

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 19 DECEMBER 1884

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.*Friday, 19 December, 1884.*

Formal Motions.—Crown Lands Bill—consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's Message.—Gratuity to Parliamentary Librarian.—Burrum Branch Railway.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Supply.—Loan Estimates.—Supplementary Estimates No. 1, 1884-5.—Ways and Means—resumption of committee.—Loan Bill.—Adjournment.

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

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to :—

By Mr. LALOR—

That there be laid on the table of the House, copies of all letters relating to the sale of the Police Paddock at Roma.

By the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson)—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as will admit of the reporting of resolutions of the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means on the same day on which they shall have been passed in such committees; also of the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day.

CROWN LANDS BILL—CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLA- TIVE COUNCIL'S MESSAGE.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith), the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Legislative Council's message in reference to this Bill.

The PREMIER said he reported yesterday to the House formally the proceedings of the Conference between the two Houses on the Crown Lands Bill.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: No, you did not.

The PREMIER said it would be seen by the message of the Legislative Council—what, of course, they knew before—that an arrangement was practically come to by the managers of both Houses, with respect to the different amendments on which they disagreed. Without putting it into formal words, that arrangement amounted to this: that the Legislative Council agreed to withdraw their amendments giving an appeal from the board to arbitrators, and to substitute for it an appeal to a judge of the Supreme Court, with assessors if it was desired. They also agreed to withdraw their amendment shortening the period of residence required before selectors of agricultural farms could acquire freeholds. With respect to their amendment fixing the maximum increase of rent upon grazing and agricultural farms, the managers of the Assembly proposed to assimilate that provision to the provision in the Bill relating to pastoral leases; that was to fix neither the maximum nor minimum increase. The other amendments of importance were in the 6th clause, which provided for the stoppage of the sale of lands by way of pre-emption, and the omission of the sections dealing with scrub farms. There were also two or three other matters of minor importance to which he would refer first. There was the proviso in subsection 1 of clause 29, which had been struck out by the Council. That was a matter of very little consequence one way or the other. He was disposed to think it was more a technical matter than anything else. Some importance was, however, attached to it by members of the Legislative Council. It was a matter that would adjust itself in the course of twelve months, and therefore the Government did not think it was of very much consequence. Then there was the amendment by which it was proposed to extend the maximum area of agricultural farms to 1,280 acres. The Government did not think it was worth while to insist on the disagreement to that amendment. The other two matters they considered to have been of importance were the provision about pre-emptives and the clauses respecting scrub farms. With regard to the latter, he thought it would be very foolish to imperil the passage of the Bill by insisting upon the retention of those clauses in the Bill. That part of the measure was entirely separate from the rest, and they could introduce it again at some other time. The only other matter that need be adverted to was the clause about pre-emption. He regretted that that was not passed. Its omission was a defect, but it was not a blot upon the Bill. The matter remained entirely in the hands of the Government of the day so long as the law remained as it was, and it would always be in the power of the Legislature to deal with it. Under those circumstances, and as it was of enormous importance to carry the Bill, the managers of the Conference for the Assembly believed that they were carrying out the wishes of the House in making such concessions as were necessary to

enable the Bill to become law. He was sure that the action of the Conference, in arriving at such an arrangement as would secure the passage of the Bill, was for the benefit of the country. In dealing with the message before them, three motions would have to be made. The first, which he now moved, was, that the Committee approve of the proposed new clauses to follow clauses 20 and 110 as proposed by their managers and agreed to by the Legislative Council.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: What is the amendment?

The PREMIER: I have explained what it is.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: We have not got the paper before us.

The PREMIER said he presumed all hon. members had in their hands a copy of the Legislative Council's message, in which the clauses were stated at length. He was only carrying out the arrangements made with the managers of the Legislative Council.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he understood they had got the Bill down from the other Chamber. The first amendment that came under their consideration was Part V.—scrub lands. How, then, did they jump into clause 20; and how were they to get back to the 1st and 5th clauses? If the hon. gentleman would try to do the thing in an intelligible way, the Committee would get on better.

The PREMIER said he thought from the hon. gentleman's long experience that he would have known the way the business should be done. He (the Premier) proposed, in order to give effect to the conclusions of the Conference, to move three resolutions. They were to the effect that that Committee approve of the insertion of the proposed new clauses to follow clause 20 and clause 110; that they insisted on their disagreement with the amendment in clause 6 of subsection 4 of section 56, but proposed to omit the whole of clause 6, and would not insist on their amendments in clause 1, clause 4, lines 14 and 39; on the omission of clauses 75 to 79, inclusive; and on their amendments in clauses 121 and 139. For that matter all the resolutions could be put into one motion, and perhaps that would be the best way. With the permission of the Committee, therefore, he would make them all in one motion.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said they had had before them the Bill with certain amendments, to which they had expressed their disapproval, and sent it to the other Chamber. The Conference had had the Bill in their hands, and the Committee ought to begin at the commencement to deal with the amendments. He thought the hon. gentleman should state the conclusions to which the Conference came. He was sure there was not a member of the Committee who understood how the business was going to be done. If they commenced at clause 20, how were they to get back to clause 1, and then on to clause 5?

The PREMIER said it did not make the least difference which way it was done. The way he proposed was, he thought, the most convenient, expeditious, and intelligible way; but if it would gratify the hon. gentleman to have it done in an inconvenient manner he (the Premier) had not the slightest objection to it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that, at all events, he wanted to see it done in such a way that he could understand it. He did not want to see business go through that Committee in a way that he did not understand, and he certainly did not understand the way proposed now.

The PREMIER said that, in deference to the desire of the hon. gentleman, he would propose that the Bill be dealt with in a different way. He would ask permission to withdraw his motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The PREMIER moved—

That this House do not further insist on their amendments in clause 1, clause 4, lines 14 and 39; on the omission of clauses 75 to 79, inclusive; and on their amendments in clauses 121 and 139.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to know how they were going to get over clause 6. Were they not going to insist on the disagreement with the amendment in that clause? It seemed to him very strange that the Minister for Lands had allowed that business to be taken out of his hands entirely. It looked like the Homeric story of Achilles sulking in his tent. How did it come to pass that the Minister for Lands, who told them that that clause was an essential part of the Bill—that he would not undertake its administration without that clause, because it would be utterly impossible to get enough land for selection purposes—did not insist upon the House adhering to it? Certainly the hon. gentleman must have given up his opinions if he could agree to those amendments. Those were the very things that the House insisted upon, and which the hon. gentleman so strongly opposed. The hon. gentleman was determined that it should be done. He now seemed to have thrown the whole thing up. Why should the Premier take the Bill out of the hon. gentleman's hands? Up to the present time the Minister for Lands had had the management of the Bill, and the Premier had simply acted the part of mentor. Perhaps the hon. gentleman was not in agreement with the managers of the Conference. There was something about it that required explanation.

MR. MOREHEAD: This appearance of sanity on the part of the Minister for Lands is to be applauded, not objected to. I am glad to see, even at the eleventh hour, wiser and surer counsels prevail with the hon. gentleman.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee do not further insist in their disagreement to the amendments in clauses 6 and 7.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee do not further insist in their disagreement to the amendment in clause 20, except the omission of the last line of the clause.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee approve of the insertion of the following proposed new clause, to follow clause 20, as proposed by their managers in conference, and agreed to by the Legislative Council:—

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the board, whether on an original hearing or on a rehearing, may within one month after the pronouncing of the decision or of the refusal of the Governor in Council to remit the matter to the board, as the case may be, appeal from the decision to the Supreme Court, which is hereby authorised to hear and determine such appeal.

The appeal shall be in the nature of a rehearing, and shall be brought, and the proceedings therein shall be had, in such manner as may be prescribed by Rules of Court.

The appeal shall be heard and determined by a single judge, but the judge shall, if required by either party to the appeal, call in the aid of two assessors specially qualified, and shall hear and determine the matter with the assistance of such assessors.

One assessor shall be nominated by each party, but such nomination shall be subject to the approval of the judge.

Evidence on an appeal to the court may be taken in the same manner as is hereinbefore prescribed in the case of matters heard and determined by the board.

An appeal shall lie to the Full Court from any decision of the judge upon a question of law.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee approve of the insertion of the following proposed new clause to follow clause 110, as proposed by their managers in conference, and agreed to by the Legislative Council:—

No appeal shall lie to the Supreme Court from a decision of the board determining the amount of compensation payable to a pastoral tenant or a lessee under this part of this Act.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he thought it was time to say a few words about the Conference which had taken place, and the position which the Government actually held at the present time. A conference had been held, at which the differences between the Upper House and the Lower House had been reduced to three very important points. Those points were, the pre-emptive right, the right of appeal from the board to arbitration, and the right of the selector to acquire his land in five years instead of ten. They were very dogged—by “they” he meant the majority in that Chamber—in their determination to stand by those points, and to show that, he need only refer to the speeches of the Minister for Lands, the Minister for Works, and the Premier himself. The Minister for Lands distinctly stated that if the pre-emptive right was allowed to remain the Act would be unworkable—there would not be enough land to work the Act; and, with regard to arbitration, he said it was the principle of the Bill that the board should be thoroughly untrammelled by any appeal. The hon. gentleman said it was one of the vital principles of the Bill, and when they on that side tried to get some kind of appeal introduced, the majority on the other side backed the Minister for Lands right through. When they proposed the concession that had been made to the Upper House, that an appeal should be made at all events to the Supreme Court, it was scouted by the Minister for Works, who said that he for one, and he believed his colleagues agreed with him, had no confidence in the Supreme Court.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I never said anything of the sort.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I appeal to hon. members if the hon. gentleman did not distinctly say on that occasion that he had no confidence in the judges of the Supreme Court?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I deny it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: The hon. gentleman not only said it during the discussion on the Land Bill, but he had said it over and over again on other occasions.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not say it on that occasion. I have my own opinion about the Supreme Court.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: The hon. member certainly did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not. Mr. Fraser, I deny positively that I ever mentioned the Supreme Court on that occasion.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Hon. members were not deaf. As a rule the hon. gentleman spoke so low that nobody could hear him; but when he had anything intelligent and very short to say he howled it, and might be heard at the other end of George street. If he would strike an average, both the *Hansard* reporters and hon. members on that side would be able to hear him better. However, to return to the principles in dispute between the two Houses. The dominant majority of the Assembly had conceded two principles which were said to be fatal to the Bill—the pre-emptive right and an appeal from the board. But what had the Upper House magnanimously conceded

to the Lower House? They had graciously conceded that a selector, instead of acquiring his freshhold by spending five years upon it, should be obliged to spend ten.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That shows what you know about it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said they had graciously conceded that he should be forced to spend 10s. an acre. That was the fact; so that they had conceded to the Council everything they had wished, and had abandoned the only clause where they had the opportunity of defending the position of the selector. It was on that point that the Government had actually given way, and the other points were not worth discussion. But there was one other point, and that was the increase of the acreage from 960 acres to 1,280 acres. The Premier told them that that was not a matter of vital importance, and that the Upper House had been allowed to have their own way; but he quite forgot that the Minister for Lands told the House that that was a vital point—and a very vital one—and that he could not extend the acreage. The hon. gentleman told them the same thing in very dogmatical language too. Again, the Premier told them that the Bill was complete without the pre-emptive clause. Did not the Opposition tell him so fifty times, and yet he brought that forward as a reason why he should make the concession to the Upper House. The Opposition told him it was an excrescence in the Bill; that he brought it in simply to gain popularity; and now the hon. gentleman had to crawl upon his knees and get the Bill passed in any shape and without that obnoxious clause. The hon. gentleman did not believe in that clause himself. He did not believe it would pass the House, but he thought he would have been able to get up a cry against the squatters that they claimed certain rights which they did not really possess. But the hon. gentleman had now to “cave in” after having done a great wrong to the country by proposing to take away a right which was a real and acknowledged right of the squatter. The Government had conceded everything that had been demanded; and in that which they ought to have stood out for, if they had been true to what they used to call Liberal principles, they had given up; they had receded from their position and allowed the Upper House to have its own way. He could not congratulate the hon. member on the result of the Conference, but he congratulated the Upper House on the firmness with which they had stood out for the embodiment of those principles in the Bill which they had contended for all through. The hon. member had reduced himself to this position: He found he had got a Loan Bill that he was bound to pass in order to satisfy his followers, and he tried to be consistent by passing a Land Bill which at all events would serve as a pretence for furnishing the interest on the borrowed money. That it would furnish the interest he (Sir T. McIlwraith) doubted, and everyone else doubted; but it would save the honour of the Ministry if they passed a Bill which would in their opinion have that effect. He had the greatest doubt that it would have that effect, and he would go further and say that he was perfectly satisfied that the Government would never get the interest for the additional loan out of that extraordinary Land Bill. Further than that, he would express the opinion which he expressed when the Bill was going through, that its effect would be to lock up the lands from settlement more than any other measure that could be passed.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman was evidently smarting very sorely. He was disap-

pointed, and he very plainly showed how his soreness rankled within him. He had thought that he would succeed in throwing out the Land Bill, but he had failed. It was quite true that the Bill would have the effect of locking up the land from settlement in the way in which the hon. gentleman desired settlement, and that was why he felt so sore. Those great schemes for settlement were now virtually blocked, and he (the Premier) did not wonder that the hon. gentleman was sore, because the land would now be locked up in a very different way to that which the late Government proposed. It would be locked up in the hands of persons who would utilise it, and who would only hold it so long as they did utilise it. That was the kind of locking up that would take place, and that was why the hon. gentleman was disappointed. The settlement he proposed would be fairly precluded, and, he (the Premier) trusted, for ever. The hon. gentleman thought the Government did not know their position all along, but was it not better to concede a few things than lose a Land Bill which, it was thought, would confer great benefit on the colony? The Government knew how they stood all along, and how they stood at the present time. The hon. gentleman said the Minister for Lands stated that he would have no appeal from the board, but he (the Premier) had just refreshed his memory on that point, and he found that no such proposition as that now under consideration was ever made during the whole course of the debate. The hon. member thought it was; but he thought a great many other things which were not facts. The proposition now made for the first time was a reasonable one, and it was a proposition that came from the managers of the Conference. The hon. member, he had no doubt, would have been delighted if the Government had thrown out the Bill because of the pre-emptive clause. Nothing could have been dearer to his heart than that; but the Government did not care to lose a very valuable Bill simply because they could not get all their own way. As the matter stood at present the whole thing was in the hands of the Government, and they were not going to grant pre-emptives to everyone who might think he was entitled to one. The pre-emptive privilege was not seriously asserted as a right by anyone at the present moment; indeed he ventured to say there were not two men in both Houses of Parliament who seriously asserted it as a right.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You did it yourself.

The PREMIER said he did not think so. He did not think the point was seriously maintained by either branch of the Legislature. He said that after the discussion that had taken place, and the light that had been thrown on the pre-emptive question, he was certain that neither the present Government nor any succeeding Government would allow such things to go on as took place under the late Administration. He thought, first, that no succeeding Government would have the chance of doing it, and that if they had the chance they would not dare to grant pre-emptives.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: You will be glad to get the money in six months.

The PREMIER said the only thing the hon. gentleman could think of was money; but the Government thought of settlement. The hon. member should not show his soreness so much. He thought the Government ought to have accepted an amendment allowing the lands to be locked up after five years' residence, and he called that in favour of the selector and settlement. That was not the view the Government took of settlement, and they did not see their way to allow the land to get into the hands of people simply for the purpose of

handing it over to others to be converted into large freeholds. That was not the way to promote settlement; and the Government had insisted upon a provision which would do a great deal more to promote settlement than the provision which hon. gentlemen opposite desired them to adopt. They had done what they had done with their eyes open, and he was proud of what they had succeeded in doing.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, "Let the galled jade wince." The hon. gentleman said that the leader of the Opposition was smarting under what had been done by the Conference; but, on the contrary, he (Mr. Morehead) thought it might be fairly said that the leader of the Opposition was elated with the success of the views expressed by his side, and the way in which they had been adopted by the Conference. Almost everything that had been contended for by the Opposition in that Chamber had been conceded.

The PREMIER: You ought to be delighted!

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was infinitely pleased with the result of the Conference, but he regretted that more ability was not shown by the representatives of the majority of that Chamber. They had not succeeded in carrying what they said were the essential points of the Bill. They might plume themselves on having got it safely through both Houses; but they could not plume themselves on getting it through in anything like the form in which it was brought in. They had sacrificed everything but honour: perhaps they had sacrificed that too. The hon. gentleman had told them that the Bill was complete without the pre-emptive clauses; and he had also given them to understand that the granting of pre-emptives at all was an administrative act. Why, then, had the Government made such a fuss about it? Last session they brought in a Bill abolishing what he considered to be that right, which Bill they carried to its second reading, and then dropped it. Why did they go to such extreme trouble over the matter if it were one of no consequence? Why did they induce the hon. member for Stanley to introduce that amendment which had provoked such long nights of debate, and which they had so ruthlessly swept away, if they held the opinions then that they held now? Now that they saw popular opinion was against them with regard to that act of repudiation, they gave in. With regard to the appeal to the Supreme Court, the Minister for Works said he had not in the House expressed his contempt for the judges of the Supreme Court. He was astonished at the hon. gentleman's hardihood; he had heard him express his contempt for them over and over again, even during the present session. Did the hon. member forget what he said when it was proposed to relegate to the Supreme Court certain cases which came before the Elections and Qualifications Committee? Did he forget how the hon. the Premier had to get up and try to explain away his remarks? With regard to the statement of the Premier, that the Bill had been introduced for the purpose of promoting settlement, he would point out that whilst the Act of 1869 compelled the settler to stock his country and keep his stock, the Bill did nothing of the sort. With the exception of fencing in certain instances, the settler would not be compelled in any way to utilise his land, so long as he chose to pay interest. In making the assertion that the intention of the Government in bringing in the Bill was to create settlement, the hon. gentleman forgot altogether the statements made before the House met as to the reasons for bringing in the Bill. The intention stated then was that a larger revenue might be obtained, in order that the colony might be enabled to borrow large sums of money in England, to be expended in

reproductive works. That was the backbone of the Bill, according to the exposition of almost every Minister of the Crown when they were stumping the country: there was nothing said about settlement. Now, the Government had not attempted to show what the increase of revenue would be. Every time the Minister for Lands had been asked for an opinion on that point he had been silent, and necessarily silent, because he knew nothing at all about it. The Government were not to be congratulated upon the passing of their land measure. It became law in an emasculated form; almost every leading feature had been taken out. It might have a backbone, but it had neither legs, arms, nor head. He did not think that if the supposed creator of the Bill—the Minister for Lands—were to look at his bantling, as it was now and as it originally was, he would recognise his own child.

The PREMIER: It is scarcely altered at all.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It was altered as much as the process of emasculation would alter a human being. Beyond that he had nothing further to say.

Mr. KELLETT said he did not agree with the hon. member. He thought the Committee might congratulate itself and congratulate the managers of the Conference on the way its business had been carried out. He was confident the country would be satisfied, and that was what they had to consider. The first matter considered was the arbitration clause which the Upper House put in, and which would have destroyed the usefulness of the board. There was a very strong stand taken on that immediately they entered the Conference; but, nevertheless, they managed to get it altered to an appeal to the Supreme Court, with assessors if necessary. That, he thought, was giving in very little. He was convinced that when the Bill was put in practice very few would appeal to the Supreme Court; they would be satisfied with the members of the board, who, no doubt, would be good men, acting fairly and impartially. They had the name of one gentleman who was to be appointed to the board, and if the Government found another man equally good the country would be perfectly satisfied. They would find that not one case in a hundred would go to the Supreme Court on appeal. It was a good thing that provision should be made for some appeal, and that appeal, he thought, was a fair one. The next question was one which was made a good deal of when the Bill was passing through the Assembly. The Opposition tried hard to reduce the term of occupation from ten years to five, and the other House, taking their cue of course from the Opposition, made that one of their principal amendments. The Government were told by the other side of the House that they were not acting in the interests of the selectors. Hon. gentlemen opposite were so anxious about small selectors and so anxious to give them every assistance, and to make the time for acquiring their freeholds shorter. Well, he thought most people who knew anything of the country were aware that for *bonâ fide* selectors it was better for them to have a longer time to acquire their freeholds, because the men who were really going to settle and make their living out of the land were perfectly satisfied to pay rent for a longer time and thus acquire their land in a cheaper way. But hon. gentlemen on the other side of the Committee represented that the sooner the freehold could be acquired the better it would be for them, because the simple men who "dummied" could be bought out in a short time. That was the plain reason why they advocated that the time should be reduced. But that was one of

the points on which the managers of the Conference were decided they would not agree: that the term should be five years instead of ten. And they gained their point. There were two principal points which they gained, and that was one. With regard to the pre-emptive, the member for Balonne, who was not present, had alluded to the member for Stanley as having been induced to propose an amendment on the original clause of the Bill—wiping it out. He (Mr. Kellett) had told him before—he knew his memory was not very good—it was good at one time, but it was now failing—he had told him before that he had not been induced by any member of the Ministry, or anyone else, to propose his amendments to the original clause. His amendment was merely a matter of compromise. Some hon. members on that side of the Committee were possessed with the idea that they were usurping something—some supposed right—and he had said: “Gentlemen, we had better give in to that fad. Hon. members seem to think that there is some right. Better give in and have a compromise: that that should not be done after the passing of this Act.” He was perfectly satisfied when that was done that the majority of the Committee would admit that it was a fair compromise, and that they did not want to take anything away suddenly. But when the other Chamber insisted on the pre-emptive it came to this: Was there anybody in that Committee, or in the country, who did not believe that so long as the present Government were in power no pre-emptives would be granted in the same way as they had been in the past. If he had not been satisfied of that he would not have had anything to say to the compromise. But he was satisfied that as long as the present Government remained in office such things would not happen as had happened in the past. He was satisfied that the Government would have a tenure of office of some few years, and during that time public feeling and public opinion would be so strong on the matter that he did not care who came into office—whether the present leader of the Opposition and the members of the late Ministry—they would not dare to allow pre-emptives to be taken up in future as in the past. He was satisfied that there was no danger in the matter, but he went further and told hon. members on the other side of the Committee that he believed a majority of the squatters—all right-thinking squatters—were perfectly satisfied with the Bill, and with the main features of it. He had said so before in the Committee. The consequence would be that the great majority of them would come in under the Bill. They would consider that they had a certain good lease for portions of their property for a long term of years, and they would find it to their advantage to come under the Bill. And if some squatters or leaseholders should be very positive, and consider that they had got the legal pre-emptive right talked of, and if they refused to come under the Bill it would be for the Minister for Lands to step in and say, “This land is required for other purposes; we must resume your station under the Act of 1869; we can resume 2,500 acres out of every block, and give you six months to clear out of the rest.” That would be the power that would be in the hands of the Government of the day, and a power they would be bound to utilise when necessary. They knew that; they had considered that; so much so, that he was satisfied that the squatters, seeing and knowing exactly how it would be—that their land would not be touched or interfered with till required for further settlement—would come under the Bill. It would be shown by the lands adjoining that that was required for settlement, and the conse-

quence would be that the Government of the day would have to resume. The country would cry out and tell them, “You must resume under the 1869 Act and allow the people to settle on it.” He therefore believed that when men outside studied the Bill and went to their legal advisers to see what position they were in now, they would be advised that the only good and safe position for them was to go under the Bill. They would know that otherwise their pre-emptive would be useless to them, and that they might as well have a monument in the churchyard to look at. The consequence was that they would not take up the pre-emptives. That was the way the managers had looked at the matter. They considered they had a safeguard in the present Ministry, and that, whatever Ministry hereafter came into power, public feeling would be so strong that they would not dare attempt to give away the lands or allow pre-emption in the future as in the past. That was the reason for allowing the pre-emptive to go, and when they allowed it to go they sacrificed nothing. He considered they had got everything that was of advantage to the people. They had got concessions from the other Chamber, and they had also satisfied those gentlemen that they had given them something. They were mutually satisfied; and he believed that their action as managers would be applauded by the country generally.

Mr. ARCHER said that in every case in which the Land Bill had been discussed, and the pre-emptive right had been brought under review, it had been the custom, from the Premier down to the least of his followers, to talk as if the pre-emptive clause in the Act of 1869 had been administered in an iniquitous way by the late Government and the party they represented; while the party now in power had always administered it in the most upright manner.

Mr. KELLETT: I never said so.

