to the suitors at very little extra expense to the country and at a great deal less expense to the suitors.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that £8,805 be granted for District Courts. There was an increase in the vote amounting to £690. The salary of the Registrar of the District Court at Maryborough had been increased from £30 to £50. District courts had been established at Muttaborra, Ravenswood, and Hughenden, necessitating the appointment of a registrar and bailiff at each place. An amount of £500 had been added to the allowances to witnesses and jurors in consequence of the enormous increase in the amount of legal business to be done. The number of witnesses and jurors required was largely increased, and of course their expenses were increased correspondingly. A sum of £50 had been added to bailiffs for service of jury summonses. The serving of summonses was often performed under circumstances of great difficulty, particularly in times of drought, when horse-flesh was very scarce, and horse-feed very high. The amount paid had been found in many cases inadequate, and an increase was necessary to meet the requirements.

Mr. NORTON asked why the salary of the Registrar at Maryborough had been increased, and none other?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL replied that during the last few years Maryborough had become a town of great importance, and the amount of district court work transacted there was very much greater than formerly. At Rockhampton, it would be noticed, the Registrar had a salary of £100; but although there were four courts at Rockhampton and only three at Maryborough, he believed the amount of legal business transacted at the latter place was nearly equal to that at the former place.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that surely if the increase of the population at Maryborough warranted an increase to the salary of the Registrar, the increase of the population at Townsville warranted a similar increase to the salary of the Registrar at that place. The hon. gentleman must admit that there had been a larger proportionate increase in Townsville than in many other towns, and it was fast assuming a prominent position. Yet there was only £30 down for Townsville, and it was worth while for the Attorney-General, when framing his Estimates again, to see that there was an increase put down for that place. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would tell them what the Registrars at Muttaborra and Hughenden received?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that they received £20 a year. The gentleman referred to by the last speaker did not get as much as he should, and he would take it into consideration when framing the Estimates again. The salary for the Registrar at Roma was fixed by the previous Government.

Mr. BLACK: If the salary is too high it can be reduced.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not think it is excessive.

Mr. BLACK: There cannot be much work there.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is a large amount.

Mr. BLACK said that, as compared with Townsville, there was not one-third of the work. It seemed strange that Maryborough was coming to the front. He did not know whether it was through having a Minister of its own. Earlier in the evening they found that Maryborough had a double charitable allowance, and now the registrar's fees were increased from £30 to £50. It was not worth while cavilling at the small items, but he should like to see about 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. knocked off all salaries above £300 a year. That was the way to make a reduction in the ever-increasing expenditure that was going on, and he believed the time was not far distant when that amount would be taken off all salaries indiscriminately. Under the head of travelling expenses, there was £1,400 for district court judges and Crown prosecutors. He wished to know how it was that those travelling expenses were higher than those of their Honours themselves.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said there were three district court judges, and some of them had to go four times a year to some places on circuit, others three times, and none less than twice a year. Unlike their Honours, they were limited to a certain amount, 30s. a day, and 35s. for the Northern Judge. The Crown prosecutors only got their steamer fares and a guinea a day allowance. He had had representations made to him by the Northern Crown prosecutors and the Northern Crown Solicitor that they were obliged to pay, every time they went north, a considerable amount out of their own pockets to make up their hotel bills. The district court judges complained in the same way. There was no extravagance in the item.

Mr. LISSNER said there was a great discrepancy between the salaries of the bailiffs. At Rockhampton, Maryborough, and Townsville they received £150, and at Townsville £75. That was not exactly fair. There was a great deal more work at Townsville than in many other towns; but he supposed the vote would remain as it was unless some one called attention to it.