Mr. ARCHER said if the hon. member for Stanley had not said so he inferred it by the way in which he spoke; and the hon. Premier was always bringing in insinuations that the party now in opposition had maladministered that clause, while the party with which he (the Premier) was connected had administered it properly. He did not wish to detain the Committee, but he gave the Premier a challenge, and the whole of the members of the Government side a challenge, if they liked. He would when they met again undertake to prove that more pre-emptives had been granted by what was called the Liberal party than by the party on his side of the Committee. He would prove it by documents in the Lands Office that could be called for. He would further prove that they had done that without asking for anything more definite than a declaration of improvements. He would further prove that when a person was willing to pre-empt merely for the protection of his improvements—not for the sake of acquiring land—that they had refused to allow him to take up all his selection in one pre-emptive; they forced him to take it up in two. He would actually prove that. He gave it as a challenge that next session, if he had a seat in that House—and he would, unless something unforeseen happened, that was to say, unless he had paid the debt to nature—he would prove that the party now on the Ministerial side of the Committee had never administered those pre-emptives in any way whatever different from the way they had been by previous Governments until the cry for the new Land Bill came on. Then they refused to grant those pre-emptives. His was a fair challenge, and one which could be taken up. The hon. Premier need not be at all afraid that he would shirk it,

because, seeing that they had been often twitted in that way, he had taken the trouble to make inquiries into the matter, and he could assure hon. members that even the hon. Minister for Lands, who had taken so much pleasure in black-guarding the party previously in power, would find that the party to which he belonged—if there was any sin in the matter at all, and he did not believe there was—had sinned to a greater extent than the party which he was holding up to contempt or even infamy, for the manner in which they had conducted the matter. That was a thing that had been said; but it did not necessitate that throwing up of their hands and saying, "What honest men we are, and what scoundrels everyone who preceded us were!" The leader of the Government in the Government he was a member of before had done exactly what every other gentleman had done; but he was inoculated by that new vision of leasing instead of alienating, and everyone who opposed him fell down to the lowest depths of infamy. That was his position; but he (Mr. Archer) could disprove that with the greatest ease. He could disprove it by documents in the Lands Office. He did not wish to go much further into the matter, except to say that as they were discussing the matter of pre-emptives it was one very strong point which they tried to contend for when the Bill was passing through committee. Members on his side saw that it was utterly hopeless, and however well they fought it out they knew that when a division was called they would be beaten. They gave reasons why they thought the clause in the Bill of 1869 which granted pre-emptives ought not to be repealed; and they did it, not because they thought the pre-emptives of such great value, but because they thought it would be wrong for Queensland to repudiate a bargain that had been made. The Government found that they had to make a compromise in the matter, and now they tried to appear pleased that they were beaten. Thus what the Opposition could not get by reasoning, and by the most anxious advocacy, had been yielded at once when they came into the Conference. He did not think that that could be quoted very much to the honour of the Government side of the Committee, and he was very glad that they had at present an Upper House which was so distinctly in favour of non-repudiation that they insisted upon their amendments in that clause, and forced the Ministry to accept what had been said by them and their supporters would utterly destroy the Bill. They had now discovered that it would not destroy the Bill; and he could assure the hon. member for Stanley that if ever he had the honour of being a Minister again, and a case was put before him where his consent was asked for a pre-emptive on the conditions which obtained under the Act of 1869, not all that had been threatened would prevent him from acceding to the request. The hon. gentleman might be certain of that. No popular clamour would prevent an honest Ministry from carrying out the meaning of the Act of 1869. He would tell the present ruling party that that cry about the pre-emptive clauses being badly administered by one side should not be only a matter of opinion; but on the very first meeting of the House again, if he were a member, he should certainly call for documentary proofs of how that Act had been administered, and they would themselves show that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, and the party to which he belonged, had really granted as many pre-emptives as any other party, and they had carried out the clauses of the Act of 1869 exactly in the same way as the party at present sitting upon the Opposition side. He would see that all that was made clear to the country, and that all

those virtuous denunciations of what the late Government had done vanished into thin air; and the hon. Minister for Lands would find out that when he was speaking from the Government side, in the manner he had several times done, he was speaking against a party who had not acted differently from the party to which he belonged.

The PREMIER said he hoped the hon. gentleman would resume the discussion on the occasion he mentioned, and let them get on with the business of the present session. They had not got the documents the hon. gentleman referred to with them; but they were quite prepared to meet him. It was not worth while to go into a general discussion upon the deeds of past Governments. Surely they might be allowed to go on with the business! He was not going to answer the hon. gentleman further than to say that a great many of the charges brought against the present Government were only ninepins, set up for the purpose of being knocked down.

Mr. ARCHER said that if the hon. gentleman had simply said that he would be glad to see that discussion take place he would have been satisfied; but when he began to lecture him he would not sit silent. He was not in the habit of taking up much of the time of the Committee; he did not speak very often or at any great length, and the hon. gentleman knew that; but he would not sit still and have the hon. gentleman continually throwing out his arms in virtuous indignation at what had been done by the Opposition. He was prepared to meet him upon facts, and the hon. gentleman made a very great mistake if he thought he was to be put down in that way. It was a most impudent way to address him, and he had no hesitation in telling the hon. gentleman so. The hon. gentleman might laugh, but "let them laugh who win." The hon. gentleman did not win by his manner towards him; he lost. If the hon. gentleman had spoken in a quiet manner he would not have got up again; but if he tried to lecture him the thing was too absurd, and business would not go on. The hon. gentleman would have to sit still and not interrupt business.

The PREMIER said surely the hon. gentleman could not have heard what he said.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Mr. Macrossan is in possession of the Chair.

The PREMIER said the Chairman called on him. He was sure the hon. member for Blackall could not have heard what he said, or the hon. gentleman would not have made the speech he did just now. What he (the Premier) said was that he would be very glad to take up the discussion which the hon. gentleman said he would raise next session, and he at the same time expressed a hope that they might go on with the business now.

Mr. ARCHER said the hon. gentleman said nothing of the sort. What the Premier said was quite different to what he stated just now. He tried to scold him (Mr. Archer), and put him down because he took up five minutes of the time of the Committee.

The PREMIER: No, no!

Mr. ARCHER: The hon. gentleman admitted that he was in the wrong now. He (Mr. Archer) had not the slightest wish to detain the Committee, but as long as the hon. gentleman lectured him he would reply to him. The hon. gentleman was quite mistaken if he thought he was going to sit under it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the longest speech which had been made that afternoon was made by a member on the Government side of the Committee—the hon. member

for Stanley. He did not blame the hon. gentleman for making a long speech; because he had a perfect right to speak, and to speak as long as he liked. As long as a member spoke sensibly and to the subject of debate he should not be interrupted. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) was rather surprised at the defective memory of the member for Blackall when he said he would have to appeal to documents in the Lands Office to prove what he wanted to prove in connection with the granting of pre-emptives. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) had challenged hon. members on the opposite side of the Committee on that question, and in pursuance of that challenge moved for certain documents relating to the granting of pre-emptives, and from those documents he proved that a greater number of acres and a greater number of pre-emptives had been granted by the party on the Government side of the House than by the party at present in opposition. He proved that clearly during the debate on the Land Bill; so that it was a mistake for the hon. member for Stanley to make the statement he made that afternoon. The hon. member must have forgotten that those papers were on the table of the House.

Mr. KELLETT: I did not forget it.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Then, if the hon. gentleman did not forget it he did not make a mistake; he made a misstatement. The hon. member also tried to gild the pill—to sugar-coat the pill in connection with the matter they were now discussing. In doing so he told the Committee that public opinion would be so strong in future that if the leader of the Opposition should come into power and become Premier, he would not be allowed to carry the law into operation. That was rather a strange public opinion.

Mr. KELLETT: I said, as carried out previously.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Under the gentlemen now in office. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) could tell the hon. member and every other hon. member in that Committee, that when public opinion wheeled round so far as to put the leader of the Opposition into office it would back him up in what he did, in the same way as it was backing the hon. gentleman now at the head of the Government. It was therefore utterly absurd to talk in that way. There was the clause in the Act of 1869, and it still existed. Whether it gave a right or not hon. gentlemen opposite had not been able to repeal it, and that was the pill they had been obliged to swallow. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) did not wish to continue that debate. There were some portions of the compromise arrived at by honourable managers of both Houses that he did not agree with at all. He would mention one that he did not agree with, and that was the provision requiring ten years' positive residence on a selection before a man could acquire it as a freehold. He believed in fixing the same length of time as was insisted upon in the case of homesteads—namely, five years, which was the term adopted in America. He believed a man should have the choice of making his land freehold at the end of five years, or at any period between that and ten years. Hon. gentlemen had no right to say that members on that side of the Committee who wished to shorten the period of residence were favourers of pre-emptives or dummies. He was neither one nor the other. He had always been an opponent of the pre-emptive right as it stood. Before sitting down he would like to point out that the Government had receded from two vitally important principles of the Bill—namely, the repeal of the pre-emptive right, and the arbitrary powers proposed to be conferred on the land

board by the Bill as originally introduced. Yet, in spite of the long statement made by the hon. the Speaker, in which he contended that the Upper House had no right to alter the Land Bill, and that they were infringing on the privileges of that House in doing so, and in spite of the fact that he was supported in that statement by the Premier, the hon. gentleman and his managers had assented to the amendments proposed by the Council, and had therefore given up the privileges of that House.

Mr. KELLETT said he must say a word or two in answer to what the hon. gentleman had stated on the pre-emptive question. The hon. gentleman said he (Mr. Kellett) had made a misstatement. Now, the statement he made was to the effect that he was satisfied that while the gentlemen now in office remained in power they would not deal with pre-emptives in the way they had been dealt with by the late Ministry. There was no misstatement about that. He did not say what had been done by previous Ministries. He also stated that he was satisfied that, after the tenure of office of the present Government, the matter would have taken such a strong hold of the public mind that no future Ministry would dare to deal with applications for pre-emptives as they had been dealt with in the past.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that was not the misstatement to which he alluded. He referred to documents on the table of the House, and the statements made by the hon. gentleman that the party represented by that side of the Committee had granted more pre-emptives than the party which now sat on the Government benches. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) challenged that statement and said it was untrue, and that it had been proved to be so from documents laid on the table of the House. That was the misstatement he alluded to, and not the misstatement referred to by the hon. gentleman.

The PREMIER said he believed the statistics alluded to by the hon. member for Townsville showed that more land had been alienated under the pre-emptive clause in the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869 under a Government from that side of the Committee than any other Government. But the greater part of them were in the Railway Reserves.

Mr. MOREHEAD: And was done through the passing of your own Bill.

The PREMIER said he believed he had a good deal to do with the passing of the measure referred to, and he had several times stated that he thought the Government were wrong, and had made a mistake in that Bill.

Mr. MOREHEAD: There were two Acts passed by you.

The PREMIER: They were both repealed now; except, of course, so far as existing rights were concerned. There were a great many pre-emptives that had been granted by the last Government which were not put down to them having been refused confirmation by the present Government. But what was the use of fighting over matters that had happened years ago?

Question put.

Mr. STEVENSON said that surely that discussion was not going to close without the Committee hearing a word from the Minister for Lands! Surely, although the Premier had taken the Bill out of his hands, the hon. gentleman was not going to sit there without explaining his position! Surely, in justice to himself, he would say something! A good deal of stress had been laid by the Government and their supporters on the pre-emptive right, or they had pretended to do so. He had the *Hansard* by him containing

the report of the discussion which took place in that Chamber after the amendments in the Bill were received from the Upper House, and he found that the Minister for Lands insisted upon having the clause relating to pre-emptions retained in the Bill in the form it left that House. The hon. gentleman stated that if the pre-emptive right were allowed it would absolutely nullify the whole effect of the Bill. Now they were told that it did not matter. Surely the hon. gentleman was going to give them some explanation of that! The hon. member for Stanley had said it did not matter, because he was perfectly satisfied that pre-emptives would not be granted in a single instance while the present Ministry were in power. If the Premier or the Minister for Lands, or in fact the Government, had got their colleagues in the Conference to go with them by telling them that they would ignore the law as it had been passed, and would not grant pre-emptive rights, it was a mean and cowardly thing to do.

Mr. KELLETT: I rise to a point of order. I said nothing of the sort.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What is the point of order?

Mr. KELLETT: A misstatement.

Mr. STEVENSON said the hon. member told them that he did not insist on the disagreement with the amendment, because he was perfectly satisfied the present Ministry would not grant pre-emptive rights in a single instance.

Mr. KELLETT: No; nothing of the sort.

Mr. JORDAN: Grant them in the same manner.

Mr. STEVENSON: And the hon. member added that by the time another Ministry came into power the public feeling of the country would be so strongly against pre-emptives that they would not dare to grant them.

Mr. KELLETT: In the same way as they were granted in the past.

Mr. STEVENSON: They had heard nothing yet about pre-emptives having been improperly granted in the past; at least he knew nothing about it. If the hon. gentleman knew so much, why did he not bring it before the House and make it plain to them that pre-emptives had been improperly granted? But in the meantime, perhaps the Minister for Lands would be able to give them some explanation as to his position, instead of sitting there and allowing an important discussion like that to be taken in hand by the Premier and the hon. member for Stanley. The hon. gentleman certainly occupied a most unenviable position. Surely he was not going to allow the matter to pass without saying one single word!

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said that the hon. member for Stanley was mistaken in saying that no pre-emptive rights would be granted in the same way as they had been granted in the past. It might be taken for granted that there would be very little difference in the way they were granted. The present Ministry were just the men to grant pre-emptives to a wholesale extent to the squatters; and within twelve months, if they remained in office, they would be very glad to see the squatters offering them 10s. an acre for those pre-emptives—they would be very glad of the money. The Premier had said that he (Sir T. McIlwraith) thought about nothing but money. Whether that was so or not, he was perfectly certain that the hon. gentleman would in a short time think a great deal more about money than the Treasurer was doing now; or he would land the colony in bigger difficulties than it was drifting into at present.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that surely they were going to hear something from the Minister for Lands!

The PREMIER: Let the business go on!

Mr. MOREHEAD: He did not understand the Premier; surely there must be something wrong with him. He (Mr. Morehead) intended to let the business go on; but he did not intend to be interrupted by the Premier. What he had to say he would say irrespective of the Premier. It seemed to him as if the hon. gentleman wanted to coerce hon. members into silence; but if he wanted to get away for his Christmas holidays he would not be able to do so by his present action. He (Mr. Morehead) had a perfect right and he intended to speak. He intended also to ask the Minister for Lands why he did not speak. Why did the hon. gentleman allow the Bill to be taken out of his hands by the Premier? His Georgian child had been taken away from him, and he looked as if he had lost an infant. The hon. gentleman reminded him of the nursery rhyme about "Georgy Porgy"—

"When the girls began to play,
Georgy-Porgy ran away."

The hon. gentleman had certainly abandoned the position he had previously taken up; in fact, his position reminded him (Mr. Morehead) of the story of the 'coon, which, when the Colonel was going to fire at him, said he would come down. He had reason to believe, from information he had received, that when the managers of the Lower House arrived at the Conference the other managers received them, and then there was a battle to which that of the Pass of Thermopylæ was nothing. He was told that the Minister for Lands did not say a single word—he was "mum." He was also told that the Minister for Works said he was going into the Refreshment Room. Whether that was true or not he did not know; but he was told that the hon. gentleman said he could not stand it any longer and wanted a smoke. Then he left the matter to the Minister for Lands and the Premier. That was the end of all the "high falutin'" which had been going on for some time. The new prophet had proved to be a false El Mahdi indeed; and he had not a word to say in his own defence.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement with the amendments in clause 21 and subsection 8 of clause 27.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement with the amendment in subsection 1 of clause 28.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement with the amendments in clause 43, in the second paragraph of clause 51, and the first paragraph of clause 70.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Committee approve of the omission of clause (f) of subsection 4 of clause 56 as proposed by the managers of the Conference, and agreed to by the Legislative Council.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair and reported that the Committee had approved of the insertion of the proposed new clauses, did not insist on the omission of clause (f) of sub-section 4 of clause 56, and did not further insist on their disagreement to the other amendments of the Legislative Council.

The report was adopted, and a message embodying it ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

GRATUITY TO THE PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIAN.

On the motion of Mr. BUCKLAND, the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider of an address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for 1884-5 the sum of £400, as a further recognition, in addition to the sum already paid, of the eminent services rendered to both Houses of Parliament by D. O'Donovan, Esquire, the Parliamentary Librarian, in the preparation of the Parliamentary Catalogue, the compilation of which has extended over several years.

Mr. BUCKLAND moved—

That an address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the supplementary Estimates for the year 1884-5 the sum of £400, as a further recognition (in addition to the sum already paid) of the eminent services rendered to both Houses of Parliament by D. O'Donovan, Esquire, the Parliamentary Librarian, in the preparation of the Parliamentary Catalogue, the compilation of which has extended over several years.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he intended to have waited to hear what the Government had to say about the motion, and would still prefer to do so; but as no Minister had spoken, he, for one, did not feel disposed to let it go. He was exceedingly sorry to assume the position of a "stonewaller," or a "dead-locker," or an obstructor, or a nuisance, or whatever was the most fitting term to describe the action he intended to take, but he should be altogether false to his principles and a traitor to his trust if he let the motion pass without a division upon it. He hardly knew what form of procedure it would be best to take. If they took a division on the motion as it stood, and were beaten, the £400 would be given, and the thing was done with. There were hon. members on that side—and he hoped on the other, too—who felt that not a shilling of it ought to be given. Or if something must be given he proposed that it should be a considerably less amount than that asked for. In order to make a start, and gain time for consideration, he would move, as an amendment, that the amount asked for be reduced by £399 19s.

The CHAIRMAN said: It will be better if the hon. member treats the sum of £400 as a blank, and he can then move that the blank be filled in by the insertion of "1s."

Question—That the blank be filled in by the insertion of "1s."—put.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said, after the debate that had taken place a week ago, there should be an end of the matter. It was simply a factious and obstructive opposition that the hon. member had raised, and as several hon. members were anxious to get home, and the Government anxious to get on with the Ten-million Loan Estimates, they ought to have sufficient influence with their own side to prevail upon them to be reasonable and just. Of course, hon. members had a right to block the whole business of the Committee if they liked, but the present was a motion that had been already affirmed by the House, and he thought it might be allowed to pass.

Mr. FOOTE said he did not agree with the hon. member in saying that the opposition raised was factious. Mr. O'Donovan had been before the House for the last ten years, and he had nothing to say against him, but he had been very well paid for what he had done. He considered it would be a misappropriation of money to vote the sum asked for. He had been told that the catalogue was a good one, and its praises had been sung throughout the colonies and England, but the matter ought to end there. He believed

when the motion was carried in the House there were very few members present, and it was only carried by a majority of four.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Four!

Mr. FOOTE said he thought it was, but, at all events, he objected to the opposition being called factious, and hoped a division would be taken on the question.

Mr. KELLETT said he was sorry the matter was discussed in so small a House previously, because he was satisfied that the larger the House the greater the majority would have been. It was acknowledged by men inside and outside the House that the work done by the Librarian was a very great one, and he thought that good officers should be encouraged. It was no use patting them on their back and saying, "You are a very fine fellow"; but it was necessary to put their hands in their pockets and give something. The money would be well laid out, and it would be an inducement to officers to do good work and know that they had men over them who would grant compensation for extra work. It was never the duty of a librarian to make such a catalogue, and he thought "the labourer was worthy of his hire."

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not see any grounds for the assumption made by the Chairman that there was a blank to fill in. The question as to whether they should grant £400 was referred to a Committee of the whole House. The sum mentioned was £400, and he said therefore that if the hon. member moved that 1s. only be granted, the question ought to be put that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question. Wherever they made a blank, there they could insert the sum proposed by the hon. member, but at present there was no blank.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he hoped discussion would not be protracted on the matter, but if the question was put in the form suggested by the hon. member for Mulgrave it would preclude any further debate whatever, because the motion would be that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question, and if that was agreed to the resolution would be affirmed. Though he deprecated any further debate it was not right to preclude reconsideration on the subject.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he liked to hear the Treasurer playing into the hands of obstructionists. The hon. gentleman wanted to violate the rules of the House in order to give facilities for prolonging the debates. What ground was there for the assumption that there was a blank? The message from the House was that £400 be granted, and the way in which the question had been put left the assumption that there was a blank to fill in. There was no blank.

Mr. GROOM said that as the hon. member for Fassifern had moved the omission of the words "four hundred pounds," the question should have been put, "That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question." There would be no blank unless the hon. gentleman made his motion in that way.

Mr. FOOTE: That would prevent the hon. member moving any further reduction.

Mr. GROOM: We cannot help that.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I assume we intend to abide by our Standing Orders.

Mr. FOOTE: Any man can move that the sum be reduced shilling by shilling.

Mr. GROOM: That is on the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN said the Standing Order relating to the subject was—

"When there comes a question between the greater and the lesser sum, or the longer or shorter time, the least sum and the longest time shall first be put to the question."

He saw now that there was no blank, and it would become the hon. member's duty to create a blank before the lesser sum could be proposed.

Mr. ALAND said he was one of those who last week voted against that matter going into committee, and he did not think there was anything very un-English in acknowledging one's self to be beaten. He acknowledged that he was fairly defeated by a considerable majority. He was as much opposed to the vote now as he was last Friday; yet he thought the Government ought to accept their defeat with a good grace and allow the motion to go.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he thought they were perfectly justified, even although they had been badly beaten before, in attempting to have the matter passed as they desired. He thought he had seen the present Speaker, in past times, when he was not Speaker, reducing sums that were proposed.

Mr. GROOM: On Estimates.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked if they had no power to propose that the sum be reduced shilling by shilling?

The PREMIER said the question had been raised a great many times in committee since he had been in the House, and it had always been decided in the same way. He could not at that moment turn to a ruling on the subject, but in "May" it was clearly stated on page 668. The Standing Order of the House of Commons, which was the same as that in force here, was quoted; and then it went on—

"This rule is applicable to other committees where taxes are granted or money voted, but is more frequently brought into operation in these committees (that is Supply and Ways and Means) where such questions form the only subject of discussion. The object of this rule is said to be that the charge may be made as easy upon the people as possible; but how that desirable result can be secured by putting one question before the other is not very apparent; for if the majority were in favour of the smaller sum they would negative the greater when proposed. If the smaller sum be resolved in the affirmative the point is settled at once, and no question is put upon the greater. A direct negative of the larger sum is in this manner avoided; and it has been urged as one of the merits of the rule that the discourtesy of refusing to grant a sum demanded by the Crown is negated by this course of proceeding."

Of course that did not apply to the present case—

"This rule is carried into effect, not by way of amendment, but by proposing a distinct resolution embracing the smaller sum."

That was the rule that had always been followed in the Assembly.

Mr. GROOM: Not always.

The PREMIER said he remembered its being ruled so a great many times.

Mr. GROOM said he remembered a distinct case in point in his own experience where it was ruled otherwise. He had succeeded in carrying a motion to go into Committee to consider a grant of £100 to various agricultural societies in the colony; but Mr. McLean moved an amendment for the substitution of the sum of 1s., and was successful in carrying the amendment. He created a blank and put in the lesser amount. That was a distinct case in point. The rule in "May" referred generally to questions in Supply. The present case was not the same as the Estimates. It was an address to the Crown, and before the hon. member could reduce the amount he must create a blank. That had been

the practice, as far as he remembered, in all Committees. He did not remember any Chairman putting the lesser sum on a motion of that kind.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was certainly very inconvenient if hon. members were debarred from proposing a reduced sum. Some hon. members might feel disposed to vote £200 or £300, but not £400, and it seemed very inconvenient that they must necessarily vote on the amount of £400, and not a reduced amount.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Premier had told them in his offhand way that they were all wrong; but he would give the hon. member an example. In the case of Dr. Hobbs, in 1880, there was a resolution sent down to the Committee that £5,000 should be granted. Mr. O'Sullivan objected to that and wanted to reduce the £5,000 to 5s. The way he arrived at it was—he moved that the "£5,000" be omitted with the view of inserting "5s." and that went to the Committee and they made then a blank. Whenever the blank was established then came in the rule that the lowest sum was put first. As the hon. gentleman said, it was quite possible that some hon. members would like to give £300 and not £400; and some might like to give £200 and not £400. That was quite right: members were intelligent enough to know what they were about. If they wanted to give £200 instead of £400 they would vote for the blank and then vote for the £200. The first business they had to do was to establish a blank. All the records of the House were in their favour. In the case of Dr. Hobbs, first the blank was established, and then Mr. O'Sullivan moved that the blank be filled up by "5s."

Mr. GROOM said that there was a case in 1864, when it was moved that an address be presented to the Governor, praying His Excellency to cause to be put on the Estimates a sum of £500 for the encouragement of agriculture. Mr. McLean moved the omission of the "£500," with the view of inserting "1s." But a blank was first created, and then the insertion of the "1s." was carried. That was exactly what they were doing now. It was certain they must create a blank.

The PREMIER said that in several instances in which the question was raised it was decided that that was the right way to do it.

Mr. SCOTT said that in 1880 the question had been raised after the blank had been created, and division after division was taken on it. There were six divisions of different sorts taken on it.

The PREMIER: No doubt; but those were on a point of order.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That was obstruction.

Mr. SCOTT said there must first of all be a blank established in order to move any amendment. As soon as the blank was established any sum could be voted from 1s. up to £399 19s.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the resolution was in the form of an address, and it was quite clear that if a blank were created in the address as it stood there was nothing left. Consequently, the cases cited by the Premier, hardly applied.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was very glad to hear the Attorney-General lecturing the Premier upon a question of law. At the same time he preferred the Premier's law, although he must admit the other might be right by mistake.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said it was strange the Government should be obstructing their own Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN said that after the remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba, and the instances that had been adduced, he was bound to say there was not a blank, and that the blank must be created before he could put the amendment. If the hon. gentleman insisted upon his amendment he must put it in the usual form—that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the resolution.

Question put.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he simply wanted to know what he was doing; for the Chairman had led him into the path of ruin. He wanted to know, if his amendment was put and lost, the thing was then decided, and there could be no more discussion and no further amendment.

The CHAIRMAN said it was quite true that the sum could not be altered after that.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he should support the vote; but he thought the word "eminent" should be struck out. Mr. O'Donovan had done very good service; but he did not see why they should call them "eminent." If no one else would do so he would move that the word "eminent" be struck out.

Mr. MIDGLEY said not only had the language been piled on in that case, but there had been a good deal of piling on of the money too. He thought it was perfectly legitimate for members to express their opinion about the way in which that matter had been brought before the Committee. Near the end of last session the question had been raised as to the propriety of giving an additional grant to Mr. O'Donovan in recognition of his services in preparing the catalogue. There was a little debate about the matter, and the Government could have done either of two things—either have brusquely and abruptly said, "We won't entertain it," or have done what they actually did do, and said, "We will take it into consideration." The way in which that statement had been construed during the present session convinced him of the necessity on the part of men in office of using words with the utmost caution. Utterances of that kind might be distorted and twisted to mean a great deal more than they were intended to mean. He objected to the motion, because it was an attempt to obtain additional money for services in a manner which no other man in the Civil Service had an opportunity of doing in urging his claim. In the case of any other Civil servant who wished to have an increase to his salary, the matter was brought before the Committee by the Government. No member had a right to propose an increase to that salary; but if any member wished he could move that it be reduced. The gentleman who presided over that Library did not ask for an increase of salary; but he asked for a gratuity, which the Government declined to grant. The Librarian then got the ear of members of that Committee and urged his claim upon them, and the result was that, to his certain knowledge, some hon. gentlemen had promised to support that application against their consciences and their convictions, and they had since expressed to him their regret that they were "got at" in the way that they were. He did not wish to enter into any kind of abuse, either of the Librarian or of anyone else; he simply maintained that all the indications were that, from time to time, Mr. O'Donovan's services had been recognised in the way of an increase of salary, and they had been further recognised in the shape of a gratuity of £600; yet the Committee were asked to give him an additional £400; and they had no assurance that that would be the last application. The same reasons that were urged now might be urged again in a few years for an additional

amount. The catalogue would have to be increased, as the number of books was continually increasing. The services of the Librarian had been sufficiently and generously recognised by the State. His position was not a very laborious one and he was well paid for his services, and he had abundance of leisure time on his hands. The work which they were told was prepared by sitting up late at night and by utilising holidays, could have been done during the ordinary working hours of that gentleman. He must confess he had intended to have opposed the vote shilling by shilling, and certain hon. members would have supported him; but he recognised the fact that they were at the end of the session, perhaps at the last working day of the session, and hon. gentlemen got, perhaps, more touchy and adverse to criticism and delay than they would otherwise be. He simply entered his protest against and objected to that way of getting an increase of salary when other Civil servants had to run the risk of getting an increase or not; and when it was decided it was done for and they had no means of getting the ears of hon. gentlemen.

Mr. FOXTON said he would vote for the money; but he should not have risen to say that, had he not had something else to say as well. It might not be known to hon. members that if any hon. member of that House—he presumed it applied to the Legislative Council as well—had the misfortune to lose the catalogue which was supplied to him, he was unable to get another unless he chose to pay five guineas for it. He understood that that was what the Library Committee were of opinion the book had cost. He would like to know whether giving that additional £400 would add another guinea to that cost. He certainly thought when copies of that book were distributed, as they learned from the public Press, to visitors who came to the colony, sometimes by half-a-dozen at a time, that when an hon. member had mislaid, lost, or was otherwise in need of one, he ought not to be asked five guineas for it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that if the hon. gentleman would take the trouble to inquire he would find that there were only a certain number of those books printed, and that the type was then distributed. Therefore, it was necessary that a high price should be paid, even by members of Parliament, who lost or disposed of a valuable work of that sort. The type could not be kept set up for all time, and that was why a high price should be paid for an extra number.

Mr. FOXTON said he was perfectly well aware that there was a limited number; but charging a high price would not increase that number. He had made application to the committee, and received a reply to the effect he had stated. Since then he had seen that distinguished visitors to the colony had received two, three, and four copies. He would like to know whether they would be charged five guineas each? He thought that members of Parliament who required extra copies should have them at the same price.

Mr. GROOM said the hon. member was wrong; there was no such case as four copies having been given.

Mr. FOXTON: I saw a paper stating that four copies had been given to Lord Rosebery.

Mr. GROOM said there were only two copies given. Lord Rosebery desired one for himself, and stated that he should very much like to have one to place in the Library of the House of Lords; and he (Mr. Groom) did not think that the committee could object to such a request. There were only eighty copies

of the catalogue left now. Applications for it had been received from all parts of the world, from all public institutions, and from all gentlemen of literary ability anywhere, so that if they acceded to all those demands the eighty copies would be soon gone; and the committee had come to the conclusion that it would be better to fix a charge, as the catalogue must, of necessity, be reprinted some day. In order that some of the expense might be recouped, it had been decided that the sum of five guineas should be charged, and that money went to the consolidated revenue, not into the pockets of anyone. He had not heard of any hon. member accidentally losing his copy and being refused another.

Mr. MOREHEAD: How could a member accidentally lose a copy of a book like that?

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put.

The Committee divided:—

AYES, 18.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Chubb, Archer, Groom, Stevens, Isambert, Stevenson, Scott, Lalor, Morehead, Kellett, Norton, Palmer, Macrossan, Foxton, Nelson, Buckland, and Ferguson.

NOES, 13.

Messrs. Miles, Rutledge, Dickson, Griffith, Dutton, Sheridan, Midgley, Bailey, Macfarlane, Foote, White, Jordan, and Black.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Original question put and passed.

On the motion of Mr. BUCKLAND, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The adoption of the report was made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

BURRUM BRANCH RAILWAY.

Mr. BAILEY, referring to a motion standing in his name relative to a vote of £2,500 for the construction of a branch line from the Burrum Railway to connect with the mines now worked by the Queensland Land and Coal Company, said: At this late period of the session I do not propose to go on with my motion. I would merely like to recommend to the Government to take into consideration the question whether these private lines should be continued under the present system. An instance was brought under my notice lately in connection with a private line, where the neighbouring coal proprietors suffered serious loss and injury through being stopped from using the line. In this case I would have shown, had I gone on with my motion, that this coal line is one leading to a number of coal properties, and that a private line might stop the owners having access to market. I hope the Government will not allow any more private lines of this sort to be constructed. With the permission of the House, I will withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER reported that he had received messages from the Legislative Council, stating that that House had agreed to the Officials in Parliament Bill, and the Bundaberg Gas and Coke Company Limited Bill, in both cases, without amendment.

SUPPLY—LOAN ESTIMATES.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee further to consider the Loan Estimates.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum of £90,000 be granted by way of loan for

buildings in Ipswich in connection with the Southern and Western Railway—namely, new station in Bell street, bridge in Nicholas street, goods shed, etc., and new workshops. That amount was the estimate of the engineer. As to the new workshops, he was informed that they were to provide not only for the extensive plant there, but also shelter for the protection of the rolling-stock that was manufactured.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that the railway station at Ipswich had been for some time inadequate for the increased traffic. The proposed new passenger station was between Bell street and Nicholas street, and it was intended to convert the present station into a goods station. Additional shed accommodation was also required. The sum of £20,000 was appropriated from surplus revenue for erecting new workshops, and it would take £60,000 more to complete them. The buildings and sidings at Toowoomba, including deviations at the Main Range, and relaying with 60-lb. rails, would cost £200,000. A good many alterations were required at the railway station, and additional accommodation was wanted for the purposes of the loop-line—

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: That item is not before the Committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the workshops at Ipswich were entirely inadequate for the work that had to be done. It was not intended to put up new workshops to compete with those who contracted for Government work. He might state that most of the work was done by contract; that was, that the building of carriages was the only new work done in the Government workshops. All the goods waggons and other rolling-stock were built by contractors outside. The only work done by the Government was repairs and the building of passenger carriages. It was found that the carriages made in the workshops were much better finished and in every way superior to those made by contractors outside. The Government found the material, and the labour was done in the workshops by contract; in fact, all the work except repairs was done by contract by the men working in the shops. It was found that they turned out better carriages at a lower cost than was done by outside contractors. The reason of that was that the Government had a better plant, and as a matter of course they could do the work at a less cost than it could be done by contractors. Even the tires of the wheels were done by contract; and he was perfectly satisfied that all the work was done for less money than it could be outside.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he recognised at once the inconvenience of the present railway station at Ipswich; it was one of the most inconvenient on the line; and he saw the necessity for the erection of a new one. But where was it to be? And did the £30,000 asked for include compensation for the land that would have to be resumed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the Government had two sites in view—one in Bell street and the other more towards the junction of the Harrisville Junction—but no decision had been come to as yet. If the Bell-street site was decided upon it would be a very costly work, for one of the main streets in Ipswich would have to be closed. However, that would be a matter for arrangement with the municipal council.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Does this £30,000 include compensation for the land that will have to be resumed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the amount was simply for the building. It would be almost impossible to calculate the compensation

that would have to be paid for land to be resumed, and there might be a difficulty with the corporation with regard to the closing of Bell street. Government would have to come to some arrangement with that body before they began to build the station.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: What difficulty could there be with the council? The difficulty would be with the proprietors of the land. They would not have to pay any recompense to the council.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. gentleman had something to do with the Ipswich Municipal Council when that line was built, and he had to put up very expensive bridges across the cutting of the railway. The Government was certainly not justified in closing a main thoroughfare without the consent of the municipality. If the demand of the municipality was excessive they would of course have to find another site.

Mr. BEATTIE said he did not see what claim the municipality could have for closing the street, seeing they were going to have a station in the locality. The property holders would, because it would depreciate the value of their property, and they could come down pretty heavy for damages. When a vote of that kind was asked for, the Minister in charge of it ought to be prepared with at least an approximate estimate of the amount of land to be resumed, and the compensation to be paid. Without that information the Committee were simply voting in the dark. He was glad to hear the Minister for Works say that the Government would have to arrange with the municipality as to the closing of the street, and that the leader of the Opposition had at one time had some difficulty with the same corporation about some other streets. The Ipswich Corporation were treated far better than a suburban division with which he was connected was treated by the hon. member for Townsville—clearly showing that “kissing goes by favour.” When that hon. gentleman ordered a cutting to be made across a certain street in his division, it was intended by the engineer to put up a 16-feet bridge in the centre of a 66-feet street. He impressed on the department the necessity of a reconsideration of the matter, and to put down a wider bridge. Instead of that they took possession of the street altogether, made it a level crossing, and put a fence across it. He (Mr. Beattie) gave the Minister for Works notice that he intended to move in that matter again, now that permission had been given to make a double line on the Sandgate Railway, and to ask him to give instructions to the engineer to have the street reopened. The closing of the street had been a great inconvenience to the people residing there. If they were to make local government a success, courtesy was required from one body to the other; but the railway authorities, without ever consulting the local authorities, commenced to make the streets they were ordered to make by the Supreme Court, and very little they had done. He gave the Minister fair warning that he intended to bring the matter under his notice, and hoped he would intimate to the railway authorities, when they were making the necessary provision for doubling the Sandgate Railway, that they should take care that people's property was fairly protected.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he remembered the hon. member for Fortitude Valley having some grievance about the closing of Campbell street, but he thought that was settled long ago.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Well, what had been done then during all this time?

It was too late in the day now to rectify the wrong. However, in making the proposed alteration, a much more convenient arrangement would be made.

Mr. BEATTIE said he might tell the hon. member that he did not bring the matter under the notice of the Government, because he quietly waited expecting that some action would be taken such as the Government now proposed. He did not want to be continually running to the Minister's office, but what he complained of was that the railway authorities when they received an order from the court did not carry it out. That was contempt of court. The people of the district did not get the slightest bit of a communication from the Government to know whether they were satisfied with the work done. He mentioned the matter now in order that the difficulty might be met, but he did not feel inclined to be continually neglecting his business after the Supreme Court had made the order.

The CHAIRMAN: I must tell the hon. member that this discussion is quite irrelevant. It was understood that the individual items should be dealt with.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was aware of that, but he was surprised to hear the Chairman call him to order. He must express his astonishment, considering that they had discussed a matter last night three times that was not under discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not call the hon. member to order; but I felt it to be my duty to call the attention of the Committee to the matter. The discussion is certainly irregular.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member was not very far wrong, because the discussion had some relation to the question before the Committee. The place the hon. gentleman mentioned should have been on the original plans, and the road should have been shown as closed. It was an omission on the part of the engineer. Anyone who knew the place must admit that it was extremely dangerous, and the Chief Justice who visited the locality, decided that the road should be closed, but gave instructions that access should be given to the inhabitants to certain streets running parallel to the railway. It was not the duty of the Minister to instruct the railway authorities what to do to carry out a decision of the court, although he remembered telling the engineer to see that proper access was given. He did not know whether the hon. gentleman had any real grievance against the authorities, but had the closing of the street been on the original plan he did not think that any access to other streets would have been called for, because Campbell street would have been shown on the plan as closed with a foot-bridge over it, just as at present. With reference to the vote under discussion, the Minister for Works had made two or three mistakes. He had not given any answer to the leader of the Opposition as to the value of the land to be resumed in Bell street. He said that he believed the land would not come to much, but he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) had a different opinion. His opinion was that the land resumed would cost more than the station itself. He had information that at the present time there had been a great deal of land speculation about the locality as soon as it was known that the Government had determined to build the railway station. For allotments that could have been bought for £100 twelve months ago £200 was now refused. The people who put such an enhanced value on the land were determined to get it all out of the Government, and the hon. gentleman would have to think twice over the matter before he decided on the site. The hon. gentleman

also said there was another site near the junction of the Harrisville line. That was in West street, he thought. Was it not the case that there was sufficient land belonging to the Government there to put the railway station on?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. SALKELD: No.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Ipswich men should know.

Mr. ARCHER: They want to sell the land.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the cost of the station if put there would be simply for reducing the grade between that part and the Harrisville junction. That would have to be done in any case, and the sooner the better. Everyone knew that there was a steep grade coming in from the direction of Harrisville. Probably after consideration the hon. gentleman would adopt the West-street site, even although the probability of the station at Bell street had led to the speculation in land.

Mr. FOOTE said the speculation alluded to would not affect the land at all. The land required to be resumed was not on that side of the street. He did not care where the station was, because the application for the station had not come from the people of Ipswich. So far as he could judge, the West-street site was a good one; but in any case the Government would have to resume a little land, and it would not cost more than £2,000 or £3,000. The rise in the value of property was certainly not due to the cause mentioned by the member for Townsville; but it was a general rise, both inside and outside of the town. He had heard of some great rises in the value of property outside the town, and he knew of some handsome prices which had been realised.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said about a quarter of an acre of land would have to be resumed for the station in Bell street. He believed there was sufficient land near the junction at Harrisville, but the gradient was very steep, and it was very doubtful whether the work would not be more costly than on the other site.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the gradient was too steep, and should be cut down irrespective of any alterations to the station. The cost of cutting it down should be charged, not to the station at all but to the general improvement of the line.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said they were asked to vote the money on very little information, and he was sure the Committee did not understand the nature of the improvements. He wished to know whether, before the station was proceeded with, the plans and sections would be submitted to Parliament for approval, or whether the £30,000 was to be handed over to the Engineer-in-Chief to do what he liked with?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was impossible for him to state to the Committee which site would be selected. He would point out to the hon. member that the site outside the points of the present station would be very much more costly than the Bell-street one; because it would be necessary to lay down the whole line afresh while the gradient was cut down and the station built. The estimated cost was £60,000. Of course, if the work was not commenced before Parliament met again, he should be glad to submit the plans to the House, but if the House was not sitting it could not be done.

Mr. KELLETT said that as the Minister appeared not to have made up his mind which site to choose, it was misleading to put in the words "in Bell street." He thought himself that

Bell street would be a very inconvenient place. There was a cutting, and there would have to be a number of steps down to the station. The new passenger station should be as near as possible to the old one, because if they had them two streets apart, when a carriage was wanted to be taken from one to the other there would be a delay of fifteen or twenty minutes. He thought the best site would be near the present coal-shoots, where the ground was level. The place in the cutting would be very inconvenient; and the West-street site, though not so far away, was still a good distance.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he might explain that the Bell-street site was on the Brisbane side of the present station, and the other site on the western side, just a little bit under the bridge. The Minister for Works had said that the Bell-street station would be the cheapest; but if they left the lowering of the line out of consideration the West-street one would be the cheapest. For the Bell-street station there would be an expenditure of £500 or £600, perhaps £1,000, for resuming land, while there would be hardly anything to pay in the other case, because the land all belonged to the Government except one little allotment. The people of Ipswich, as a rule, were quite unconcerned where the station was; it was simply a question of the convenience of the travelling public, and of which was the cheapest line.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had quite overlooked the fact pointed out by the hon. member for Stanley, that the Bell-street station was in a cutting, and so would be inconvenient for all time; whereas the other place mentioned by the hon. member was quite the reverse. A little extra expense should certainly not be spared, seeing they were making a final choice of a site.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he had asked a question of the Minister for Works to which he had not yet had an answer. The hon. member asked for £30,000 for a new station at Bell street; and he told them that did not include the cost of the land; and further, that he did not know whether he would put the station at Bell street or not. Would the hon. member promise that, before the new station was proceeded with, the plans and sections would be submitted to the House the same as any ordinary railway vote?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that with the permission of the Committee he would move the omission of the words "in Bell street."

Mr. ARCHER asked whether, that being omitted, the Minister for Works would promise that the plans and sections would be laid before the House for approval before the work was gone on with?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said if land was resumed, of course they would have to ask the sanction of Parliament. The estimate of the cost of the station outside the point of the present railway station was £50,000. It would be a very costly work, for a tunnel would be required so as not to interfere with existing streets. The estimate for the other site was £30,000.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not state that there would be any difficulty about voting £30,000 for a new station at Ipswich. But the Minister for Works had told them that he did not know the site, nor the land that was to be resumed, nor whether the new station would cost £30,000. What he wanted to know was, would the approval of Parliament be asked for the expenditure before it was incurred? The hon. member said that of course if land was to be resumed they must get the sanction of Parliament. That did not follow.

The PREMIER said that when the land did not belong to the Commissioner for Railways the plans and book of reference had to be approved of by Parliament. He himself did not know whether any land would require to be taken for either of the sites. There was no provision under the law for asking the approval of Parliament to the plans and book of reference, except when land was required to be taken from private proprietors.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said there was another way of acquiring the land, and that was by consent of the owners. If the owners agreed, and they passed that vote, then the Government might proceed with the station, even on the site which was to cost £30,000, irrespective of the consent of Parliament to the plans and book of reference.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that the existing railway station at Ipswich was very inadequate for the traffic, and it was very necessary that the work should be commenced before Parliament met again.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not think the Minister for Works had made out a case at all. He had heard him say over and over again that the Ipswich station was the best in the colony, and now he got up and asked a vote of £30,000 to assist that place. Would the Minister for Works explain to the Committee how he altered his opinion?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would withdraw the motion previously made for £90,000 for "New Station in Bell street, Bridge at Nicholas street, Goods Shed and New Workshops," and submit a vote simply for "New Station, Bridge at Nicholas street, Goods Sheds and New Workshops, Ipswich, £90,000."

Motion by leave withdrawn.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1884-5, by way of loan, a sum of £30,000 for New Station, Bridge at Nicholas street, and Goods Sheds at Ipswich.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he wanted to ask how much the present railway station at Ipswich had cost, with the deviations thereunto attendant. Perhaps the Minister for Works could tell them in round numbers. If he could not, the Engineer-in-Chief was in the gallery, and he might be able to give the information in a broad way to the hon. gentleman.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was sorry he could not give the hon. member the particulars. It was many years since that station was erected, and it was hardly possible that the Engineer-in-Chief or he could carry the details in their heads.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman, after having had some consultation with the Engineer-in-Chief, had come back and told them that he could tell them nothing; that the Engineer-in-Chief was as ignorant as the Minister for Works. He (Mr. Morehead) believed that was the truth: that they were both equally ignorant. He perfectly believed in Darwinism, as when he heard the hon. gentleman speak he believed it was a perfectly correct theory. He thought they should certainly have from the head of the department, after his consultation with Mr. Stanley, some estimate of what Ipswich station and appurtenances had cost. He did not know he would be far wrong if he said it had cost £150,000, and now for political reasons, if for no others, they were asked to vote another £30,000. He maintained they should have some information on that point.

Mr. ALAND said he did not stand there as a champion of Ipswich, but he did take exception

to the statement of the hon. member for Balonne, for he knew that the scheme under discussion had been initiated by the Government of which the hon. member was a member. That Government had seen and recognised the necessity for a new station at Ipswich. He thought it hardly fair to say that those matters were political matters, and given, as the hon. member for Mulgrave put it, as a bribe—which expression he withdrew and substituted "solatium"—to their followers. It was nothing of the sort.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was all very well for the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Aland) to try and disguise the action of the Minister for Works; but it was too apparent. He asked the Minister for Works how much Ipswich had cost the country with regard to the railway works and a terminus constructed at the expense of the State; and after appealing to the Chief Engineer, for whom he had expressed the greatest contempt, both inside and outside that Chamber, the hon. gentleman could tell the Committee nothing. He objected to the Minister for Works not being in a position to say how much they cost, and, further, to his not giving any reason why an extra amount was demanded.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it would be hard for him to carry in his head the cost of a station which had been erected for the last twenty years; nor could the Chief Engineer be expected to do so. If the hon. gentleman asked him any reasonable question he should be glad to give him an answer.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the hon. member might have avoided all the discussion if he had answered the question he put to him with regard to the new station at Ipswich. It was intimated that the site for the station had not been chosen, and he asked whether, before any expenditure beyond the £30,000 was incurred, the plans would be put before Parliament for their approval. If the hon. gentleman had said "Yes" the difficulty would have been over. Instead of that, they had a quibble from the Premier, who said that if they resumed land for the purpose the matter must be put before Parliament. That, however, did not follow; at any rate, it was no answer to his question. The hon. gentleman could not understand the Committee not being anxious to give *carte blanche* to the Minister for Works to put the station where he liked and spend on it as much money as he liked. If it was estimated to cost £30,000 and the hon. gentleman spent £50,000, he might as well spend £80,000, or £50,000 more than the £30,000. The Committee had no information; they were simply giving leave to the Minister to work out his wicked will to spend money about Ipswich just as he liked.

The PREMIER said he did not see how the Government could undertake to ask Parliament to sanction their executive actions. They would try to fix upon the best site for a station; but they would not be justified in asking Parliament to approve of a site, whether great or small.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier seemed to forget that the site had already been fixed but was withdrawn by the Treasurer. If the hon. gentleman had only read the estimate he would not have made the remarks he made just now.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not think the site was fixed by the Government, but by the Chief Engineer. The Minister for Works said there were two sites, one of which would cost £30,000 and the other £50,000. In order to make sure that the Minister would not spend £50,000 he was asked to put the plans and specifications on the table for approval before commencing the work. He admitted that the Minister was not bound to put them on the

table; but whenever an amount of money was asked for a particular work, it was fixed beforehand where the work was to be placed, and the exact amount of money required. In the present case, however, neither the site nor the amount had been determined, and that was why the hon. gentleman was asked to put the plans and specifications on the table. While he was on the subject, he might as well point out that he did not think such an amount of money had ever been asked for, or such important legislation undertaken in any Parliament in Australia, as had been during the present year in that Chamber, with such a small amount of information. When the Land Bill was under discussion, he had a copy of the Victorian Land Bill, in connection with which was published the fullest information showing the exact bearing of the Bill on every part of the colony, together with maps showing the land on which the Bill would operate; but it was very different with the Bill passed by that Chamber. And now they were asked to pass items amounting to £10,000,000 with actually no information. He had asked questions, not in any carping spirit, but in order to let the country know what they were doing; yet he could get no information. Even the question asked by the hon. member for Balonne with regard to the cost of the Ipswich station was not answered. No one asked the Minister for Works to carry all those things in his head; but he had a box in which he could carry all the information desired.