Mr. GROOM said he did not wish to draw any invidious comparisons between one town and another. There was no doubt that Townsville was one of the most rising and prosperous towns in the North; and there was more business done there in a day than in many other towns together in a week. He noticed that at a little place like Springsure, for instance, the Clerk of Petty Sessions, who was district registrar also, was in receipt of a salary of something like £600 per annum, while the Police Magistrate at Townsville, whose time was all taken up, only received £500, and £50 allowance for quarters; so that there was a great disparity indeed in regard to some salaries, and it was a matter which the Government ought to take into consideration. The salaries would have to be recast, and some provision made for the extra cost of



living. The cost of living in the North was 25 or 30 per cent. higher than it was in the South.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he had made a slight slip with regard to the travelling expenses of the judges. The allowance was not 30s. and 35s. per day, but 25s. and 30s.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if that included the steamboat fare and the coach fare?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; exclusive of that.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked how it was that, with the additional circuits of the district court judges at Muttaborra, Hughenden, and Ravenswood, no more was asked for travelling expenses for the present year than was down for last year? It was £1,400 in both cases. There must be some mistake; and he was inclined to think that district court judges and Crown prosecutors received too little for travelling expenses. Other gentlemen they had been discussing lately got far too much, and the matter should be squared a little. He quite agreed with what the Attorney-General had said as to the increase in the travelling expenses.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the amount voted for last year was not all spent, and he had felt that he would not be justified in asking for an increased sum, although new courts had been established.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he hoped it would not be the means of cutting down the travelling expenses of the Northern Judge and Crown Prosecutor.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No. He had been making inquiries in regard to the travelling expenses of the district court judges to ascertain whether the amount voted was sufficient. If he found that it was not he should have more to say about it.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had travelled in the North both as a private individual and a Minister, and if the Attorney-General thought his opinion worth anything he might say that two guineas a day was not too much. He should like the hon. gentleman to give some assurance that the matter referred to by the hon. members for Toowoomba, Charters Towers, and himself, in reference to the stereotyped nature of the salaries for registrars and bailiffs, would receive some attention. Some of the towns had been growing in importance within the last few years without the knowledge of the Government, yet the salaries were the same for the officers he mentioned year after year.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he could give an assurance that the subject would receive attention. There had been a rule fixing the amount granted. Where the district court only sat twice a year £20 was granted to the registrars. Where it sat three times a year, £30 was granted. There were one or two exceptions to that rule. There was a great deal in what the hon. gentleman said, and he would consider the question before the next Estimates were framed.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that £1,527 be granted for Insolvency. The only increase was £100 to the Official Trustee. It was not proposed to ask for that increase, so he would move the amount less £100. A rearrangement of the office was pending, and it would not be necessary to vote the additional £200. He moved that £1,427 be granted for the service.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL asked the Attorney-General why the amount was being cut down. Was it not a fact that the gentleman was about to leave?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said a rearrangement was pending which had not yet been completed.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL: May I ask if an appointment has been made?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. LISSNER: It is worth another £100 on account of the increase of insolvents.

Question put and passed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that £900 be granted for Intestacy. An increase had been proposed to the gentleman who acted as clerk and Deputy Curator, but he had been transferred to another office and his successor would not receive an increase.

Mr. NORTON: What is the first item—Curator of Intestate Estates, £475?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the rearrangement of the office affected that officer also. It was proposed to amalgamate two offices.

Mr. ARCHER said they would like to understand what was to be the salary of the Curator of Intestate Estates. He saw he was put down at £600 in the schedule. Did he fill any other office, or was he going to do anything which would add to his salary?

The PREMIER said he had explained the matter the other day when the Insanity vote was under consideration. They had a new officer in the Curator of Insanity, and it was considered unnecessary to have two officers performing similar duties. The duties of a curator were exactly the same, whether the estate of a deceased person was being administered or the estate of an inmate of the asylum. £350 was voted under the head of "Insanity," and another £350 it was proposed to vote under the head of "Intestacy." The sum now asked was only for six months. The officer who now held the office was at present receiving £700, of which £100 was as Inspector of Distilleries and the other £600 as Curator of Intestate Estates.

Mr. BAILEY said he would like to call attention to the administration of that department. When a person died without a will, his estate was taken in charge of by the Curator of Intestate Estates, who advertised for claims against the estate to be sent in. It was the practice for people to do so; but some of them never heard any more about them. No notice was given that their claims were recognised, and year after year the money realised from the estate remained in the hands of the department, while the creditors were unpaid. He thought that all claims ought to be acknowledged and scrutinised; but at present people who were creditors, finding, after two or three years, that they got nothing out of the estate, had to send to some friend in Brisbane to find out where the money was. He thought it was a weakness in the administration of the department that the claims of creditors were not more promptly recognised and paid. He did not know why the money should be allowed to remain where it did not belong, while people to whom it did belong were actually prevented from receiving it. He was quite sure that there were thousands of pounds there, the property of the people who had sent in proper claims; but the claims had never been recognised in any way, and the creditors did not know that there was money to their credit.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it was the first time he had heard of anything of that kind; and he thought the hon. member must have been misinformed. Very likely the persons referred

to by the hon. member never sent in their claims, and could not of course share in the money distributed from the assets. The hon. member must be mistaken in thinking that a large sum was lying in the department.