Mr. MOREHEAD: "*Boa*" et *præterea nihil!*

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman should come prepared with information on every item which would come on for discussion; but he did not do so; and it was disgraceful that the Engineer had not the information prepared.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he understood the objection to be that if the site was not fixed the expenditure of £30,000 might expand to £50,000; and he believed the desire of hon. members opposite was that plans and specifications should be submitted to Parliament before any expenditure beyond the sum of £30,000 was incurred. He thought hon. gentlemen should be satisfied with a promise that the amount should not be exceeded; and that if it were, the sanction of Parliament should be asked for further expenditure.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said that was what they had been asking for the last quarter of an hour—that the sanction of Parliament should be obtained for any expenditure beyond the sum of £30,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that if Parliament were sitting when the work was commenced he should not have the slightest objection to laying the plans and specifications on the table; but the work was urgent, and it might be necessary to commence it before Parliament met again. He had no objection, if Parliament were sitting before the work commenced, to lay the plans and specifications upon the table. If the Government were not fit to carry out such a work as that for the convenience of the public they should be turned out.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said that, when once the Government had the sanction of the Committee to build a station, they would commence it; and, having expended the £30,000, they might ask for £30,000 more. It was simply handing over the responsibility of Parliament to the Ministers, and they would not be performing their duties by allowing such a thing. He understood the Treasurer to say that when they had fixed a site, if the building would

cost more than £30,000, the Government would submit the new scheme for the approval of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he had no objection to agree to that. He was not in the habit of spending money that was not voted by the Committee.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, after the pure patriotism of the Minister for Works, it was rather difficult to speak. They found that the Bell-street site had already been abandoned by the Government—were they also prepared to abandon the bridge at Nicholas street? That would leave the vote only for a new station at Ipswich, striking out all streets.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the vote was originally submitted with the intention of erecting a station at Bell street, and contingent upon that was the building of the bridge at Nicholas street. The primary object of that vote was a new station at Ipswich. There would be no necessity for the Nicholas-street bridge if the Bell-street station were abandoned.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that if the Colonial Treasurer had abandoned the Bell-street site he could have no objection to abandon the bridge at Nicholas street. The item would then read—"New station and goods shed, Ipswich."

Mr. BEATTIE said he would point out that that would defeat the object of the leader of the Opposition, which was to prevent the expenditure of more than £30,000 upon the new station at Ipswich, because it would simply throw the matter back upon the Government, who had told the Committee that the cost of the other site would be £50,000.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that he understood that the words "in Bell street" had been omitted. He therefore assumed that the hon. gentleman would not object to the bridge at Nicholas street being omitted. It was consequential.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not think he could omit the bridge; but it would not be required if the Bell-street site were abandoned.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £60,000 be granted by way of loan to defray the expense of new workshops at Ipswich.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked whether that was the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief of Railways or of the Locomotive Engineer?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was informed that the plans were prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief after consultation with the Locomotive Engineer.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said they had been told by the Minister for Works that it was not intended to do away with the construction of railway rolling-stock outside of those shops.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if the Government intended to carry on the system of contracts which had been established within the last few years?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was afraid that £60,000 was rather too much to ask for the workshops, unless the hon. gentleman intended to construct all the rolling-stock there. That vote was only for buildings; they had all the machinery at present. £60,000 was a large estimate for the building of shops for repairs and making carriages. All the other rolling-stock—

waggons and trucks—would be made outside the department by contract, and the locomotives would be imported as usual. They did not require such extraordinarily big workshops for the purpose of merely making repairs; and the carriages could be made outside as well. It was a great mistake to be keeping up that huge Government establishment to make anything that could be made outside. There were some hon. members who believed that railway rolling-stock was made cheaper in the Ipswich workshops than outside; but he did not believe that to be the case. Whenever a return was called for showing the cost of the work done in the workshops they never got a correct estimate—the same as a manufacturer was bound to furnish every year in making a yearly audit of his business. In the first place they had never got the value of the money that was spent on the workshops; they had never got the value of the plant that was there; they had never got the value of the depreciation. None of those things were taken into account in the returns; they were simply told that they had those huge workshops, and could make things cheaper than contractors outside. But the competition was not a fair one. Every manufacturer must build his own workshop and find his own plant, but in this case the manufacturer, who was the locomotive superintendent, had workshops and plant worth about £100,000, and no account was taken of them in the estimates as to the cost of carriages, etc., which were submitted to the House. Then, as the hon. member for Port Curtis said, there was timber always kept seasoned: that meant depreciation also, and nothing was allowed for that. Then there was the cost of supervision—he was not quite certain whether that was put in.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: An hon. member said "Yes"—possibly he knew. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) had been boss of the workshops for some time, but he was not quite certain whether the supervision was taken into consideration in making the estimates as to the cost of the work done there. There was also a great deal of clerical work done in those shops, and a considerable amount of drafting, and, as far as he knew, neither of those were included in the estimates; and there were many other items which should be included in making a return as to the cost of work done, but which were not included. Therefore the returns made to that House this session were not honest. They were not fair to manufacturers, and they tended to lead hon. members astray. He thought the Minister for Works should make up his mind to have nothing done in those shops but repairs. Every description of rolling-stock should be given outside under contract to the different manufacturers who had lately established themselves in that business here, and to others who would no doubt arise through competition. He was quite certain that the Government and the country would gain by that, and that the Government and the country would also gain by having a workshop of lesser dimensions than the present one. He did not think it was a good thing to have four or five hundred men employed in one workshop, as it was impossible to watch them properly. All the items he spoke of were carefully left out in the estimate which had been furnished to the House. They were not considered as part of the cost of the work. All the supervision, all the material, and all the plant were found ready to the hand of the contractor, and all he had to do was to find the labour, and that was put down as the cost of the work performed in the Government workshops. The Minister for Works should bear in

mind in passing that vote, which he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) supposed would be passed, that he ought to be careful to have nothing done in the workshops but repairs.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member was quite correct that the return laid on the table a few days ago did not take into calculation the plant of the workshops, which was very costly. He thought it would not be wise for the Government to allow the plant they had got to lie idle. He estimated that the plant in the workshops was worth £100,000, and the Government could hardly afford to allow that plant to lie idle. No work was done in the shops with the exception of repairs and the building of passenger carriages, and not many of those. There was a difficulty in getting them from contractors. Indeed, those who had contracted for carriages had made a considerable loss on them. They had not got such good appliances as there were in the Government workshops, and it was therefore not to be expected that they could make carriages as cheaply. Many of the passenger carriages now on the line were in a shabby—he might almost say disgraceful—condition, but the department was so short of carriages that they were bound to keep them on the line, and they could not therefore, at present, be taken into the shop for overhauling. The whole of the other rolling-stock, such as waggons, was made by contractors outside the workshops.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the contractors of the colony had not a fair chance in constructing Government railway plant. His colleague, the member for Townsville, had adopted a policy of having that work done by contract outside the Government workshops. That it was a sound policy, he (Sir T. McIlwraith) thoroughly believed. The member for Townsville tried his best to give it a fair trial, and he (Sir T. McIlwraith) believed it had had the effect of certain workshops being established in the colony by men of enterprise who were willing to carry out the work. But those men were hampered in their operations by the possibility, owing to the Ipswich influence being so strong, of finding the Government changing their policy. When the Government did a work they were not bound to show a profit on it, but private individuals or companies were bound to show a profit. The figures produced in connection with Government work of the kind to which he was referring did not always convey a true idea as to the cost. He had tried for a long time to get at the cost of the work done in the Ipswich workshops, but could never get reliable figures. He did not say that the men deliberately cooked the accounts, but every man engaged in such an establishment was interested in making its working appear as favourable as possible. The men who got up the returns were all anxious to show that work could be done cheaper in the Government workshops than anywhere else. The contract system was undoubtedly the best, but contractors would not invest their capital and put down plant until the Government expressed the opinion that work of that kind would in future be done by contract. The vote before the Committee was the greatest damper they could put on private enterprise in that direction. The Government really proposed to employ the tail-end of their ten-million loan in competing with private contractors. That was not fair. It was a great damper, as he had said, on private enterprise, and was going back to the vicious system of having the railway works centralised at Ipswich. He agreed with the hon. member for Townsville that nothing but repairs—nothing but work that could not be let by contract—should be done by the Government. But there

was another and even worse aspect of the question. Why should they spend £80,000 on the workshops at Ipswich? He believed they had spent nearer £200,000 than £100,000 on those shops, and now they were asked to vote another £60,000 in addition to the £20,000 voted at the commencement of the year from the Surplus Revenue, making altogether £80,000. Why should all that money be spent at Ipswich? Was it the most convenient place for having Government workshops? He contended that it was not, but that it was an inconvenient place. Those shops were built there originally simply for the reason that Ipswich was the terminus of the line. That reason existed no longer. A far more convenient place could be found in Brisbane, either on the north or south side of the river. There was a better available supply of labour in Brisbane than in Ipswich, and material could be landed here more cheaply. The only reason in favour of putting the shops at Ipswich was that that town was nearer to the coal supply, but that really amounted to nothing, for when once the coal was put in the waggons it might as well be brought to Brisbane as to Ipswich. There was no doubt that the more economical plan, for the reasons he had stated, would be for the workshops to be at the terminus of the line. The question of bringing down the coal to South Brisbane was a mere bagatelle. He believed they ought to make a new start altogether; they ought to have the workshops in the interior. In addition to what they had, they ought to have workshops over the Range. There would be an advantage in having men working in a different climate, and there would be a gain in the competition of the workmen. It would be a great deal more economical to have a certain class of work done there instead of bringing it down the Range. They ought, in fact, to have two workshops—one established on the other side of the Range, and the other in Brisbane; in that way the work would be done a great deal more economically, and they would not be asked for that £60,000. The fact was that Ipswich was taking advantage of that ten-million loan; it was their part of the sop for fixing themselves more forcibly around the neck of the colony than before. Surely the colony had sacrificed more than enough for Ipswich! What in the name of common sense had the North to do with the prosperity of Ipswich? He said that was pure conspiracy. They had seen the members for Ipswich conspiring over and over again—parliament after parliament and session after session—and that was the final offer. Once they got that £80,000 at Ipswich what would be the result?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Not £80,000.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: They were now asked to vote £60,000 and there was £20,000 voted last year.

MR. MACFARLANE: £10,000.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Well, £10,000; he took the word of the Treasurer. That made £70,000 any way, and that was the amount they were asked to vote for making Ipswich a permanent workhouse.

MR. MOREHEAD: Workhouse! That is a very good word.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Yes, it was a very good word, as the hon. member had said. The place was proved to be so for a long time, and he did not think it had redeemed its character since. Let them spend that money, and it would be the most expensive item on the Estimates. He would advise the Minister for Works to consider whether the work could not be done more economically than by the Government. If he considered the matter at all, he

believed he would see that; in fact, he believed the hon. gentleman had considered it, and that he thoroughly believed what he (Sir T. McIlwraith) had stated.

MR. MACFARLANE said he would not have spoken had it not been for the long and peculiar speech they had just listened to. The hon. member's object was to make a division. He would have workshops over the Range, to make the Ipswich members dissatisfied, and would have shops in Brisbane to satisfy South and North Brisbane and the Valley. He supposed it would be admitted that there must be workshops somewhere. The hon. member would remember that a threat was held out by the late Ministry to remove the workshops to South Brisbane; they proposed to spend £50,000 for new workshops; but £50,000 might just as well be spent in keeping the workshops where they were. Brisbane got a good deal of money. The Northern members were always calling out about the amount Brisbane got. But if they looked at all the money that had been spent they would find that Ipswich had got a very poor share.

MR. MOREHEAD: So it has, even of members.

MR. MACFARLANE: If Ipswich was not represented better than Balonne, it would have good reason to complain. From its central position, Ipswich was the very best place in the colony in which to have the workshops, more especially when the broad-gauge line to Warwick was made. There would then be a number of branch railways from there, and it would be more than ever the best place for the workshops. Hon. members seemed to think that Ipswich was altogether dependent on the workshops. That was a great mistake. Ipswich could do perfectly well without them; and if hon. members knew of a better place for the workshops, by all means remove them. But no better place could be found; it was alongside the river and the railway, and had other advantages. The hon. member for Townsville said that all the carriages ought to be made outside the workshops. He (Mr. Macfarlane) did not want to run down any of the outside work, but he knew that that work was a long way from being as good as the work done inside. From the facilities the Government works had for purchasing cedar in large quantities and properly seasoning it, the travelling public were much more secure in carriages made there than if they were made by contractors outside. The carriages were much more substantial. He did not want to mention names, but he knew of carriages that had only come from private workshops about three months, and they were actually in the Government workshops for repair now. They could never depend on carriages made in outside workshops; and he was convinced that, even if those made in the Government workshops cost more—though, as a matter of fact, they cost from 20 to 30 per cent. less—they would be cheaper than those made outside. He did not say that in disparagement of the outside makers, who had not the facilities for buying timber and for seasoning it. They might have quite as good workmen, but they had not the materials to work with that were found in the Government shops. He did not care whether the Government workshops were at Ipswich or not—they might be taken to Jericho as far as that was concerned—but he believed the work done in them was better and cheaper in the long run than the work done outside. The return he called for three weeks ago clearly showed that carriages made by contract in the Government workshops were cheaper.

MR. NORTON: No.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Well, refer to the returns.

Mr. NORTON: The Minister has just told us that all the items are not included.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that wherever the railway workshops were the Government should continue to have the carriages made there. Waggon, goods vans, coal trucks, and that description of rolling-stock might be made outside, and they were being constructed all over the colony. He said again that the members of that Committee would make a mistake if they decided to have the carriages made outside their own workshops, because if made in the workshops they could be sure of having properly seasoned timber used and having the ironwork properly attended to. They would make a terrible mistake if they allowed the carriages to be made outside.

Mr. NORTON said it was useless for the hon. member to tell them that the returns he had in his hand showed that carriages were made cheaper in the Government workshops than outside, because the Minister for Works had only just told them that some of the items were not taken into account at all. He said that even if they were made cheaper in the Ipswich workshops it was not fair to have them all made there. One set of contractors twelve months ago were making carriages in Brisbane, others had started since; there was a contractor in Ipswich making carriages at the present time; there were contractors in Maryborough, and one of them had brought plant down here; there were others in Toowoomba, and a new factory had been started on the Sandgate line. Why should all those contractors be kept out of that work?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have all got contracts now.

Mr. NORTON: They had all got contracts now, but the proposition was that all carriages should be made in the Ipswich workshops. Many of those contractors had bought machinery specially for the construction of carriages, and why should that machinery be left useless on their hands? The hon. member for Ipswich had said that the carriages made outside were so bad that some of them had to be returned for repairs within three weeks after being first used, because they were not made with seasoned timber. The fault in that case lay with the person who took them in that state. If the timber was so badly seasoned it would show shrinkage while the carriages were being built. Anybody knew that if the timber was so green as that, anyone inspecting it could easily discover it. The hon. member for Townsville reminded him that the contractors at one time used to get the timber from the Ipswich yards. He did not know whether they did so now or not. It was quite clear that the man who took over the carriages at first when the timber was so new was at fault for taking them. It was unfair to induce men to start industries of that kind and then take all the work from them. He knew that some eighteen months ago carriages had to be made in the Ipswich workshops as they were not built outside as quickly as required. It was a reasonable thing to encourage the establishment of manufacturing of that kind, as they not only benefited the towns in which they were established but the whole colony. By competition with each other they reduced the cost to the lowest, and it was unfair to induce men to go into those industries and then take all the work away from them. If they took that work away from the private workshops and had it all done in the Ipswich workshops the price would go up, because there was not the inducement of competition to keep down the price.

Mr. JORDAN said he agreed with the remarks of the hon. member for Port Curtis. He believed that there should be competition, and if they had all the carriages made in the Ipswich workshops there would be no competition. He had heard no reason given by the hon. member for Ipswich to show that the Government should make all the railway carriages. He was very fond of the people of Ipswich, and had known and respected the members for that town for a very long time; but he liked the people of South Brisbane better because they were his constituents, and he did not see why they should not have workshops there. In fact, there were workshops in South Brisbane, and he saw a workshop there the other day in which a very large amount of capital had been invested. It was a fair thing to encourage private enterprise everywhere. He would like to see the thing divided in a reasonable and sensible way between Ipswich and South Brisbane. He was sure the hon. member for Ipswich could hardly object to that. Why not spend £30,000 in South Brisbane and the other £30,000 in Ipswich? He would be satisfied with that, though he would be more satisfied if the whole amount was spent in South Brisbane.

Mr. ARCHER said the price at which the work was turned out at Ipswich had been several times alluded to, but the returns were misleading on that point. There was not the slightest indication in the return that any account was taken at all of the capital sum the workshops had cost them, the expenses of the tools, the interest on the money expended, or the depreciation of property. Those were things which private contractors were bound to take into consideration. Judging from past experience of the cost of work executed for the Government, they might fairly conclude that before that work was finished it would cost £100,000. The depreciation of machinery and tools could not be taken at less than 12 per cent., or £12,000 a year; and the interest on outlay could not be taken at less than 5 per cent., or £5,000 a year; making a total of £17,000. But those facts had never been mentioned in any return showing the cost of work done at Ipswich. If a private company erected workshops at a cost of £100,000, before making a single penny of profit they would have to pay for depreciation of machinery and tools, and interest on the original outlay. He would like to see the work taken away as far as possible from the Government workshops. Of course, it was necessary that repairs should be done there; being alongside the railway it was more convenient to send engines and carriages there for repairs than to send them to an outside establishment. The tendency of men employed in large Government workshops was to deteriorate. They all knew the meaning of the "Government stroke," an expression which had passed into a by-word. Men employed in Government workshops drifted into a bad system. There were some excellent workmen in the Ipswich shops, but a great number of the men who were formerly employed there were mere "duffers." He had heard from Mr. Sinclair, in Brisbane, and from Mr. Walker, in Maryborough, that the majority of the men who came from the Ipswich workshops were men whom they were compelled to discharge after a week or two. Until the cost of depreciation of machinery and tools, and interest on outlay, were taken into consideration, no real comparison could be made between the cost of the work done in the Government shops and by private contractors.

Mr. ANNEN said he was glad to hear the Minister for Works say that it was the intention of the Government to continue to let the construction of rolling-stock by tender. The speech

of the hon. member (Mr. Macfarlane) would lead the Committee to infer that outside the Ipswich workshops there were no mechanics competent to construct rolling-stock.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Quite the reverse.

Mr. ANNEAR said that when the first tenders were called for the construction of carriages the great firm of Hudson Brothers, of Sydney, tendered for £890 per carriage; other firms tendered for £866, £659, £554, and Negus Brothers, of Maryborough, £511. The carriages now running on the Gympie line were made by that firm. They had a factory at Woolongabba where they made many carriages running on the railways down south. Mr. Negus was a mechanic able to turn out work with any man in the colony. The hon. member said rolling-stock should be made at Ipswich because there was plenty of seasoned timber there. Was Ipswich a better district for timber than the district of Maryborough and Wide Bay? The firm of Negus Brothers at Maryborough had every one of their shops full of seasoned cedar, in addition to which they had 100,000 feet of cedar in logs on a vacant allotment alongside of their premises. Only the other day Mr. Lillis, of Gympie, sold to one Melbourne firm 2,000,000 feet of cedar. There was plenty of timber in that district—timber which could not be excelled in quantity or quality or variety by any other district in the colony. With regard to ironwork, he ventured to assert that there were two foundries in Maryborough which could turn out work equal to anything in the Australian colonies, and who could turn out work equal to anything in Great Britain. The action of the late Ministry had been the means of building up many local industries in different towns of the colony, and he hoped they would not be interfered with. Therefore he was glad to hear the decision of the Minister for Works that tenders would continue to be called for the construction of all the rolling-stock required on the various railways. He, too, had a great regard for the hon. members for Ipswich, but he felt bound to remind them that Ipswich was not the colony. He had been sent there to represent Maryborough, and he intended to do it faithfully in every particular.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he quite agreed with the hon. member that Ipswich was not the colony—a fact which had somehow escaped the attention of the Committee. Judging from the Estimates before them, one would imagine that it was the colony. He also agreed with hon. members who urged that a great deal of the rolling-stock should be constructed outside the Government workshops. At the same time a considerable amount of that work must be done in the Government shops. But why those shops should be at Ipswich was certainly a puzzle to him. He had over and over again protested in the House against the continuation of the system which was inaugurated when Ipswich was supposed to be at the head of navigation, and when it was really the starting point of the southern railway system. But although that state of things had ceased, the railway workshops there had been perpetuated—why or wherefore he did not know. They had heard from the hon. member (Mr. Macfarlane) that Ipswich was the centre of a large number of railways. There was the Passifern Railway, which, he was told, was largely patronised, and was one of the best paying lines in existence; and there were other railways there of the same sort. But they had to consider that Brisbane was the terminal point; it was the centre of a large number of paying railways, and would be the centre of a great many more in the future. If they were to have railway work-

shops at all, the question arose whether it would not be better to have them in Brisbane—whether, instead of voting £60,000 to perpetuate workshops at Ipswich, the Government should say, "No, let us have our workshops where they should be so far as the Southern and Western Railway is concerned, and that is in Brisbane." It appeared to him that the present Government were afraid of the Ipswich vote, as indeed other Governments had been; but they should put their foot down and say, "We know that Brisbane must be the centre of the Southern and Western Railway system of this colony, and in Brisbane we will have our workshops." Why the Government did not take up that position he did not know. There was no reason why they should not, and every reason why they should. Better far lose the £150,000 that had been sunk in the workshops at Ipswich than put another £60,000 into a sinking ship. Let them have Brisbane as the centre of the railway works; let them start *de novo*, and he was sure the Government would have the support of the majority in the House. They would have a certain section of the House against them; but they would fail in their duty if they voted that £60,000 to bolster up a rotten system. He agreed with the leader of the Opposition that there should be workshops over the Range, which was absolutely necessary on a long length of line, but he protested strongly against spending that sum in Ipswich. If they spent it in Brisbane they would have the nucleus of workshops where there was a large population, where cheap labour could be obtained, and where the work could be done more cheaply. He, as a representative of an outside constituency, would not object to that, but he protested against further expenditure upon a place that was neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring. Ipswich had been a political Sodom and Gomorrah—nothing good could come out of it, because there was nothing good in it. He was sure he would have the support of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley in what he had said. He was sure he would have the support of the people both outside and inside of Brisbane, and that they would endorse his views. He did trust hon. members would take that matter into consideration, and give their votes against that item. The workshops must be transferred sooner or later to Brisbane, and he thought it would be better sooner than later. So far as the argument about the supply of coal was concerned, that went for nothing, because the cost of the carriage of coal from Ipswich to Brisbane was a mere bagatelle as compared with the cost of carriage of heavy material to Ipswich from Brisbane. He would ask hon. gentlemen to consider very carefully whether they should put £60,000 more into a concern that must, before many years were over, be shifted to Brisbane, and he would ask them to say now decidedly, once and for all, that Brisbane was to be the centre of the railway works of the colony. Far better, as he said, would it be to waste the £150,000 they had already expended than go on voting, year after year, large sums of money for the support of workshops that must eventually be transferred to the metropolis. He hoped to have the assistance of every member except those whose whole interests were bound up in Ipswich, in negating that vote, and he would ask every member to pause before he gave his vote in favour of an establishment which must eventually cease to exist.

Mr. ALAND said no doubt the hon. member would be very effectual if he would be less insulting. He (Mr. Aland) did not care a pin whether the hon. member had got a good opinion of Toowoomba or its representatives. When he wanted the hon. member's opinion he would ask for it.

Mr. MOREHEAD : It is a good thing for you that you do not ask for it.

Mr. ALAND said the hon. member might express his opinion when it was called for. He said the hon. member took too much altogether upon himself in that House; and not only did members on his (Mr. Aland's) side think so but the members on the other side also, as was shown by their leaving the Chamber when he rose to speak. He would ask the Minister for Works if he understood him to say that in future, in calling for tenders for railway carriages, contractors in the colony would be asked to tender?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. BEATTIE said he should certainly have to say something upon some of the speeches that had been delivered during the evening. He was surprised at the modesty of the hon. member for South Brisbane. Let that hon. member look at the Loan Estimates, and then say what he had to complain about. He had condemned Ipswich, but he had piled on the agony for South Brisbane. Then, again, the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. Annear) had given them a speech upon the private workshops at Maryborough, and listening to him one would think that he was personally interested in them. Everyone knew his (Mr. Beattie's) opinion upon the subject of Government work. He said now, and had always said, that every piece of work for which it was possible to call for tenders should be carried out in that way. The hon. member for Blackall would remember the action he (Mr. Beattie) took with reference to the building of the "Platypus." There was some little excuse for that, but holding the opinions he did he felt that no work should be sent out of the colony that could be done in the colony. The hon. member for Maryborough had spoken of the excellence of the work done by two firms in Maryborough, but those firms had not been neglected. The hon. member knew very well that the dredge at present being built in Maryborough was built without tenders being called. They were given the contract on the terms of a former agreement for other work. He had to acknowledge that the work done both in Brisbane and Maryborough was of a character such as they could not get when they sent away for it, as they had it under their own supervision, so that it was more advantageous to spend the money here, even if they spent a little more. The hon. member for South Brisbane, who was running down Ipswich and demanding that South Brisbane should be attended to, forgot a place that would ultimately come to far greater eminence than South Brisbane—he meant Fortitude Valley. The day was not far distant when a great part of the trade would go down to Fortitude Valley.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would like to ask the hon. member why he would vote for that £60,000 being spent in Ipswich—he presumed he was going to vote for it—when none of it would go to Fortitude Valley.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Nor Balonne!

Mr. MOREHEAD: Nor Balonne. There was no money being spent in Balonne. He objected to that £60,000 being spent on those workshops at Ipswich, because they were the biggest nest of political corruption in the colony. The hon. gentleman wished to keep them because it was by working those who were in the workshops that he had succeeded in getting into Parliament. They had been used for years as a means for putting men into Parliament, and for that reason they should be moved towards a larger centre of population where their evil influence would be counteracted to a certain extent. Without the workshops Ipswich would almost

cease to exist, and that would be a pity for the sake of the interesting specimens of humanity they saw returned by that town. He should not have mentioned that argument against the workshops had he not been interrupted by the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Macfarlane). That gentleman supplied another reason against perpetuating the political power which otherwise could not exist. He had certainly hoped for some assistance in his opposition to that expenditure, from the representatives of the city of Brisbane, where the works ought properly to be fixed. What claim Ipswich had for a continuation of the mistake he did not know, unless it was that it returned hon. members, some of weight and some of no great weight, who supported the Government. He had heard no sufficient reason for the vote, and he supposed no sufficient reason would be given except that the Government had a majority at their back. The hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Aland) had objected to some remarks he (Mr. Morehead) had made about Toowoomba and that hon. gentleman's representation. The less said about that the better.

Mr. FERGUSON said he gathered from the speech of the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Macfarlane) that Ipswich was to be the workshop of the whole colony. He did not know yet whether the money now to be voted was for an addition to the old workshops or for building new ones. The hon. member for Maryborough need not expect that much would be made in Maryborough. They had already passed the vote for a line to connect Maryborough with Brisbane, and later on there were votes for connecting Gladstone with Brisbane, so that the whole of the work of Maryborough and Gladstone would be sent through Brisbane to Ipswich. If that were not the intention such a large vote would not be asked for. Last year they had passed £10,000 for those workshops, and now they were asked for £60,000 more; surely all that would not be required if the workshops were only to be used for repairs in connection with the Southern and Western Railway. The intention was evidently that they should be the workshops of the whole of Queensland. Every town on the coast of Queensland would suffer for the vote they were about to pass.

Mr. KELLETT said that to his mind it was absurd to speak about that £60,000 as a large sum, when they compared it with the other items on the Estimate. Brisbane had £339,000 for public buildings, and they had heard already what South Brisbane was to get; so he thought Brisbane was getting more than her share. It was not to the advantage of the colony to centralise all the public works; they should be spread over the different towns. He believed very much in outside contracts, and they had been told by the Minister for Works that he did not intend to have any considerable quantity of new works made in the workshops. The repairs were increasing every day; and besides that, they could not always depend on the contractors. A little time ago it was found that they were very badly off for rolling-stock; the railway workshops had stopped making any new carriages or trucks, and they could not get them made by the contractors. Time was a great thing in all contracts, and in a return before him he saw that four carriages which were to have been made in five months were actually delivered in thirteen months! How was the railway business of the country to be carried on if that was the time contractors took to deliver goods? He thought it was very desirable there should be some workshops where they could turn out a certain amount of new works; where, for instance, fifty or sixty new carriages could be built in an emergency,

the material of which could be depended on. He thought it had been shown that in those shops the work could be done cheaper and better, because very few of the contractors had got the plant and appliances that were in the Ipswich shops. He contended that it was not necessary to reckon the interest on the money those shops had cost, for they were always there ready for use in emergency cases. He believed, with the Minister for Works, that where they could get good men and good prices they should get some of the work done by contract, for he had faith in the contract system; but it was at the same time very advisable to have those workshops at Ipswich. He did not think it would be desirable to bring the workshops down to Woollongabba as proposed by the late Government. The leader of the Opposition thought it would be a good thing to have one workshop on the Downs somewhere, and another at Brisbane, so that he might catch the influence at both ends; but hon. members were not so green as to agree to that. Ipswich was a much more suitable situation for the workshops, for the Government had plenty of land there, while they would have to pay a very large sum for land suitable for works down at Brisbane.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that something should be said in defence of the manufacturers outside, all over the colony, against the attack made upon them by the hon. member for Stanley. That gentleman had made the broad charge against them that they could not do the work in time, because they had not appliances to carry on the work. Now, the reason why they had not been in time with the work was that the Government had changed their system of getting all the work done inside their workshops. And those manufacturers outside had to commence and start a new system; they had to find capital and machinery. They had now found both, and the complaint which existed some time ago, of the work not being done up to time, would not exist in future. Hon. members must understand that in changing a system—no matter what—there was always some inconvenience. And that was how the inconvenience arose in the railway work not being done up to contract time. One of the members for Ipswich had also complained that the timber used by the contractors was not seasoned. He knew when he was in office that all the contractors got their timber from the Ipswich works, and the timber was thoroughly seasoned. If that system had been departed from it was the fault of the department. And if they had always kept a supply of seasoned timber in stock at Ipswich and given it out to the contractors, he could not understand how the contractors did not use the seasoned timber. He could himself see good reason why the whole of the work of Southern and Western Queensland should not be done in Ipswich, and why some of it should be done somewhere else. He would have some change made in favour of Toowoomba. When he was in office he removed some machinery there, and had he remained longer in office he would have established a larger workshop at Toowoomba. He did not believe that crippled stock from the West should come down to Ipswich. There was danger in it, and he believed that the greater part of the crippled stock from the western lines should be repaired at Toowoomba. That was a most central place, and had a much better climate, where the men could work, at any rate a little better than under the Range. Then, again, they were establishing a system of railways along the coast having no central connection with Ipswich any more than the western and border lines had. Why should the crippled stock on those lines be carried to Ipswich? Why

should not there be a workshop at Brisbane for the coast-line necessary repairs? Of course that would not interfere with Ipswich, which would still have a large amount of work to do. There was no reason on earth why they should keep up such a large establishment at Ipswich. The only reason was that it had been established there, and that for many years, in the early history of the colony, Ipswich was at the end of the line. That reason did not exist now. He admitted it would be very expensive to remove the workshops from Ipswich; but although they might not remove them, why should they spend so much money in keeping them up? Why should they expend £70,000 in thoroughly establishing them in the position they occupied in relation to the rest of the colony? He thought a portion of the money could be far better spent in establishing larger workshops at Toowoomba than existed at present, and somewhere near Brisbane—he did not care whether it was at Woollongabba or Fortitude Valley—where crippled stock could be repaired for the lines running north and south.

Question put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 24.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Griffith, Dickson, Dutton, Sheridan, Smyth, Foxton, Bailey, Beattie, Foote, Jordan, Buckland, White, Kellett, Isambert, Macfarlane, Kates, Macdonald-Paterson, Midgley, Salkeld, Higson, Horwitz, and Annear.

NOES, 11.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Nelson, Macrossan, Lalor, Norton, Stevenson, Archer, Morehead, Palmer, Aland, and Ferguson.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £26,000 be granted by way of loan for Toowoomba—new goods station, additions, alterations, etc. The amount put down was the Engineer's estimate.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS, in reply to Mr. Morehead, said that the accommodation for goods was insufficient. When the shed got full it was utterly impossible to get at the goods people wanted. Hon. members knew very well that increased traffic required increased accommodation. It was therefore necessary to enlarge, not only the goods shed, but the sidings also.

Mr. PALMER said he was told by the Minister for Works a week ago, in answer to a question, that the cost of all repairs was paid from revenue. How could the hon. gentleman reconcile that statement with the item just moved?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was not an ordinary repair for which the money was required; it was a heavy undertaking, the cost of which could not be expected to come out of revenue.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought the committee would give a sigh of relief when they had got rid of Darling Downs in connection with those Estimates. The Government had chess-boarded the Darling Downs with railways, and subsidised Ipswich as much as they could, and it would be a relief when they got to something really for the benefit of the colony. So far, they had only pandered to the majority that supported the Ministry, without conferring any really great benefit on the general community.

Mr. KELLETT said that Toowoomba seemed to have its finger in every pie, and it had received twice as much as any other place in the colony. Money was voted for the Drayton deviation the other day and the money might as well have been thrown into the sea. Whatever Government was in power, Toowoomba got more than its share of public money. The

principal railway of the colony was to be taken in another direction, and that showed that the money was not required. How could additional accommodation be required if the traffic was going in another direction? South Brisbane had got a big share of public money lately, but it had not got half as much as Toowoomba in proportion; and it was nearly time the Toowoomba people knew they were getting more than their share.

Mr. ALAND said the speech of the hon. member was the result of a caucus held by three or four members in the corner where the hon. gentleman sat. He was not going to stand up for the rights or wrongs of Toowoomba. That town was before the colony, and there was no ground for the belief that it got more than its fair share of the good things going.

Mr. HORWITZ said he thought an expenditure of £500 would be quite sufficient to make the Toowoomba goods shed fit to accommodate the traffic. He thought there had been too much money spent at Toowoomba. He was told last night that Warwick was jealous of Toowoomba; but he thought that Toowoomba was jealous of Warwick. He would vote against the motion.

Mr. BEATTIE said he simply wanted to know whether what he had heard was correct. He had been told upon very good authority that most of the money had been spent already.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Question put, and the Committee divided.

There being no tellers for the "Noes," the question was resolved in the affirmative.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in moving that £200,000 be granted by way of loan to defray the cost of buildings and sidings generally, deviation upon the Main Range and relaying with 60-lb. rails, said that these extra sidings were very necessary, and it was proposed to remove all the timber bridges.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if the Minister for Works could tell the Committee how much of that money had been spent?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said some of it had been expended in providing increased accommodation at several of the stations along the line. Trains had to be divided at Grandchester, and the engine had to take one half up to the tunnel, and then go back for the other half, with the tender forward, which was found to be very dangerous on the Little Liverpool Range; so that a fork had been made to turn the engine, and another one at Laidley. All the stations along the line had been provided with increased accommodation owing to the increased traffic. Such parts of the rails as had become worn out, particularly between Helidon and Murphy's Creek, were being replaced by 60-lb. rails. There were some bridges on the Main Range that would require rebuilding shortly; and it was proposed to do away with bridges by deviations and substitute embankments, which had been done in several cases before. It was found that that was the least expensive in the long run.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he asked a very simple question. He wished to know how much of the money had been spent. He did not ask for a detailed account of where it was spent, but just the amount. He knew that a certain amount had been spent in relaying with 60-lb. rails; but he did not know how much it had cost, or what other portions had been improved. If the Minister for Works would tell them how much had been spent, they would know how much there was left to be spent.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that somewhere between £2,000 and £3,000 had been spent in giving increased accommodation at Grandchester, Laidley, and Gatton, and other stations along the line, particularly between Gowrie Junction and Warwick.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that there must be a great deal more than that spent. There had been several miles along the Main Range relaid with 60-lb. rails at a cost of not less than £1,000 per mile. There were at least seven or eight miles, and probably more than that. The Chief Engineer ought to be able to tell the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the work was not being done by the Chief Engineer. The relaying of the rails was done under the Engineer for Existing Lines. The men were now engaged relaying rails between Helidon and Murphy's Creek.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the work of relaying the rails from Murphy's Creek to the top of the Main Range was done under the Chief Engineer. That he knew himself, because it was done during the time he was in office. The Chief Engineer therefore ought to be able to tell them what the work cost—that was, if it was included in that vote. Of course they knew perfectly well that the work of replacing worn-out rails with 60-lb. rails was now done under the Engineer for Existing Lines. It was, however, absurd to say that the work which had been done previously by the Chief Engineer only cost £2,000 or £3,000. It must have cost £20,000, if not a great deal more.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the Government were bound to keep the line in thorough repair, and worn-out rails must be replaced; and where increased accommodation was required it must be provided.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said it was not usual to submit a vote like that, without a schedule showing how the money was to be expended. The Ministry did not seem to know what they were doing, and all the information the Committee had was that that vote of £200,000 was for "Buildings and sidings generally, including deviations, Main Range, relaying with 60-lb. rails, etc." on the Southern and Western Railway. Such a vote was never submitted to Parliament in that manner before. It simply amounted to this: that Parliament was not to have the slightest control over the expenditure; they were to hand over that £200,000 to the Engineer's Department. As the vote now stood, the Government might legitimately take £100,000 of the amount already passed for new station and goods sheds at Ipswich, or add another £50,000 to the £26,000 voted for new goods station and additions at Toowoomba. No particulars were furnished and no schedule accompanied the vote showing how it was to be expended.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said applications were continually coming in for additional sidings in order to afford accommodation for people to load their produce on the railway, and they must make provision of that kind so that the traffic could be carried on properly. Applications had also been made for sidings on the Brisbane Valley line, where accommodation was required for loading timber.

Mr. NORTON said he thought that subject was exhausted, but perhaps the Minister for Works could tell the Committee what had become of a shelter-shed erected at the Brisbane station near the Countess-street Bridge about a month ago? Was it blown away by one of the thunderstorms the other day?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he did not go ferreting about to see what had been blown away. The hon. member, however, had got nothing else to do but to go ferreting and sneaking about like a detective to find out small things to complain about.

Mr. NORTON said there was a shelter-shed for carriages put up just outside the railway station within the last month or two, and it seemed to have disappeared, or else it was made of invisible stuff. If it had not been blown down it must have been removed. Could they not get an answer as to what had become of that shed, which was a new one? Immediately after the shed was completed—or before it was completed—it disappeared. That was the way the money went. Perhaps the Colonial Treasurer would ask the Engineer what had become of the shed, if they could not get an answer from the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the shed the hon. member was growing about was only a temporary arrangement, and when it had answered the purpose for which it was put up it was taken down.

Mr. NORTON said he did not know what was the use of asking any questions at all. They were now told that was only a temporary shed. What was the use of putting up a shed one month and taking it down the next? Was that the way the Government were going to spend that vote of £200,000? It was simply ludicrous to see the way the money was wasted. He was sure that shed could not have been put up and removed again without a dead loss of £50 or £60. Surely there ought to be some supervision which would prevent such waste.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had observed that shed a few times, because the Sandgate trains turned there. The shed was actually planted three feet in the solid rock; that was a rather strange way of putting up a temporary shed. It certainly disappeared a great deal faster than it was put up. It seemed that the Minister for Works had a mind above details. If they asked him a question about a railway which was to cost a quarter of a million, he said he could not carry everything in his head; and if they asked him about a shed which was supposed to have been blown away, he said he did not know anything about it. His office was only just outside the station, but according to his statement the railway station might be blown away and he would know nothing about it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was surprised that the hon. member for Townsville and the hon. member for Port Curtis had not trained the officials in such a way during the time they were in office that they would not have to find fault with them now. It was only now that the hon. members discovered their shortcomings. If he could not manage the Railway Department better than the hon. member for Port Curtis he would give it up.

Question put.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would point out that he had not yet got an answer from the Minister for Works. Neither the hon. gentleman nor the Engineer-in-Chief seemed to know the expenditure on that vote. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) believed that £20,000 or £30,000 had been spent already.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman said that only £2,000 or £3,000 had been spent; but to his (Hon. J. M. Macrossan's) knowledge four or five times that amount had been spent.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £653,000 be granted for Railways in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts. With regard to the first item—Maryborough to Gayndah, £250,000—he might state that the distance between the two places was 100 miles, and the mileage to be constructed was estimated at 87 miles. The vote of £35,000 for the Maryborough and Gympie line arose from the expenditure having exceeded the amount of the previous vote. The total expenditure had been £400,346, and the amount of the previous vote was £365,500, leaving a deficiency of £34,846. The sum of £35,000 was now asked to meet the expenditure for wharfage branches, permanent-way material, concrete culvert in Kent street, rolling-stock, etc. For the Maryborough Wharf Branch Extension, £8,000 was asked; and the £25,000 additional for the line from Maryborough to Burrum was required to meet the expenditure on the Burrum Bridge and other works. For the line from Howard to Bundaberg, £100,000 additional was asked. The amount of the previous vote was £85,000, and of that sum only £1,900 had been expended in surveys; so that nearly the whole of the vote was available. Then there was the Isis branch, for which £20,000 was asked. That was to construct 11½ miles. The other items in the vote were:—Bundaberg to Mount Perry (additional), £30,000; Bundaberg towards Gladstone, £150,000; Buildings and Sidings—Maryborough Railway, £20,000; Bundaberg Railway, £10,000; Burrum Railway, £5,000.

Mr. PALMER said, with regard to the line from Maryborough to Gayndah, he would like to know what prospect there was of getting any return from it? Where was the traffic to come from? There were no sheep in the Burnett district now. And even if there was traffic, the line ought to have the virtue of directness. If hon. members looked at the map they would see that the route was like a note of interrogation. He knew the district pretty well, and he was sure it was as easy to take the line in one direction as in another. There was no agricultural country there; and the grazing land was not even second-class. Besides that, there was no back country and no prospect of extending the line far out to open up new country. He should protest against such a line as that being carried out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was surprised at the hon. member finding fault with that line. There was some excellent agricultural land along the route; and it was anticipated that that line would increase the settlement. It was to be built for the purposes of giving accommodation and opening up new country. Besides that, it would go through a mineral district, and would be a remunerative line.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Burke the other night was very much surprised at his (Mr. Annear's) ignorance. Now, he was very much surprised at the hon. member's ignorance in stating that there was no agricultural land in the Burnett district. Why, at Gayndah, and from Mungarr to Gayndah, there were tens of thousands of acres of the best agricultural land in the colony. The hon. member might not know that, but he would prove it conclusively before he sat down. There was no district in the colony where a railway would pay better than that between Maryborough and Gayndah. The people of Maryborough in that case were, as they had been in every other case since he had known Maryborough, a self-relying community. They had during the last twelve months spent some hundreds of pounds in trying to find out the best route for a line from Maryborough to Gayndah. He had the report of a route by Mr. Surveyor Charlton, a gentleman to whom the

Surveyor-General would give a good character for ability and truthfulness, and he believed every word in that book written by Mr. Charlton. Mr. Charlton had gone over the route from Maryborough to Gayndah, and it was eighty-two and a-half miles from the Maryborough station to Gayndah. Twelve miles of that were already constructed, and there were now to be constructed, between Maryborough and Gayndah, seventy-six miles. The other night the hon. member for Mackay had referred to that railway. That gentleman was jolly and good-tempered and never insulted anyone, and he was always quite willing to be set right if it was pointed out that he was in error. The hon. member wanted to know if there was anything to be carried on the line but timber. He could tell the hon. member that timber was one of the products that would be carried on the line, but there was not only timber. There were good mineral lands along the line, and there were copper lodes there which had been developed and furnaces erected, but owing to there being no means of transit, the whole of those mines had to be abandoned. In connection with the timber Mr. Charlton said:—

"On the heads of the Eel and Sandy Creeks is situated a most extensive pine scrub, and which includes a splendid block of from fifteen to twenty square miles of fairly level scrub, suitable for agriculture. This scrub, from its great extent, the richness of its soil, the size and quantity of its pine timber, which renders it one of the most important in the district, is included in a state forest reserve."

When the timber was taken away they would have a large area of fifteen or twenty square miles of country suitable for the settlement of agriculturists. The whole of the land along the line was suitable for close settlement. He would ask hon. members to look at the returns in the Lands Office since that line had been agitated for, and they would see that an enormous amount of land had been taken up in that district. He thought the reserve was something like twenty-five square miles in area, and he had been informed that more than two-thirds of that had been applied for. The timber resources were no doubt unlimited. He would leave the timber and give what Mr. Charlton said of mining:—

"A large group of mineral selections are situated on Boomba, Clifton, and Sandy Creeks. The Teebar mine on Sandy Creek is the most developed. This property of 160 acres contains three lodes of copper, and £6,500 has been spent in its development. Two large furnaces were erected at a further cost of £2,000; and although 25 per cent. ores were obtained, the industry was allowed to languish at the time of the general collapse of copper-mining in this district, for the want of capital."

There was a great deal contained in that report, and he would now refer to what Mr. Charlton said with respect to agriculture:—

"Gayndah, which was once an important and thriving township, has steadily declined since the sheep were removed from the Burnett runs. An attempt was quite recently made to establish wheat growing in the district, and over forty bushels per acre was raised, but the absence of capital to build flour-mills or of cheap means of transit to port caused the industry to fail."

"Heavy crops of maize, oats, hay, lucerne, sweet and English potatoes, are yearly raised. Vines and fruit-trees grow most luxuriantly throughout the district. Gayndah is the centre of a very large agricultural area, the best lands being situated on the Gayndah Reserve."

And on other places named in the report. Last night the hon. member for Rockhampton, in referring to that line, said it would not pay for the grease for the wheels: but that was an old stock argument which had been in existence a long time. They were told the Gympie line would not pay grease for the wheels; and one eminent man, who was no more in that House, had said they ought to blow up the line between Maryborough and Gympie with gunpowder, as that would be the cheapest way to get rid of it. Since its construction, however, no line in the colony had

paid better, and he said that a line between Maryborough and Gayndah would pay equally as well as that line had done—not, perhaps, by the actual returns—that was to say, freight returns—but it would be the means of settling an immense population upon the land. They had passed a vote of £750,000 to bring out people to the colony, and there was no place more suitable for them to settle than on the lands along that line. The hon. member for Rockhampton could only see the Central railway. His whole song last night was "Extend the Central Railway, that will pay." The Central Railway and Rockhampton, however, had been very well looked after. He would point out the claims of the district, and what they received for railway construction, and he would show that they were entitled to a large sum of money without touching one shilling of that ten-million loan. In the whole colony there were 1,038 miles of railway constructed, and in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts they had seventy nine miles only, and there were now under construction twenty-six miles. The population in the Wide Bay and Burnett district, exclusive of the Bundaberg district, amounted to one-ninth of the population of the whole colony, and if the population of the Bundaberg district was included it would amount to one-seventh of the population of the whole colony. The public loan debt of the colony for railways was now £9,417,318. He wanted to show what that one-seventh of the whole colony received. It had been stated in that House, but without any foundation for the statement, that the Maryborough people were always clamouring for something. He had stated the other night that they asked a great deal, and that the capabilities of the district warranted them in asking a great deal more. But what did they receive? The district was entitled to one-ninth of the whole, as a proportionate share of railway construction, and that for the Wide Bay and Burnett districts would amount to £1,046,368. The actual cost of the Maryborough Railway and branches by the last returns was shown to be £480,374, leaving a balance to which the district was thus entitled, without considering any future loans, of £565,995, and that would more than cover the amount provided for the railways and works in the district in the new Loan Estimates. He wished to show that he was making a truthful statement. The railways and works set down were these:—Maryborough to Gayndah, £250,000; Maryborough to Gympie, to complete, £35,000; Maryborough Wharf Branch Extension, £8,000; Maryborough to Burrum (additional), £25,000; buildings and sidings, Maryborough Railway, £20,000; Burrum Railway, £5,000; construction of Kilkivan line, £120,000; making a total of £463,000, and leaving them a balance, without touching a penny of the ten-million loan, of £102,994. The district had never had a fair share of expenditure. They did not ask the Government to carry out a bogus railway, but one which would be remunerative, and which would tend to settle people on the land. There was not a better district in the colony, and when those agricultural immigrants arrived for whom they had voted the large sum of £750,000, there was no place more suitable for them to settle upon and to lead a prosperous and happy life, than the country alongside the railway in and around Gayndah.

Mr. BLACK said the hon. member need not be the least bit alarmed; his railway was quite safe. Maryborough had just as much claim as any other district to a share in that ten-million "grab," and the railway had just as much right to be made as a lot of other railways they had passed. Maryborough would get that railway—

or at least it would get the promise of it—but he could assure the hon. member that that £250,000 was one of those votes which would be deferred. In three or four years' time, if the Treasurer was lucky enough to get the English capitalists to advance the money, the construction of the line would be taken into consideration. It was quite as good as the line from Brisbane to Cleveland, and he believed a great deal better. It was quite as good as the extension to Fortitude Valley, and just about as necessary. It was quite as good as the Laidley Creek branch, if not a little better. In fact, if the construction of the Maryborough and Gayndah line was taken into consideration in five years' time, the construction of the Laidley Creek branch should be taken into consideration in six. Those were about the relative merits of the two lines. It was quite as good as the Drayton deviation, and had a much greater claim to consideration than the direct line from Ipswich to Warwick. Looked at in any light, that district was fully entitled to a share in the gigantic swindle that the Government contemplated perpetrating. As to whether the line would be reproductive, whether it would pay expenses, and whether it would create agricultural settlement in its vicinity, he differed with the hon. member. He was much afraid it would not lead to any of those results. But those details were not worth considering. The Government were going to borrow more money than they knew what to do with, more than they could decently spend in three or four years; so the quicker they could make it fly—the quicker they could make the wheels go round—the better. It was on that basis that a lot of the votes were framed. He was glad the Treasurer had got away from the system of discussing each line separately; they might just as well vote them by the lump. The Committee had been three months in getting through an estimate of two millions. They had been very careful to see that the strictest economy was practised, that no man's salary should be too high. They had been anxious that the poor working man of the Civil Service should get justice done to him, and they had tried every now and then to cut down the salaries of those higher in the service. Now, they had passed three millions in two nights, and at that sitting they were going to slip seven millions through in seven hours. He hoped the country and the Government would be satisfied. But a day of reckoning would come when the Government would have to answer to the country for having needlessly borrowed that huge sum of money, and to meet the interest on which they would have to impose additional taxation. He only asked the Government to get through with their Estimates as quickly as possible; let them put the thing through at once, and get done with that fraud on the country. It would be a farce to say they were seriously debating the merits of those items, for they were doing nothing of the sort. The Government intended to pass every one of the items; let them get rid of them, and do away with the supposition that the Committee were debating the thing seriously. The Government were determined to borrow the ten millions, and their followers were determined to support them in doing so. Therefore let them no longer deceive the public into supposing that any of those items were being discussed on their merits, but let them get done with the swindle and go home.