Mr. BAILEY said he only spoke from personal experience.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It was never brought before me.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that a few months ago he applied at the Intestacy Office for some money due to him, and in two months it was paid. That did not bear out what the hon. member had said.

Mr. BAILEY said the matter happened in this way. It was acknowledged by the office that the claims had been received; he saw it in the books himself. Afterwards, when it was supposed that the claims had been gone through, the claimant sent a request that the money should be paid to him, though he did not know there was any money. He put in his claim, and he (Mr. Bailey) supposed it was recognised. It certainly ought to have been scrutinised, to see whether it was a just claim or not. Years afterwards the creditor heard that there was money to his credit, and he got his friend in Brisbane to find out whether it was so; then he got the money. Notice should be given to the creditor that there really was something to his credit. In the case he referred to, the money ought to have been paid as soon as possible after the estate had been realised.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said there must be some special circumstances in the case the hon. member referred to. If the hon. member had taken the trouble to bring the matter before him (the Attorney-General), he would have found out the reasons for the delay.

Mr. FOXTON said that it seemed to him the thing was in a nutshell. The claimant referred to by the hon. member sent in his claim, and let the matter rest. That was not what creditors did as a rule. If a man did not like to take the trouble to find out whether there was any money belonging to him, he was very well served if he did not get it. It was not for the Curator of Intestate Estates to run all over the country to find out where people were. It was to the interest of the people themselves to go to the Government office and see whether the money was payable. That was done in Insolvency.

Mr. ARCHER said the mistake was that the claimant did not apply to a lawyer; that was the lesson to be learnt from the case. He had no doubt that had the hon. member for Carnarvon been applied to, would have got the money much sooner.

Mr. FOXTON said he was much obliged to the hon. member for advertising him; and he hoped that some person would take his advice. That was not the first time that the hon. member had spoken in what he thought was a jocular manner in reference to him (Mr. Foxton) and his profession. The hon. member did him the kindness on a recent occasion to say that he had heard a report that he was the legal adviser to a company who were the promoters of a private Bill he (Mr. Foxton) was trying to put through the House. It had nothing to do with him, or anybody else, if the hon. member chose to listen to tittle-tattle outside that House. He took no notice of the hon. member's statement at the time, because he wanted the Bill to go through, and he had learnt during the short time he had been in that House that if an hon. member wanted to get a measure passed it was not wise to provoke opposition. But he had no hesitation in telling the hon. member that if he took as much care

of his own reputation for good taste as he did for his (Mr. Foxton's) reputation in connection with that particular affair, it would be more credit to him. In spite of the hon. member's age and venerable appearance he appeared to be one of those who listened to tittle-tattle outside and repeated it in the House.

Mr. BAILEY said before the vote passed he wished it to be publicly known whether, in the case of a man dying intestate, creditors in the country putting in their claims would get their money, or whether they had to employ a lawyer or agent in Brisbane. He had always thought that when a man sent in his bill, whether against an intestate estate or not, he had a right to expect payment; but it seemed that there was a different way of carrying on things in that department. He was sure there were thousands of pounds in that department, the property of creditors in the country.

Mr. GROOM said that he knew a case where the necessary accounts had been forwarded to the office accompanied by an affidavit, and the money was paid within a very short time without any difficulty. He thought that, as the Attorney-General suggested, there must have been some mistake or informality about the case mentioned. The Intestacy Department was excellently conducted, and anyone having business there received the utmost courtesy and attention.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. S. W. Griffith) moved that there be granted a sum of £4,100 for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Department of Public Instruction.

Mr. ARCHER drew the hon. member's attention to the fact that it was a quarter-past 10 o'clock.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said it was a great deal earlier than they usually adjourned when dealing with Estimates. He believed hon. members desired to get through the business before Christmas, and to do that they must get themselves to work. It would be very inconvenient to have to come back next year for the sake of a few days. He would ask hon. members to sit a little longer. In the vote he had moved there was a new clerk at £100, another clerk was down for an increase of £20, and there was an increase of £50 for contingencies.