Mr. BAILEY said the line from Maryborough to Gayndah was not a swindle. Everything connected with it had been before the public for many months, and the district had been applying to the Government for years for nearly everything that appeared on the vote. The subject

had been thoroughly discussed both in the House and out of it. Amongst the items on the vote was one of £25,000 for additional expenditure on the Maryborough and Burrum line. In order to facilitate the work of the session he had that afternoon withdrawn a motion that a portion of that amount should be expended in a certain way. Had he gone on with it he would have explained how a certain company offered to construct the whole of the Burrum line under conditions conformable with the policy of the Government of the day; that company had brought in two Bills both of which were disallowed. Secondly, he would have shown the House that the company offered to construct that branch line, if it had been deviated from the line as originally intended; and thirdly, he would have proved from documents he held that that company had been almost ruined through the fault of either the Government or the Railway Department, through not having the ordinary facilities for getting their coal to market. He objected on principle to those private lines, and he would much prefer that the Government should make them where the traffic was likely to pay. The Gulland Railway was an instance of what he meant. The fact of Mr. Gulland having a railway of his own had cost private individuals thousands of pounds, and had almost ruined some; and the Government now, he believed, were determined to step in in spite of lawyers and all others. The hon. member, Mr. Norton, moved for a return explaining the position of the Burrum line, and he would refer to page 5 of that return, which explained exactly the position of the proposed extension of the line which the Government were asked to make. It was the report of Mr. Thorneloe Smith which he would read from, and he said:—

"The ground presents no difficulties, but I cannot recommend proposition, inasmuch as a better and a shorter route is available by direct extension, with but little land to purchase, whilst the station siding will be kept intact for general traffic. Hurley's siding is probably only the commencement of a branch to several prospective coal-mines down river."

That was what he wanted to draw attention to, and he thought it unfair to the other coal proprietors that the men first on the ground should block, and hinder, and harass all other proprietors. Supposing the Queensland Coal Company had the privilege of making a branch line from the mine in their possession, a number of coal proprietors would be all blocked; and he certainly thought that the Government, whenever they found traffic, should make the line, provided that the owners of the land gave it up for the purpose just in the same way as the Yengarie and Bundaberg lines were constructed. It would be a far better practice; much more economical to the Government and much more advantageous to the people who were engaged in the industries beyond, and to which the line went.

Mr. NORTON said he did not want to discuss branch lines, but he would point out to the hon. member that the line he spoke of could be completed for the sum of £2,500; and surely the company were not in such a position that they could not afford that? There had been difficulties he knew, but still he did not believe the company could be in such a position that they were unable to build the line. There was another report which the hon. member did not refer to, in which Mr. Smith reported, upon taking the line round by the coalfields—whether it was more profitable to do so than taking it straight through. A saw-mill proprietor made a similar application, and it was refused, but the Government constructed the line on condition that the proprietors refunded the money. That was agreed to. The same offer was made to the Burrum Company. If the

Government took to making those short sidings there would be no end to the thing. It was all very well to say that the line was the commencement of a line further down the river; so it might be; and by the construction of those lines by private hands, provision could be made which would enable the public to have full access to them. They had gained experience in granting a few private railway Bills, and now they knew that a provision of that sort would have to be made in all future Bills. If the Government undertook the construction of the line mentioned by the hon. member, they must refund to those other men the cost of the lines which they had made, and which had been taken out of their hands. In regard to the Gayndah line he would like to ask for a little information. It had been shown pretty plainly by the divisions which had taken place that all future divisions would be merely formal; but in regard to the line under discussion, he would ask if the Government had taken into consideration the propriety of taking the line from the Isis Scrub to Gayndah, because it was very much shorter, and the report made by Mr. Phillips was decidedly in favour of that route. When Mr. Phillips inspected the Isis Scrub he called the attention of the department to that route, because if the line had to be constructed to Gayndah, that he considered would be the best route. He knew there was very rich mineral land through which the line would pass on its way to Gayndah. He pointed that out specially to the Minister for Works, because it was reported upon so formally by the engineer. He wanted once more to refer to the item put down for the line from Bundaberg to Gladstone. Only a few nights ago the Minister for Works expressed a desire to fulfil all the promises he (Mr. Norton) had made when in office; and he not only did that, but when the hon. gentleman was in Gladstone, he led the people to believe that money would be put down for a line from Bundaberg to Gladstone, and that the work would be commenced at both ends. He could assure the Minister for Works that the Gladstone people had not forgotten that promise, and that they would remember it against him if he did not see that that was done. They had written to him frequently about it, and were naturally grieved in consequence of the action of the Government in placing such a small sum on the Estimates. He thought it would be only fair to the district that the work should be begun at both ends.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member would see further down the page a sum of £110,000 put down for "Retreat to Pine Hill; Pine Hill to Jericho; extension, 130 miles authorised;—to complete." He supposed there would be no objection to completing the Gladstone railway in the same way. It would be a piece of folly to carry the line a certain distance and leave it uncompleted.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if the £650,000 down for the line from Maryborough to Gayndah was sufficient to complete it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it would not complete the line, but the line would not be an expensive one. It was not decided whether it would be taken from the Isis Scrub or from the Kilkivan line. A thorough examination would be made to determine which was the best route.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the line was marked on the map as branching from the Maryborough line, so the map was entirely misleading. Of course the line was down as one of those the route of which was not yet defined; but the point of departure was defined on the map. If one-half of what the hon. member for Maryborough had said was true, the line ought no

doubt to be constructed; but he did not believe one-half the hon. member had said. When a man advocated a line in the House, it was just the same as a deputation outside; they must expect exaggeration. He founded his idea of the exaggeration of the hon. member for Maryborough upon the statement he had made, that the Maryborough line as soon it was built was the best paying line in the colony. If the hon. member made such a statement as that, which every hon. member knew was incorrect, he might take a very large license in making statements they could not controvert. The Maryborough line last year paid 2·718 per cent. Of course that included the Burrum line. The line from Maryborough to Gympie paid 3·265 per cent. Every other main line in the colony paid more than that. The Southern and Western line paid 4·054 per cent., the Central line 4·795 per cent., and the Northern line 7·862 per cent.; yet the hon. member had the audacity to tell them—and to tell them in very loud tones as if he wanted them to believe it—that the Maryborough and Gympie line was the best paying line in the colony. When the hon. member advocated a certain railway as he did, he should be certain of his facts. If it was a good thing to make that railway, why not make it from Mount Perry? It was only thirty miles from Mount Perry to Gayndah, and why should the country be put to the expense of constructing eighty-seven miles? Another argument in favour of making it from Mount Perry was that the Mount Perry line did not pay; and if the Gayndah traffic was such as the hon. member for Maryborough represented, it would assist very materially in making that line pay. Besides that, such heavy traffic would rather inconvenience the working of the Maryborough line, but if they took it on the Mount Perry line, where there was at present so much less traffic, it could be carried much more easily. Of course there would be some little difficulty about the line between Mount Perry and Gayndah, but none than an engineer could not get over. The hon. Minister for Works had told them that £250,000 would not make the line, but if they took the thirty-mile line, less than £200,000 would be sufficient. If the hon. member was so strong an advocate for economy as he wished them to believe, he should reconsider the line; let the engineer make an effort to find a route from Mount Perry to Gayndah, and so save the country a heavy expenditure.

Mr. ANNEAR said that when he referred to the Maryborough and Gympie Railway as the best paying line in the colony, he did not state that he judged by the actual returns of passenger and goods traffic. He judged of a railway by the population that it kept around it, and not by its actual returns.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that they in the Committee judged of a railway by the actual return, which was the best estimate.

Mr. PALMER said he had before him a pamphlet, published under the auspices of the Western Railway Association of Maryborough, from which the hon. member for Maryborough had quoted, and it must necessarily have a tinted expression. Notwithstanding that, he would like to remind the hon. member for Maryborough that he had not got a monopoly of the knowledge of Queensland. He (Mr. Palmer) knew and lived in that district before the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman had been very eloquent, and deserved the thanks of the people of Maryborough and Gayndah for his very able advocacy of the line. He, however, was not in the least more convinced of the necessity of that line. As to the copper ore there, compared with Cloncurry it was scarcely coloured stone. He had never

seen any agricultural land in the district, and the most favourable opinion could only put it as second-class pastoral property.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if £20,000 was enough for the Isis branch? Was that the Engineer's estimate? He believed the line was nearly twelve miles long, and surely £20,000 would not make that length of line!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the length of the Isis branch was eleven and three-quarter miles from the Bundaberg line. He was of opinion that the best way to get to Gaydah was to connect that branch at the Isis scrub.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that that was less than £2,000 a mile—surely that was not enough!

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for service of the year 1884-5, by way of loan, the sum of £636,000 for certain works on the Central Railways. Hon. members would observe that £110,000 was to complete the 130 miles authorised in 1879. It was proposed to extend the Central Railway westward 120 miles beyond the 130 miles previously authorised, which would make a total of 447 miles from Rockhampton. There was £25,000 for a new bridge over the Dawson River, and £35,000 to complete the Clermont branch—the permanent-way material having cost £50,000, and the last available balance being £15,000. There was £10,000 for new wharves at Rockhampton, and £64,000 for the branch line to Emu Park, which would not only be a great convenience to the people of Rockhampton, but of the villages round about. Buildings and sidings were required to the extent of £32,000. He had no doubt that the member for Rockhampton would be able to advocate the Emu Park railway, and he trusted to receive the support of that hon. gentleman.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that most of the items explained themselves. Hon. members would admit that it was highly desirable that the Central Railway should be extended as rapidly as possible. The only new service was the Emu Park railway. He had travelled over the route and visited that watering-place, and he could say that it was better than Cleveland. The Government would be able to dispose of land, and the line would lead to a considerable amount of settlement. The line would be a great benefit to all those who lived in the interior of the country, for they would be able to go by it to the seaside with their families in the heat of summer. Emu Park was, in his opinion, the best watering-place he had seen on the coast of Queensland.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Minister for Works had told them of the beauties of Emu Park, but if he were going to construct a railway to every beautiful place on the sea-coast his ten-million loan would not be sufficient. He could not see the necessity for the line unless it was to take people to the seaside; and if it was intended for that purpose they ought to make railways to every watering-place in the colony. There would be no traffic except from Rockhampton; and unless the hon. member for that town could make out a better case than the Minister for Works, the item should not pass.

Mr. FERGUSON said he quite agreed with the Minister for Works. The line to Emu Park was the only line passed, or to be passed, with which no fault could be found. The traffic would come from the town of Rockhampton and the whole of the district west of that town. The Central Railway was going to be extended, and the Emu Park line would not only receive traffic from that source, but also from the

branch lines to Springsure and Clermont. There were many people settled in the West who would be prepared to invest in land and build seaside residences at Emu Park as soon as the railway was constructed. There were about 1,500 people settled along the route the line would take, and there was no doubt that the day was not far distant when there would be on the Fitzroy River numerous sawmills and other factories. The population of Rockhampton had no other outlet by which to avail themselves of the sea-breeze, and he believed it was the best watering-place, not only in Queensland, but in the whole of the Australian colonies. The Government owned 2,400 acres of the best land at Emu Park, the bulk of which was reserved. It had a frontage of two miles to the sea, and it extended back about the same distance. Land skirting the reserve had recently been sold at £90 to £100 an acre, and the auctioneer himself said that the Government land was worth double that amount per acre; so that if 100 acres were sold every six months the Government would never require to spend a sixpence of the loan on the construction of the railway; in fact, the enhanced value of the land after the estimate was passed would of itself pay for the line. It had been shown by the hon. member for Townsville that of all the trunk lines the Central and Northern Railways paid best; and he could assure the Committee that the line to Emu Park would increase the rate of interest which the Central Railway returned for the expenditure.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he thoroughly endorsed the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for Rockhampton. That hon. gentleman advocated the line to Emu Park as one of the best paying lines the Government could possibly construct. There was only one exception, and that was a branch line to the Rosewood. There was a living witness in that Committee—the Colonial Treasurer—who could prove that land there had recently been knocked down at £160 per acre, in quarter-acre allotments. Yesterday he (Mr. Isambert) expressed the hope that as soon as they had passed the votes affecting the rapacious South, they would be able to go on more quickly with the items relating to the generous North; in other words, as a late speaker expressed it, when they had passed the Southern votes they would have passed the Rubicon. He trusted that they would soon finish the Estimates. He voted yesterday impartially and liberally for every vote that came forward, and although he expressed his abhorrence of borrowing, yet he voted for it. No member should vote for what he had expressed his opposition to, or his condemnation of, unless he had very good reasons. If it were not for having promised yesterday to offer an explanation for his extraordinary conduct, he should not have risen now. He would not only vote for £10,000,000, but for £30,000,000, with the same cheerfulness; and why? Not only the people of Queensland, but the people of the whole of Australia were living in a fool's paradise. All those people who depended upon borrowing money for the introduction of foreign capital which they never got, except in rubbish, were only a collection of flat-headed fools, and were inhabiting a fool's paradise. He knew that that £10,000,000 would never be raised. The Government might raise a few millions, but before the whole of the loan could be floated the eyes of those flat-headed fools would be opened.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Now you are talking sense.

Mr. ISAMBERT said they would say that they would not contract any more debts for money which they could not get. They would say to the Government, "We have seen our sinful

ways of the past; the Government had better tax us one shilling to pay for what we are constructing instead of contracting debts and allowing commercial men to rob us." There was another reason why he believed they would never be able to borrow £10,000,000, and that was that the English money market was excessively sensitive. There was a wise scribe who thought he possessed a superabundant amount of wisdom regarding the money market, and who wrote in the *Courier* from time to time giving his advice about the money market and the fluctuations in the reserve of the Bank of England, and by doing so he only exhibited his ignorance. The money market in England resembled thimble-rigging and the three-card trick. The whole of the money transactions in England amounted to only 2½ per cent. of actual cost. But those expeditions to the Cape and to Egypt did not take Manchester goods or anything of that sort. They took only gold, and were a drain upon the money market, and would destroy it to a certain extent. They might disturb it when the £10,000,000 was on the market, and then their dream would be dispelled. Before that loan could be raised they would be in the midst of a most blooming deficit, because freetrade, borrowing, and deficits all went hand-in-hand.

The CHAIRMAN said that the hon. member must address himself to the subject under discussion.

Mr. BLACK said the hon. gentleman should certainly be allowed to go on. No doubt Egypt and Emu Park might be some considerable distance apart; but the remarks of the hon. gentleman were really relevant to the questions before the Committee, which was the expenditure of £10,000,000 of borrowed money.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that so long as the present Ministry were in power they would not resort to the expedient of going into partnership with the "heroes of civilisation" and squander the public estate away in transcontinental land-grant systems. He might give a good many more reasons; but, having passed the Rubicon, he hoped they would get on swimmingly.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he felt quite disappointed. The hon. gentleman got up to tell them the reasons why he voted for that £10,000,000, and would vote for £30,000,000, and the only reason appeared to be that he did not believe in it. The hon. member for Rockhampton had made a long speech about the Emu Park railway; but could the Colonial Treasurer tell them whether it was going to start from North Rockhampton or South Rockhampton?

The PREMIER said they did not propose to go down the south side and cross by a floating bridge. They proposed to go down the north side of the river, and the terminus would have to be at North Rockhampton until some scheme was devised for joining the two together, which, in the fullness of time, there would be.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that was the very thing he wanted to know, because he was quite certain that if the line was going to start from the present terminus £66,000 would not be enough to construct it. It would cost more than that to build a bridge across the river. There was another matter to which he wished to refer, and that was the bridge over the Dawson River. He would like to know whether that was required?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said Mr. Ballard had informed him that the bridge was required.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he hoped the hon. gentleman did not take all that Mr. Ballard told him as gospel. If he

(Hon. J. M. Macrossan) had done everything Mr. Ballard said was necessary while he was in office, he would have spent a million more than he had done on the Northern lines, and more than had been spent since. He was surprised at the answer they had received from the Minister for Works. His (Hon. J. M. Macrossan's) candid opinion was that a new bridge was not required over the Dawson. It was very well bridged and strongly bridged at the present time, and Mr. Ballard only wanted another bridge over it to show his constructive skill as an engineer. The item for that bridge should not, he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) thought, be passed in that vote of £636,000.

Mr. FERGUSON said the Dawson bridge had been built a very long time. It was built before the railway for the ordinary road traffic, and at the present time was used temporarily as a railway bridge, the line having to make a curve in order to cross it. The bridge was an old wooden structure and was not safe, and engines had to slow off when they came to it and cross it at a moderate speed.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the hon. member for Balonne had that afternoon propounded the theory of Darwin. He believed the hon. gentleman was right. The hon. member for Townsville was a striking example of it. When Mr. Thomassen went to him, as Minister for Works, to make a contract for steel rails, he induced the hon. member to sign it, but said he had not power to bind his company. The member for Townsville was not cautious enough on that occasion. He now, however, exhibited greater caution. So that clearly he was an illustration of Darwin's theory, for he had progressed.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the answer he had given to the hon. member for Rockhampton's statement that the bridge over the Dawson was not safe was a very good one. Mr. Ballard had said it was not safe ten years ago when he was compelled against his will to use it as a railway bridge by the then Minister for Works, who he believed was Mr. Walsh. Ever since then he had been trying to get each successive Minister for Works to build a new bridge, and it seemed that he had at last got one pliable enough to accept his statement that the bridge was not safe, and to put down £25,000 for a new structure on the Loan Estimates.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said Mr. Ballard stated it was absolutely necessary to have a new bridge across the Dawson. Was he (Hon. Mr. Miles) to say he would not have a new bridge? He would like to know what an engineer was for unless to advise the Minister on matters of that kind? Did the hon. gentleman wish him to say that the old bridge was to be used until a train fell into the bed of the river? The member for Townsville meddled far too much with the engineer. He believed the hon. gentleman thought himself quite capable of taking charge of the channel fleet. There was nothing that he could not do. There was not a single engineer in the department than whom he could not do better. All he (Hon. Mr. Miles) could say was, that if the engineers had to be instructed by him (Hon. Mr. Miles) they would not be instructed at all. How was it possible that he could tell Mr. Ballard that there was not to be a new bridge over the Dawson? He could not go against the engineer when he told him that it was absolutely necessary.

Mr. HIGSON said he had no intention of rising at that late hour of the night, but he must take exception to the statements of the hon. member for Townsville as to the necessity for a new bridge over the Dawson. He (Mr. Higson) thought it was essentially necessary. The

bridge had been built for a long time, and was unsafe at the present time. He had seen several places where it was crumbling away, and he thoroughly endorsed all that had been said on the subject by his hon. colleague Mr. Ferguson. The railway bridge should have been made two or three years ago, and the old bridge left for the road traffic. He did not think it was necessary to say anything about the Emu Park railway, as his hon. colleague had given sufficient reasons for its construction. He (Mr. Higson) had explained to all members with whom he had come into contact why it should be built. They had heard a good deal about this and that line being the best paying line, but he thought that that line would be the best of all. When it was made, people from the western districts would reside at Emu Park in the summer months, and it would soon be half as large as Rockhampton. There were now two public-houses there and a telegraph office, and other buildings. As soon as the railway was initiated land went up in price. As his colleague had stated, land three miles away, which three years before brought 27s. 6d. an acre, when it was sold a short time ago realised between £90 and £100 an acre. The land was put up in lots, and was sold as fast as it could be. He believed that if a little more time had been taken it would have brought a great deal more. If the Government would only put up forty or fifty acres at a time, at intervals of three or four months, he believed the land would realise enough to pay more than would absolutely construct the railway, and there would be something over for maintenance; and he could assure hon. members that if the Government would only give the land, there were seven or eight gentlemen quite willing to construct the railway.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that the Minister for Works had told him that he meddled too much with the engineers when in office. The hon. gentleman must have a short memory. The other night, when the Committee passed the railway from Brisbane to Caboolture, the hon. gentleman said he would take care the engineer did not spend all the money. How was he going to do that unless he meddled with the engineer? The difference between him (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) and the hon. gentleman was, that if he meddled too much with the engineers the hon. gentleman allowed himself to be meddled too much with by the engineers. With regard to the Dawson Bridge, the hon. members for Rockhampton had stated that trains ran very slowly over it. But why did they not tell the reason? The fact was that Mr. Ballard built the bridge with an S curve, and it was not safe for the trains to go fast; they had gone slowly ever since the bridge was built. Mr. Ballard made an S curve, and did not approve of using the bridge at all, and he thought he would make it as awkward as possible.

The PREMIER said that was unfair to Mr. Ballard. The bridge was never intended to be a permanent bridge, but a bridge for the road traffic. The site of a permanent bridge was fixed when the railway was made. The S curve was made so that a direct line could be got on to the other bridge.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: That is a mistake.

The PREMIER: I know it is so.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he could tell the hon. gentleman of another instance in which Mr. Ballard made an S curve; that was at Stewart's Creek. Complaints were made about the bridge, and when Mr. Ballard left the colony on leave of absence he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) inspected the bridge and instructed Mr. Ballard's successor to remove the curve, and it was done.

Mr. HIGSON said he rose to put the hon. member right. There was a railway there before that, and Mr. Ballard could not put a straight bridge, because it would have interfered with the traffic on the line.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum of £1,625,000 be granted by way of loan for Northern Railways. The extension westward from Hughenden, 100 miles, was estimated to cost £300,000; and to complete the Townsville extension to Charters Towers would take £30,000; Townsville to the jetty and wharves, £20,000; and new bridge over the Burdekin, £40,000. For the line from Herberton to the coast an additional £400,000 was asked. The amount of the previous vote was £200,000. For the line from Cocktown towards Maytown an additional sum of £150,000 was asked; that was also an addition to the previous vote, which amounted to £180,000. Then £500,000 was asked for a line from Cloncurry to the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Government were taking steps to ascertain what was the best terminus for that line. Hon. members would observe £100,000 for a line from Bowen to the Coalfields. A vote of £150,000 for a line from Houghton Gap was voted in 1882-3, but that amount would be transferred to the proposed new line to the coalfields.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was going to take the first item, and he would ask the hon. gentleman whether he was willing to put that line on the same basis as the other two lines going west, and extend the distance from 100 to 120 miles. The only reason the Minister for Works had given for not doing it was no reason at all; he said that if they increased the distance it would overlap the other lines.

The PREMIER: You cannot alter it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes, we can.

The PREMIER: We cannot increase the distance.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they could increase the distance, and the Minister for Works knew how to do the rest. The hon. gentleman had pointed out to the hon. member for Port Curtis that he could make the railway through to Gladstone, although the £150,000 voted would not do it. If the Premier was willing to extend the distance for that Northern line to 120 miles, the Minister for Works could do just as he was willing to do with the Gladstone line. If the sum was not sufficient, the hon. gentleman could easily ask for a vote to complete it. But it might be enough, because the line went through level country, and ought to be constructed very cheaply.

The PREMIER said that a limitation of 100 miles would not be insisted on, provided there was any of that money available for an extension. But, as a matter of fact, an extension of 100 miles would take the line further west than the other lines. Every part of the Burke district except the north-east would be within 100 miles of a railway; but that arithmetical principle of extending lines ought not to be recognised at all. Extension *pari passu* he entirely agreed with; that had been the policy of the present and previous Governments. But to make it on a purely arithmetical basis was a mistake. At any rate, the estimate could not be altered. Whether it would be desirable to join that line with the Cloncurry line or not was a matter to be determined, and it was not necessary to determine it this year. The best place to stop must be a matter for consideration,

and what they were trying to do was to bring all the districts within a reasonable distance of railway communication.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman need not be afraid of getting too near the Cloncurry line. With that extension of 100 miles they would be 333 miles from Townsville, but the Cloncurry was 500 miles from Townsville, so that there would be nearly 200 miles between the end of the 100 miles' extension proposed and the Cloncurry. The argument the hon. gentleman had used was an argument against the construction of any extension of the line at all—because it was in a better geographical position. The late Government constructed those lines *pro rata*, a mile of one for a mile of the other.

The PREMIER: They put them on the Estimates *pro rata*.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: And the mileage also. The Colonial Treasurer had altered the estimate that night before, and why could he not put a "2" instead of the first cypher and make the extension 120 miles? He believed the amount would be sufficient, but if it was not, the Minister for Works knew how to provide for it.

The PREMIER said the only argument the hon. member used was the arithmetical one. If the hon. member's argument was correct, what they should do was to draw a line parallel with the coast, and when the lines got as far as that line they should stop. That was absurd!

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: That is your argument, not mine.

The PREMIER said that would be a posterous thing to do. What they ought to do was to make railways to open up the country, and they would have done more to open up the Northern country by extending the railway 100 miles, than by extending the railways in the South for that distance.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: You have not done more; you have done less.

The PREMIER said they would have done more when the line was extended 100 miles. If they extended the Southern line 120 miles, it would bring them to the Bulloo, and open up the traffic up and down that river. One hundred and twenty miles' extension on the Central line—whether it would take them to a good temporary stopping place or not, he did not know—would not bring so much traffic as an extension on the Southern line; at any rate the settlement from Hughenden westward was very much more scanty than on the Southern and Western line.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman must surely think him a child when he told him that they had done more to open up that country than they had done to open up the South.

The PREMIER: I said we should have done more when this extension was carried out.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they would not. When the Southern line was carried out to the distance put down—120 miles—they would have constructed 571 miles.

The PREMIER: Yes; but 500 miles is not as much out of 1,000 as 330 is out of 500.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the whole thing was that the people of the northern part of the territory were to be punished because their geographical position was superior to that of the people in the South.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he could not understand why the hon. gentleman was not satisfied

with an extension of 100 miles. He would be quite satisfied with a tenth part of it in the Rosewood district. The hon. member was too rapacious.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he believed himself that the hon. Premier, who was finding fault with that arithmetical making of railways which he said he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) advocated, was himself the author of the system. He propounded that system.

The PREMIER: I know he did.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes; and why did he not stick to it? Because it did not suit him.

The PREMIER: Because the boundaries of the colony are not perfectly square.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Why did he not square them? He was capable of doing everything—why did he not square the colony? He was willing to spend £250,000 upon a railway which, to use the ordinary expression, would not pay to grease the wheels. He was willing to do that, but he was not willing to extend the Northern line for the same distance as the others, although it was paying nearly 8 per cent. That line paid over 7½ per cent., and while the hon. gentleman was not willing to extend it he was willing to build a line that would not pay for the next fifty years—the line from Warwick to St. George. The Minister for Works had boasted several times about his impartiality in framing those Estimates, and treating every district alike. He could tell him of a district which he had neglected entirely, and simply because he was ignorant of its existence. That was the district of the Herbert River, and he had not the slightest doubt the hon. gentleman had statistics in his office to prove that it would pay if a line was constructed there. There was one of the worst harbours on the coast there. The port of entrance was Dungeness, which everybody knew was a byword as a port. The people on the upper river had to have their goods taken up and dropped down in punts and boats to Dungeness. A railway survey had been made there; and from Ingham to Townsville was only sixty-six miles, and the country was as level as the floor of that House throughout. The railway would certainly not cost more than £2,500 a mile to construct. In that district there was a population of nearly 3,000; 2,000 acres of land were under cultivation and there would be 10,000 tons of sugar produced this year, and the people who produced that sugar were taxed to get to Townsville to the extent of 50s. a ton. The hon. gentleman was ignorant of that district; and while the hon. gentleman had put down railways that would not pay he could not have known that that district was in existence or he would have put down a railway for it. The hon. gentleman gave, as an excuse to a deputation that waited on him the other day, that it was now too late, that the Estimates were framed, and that it did not connect with a main line. That was an excuse which the hon. gentleman could easily obviate, because if the line came into Townsville it could easily be connected with a main line. What had the hon. gentleman to say now about his impartiality? He wanted to know something about that new bridge over the Burdekin, for which £40,000 was put down. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would tell him that Mr. Ballard said that bridge was unsafe?

The PREMIER: It does not require Mr. Ballard to tell us that.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not think Mr. Ballard would tell them anything of the kind. The bridge was quite as strong as some of the bridges that had been built specially

for railways. When that bridge was designed, he went to the then Minister for Works, the present Premier, and asked that it might be built strong enough to carry a railway; and that was done, and the bridge was still strong, and would stand for many years. If that bridge was done away with, he could assure the hon. gentleman that it would take a great deal more than £40,000 to erect another in its stead.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not make the estimate.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said a small sum had been submitted so as not to frighten the hon. gentleman. Had the engineer reported that it required a high-level bridge with iron cylinders, the hon. gentleman would have been alarmed at the cost of it. When he brought forward the motion to build that bridge across the Burdekin, the hon. gentleman got an engineer to send an estimate down. It was to be a low-level bridge for road purposes, and he forgot the exact amount.

The PREMIER: The amount was £100,000, and we borrowed it too.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the bridge was actually built for £17,000, and it was still perfectly strong and did not require renewing. It was fooling the Committee to ask for £60,000 to build a railway bridge across the Burdekin.

The PREMIER said he had been over the bridge more than once, and he believed it to be absolutely dangerous. Every man who went across that bridge by train did so at peril of his life.

Mr. NORTON said that on the road from Townsville to that bridge there was a gully, over which a temporary bridge had been erected, with a sudden curve at either end of it. When he was up there he was told that the present Minister for Works was afraid to cross it in the train, but got out on approaching the bridge and rejoined the train at the other side.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They were fooling you.

Mr. BLACK said he entirely endorsed the remarks of the hon. member for Townsville in connection with the vote for Northern railways. It must be apparent to everyone that in framing the estimate no attempt whatever had been made to advance the agricultural industry of the more northern portion of the colony. A line of railway which might have been of very great value to the agricultural selectors in the North had been entirely ignored by the Government—that was, a line from Townsville to the Herbert River. The real agricultural industry of the colony was in the North, and it was capable of enormous development in different directions. He was not referring especially to sugar, for there were innumerable other tropical products which could be successfully grown in the North if farmers had the same facilities for getting their produce to market as they had in the South. Instead of constructing useful lines of that kind, they had on the schedule a number of lines which would be of no practical benefit to the colony, such as the line from Bowen to coalfields which had not yet been discovered, and whose discovery was problematical in the extreme. The people of Bowen were being deceived into the belief that they were going to have a railway for £100,000, whereas he very much feared that in consequence of the non-discovery of a remunerative coalfield they would never get it at all.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, they will.

Mr. BLACK said he hoped they would. If that line had been diverted to the north or to the south it would have been of great benefit to that part of the colony. Had it been taken in the north—it need not necessarily be to Haughton Gap, but it might have gone to the Burdekin, and the land between the Burdekin and Bowen was clearly equal to the land in the southern portion of the colony. Then again it might have been diverted south. It might have been used to connect the town of Bowen with Mackay. He need hardly say that the whole of that land was of exceptional quality. It was land that had been proved to be able to produce a product which would have a sale in the markets of the world. Instead of voting £100,000 for a line to an imaginary coalfield, if it had been diverted to the south to connect Mackay and Bowen it would not only have led to a large agricultural population getting the means of bringing their produce to market, but it would have proved in favour of the chain of coastal communication which they were told was the present policy of the Government. He was sorry that the Government had not recognised the necessity of giving those same facilities to the agricultural population of the North that they had given to the South. The Southern estimates were bristling with branch railways wherever a small population was settled and where the production was not very great; whereas in the North, where the agricultural produce could be reckoned by hundreds of tons to the tens of tons in the South, there was no consideration whatever. There was not one single line that was likely to benefit the agricultural industry in the North, and on those grounds he thought he was justified in calling the attention of the Committee to the fact. He did not blame the Government for the amount of money they had put on the Estimates for Northern railways; but with a very little deliberation and inquiry that amount of money might have been devoted to a very much more useful purpose, and proved very much more satisfactory to the people of the North.

Mr. CHUBB said but for what had fallen from the Minister for Works he should have felt it his duty to oppose most strenuously the proposed railway to the coalfields, for he had very great doubts whether those fields would ever be successfully developed. They might be or they might not. Mr. Jack's report so far was not satisfactory, and he was doubtful of their ultimate development. He would point out that the coalfields were at least eighty miles from port by the nearest route, and Mr. Jack's report was to the effect that before coal was discovered they would have to bore for 1,000 feet. It was doubtful even whether it would pay to carry coal eighty miles to port, especially when they knew that in the southern portion of the colony the shortest distance it had to be carried was from six to seven miles, and the longest ten to fifteen miles. He could not oppose the vote for the reason that the Minister for Works explained, that that railway would not depend upon whether coal was discovered or not. The hon. gentleman said the line was not to stop at the coalfields, but was to be carried into the interior for the purpose of opening up the country. That being so, of course they must accept the line, but he would have liked to have seen the Government retrace their steps in reference to the Haughton Gap line. There was a balance of £150,000 in the Treasury waiting to be spent on that line, and he thought it might have been gone on with. He would like to say a word in answer to the Minister for Works' statement, that the Bowen people would like to have that railway to compete with

another line. That was certainly not the reason. The reason was that they wanted to be connected with the main trunk system from Townsville out west; and as a portion of that coastal line which would one day connect Brisbane with Cooktown, he claimed the support of nearly every member of the Government for the Haughton Gap railway. In the first place the railway was asked for in 1880, when a petition was presented by the late Mr. Beor. A subsequent petition was presented in 1862 by Mr. Cooper, and the money was afterwards voted and raised by loan. That line was not opposed by the gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury benches. The Premier spoke in favour of it, and he (Mr. Chubb) could claim the support of every hon. member on the Government benches for that railway. He could claim the vote of the hon. the Attorney-General, because in a political speech made by him at election time he supported the line. Both he and Mr. Lissner declared that they would vote in favour of it. He could claim the vote of the Minister for Lands on these grounds: He said he would vote for the Springsure railway, because it was authorised by Parliament, and he believed in keeping faith with Parliamentary promises; and lastly, he claimed the vote of the Treasurer, because the line would form part of a coastal system which the Treasurer advocated, and which, he said, would one day extend along the whole seaboard. Of course he could not alter the estimate, and he would not press the matter any further. He was bound to accept the inevitable, and as the line was for the benefit of the district he accepted it, hoping some day to get the other in addition.

Mr. NORTON said it was a great misfortune that the Haughton Gap line had not been provided for. At that time of the evening it would be quite out of place to propose anything serious. They had had an excellent evening's amusement. Though they had voted £7,000,000, they had managed to keep a bare quorum in the House; there was one boy in the gallery who had taken a deep interest in the debate for several hours—he believed the boy had to be there, but anyhow he was there—and there were a few gentlemen in the Ministerial gallery who were also obliged to remain. It was ludicrous that after spending several months on the Estimates squabbling over small sums of money every vote was now put through as a matter of course, until hon. members on the Opposition side saw that it was a farce to object to anything. Almost every piece of information they had asked was refused; and the Minister for Works would not even walk from his place to the Engineer-in-Chief to put a question—he said the Engineer-in-Chief had something better to do; and yet the question asked was as to a shed which had been put upon the railway line less than a month ago, and had already been removed. It was too ludicrous; they had better put all the remaining votes together and pass them in a lump. He regretted that the item, Bowen to Coalfields, was not the last, because it would have been such an appropriate wind-up to the proceedings. He knew it was an excellent coalfield, because Mr. Jack had reported that there was only one vein of coal discovered, and that coal took an immense wood fire to keep it alight.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he should like some information about the Herberton railway.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the survey was being proceeded with; but the country was very rough, as the hon. member must know. He had communicated with Mr. Ballard to endeavour to get plans and sections

for the first section of the line, but Mr. Ballard said it was utterly impossible to prepare them before the House rose.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he presumed that by the first section the hon. member meant from Cairns to some place at the foot of the range.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Then there should be no difficulty about getting the plans and sections. Had it not struck the hon. gentleman that Mr. Ballard had not found a route at all from Cairns to Herberton? If he had found a route to ascend the Main Range, there could be no difficulty about plans and sections; but, of course, if he had not found any route, the first section could not be made, as the first section would depend upon the point of ascent of the range. He believed Mr. Ballard was simply playing with the hon. gentleman. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) knew the country, and he knew Mr. Ballard also. Mr. Ballard would have had no more trouble about making the plans and sections than he would about walking downstairs, and he could have completed such plans and sections as had been laid on the table in a very few weeks. It was months since he had been asked to make the first section; and he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) was certain he had not found a route yet.

Question put.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Has the hon. gentleman made up his mind not to extend the Hughenden line 120 miles?

The PREMIER: It cannot be done.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the line was not going to stop at 100 miles. They had already voted £110,000 to extend a line that had been completed before.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the £110,000 voted for the line from Pine Hill to Jericho and onwards was not to carry the line beyond the 130 miles authorised; it was to complete the 130 miles. He would like to ask the Chairman's ruling whether it was opposed to the Standing Orders to substitute "2" for the first cipher of the 100 miles, leaving the sum of £300,000 still the same?

The PREMIER said he hoped the hon. member would not persist in a matter of that sort. He could not understand why the hon. member should be so persistent, except it was that he wished to arrive at arithmetical symmetry. No money could be voted by the Parliament which had not previously been recommended by the Governor, and the Governor had recommended a vote of £300,000 to provide for 100 miles of railway.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I do not propose to increase the amount.

The PREMIER: It was time for them to recognise that, while accepting the principle that one line should be extended ten miles for another's ten miles, the day might come when one must stop and the other not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman himself was the author of that arithmetical symmetry; the late Government had carried out the principle, but they were not the authors of it. Of course he knew the time would come when one line would have to stop. That line, he supposed, would stop when it got to Cloncurry. He wanted the Chairman's ruling as to whether it could be done. The Premier had told them that it could not be done, but he (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) doubted it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he hoped the hon. gentleman would be satisfied

with the assurance that there was no intention to stop the line at the 100 miles. He submitted that to adopt the hon. gentleman's amendment would involve an increase of the Estimates proportioned to the increased extent of mileage. He did not think the case mentioned by the hon. gentleman at all analogous.

The CHAIRMAN said the figure "2" could not be substituted for the figure "0." They must assume that the vote of £300,000 was for 100 miles, and by adding twenty miles they would add a proportionate amount to the vote.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was quite content to take the Chairman's ruling. It might be assumed that the same sum would not pay for twenty miles more line, but they knew that there were some votes that would do far more work and some less. However, he had another amendment to propose. He thought that, after the exposure the other night of the Bowen Coal Fields, the hon. Minister for Works would not persist in the Bowen Coal Fields railway. The hon. member for Bowen had stated that he would oppose that vote only for the statement made by the Minister for Works that it was his intention to carry the line further. If they looked at the map they would see that the Charters Towers railway ran to the south until it got to a point further south than Bowen. If that railway from the coalfields were continued it would run into the Charters Towers line.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Oh no!

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: If the line were carried into the interior it must be taken to the south to avoid the Charters Towers line. He did not suppose that the Minister for Works would advocate carrying the line into the interior at a less distance than 100 miles from the Charters Towers line; and then it would be actually south of Mackay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, no

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Look at the map. He knew the hon. gentleman did not like to take a railway towards Townsville; he had some insuperable objection to that. They had £150,000 on the Estimates for making a line in that direction towards Townsville from Bowen—that was by Haughton Gap. He did not think it was any use asking for the approval of the Committee to alter the vote so as to make it extend the line towards Townsville. But as there was a chance of the line being made useful if carried to Mackay, he should move that the word "Coalfields" be omitted, with the intention of inserting the word "Mackay."

The PREMIER: You cannot do that.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Yes; it had been done already in the Ipswich station vote, where the words "Bell street" had been omitted. He would take the Speaker's ruling on the point, and would not be satisfied with the Chairman's ruling. If the recommendation of the Governor could be altered in the one case it could be altered in the other.

The PREMIER said that the words of the statute were—

"It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to originate or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the said Consolidated Revenue Fund, or of any other tax or import to any purpose which shall not first have been recommended by a message of the Governor to the said Legislative Assembly during the session in which such vote, resolution, or Bill shall be passed."

Now, the Governor had never recommended the appropriation of any sum of money for a line from Bowen to Mackay.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: But he had recommended the appropriation of a sum of money to make a railway station in Bell street, Ipswich, and Bell street was omitted from the Estimates that night. He referred to what had been done in Committee, and maintained if it was improper now to move that "Coalfields" should be omitted, and "Mackay" substituted because a line from Bowen to Mackay was not recommended, then it was improper to omit "Bell street" after it was recommended. He should not be satisfied with the Chairman's ruling, and should only take the Speaker's on the point.

The CHAIRMAN said he was of opinion that it could not be done.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that before the Chairman gave his ruling he should like to direct his attention to an alteration he had made in one of the estimates that night. There was an item "New Station, Bell street," recommended by the Governor. The Minister for Works had stated that it was quite likely that the new station would not be made in Bell street, but in some other place. Therefore he altered it by the Chairman's authority so as to make it stand simply "New Station." The object was that the new station should be made in Bell street or any other street. The alteration had the effect that the recommendation did not come from the Governor at all. If the Chairman ruled therefore that the railway under discussion could not be altered from Bowen to some other place, then he contradicted himself. The Chairman was quite aware of the fact that he had gone beyond the Governor's recommendation in the amendment he had made in the previous item regarding the new station in Bell street; and that alteration had been made without the slightest remonstrance from himself. He had made there a precedent which he could not depart from now. The hon. member for Townsville proposed to alter "Coalfields" to "Mackay"; that was simply an alteration of site, as was done in the "Bell street" station. It should not be forgotten that the object of the alteration and the omission of "Bell street" was that some other street should be substituted.

The PREMIER said the cases were not parallel. Anyone could see that there was a difference between a mere matter of detail as to whether a railway station was to be at one spot or twenty yards away and the principle as to whether a railway should go into quite another part of the country. The purpose of the omission in the one case was entirely different; in the other case, substantially the same.

Mr. NORTON said it did not make any difference as a matter of principle whether the change was from one site to another, or one place to another.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said a change of site was something more than a matter of detail. As the vote stood now the Minister for Works could fix the site wherever he chose. There might be something in the point that no objection was taken at the time the change was made; but if the Chairman wished to put himself into an inconsistent position—allowing an alteration in one case and not in another—he must put up with the consequences.

Mr. KELLETT said the insertion of "Bell street" in the previous item was nothing but a clerical error. He was informed so by the Minister when he first saw the Estimates.

Mr. NORTON said that if the insertion of "Bell street" was a clerical error they were all clerical errors.

The CHAIRMAN: I find in "Burke's Decisions" that—

"When estimates have been laid on the table of the House, it is quite competent for the House to withhold or to grant any votes; but it is not competent for the House to make any alteration which will change the destination of a vote."

I therefore rule that the amendment cannot be put.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN moved that the Chairman leave the chair, and report the matter to the Speaker.

Question put and passed; and the House resumed.

Mr. FRASER said: Mr. Speaker,—I have to report that while a certain vote was under consideration in committee, the hon. member for Townsville moved that in the item "£100,000 for the railway from Bowen to Coalfields," the word "Coalfields" be omitted, with the view of inserting the word "Mackay." The question was raised as to whether it was competent to do this, and my ruling was asked in the matter. I decided that it was not. My ruling was not disagreed to, Mr. Speaker, but objected to by the hon. member for Townsville.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I said nothing at all about £100,000; I simply referred to the word "Coalfields," showing that it should be omitted, with a view of inserting the word "Mackay."

Mr. FRASER: I merely mentioned the sum of £100,000 to identify the question.

The PREMIER: In this colony we are guided by a rule of law—

"It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to originate or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the said Consolidated Revenue Fund, or of any other tax or import, to any purpose which shall not first have been recommended by a message of the Governor to the said Legislative Assembly during the session in which such vote, resolution, or Bill shall be passed."

His Excellency the Governor has recommended the appropriation of £100,000 for the construction of a line from Bowen to the Coalfields; and the hon. gentleman moved that the purpose to which that £100,000 shall be appropriated shall be changed. The hon. gentleman (Sir T. McILWRAITH) is in the habit of objecting if any two members are conversing if he is speaking, but now, while I am addressing an argument to the Speaker to assist him in giving his ruling, the hon. gentleman certainly offends very much more gravely against the rules. The amendment proposed is to divert a vote to a different purpose. It is proposed that this £100,000 shall be appropriated for the purpose of making a line from Bowen to Mackay—a purpose not recommended by any message from the Governor.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: I beg the hon. member's pardon: I was not aware that I was interrupting him at all. I went to the Speaker for a book, and the hon. member persisted in speaking while the Speaker was giving me some explanation. This ruling of the Chairman was given on the authority of one of Burke's decisions—that it was not competent for the Committee "to make any alteration which will change the destination of a vote." It is not competent for the House to make any alteration which will change the destination of a vote. The alteration that was proposed by the hon. member for Townsville was to change the word "Coalfields" to "Mackay." "Coalfields" is a most indefinite term, and from the authority we have had, it is far more likely that we will find coal at Mackay than in the direction which is proposed, according to Mr. Jack's report. It was shown that there are no coalfields there, they are all burnt out, and it is much

more likely that we will find a coalfield at Mackay; so that as a matter of fact we will come a great deal nearer the recommendation of the Government than by keeping the indefinite word "Coalfields." If we adopt precedents, Mr. Speaker, why not take the precedent of our own Committee. The recommendation of the Government was that the new station at Ipswich shall be built in Bell street. The information from the Minister for Works was that since putting in "Bell street," an alteration had taken place in the opinion of the engineer, and it was quite possible that he would make the station somewhere else. The Government therefore wanted authority to make a station either in Bell street or somewhere else. And with that view they altered the recommendation of the Governor. That is quite as much an alteration of the recommendation of the Governor as is altering the direction of the line in question. I hold that the precedent set for us by the Government should have a great deal more force than a precedent taken from "Burke" about seven years ago. It is all very well for the Premier to come in and get authority to wander about Ipswich and put the railway station where he likes. There is nothing there about a recommendation of the Governor being altered. But whenever a real tangible objection to a particular line is made, he brings in that technical point. If you decide that it is not in form, I would like to know what becomes of the informal amendment we have made before? I should think that ought to go by the board. If you decide that it is illegal to carry the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville, it is quite illegal to have carried the amendment we have.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Before you give your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask you to rule still further. Supposing you rule against the omission of the word "Coalfields" and insertion of "Mackay" as being illegal, or contrary to practice, would it be contrary to practice to insert "Mackay" after "Coalfields," defining thus where the coalfields are, according to the recommendation here? We have not the slightest idea of where the coalfields are; they exist all over Queensland, and all over the world. There are coalfields near Mackay and near Townsville. The only thing we know of the coalfields mentioned in the item is what was said by the Minister for Works, who told us that they were on the Bowen River. The Minister for Works said they were splendid fields; but I read Mr. Jack's report or a portion of it, last night, which showed that very likely there had been coal there many ages ago; but it is all burnt, and it was burnt before Adam was born, so that there are no coalfields there now. I shall also ask your ruling as to whether I can insert the word "Mackay" after the word "Coalfields."

The SPEAKER: There are two distinct points raised. The House at the present time is in Committee of Supply. May observes—

"In Committee of Supply it is irregular to propose any motion or amendment not relating to a grant under consideration, as the Committee may grant or refuse a Supply, or may reduce the amount proposed, but have no other functions."

The Constitution Act provides that—

"Every appropriation must be recommended by a message from the Crown, and the direction of that appropriation is set forth in that message."

In this case the message of the Governor comes with the Estimate in which the particular item referred to by the hon. member for Townsville is set forth—Bowen to Coalfields—and I do not think it is competent for the hon. member to alter the appropriation in the way in which he proposes in his amendment.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: It is no alteration; it is simply adding intelligence to the Governor's recommendation.

Mr. NORTON: The direction of the coal-fields is not known.

The SPEAKER: The practice in England, as laid down in 1843 by Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who is acknowledged to have been an exceedingly good Speaker, and well up in parliamentary practice, is clear here, because, when the question is referred to him he distinctly states:—

"It is not competent for the House to make any alteration which will change the destination of a vote."

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I may point out that if the vote pass as it is now, it would be quite competent for the Government to take that line from Bowen to Mackay; so that we are not changing the destination.

The SPEAKER: I understand the point to which the hon. gentleman alludes. The Committee will clearly understand the ruling I gave. I do not think it is competent for the hon. member to omit the word "Coalfields"; but I can see no objection to the hon. member inserting the word "Mackay."

The PREMIER: That depends upon whether there is a change of meaning.

The SPEAKER: The Committee will clearly understand me; my own impression is that the word "Mackay" can be inserted after the word "Coalfields" because that is not a change in the destination of the vote.

The PREMIER: It is a question of meaning. The word "Mackay" has no meaning in itself. We happen to know where Mackay is and where the Coalfields are. That is a question of fact. If the Coalfields and Mackay are the same place, the insertion of the word "Mackay" would not be a change in the destination of the vote. But most of us happen to know that they are two entirely distinct places, and in two entirely distinct directions. Then the insertion of the word "Mackay" would be changing the direction; so that whether the amendment can be moved or not depends upon whether, as a question of fact, the Coalfields and Mackay are in the same direction. As a matter of fact, we all know that they are not—just as much as we know that Mackay and Rockhampton are more than five miles apart. We have nothing to tell us except our own knowledge. The two places are not identical.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Mr. Speaker,—We are not altering the recommendation of the Governor. The Governor has recommended the appropriation of £100,000 for a line from Bowen to Coalfields. That is not definite enough, and neither the Premier nor the Minister for Works can enlighten us as to the Governor's idea of where the Coalfields are. Can we not define where they are?