Mr. ARCHER said he thought they had done an excellent evening's work, and if they passed that vote the hon. gentleman ought to be very well satisfied. He did not think the increases were greater than necessity required, and he would not object to the vote. He thought they had better pass it and retire to their virtuous homes.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said he noticed the Accountant was down for £400, while the accountants in other departments ranged from £500 to £550. The Education vote amounted, he thought, to about £180,000, and as far as he understood, the whole of that passed through the Accountant's hands. He should like an explanation of the cause of the very great discrepancy between the salaries of the accountants in the different departments.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that the salary was increased last year, and it was not the practice to increase the same salary two years in succession unless it was very low. The hon. member would observe that the Accountant in the Colonial Secretary's Department was till this year receiving only £350 a year, although the annual expenditure in that department was £430,000. He might say that the Accountant in the Department of Public Instruction was an extremely competent officer.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said he was not quite content with the explanation. The officer, he understood, had been in the department about twenty years; and he thought the hon. member for Blackall—as well as other members in that Committee, and in another place—who had been at the head of the department, could bear him out when he asked whether that officer should be kept on a small salary of £400 after such long service; while other accountants, without half the length of service, and he thought he might say, with not half the ability, had salaries of £500 or £550.

Question put.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said he certainly should not let the vote go without further explanation from the Minister for Public Instruction. He knew himself that the officer had been in the department over twenty years; and he had an excellent character for competency, as the hon. the Minister himself had been pleased to say; why, then, he should receive less salary for doing as much work as other accountants in the Public Service was beyond his comprehension. Increases had certainly been given to officers not more worthy to receive them; and he did not see why well-deserved increases should not be granted.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he could not give any further explanation than that already given.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to certain passages in the eighth report of the Minister for Public Instruction. On page 4 they found:—

"It became manifest towards the close of the year that the number of teachers trained in the colony was not sufficient to supply the requirements of the State schools in course of erection. Provision has since been made through the Agent-General for securing the services of British teachers of extended professional training, including a residence of two years in a training college recognised by the Privy Council, and of subsequent experience in the charge of schools. Considering the large number of persons who enter the teaching profession in Great Britain, I am confident that an adequate number of well-qualified and trained teachers—men in the prime of life—can be thus secured, and that the necessary moderate outlay will be well incurred. At the same time I am glad to be able to record the fact that many teachers of our own training have displayed great aptitude for their profession. Some of them are now in charge of large schools, which they conduct with great efficiency; and I look forward with confidence to a continually increasing proportion of these gentlemen in the service of the department."

And further on they found:—

"Young men who have completed their pupillage are often attracted to other occupations by better prospects of rapid advancement, and a certainty of easier work with less restraint and self-denial, and sometimes, doubtless, by higher pay."

Now, he took it that there was not a branch in the Civil Service of any country more honourable, more important than that of the teachers. They knew that the teachers had the moulding of future generations in their hands; and to a great extent what the future of the colony would be, was the doing of the teachers of the present day. If anyone would take the trouble to look through the report he would find many defects disclosed. For instance, there was no system whatever in the reports of the inspectors. One inspector reported in such a way, and another in another way, and it was hence a great hardship to teachers that the inspectors were changed so often. The Inspector-General thus wrote on page 44:—

"Of new arrivals from the British Islands there were taken into the service during 1883 nine classified teachers—six males and three females—of whom three males were sent out by the Agent-General."

"The Agent-General is instructed to send out none but teachers of high classification, who have studied two years at a training college, have passed well the

Privy Council examination for certificate, and have a good professional record. There seems to be no difficulty in getting as many men of that kind as we require."

He wished to draw the particular attention of the Committee to the following passage:—

"And therefore, as we could not efficiently train them up to the standard mentioned for a much larger outlay than the cost of passage, it seems well to continue to draw a supply of teachers from the mother-country. The training and experience of British schoolmasters suit the requirements of our service very well."

"Boys suitable for teachers do not offer freely for the service of the department."

He should think so. What encouragement did they get when they were put aside as so much merchandise?

"But no difficulty has arisen during 1883 on this account, except that in some of the northern towns it has been necessary to appoint adults to keep up the numerical strength of the staffs, where pupil teachers would have sufficed if available."

Mr. FOOTE said he hoped the hon. member was not going to take up the time of the Committee in reading the whole report.

Mr. ISAMBERT said it was very important. The Inspector-General continued in his report:—

"It is found that ex-pupil teachers of our own training have not at first sufficient mental weight and breadth of culture to take responsible positions and to deserve the emoluments accruing, until they have acquired skill and experience for some years after attaining to the rank of classified teachers; and as few of them remain in the service until the regulations of the department and the quality of their work permit of an increase to their salaries, it has been considered necessary to send home for a supply of men, trained as already mentioned, to fill some of the more important assistantships which there are not young men under the department fitted to fill."

Now, the General Inspector might be a man of the most consummate ability for his position, but—

The CHAIRMAN said he did not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but it would be better if he reserved any further remarks until the next vote—that for the inspectors' salaries—came under consideration.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he would make his remarks short and continue them later on. But he wished to say that the inspector who penned those remarks might be very well as an inspector, but his sentiments were out of place altogether. He ought to be in a wholesale warehouse selling cheese, hides, and tallow, or importing general merchandise. The inspector must be a free-trader by profession, but he (Mr. Isambert) was of opinion that when so many young men were induced to enter into the profession as teachers, and were then treated in the manner described, it was high time that the department proposed establishing a training college, and gave the young men an opportunity of acquiring their professional qualifications in the colony. At the next sitting of the Committee he would have more to say on the subject.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he did not know what the hon. gentleman complained of. He surely did not complain of having a sufficient number of teachers. They must have the schools provided with teachers, and when they had not sufficient teachers in the colony they must get them from abroad. Every encouragement was given to young men to enter the profession here, but there were not enough of them. The hon. gentleman also complained that there was a difference in the system of the inspectors. The inspectors were individual men, and they had their own individual character, and he (the Minister for Public Instruction) thought it would be very unfortunate if they were all cast in the same groove. As long as the instruction was the same, variety in

detail was rather an advantage than otherwise. The inspectors were not changed every year now, as they were at one time. Hardly any change, in fact, had been made during the present year. His own opinion was that it was just as well to change inspectors tolerably frequently, especially when the inspectors were more numerous than they had been of late. During this year and last year the schools had not been properly inspected, simply because there were not enough inspectors. This year some of the schools would have to go altogether without inspection. There were not enough inspectors to inspect all the schools in the colony, and it would be his duty to ask for the appointment of additional inspectors. What the hon. member had called attention to were by no means defects in the system of teaching.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that one of the contentions of the hon. member for Rosewood, to which the hon. gentleman had not referred, was that they ought to establish a training college in the colony instead of importing teachers from the old country. In his opinion sufficient encouragement was not given to young teachers to retain them in the department. They could get far better salaries outside of it, and, even after having been trained as teachers, they left the service as soon as they could, seeing that there was no encouragement to them to remain in the department. But as the hon. gentleman intended to bring the question forward when the proper vote was under discussion, he would refrain from speaking further upon it till then.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he scarcely thought it desirable to establish a training college in the colony just yet. An attempt in that direction was made some years ago, but it was found unsatisfactory, and he recommended its abolition. There was not sufficient material in the colony for it. The instruction given to teachers in the schools in the large towns was quite as good as that which they could get in a training college at present, and some of the best of the younger teachers in the service had been trained there. As to remuneration, the Government had recognised its insufficiency. If hon. members would look at the vote for salaries to teachers they would see a total increase of £10,000. Of that amount, between £4,000 and £5,000 was actually made up of increases to teachers' salaries, the rest being for the increased number of them.

Mr. T. CAMPBELL said he regretted that the Chairman had pulled up the hon. member for Rosewood. That hon. member had quite sufficient data to discuss the question upon; and before the Minister for Public Instruction passed the vote it would have to be fully discussed. The hon. member for Rosewood would not shirk his duty in that matter.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION : Nobody wants him to.

Question put and passed.

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

#### PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Mr. FRASER, on behalf of the Speaker as Chairman, brought up the eighth report of the Printing Committee, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, stated that he proposed to proceed with the consideration of the Estimates to-morrow.

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