The PREMIER: The parliamentary papers explain that.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: No; the parliamentary papers do not explain it. As the vote stands now the Government might make a line from Bowen to Newcastle in England. I think it is quite competent for the Committee to localise the coalfields. The Governor has no doubt read Mr. Jack's report, and he knows that there are no coalfields on the Bowen River. I believe the Governor's intention was much more clearly interpreted by the hon. member for Townsville when he said it was the intention to make the line from Bowen to Mackay than it was by the Ministry. There are no coalfields on the Bowen River. That has been proved by Mr. Jack's report. We do not

know that there are coal-mines at Mackay, but we know that it is possible and probable. I therefore think the amendment is in order.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker,—I hope the hon. member is not serious—that he is not simply trying as a sort of joke to induce you, sir, to give a foolish ruling. I feel it hard to believe that the hon. gentleman is serious. I do not understand the hon. gentleman putting forward—shall I say what he knows is an untenable ground, or that he ought to know to be an untenable ground? I do not know which is the more uncomplimentary to say—that he does know, or that he does not know.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I do not care whether the hon. member is complimentary or not. Anything he says about me goes off me like water off a duck's back. I do not care one straw what he says. But I will tell the hon. member that if he had been attending to his business he would not have set such a bad precedent as he has done to-night when he allowed the vote for the Ipswich station to be altered by the omission of the words "Bell street." That is where he neglected his duty. We know perfectly well that if his contention now is right he did wrong then in allowing the Colonial Treasurer to alter the vote for the station at Ipswich. He did wrong then, and now asks whether the hon. member for Townsville is serious, and raises a question of constitutional law.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I take it, Mr. Speaker, that your ruling is that I can move the insertion of the word "Mackay" after the word "Coalfields."

The PREMIER: I do not understand that to be the ruling. I addressed the Speaker before he gave a ruling.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The vote is at present indefinite, and, according to the Speaker's ruling to remove the indefiniteness I can add the word "Mackay" or "Townsville," or any other place after the word "Coalfields." We know for a positive fact that there are coalfields at Townsville, and that there are possibly coalfields at Mackay; but we know very well that there are none on the Bowen River.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is a coalfield on the Bowen River.

The PREMIER: Oh, they know that; they are only wasting time.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Do not get sulky over it now.

Mr. FOXTON: Here is a map, apparently an official map, on which the coalfields are marked. This map was supplied to hon. members before we went into Committee on the Loan Estimates. It is as clear as possible where the coalfields are, and they are not at Mackay.

Mr. NORTON: I would point out that according to Mr. Jack's report there are no coalfields there at all.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: The real point is this: that if we pass the vote as it stands, the Government will then be authorised to send this line to Mackay. In fact they may make it a duplicate line to Haughton Gap if it were possible for coal to be found there.

The SPEAKER: I should be very sorry indeed to give a foolish decision. I generally endeavour to exercise my common sense and my knowledge of matters of parliamentary practice in giving a decision to the House. I do not think it would be inconsistent with the message from His Excellency to insert the word

"Mackay" after "Coalfields." Neither would it, in my opinion, alter the direction of the vote.

The Committee resumed.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN moved that the word "Mackay" be inserted after the word "fields" in the vote "Bowen to Coalfields."

The PREMIER said: Did the hon. gentleman really wish to press his motion? Was he not satisfied in having induced the Speaker to give a ruling contrary to the law?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: You have no right to say such a thing.

The PREMIER: At any rate we shall take a division on it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said hon. members thought it was somebody on that side snoring, while it was the Premier expressing his disapprobation of the ruling of the Speaker; and now the hon. gentleman asked the hon. member for Townsville whether he wished to press his amendment. Of course the hon. member did. If the Governor had not given them something definite in his message, he (Sir T. McIlwraith) thought the Speaker was right in authorising that Committee to localise the line.

Mr. BLACK said that was a very important matter. He did not really mean that the line from Bowen was not to get on to certain coalfields at the back. It meant that that vote, if the Committee assented to it, would be diverted so as to apply it to some really useful purpose.

The PREMIER: The vote will be struck out.

Mr. BLACK: He would not be at all surprised if the Government were to find some way of striking it out, or that that was what they had long wanted to do. He believed that was what had been attempted by putting down £100,000 for a railway to an imaginary coalfield. He maintained that the Government had never been sincere in that vote. If they were sincere, and wished to benefit Bowen by the expenditure of the money, he maintained that it could be best done by connecting Mackay and Bowen. He would ask the Minister for Works why it was that while every other line in the colony had had a slice out of that £10,000,000 vote, that one solitary line had been left out? It was not left out because it was a bad line, or because there was no settlement there. Perhaps the Premier would give some reason for that neglect.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You do not want half-a-dozen railways going on at once.

Mr. BLACK: No; Mackay did not want half-a-dozen railways going on at once; but when they saw other districts getting railway extension, there was no reason why a district like that, where agricultural settlement had been more rapid than in any district in the colony, with the exception of Ipswich, and where land selection had been more rapid than in any other district; where agricultural produce of greater value had been produced than in any other part of the colony; and where the Customs revenue had kept pace with the agricultural produce—there was no reason, he said, why a district like that should be neglected. He maintained that there was finer agricultural land between the terminus of the present Mackay Railway at Hamilton and Bowen than in any part of the colony. The only thing that was wanted was railway communication to enable the farmers to get their produce to market. The selectors there were languishing for what was actually granted in the south. He only asked

that, instead of taking the line to imaginary coalfields in the south-west, it be diverted a few points to the south. It would not only benefit a proved agricultural district, but also form a portion of the link of the coastal railway which the Government professed to be so anxious to carry out. On those grounds he maintained that even if there was some slight irregularity in the way the vote was moved, the hon. member for Townsville was justified in extending that amount of justice to that particular district to which it was well entitled.

Question—That the word "Mackay" be inserted after the word "fields"—put.

The Committee divided:—

AYES, 6.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Macrossan, Black, Norton, Palmer, and Ferguson.

NOES, 20.

Messrs. Griffith, Dickson, Chubb, Dutton, Rutledge, Midgley, Annear, Sheridan, Jordan, Smyth, Isambert, Miles, Kellett, Buckland, Kates, Bailey, Foxton, Higson, Stevens, and Horwitz.

Question resolved in the negative.

Original question—That £1,625,000 be granted for Northern Railways—put.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Government were now taking upon themselves the responsibility, with the help of their faithful majority, to squander £100,000 to take a railway to a coalfield which did not exist.

The PREMIER: Better move the omission of the item.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I shall not.

The PREMIER: We will take the responsibility.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman had better move the omission of the item. He wished to know from the hon. gentleman what his intention was with regard to the vote to which the asterisk referred at the foot of the Estimates—

"A vote of £150,000 for a railway from Bowen to Haughton Gap was passed in 1882-3, but the approval of the House will be asked to transfer this amount to the line, Bowen to Coalfields."

How was the approval of the House to be asked?

The PREMIER: The amount has been appropriated by Act of Parliament, by a Loan Act, and it can only be altered by an Act of Parliament.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I can give the hon. gentleman my word that he will not get that Act through the House—at all events not this session.

The PREMIER: We do not expect to do it this session.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £90,000 be granted for Survey of Railways—Southern, Central, and Northern divisions of the colony.

Mr. BLACK said he believed that that was a very necessary vote, not only in consequence of the number of big lines that the Government proposed to initiate, but also, he hoped, in view of some future extension at a distant date. It was the intention of the Government to carry out a system of coastal railways, and he would like to ask the Minister for Works whether it would not be advisable to have trial surveys made between the different towns of such railway lines as would be likely to be adopted. He referred, of course, especially to the Northern district, and he would suggest that with a view to future railway communication between the

coast towns, trial surveys might be made between Rockhampton and Mackay, Mackay and Bowen; and—if the Haughton Gap line was not approved of—between Bowen and Townsville, that the land be reserved on each side of the line in order that when the railways were carried out the Government would derive a great benefit from the sale or lease of those lands.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said if the plan of the hon. member was carried out it would effectually level the lines for which provision had been made. There were several surveys in the Southern division being made—the Western extension, the Gympie line, Brisbane to Cleveland, Fassifern branch extension, Laidley branch, Howard to Bundaberg, and Drayton deviation.

Mr. BLACK: We will take all that for granted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was in the Southern division. If he had the opportunity he would be very glad indeed to make the survey the hon. member spoke of, simply to reserve the land for railway purposes. He quite believed in reserving land where lines were likely to go, but he could not well make those surveys at present.

Mr. BLACK said he was very glad to have that satisfactory reply from the Minister, although the hon. gentleman commenced his speech by saying he was not going to do anything of the sort. The last half-dozen words the hon. member used would have been sufficient. There was nothing unreasonable in what he had suggested—that the Government should make trial surveys between the different coast towns and reserve the land.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it would not be very costly to make trial surveys and reserve the land which might be required for railway purposes.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that of course the hon. gentleman knew that the land on the coast was more likely to be taken up by selectors than that in the interior; and as for saying he would have trial surveys made when he had the opportunity, the hon. gentleman would have the opportunity as soon as the vote passed. He would have £90,000 for surveys besides what balance he might have on hand. He would like to ask whether the land along the line from Townsville to Ingham on the Herbert River had been reserved. That line had actually been surveyed, and if the land was not reserved it ought to be; otherwise it would certainly be taken up under the expectation that the Government would make a railway there, as they must do very soon.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said all the land that was any good between Bowen and Townsville was already alienated.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had said nothing about that line. The hon. member had the Burdekin land on the brain. He spoke of the line between Townsville and the Herbert River.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there had been a survey made from Townsville to the Herbert River, and it would not require another survey to reserve the land for railway purposes.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was trying to make the hon. gentleman understand that what he wanted to know was whether the land along that line had been reserved from sale.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not that I am aware of, but I will see that it is reserved.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: We shall never hear any more of it.

Mr. BLACK: Mr. Fraser—

The PREMIER: Are we to get home to-night?

Mr. BLACK said that considering the time they had spent over the Southern railways, he thought he was perfectly justified in getting some small amount of information, if it was procurable, in connection with some of the Northern railways, in which he was more especially interested. He would like to ask the Minister for Works if he could give any sound reason why no provision had been made for railways to facilitate agricultural settlement north of Rockhampton? Did the Ministry consider that there was no such thing as agriculture in the North, or that the Northern agriculture was of less value than the Southern agriculture; or did the Government propose to take it into their consideration at some future time?

The PREMIER said the reason why no additional provision was made for railways in connection with agricultural settlement, north of Rockhampton was that in the opinion of the Government the condition of agriculture north of Rockhampton was not such as to require further railway provision at the present time?

Mr. BLACK said that was a very unsatisfactory and vague reply. He would ask what railway facilities agricultural settlement north of Rockhampton enjoyed at present.

The PREMIER: The railway at Mackay.

Mr. BLACK: There is none there at present.

The PREMIER: It is being built.

Mr. BLACK said that Mackay, as the hon. gentleman had often told him, was not the whole of the North. What about the other places? Did the hon. gentleman mean that there was no agricultural settlement? The bulk of the agricultural settlers who came into Queensland went north, and why should they not have the same facilities for getting their produce to market as those in the South. He was very glad the hon. the Premier had given the reply that he did not consider the North had any agricultural industries that required development.

The PREMIER said that was not what he had said. What he said was plain enough. Might he ask if the hon. member had made up his mind that he would not go home till morning, and that nobody else should go home till morning?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that if they sat there till to-morrow night they would get all the information they wanted—if it were procurable, as the hon. member for Mackay had said. It was very little information they had got since they started the Loan Estimates.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the 1884-5, by way of loan, the sum of £737,000 for Rolling-stock, all Railways. The sum might appear very large, but hon. members would understand that for £206,000 of that amount the Government was already under obligations to contractors in London, besides £60,000 which had been authorised. The vote was little more than £500,000 for actual requirements.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if, when the hon. gentleman said "all railways," he meant all railways already constructed and those still to be constructed under the Loan Estimates.

The PREMIER: Yes.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if they were going to continue still borrowing money for rolling-stock for the open lines of railway? He

thought that surely when a line of railway had been opened for a length of time it ought to provide rolling-stock for itself just the same as any other undertaking. It was not usual to put all rolling-stock on Loan.

The PREMIER: Rolling-stock is capital.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes, it was capital, but it wore out very soon. Anything was capital. A roadside station was capital. He must say that if £205,000 of that sum was already contracted for, and if it meant rolling-stock for all railways at present open and to be constructed under the Loan Estimates, it was a very small vote. They had 1,201 miles open; there were between 300 and 400 miles under construction, and he did not know how many hundred miles had been provided for under the Estimates. But those would certainly bring the total up to between 2,000 and 2,500 miles.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was ample provision made for all.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not think the hon. gentleman knew much about it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You do; that is enough.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1884-5, by way of loan, the sum of £36,000 for additional Railway Telegraph lines, and other works.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Let it slide; it is a very small item.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1884-5, by way of loan, the sum of £583,000 for expenditure on the improvement of Harbours and Rivers. That, he considered, was a very important service, and it had been very carefully gone into in connection with the requirements of the harbours and rivers for the next four and five years. That loan estimate was framed on somewhat different principles from previous loans. Heretofore the principle was to appropriate so much to each port, but the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers had adopted the system of obtaining a vote for the working expenses of all the dredges, to be charged wherever the dredges were working. The provision was intended to cover the working expenses of the present dredges for four years including the current year; for the Maryborough dredge, now building, for three years, and the working expenses of the new dredge for two years from date of completion. That represented, for the present dredges and the two new ones, £120,000. There was a large amount for new plant. Tenders had been accepted for six 200-ton hopper dredges for the Maryborough dredge, and two screw tug-boats to work those dredges; for six 200-ton side barges for the dredge at Rockhampton, and two screw tug-boats to work them. Tenders had likewise been accepted for three 160-ton barges for the dredge "Lynton," at Bundaberg. In addition the engineer had prepared plans and specifications for five 150-ton steam hopper barges—one for the "Octopus," two for the "Groper," and two to be ready for the new dredge which was yet to be ordered. The two steam hopper barges for the "Groper" were intended to replace the "Brisbane" and "Lucy" tug-boats, now nearly worn out; and they were to be constructed in such a manner that they could be used as tow-boats. Two steam launches were to be built each for

the "Octopus" and "Platypus." The "Groper" would require to be provided within the next six or eight months with new boilers; the present ones being worn out in doing good work on the river. The total amount for new dredge plant was £165,000, and that included provision for two additional clam-shell dredges—one of which had been found very useful for working in small rivers and shallow reaches. For new dredge plant for harbours and rivers the balance of votes at present in hand represented £70,000 and the amount put down in the Loan Estimates was £95,000, the difference between the amount in hand and the amount required. The sum of £6,000 was required to complete Auckland Point jetty, for which £12,000 had already been voted. The structure would be completed in two or three months. Then there was a most important item of £60,000 for Mackay Harbour improvements. He regretted that hon. members were not in possession of the report of the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers—(now in the Printing Office)—in which the opinion was expressed that the only mode of effectively improving the port of Mackay would be to construct a basin or dock near the mouth of the Pioneer River so as to allow vessels to float at low water. When the proposed improvements were carried out, the port would be one of the safest and most commodious in the colony. The sum of £4,000 was required to rebuild the Cleveland jetty—a work which was rapidly falling into decay. The engineer was of opinion, however, that it would be better to build a new jetty at Raby Bay. There was an additional sum of £3,000 for the jetty at Thursday Island, the improvements of which were very much required owing to the increase in shipping. For Miscellaneous Services the sum of £65,000 was asked.

Mr. PALMER asked for some information regarding the Thursday Island jetty.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the surveyor was on his way from the Gulf ports, and when he returned he would be in possession of full information regarding the jetty. What had already been done was in pursuance of a request made by the hon. gentleman and others interested, who pointed out the inconvenience resulting from the want of a jetty. The sum of £3,000 was the amount recommended by the engineer: but when the surveyor arrived in Brisbane, if an additional sum was required to enable vessels to find deep water at the jetty, it would be taken out of the miscellaneous vote.

Mr. ARCHER said it looked as if the vote put greater power into the hands of the Minister than had ever been the case before in regard to expenditure. With regard to the sum of £250,000—would the dredges be placed where required? And could the hon. gentleman give any information regarding the "Bremer"?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman knew very well that no Treasurers cared to interfere very much with the recommendation of the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers. They did not care to put dredges to work where he was of opinion they were not required. Again, a certain amount might be apportioned for dredging a northern port and the dredge might be working at another port, the funds for working which were deficient. If that dredge were allowed only to work in that port the work might be stopped while the vote for the improvement of another port remained untouched. The practice was far better as it stood now, the expenditure being charged to a general vote. As soon as the "Platypus" had effected certain improvements in Cleveland Bay she would be removed to Cooktown for a short time, as that harbour

was completely shoaled up, and it was necessary that some relief should be afforded. With regard to the "Bremer" dredge, she would be primarily employed at Stewart's Island Flat, and also to do some cuttings in the Mary River so as to make the channel as straight as possible.

Mr. ARCHER said he could only say with regard to the jetty at Cleveland, for which the sum of £4,000 was proposed, that the Colonial Treasurer was far more generous than he (Mr. Archer) had been in that respect. Could the hon. Treasurer say whether it was proposed to replace the old jetty or build one upon another site?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it would cost very nearly as much to repair the old jetty as to build a new one, and the engineer recommended that a new one should be built in a less exposed position—namely, in Raby Bay, which would be far more convenient.

Mr. NORTON said the present Treasurer and the ex-Treasurer were both more liberal than they ought to be. The Southport people had put up a jetty without any assistance from the Government, except that the Government gave them a few worn-out rails from the Railway Department. The Government had not rendered any assistance on the matter of the Sandgate jetty.

Mr. BLACK said he was glad to find that sum of £10,000 still available for the improvement of the Pioneer River, in addition to the proposed vote. He would like to have some assurance from the Treasurer that the works would really be commenced as soon as the plans could be prepared. It was entirely unnecessary to go at length into the matter, because hon. members had so often heard of the fiasco so frequently repeated in connection with the Mackay harbour and harbour works, either through the inability of the engineer or the want of inclination on the part of the Minister for the time being to carry out the scheme. He was rather inclined to think it was the fault of the Minister. However, time had gone on, and at last they were told that a proper scheme had been devised, and it had taken the shape of a sort of dock or basin in which vessels could lie. He was perfectly satisfied to accept that scheme, but would like some assurance that the work would be gone on with without delay. There were two new dredges being built, and the report of the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers included a scheme of dredging up to that dock. He would ask the Colonial Treasurer, before he apportioned the whole of those dredges and all the other dredging plant of the colony north and south of Mackay, to give some promise that one of the dredges should be sent to Mackay to commence the work, which, in any case, would be of very great importance to Mackay. There were only two or three bars that seriously impeded navigation, and if they were removed ships could get up and down with very much greater facilities than at present.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman would bear him out in saying that when the matter was discussed last January he gave no assurance whatever of doing anything for the Pioneer River until the engineer had made better recommendations. That officer was now much more confident of that proposed scheme, and upon his reporting satisfactorily there would be no time lost in getting to work. He certainly would not commit the country to any undertaking where the engineer did not assure him that the results would be satisfactory. With regard to the dredge, he could hardly make any promise at present. The dredges the Government

possessed, and those which were being built, were of that character that they would be lying high and dry in the river half their time. A smaller dredge as soon as could be arranged would be sent to work inwards to the basin, and might do some good work.

Mr. BLACK said he understood the Treasurer to say that he would proceed with the work if the engineer would assure him that it would be effective. He had assumed that that stage was entirely passed. There was still doubt about it, and the scheme was yet in embryo.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if the hon. gentleman would refer to the report of the Engineer of Harbours and Rivers, which would be in his hands in a day or two, he would see that the scheme had been fully considered. The work would be proceeded with as soon as possible.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman had referred to a "basin" at the mouth of the Pioneer River. The hon. member for Mackay called it a "dock." There was a slight difference between a basin and a dock. Did the hon. gentleman mean that it was simply a basin scooped out of the sand? If it were to be a dock it would require walls and a gate, and would certainly be much more expensive than the vote would warrant.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had used the expression "basin" because the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers had used it. It was a dock with gates, which would enable a vessel to float when the river was dry. He could not say whether the amount on the estimate would be sufficient, because he had no plans. This would be a vote on account.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to ascertain upon what plan that £100,000 for harbour improvements at Townsville was to be spent? They had had a great many plans at different times.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was intended to extend the breakwater, so that with Magazine Island it would form a harbour 100 acres in extent, with minimum depth of 6 feet at low water. Of course, that depth would be increased by the working of the dredge.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the basin would be required to be dredged out, of course. Would the work be carried out on the existing plan?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Is it expected that this £100,000 will cover all the expense, or is it simply a vote on account?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is supposed to cover it amply.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Will it be necessary to wait for plans before the work is begun?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No. I understand the plans are being worked upon at the present time. The scheme that has been carried out for some time will be continued.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Perhaps the hon. gentleman can give me some idea when the work will be commenced?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that what was known as Fountain's Breakwater was being carried out now with the limited funds at the disposal of the department, some £7,000 or £8,000. As soon as that vote was passed, tenders would be called for the extension of the Magazine Island jetty by contract.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted, by way of loan, the sum of £10,000, to defray the expenses in connection with Lighthouses. That was not a large amount, and he was glad to say that a larger amount was not required, as it showed that their coast was well lighted. But some small works were necessary at Bay Rock, Cleveland Bay; Grassy Hill, Cooktown; and the anchorage at Thursday Island.

Mr. NORTON said the people at Cooktown were anxious to see a monument erected to Captain Cook, and he thought the Government could appropriate £1,000 of that vote for a superior light on North Shore that would answer the purpose and would satisfy the residents of Cooktown. Would the hon. gentleman expend a portion of that vote in the way suggested?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could not give the hon. member an exact answer. He did not know how far that vote would serve, but he very much questioned whether there would be a large margin after providing for the first three lights—namely, Bay Rock, Grassy Hill, and Goode Island. "Other lights" were put down so that in case there should be any surplus it might be appropriated for other lighthouses where some expenditure might be found necessary.

Mr. NORTON said he would suggest that if there were a surplus of £1,000 it might be devoted to the purpose he had indicated. At any rate he would ask the hon. gentleman to take the matter into consideration, in the event of there not being a surplus.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said if there was a sufficient surplus, and the Portmaster was of opinion that a light was required at the place mentioned by the hon. gentleman, he would have no objection to applying it in that way; but it must be understood that he must accept the opinion of the Portmaster.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted, by way of loan, a sum of £485,000 for defraying the expenses of Buildings, and said that was an important item dealing with several new works of a public character which he thought were much required. The Government had it in contemplation at one time to ask the Committee to vote a sum for a new Government House, but they afterwards thought that the money which would be required for such an undertaking was more urgently required at the present time for the public works of the colony. They had, therefore, contented themselves with putting on those Estimates a sum of £10,000 to provide for additions to Government House; such additions as were absolutely necessary to a mansion which was understood to afford accommodation to the public on certain occasions. He thought hon. members would agree that, however desirable it might be to build a new Government House, considering the sum that would run into, and the fact that the wants of the colony were so many, they had done wisely in reserving their borrowing powers for reproductive works. Then they came to the item of £180,000 which was to be applied to building public offices in Treasury Square. The erection of a portion of those buildings had been commenced at the corner of Queen and William streets, where the offices of the Colonial Secretary would be situated. It was intended to remove the Lithograph Office and carry the buildings round the square, so that they would have the whole of the public offices in one block. There was an item of £20,000 set down for additions to Parliament Buildings. Hon. members would

remember the discussion that took place recently on that question. The Government proposed, instead of carrying out the plans recommended by the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, to expend £20,000 in providing additional accommodation. That accommodation, he took it, would be new refreshment rooms, which would provide for the convenience of hon. members; and also for the safety of the main buildings, as the present buildings at the rear would then be removed. Then there was a vote in which he was very much interested, and that was for a new Custom House, £30,000. If they considered the trade of the port and the antediluvian character of the tenement now occupied, he thought it would be admitted that they ought to put up a building worthy of the port, and also to afford more accommodation for the public business. Then it was proposed to spend £20,000 for a Government Printing and Lithographic Office, which would be put under the care of the Government Printer. It was intended to form a block of buildings extending from William street to George street. The sum of £5,000 was to be spent in the completion of the tower and clock of the Brisbane Post and Telegraph Offices, and £4,000 for Post and Telegraph Offices at Fortitude Valley. The site was in Brunswick street, adjacent to the wooden building at present used for that purpose. Then there was £20,000 to defray the expenses of Immigration Barracks to be erected on land recently purchased by the Government at Kangaroo Point, which was considered very suitable for the purpose. The sum of £10,000 was put down for additions to the Gaol, and £40,000 for a Public Library and Museum. The site of that building had not yet been determined upon; but it was a matter to which the Government would give a great amount of consideration. No doubt hon. members would express their opinion as to where the site ought to be. Unquestionably, with the advancement the colony had made, no member of the House would grudge the expense. The penal establishment at St. Helena was in a very dangerous and unsafe condition. It was a wooden building, and it was intended to build a new one at a cost of £35,000. It had now become a large gaol, and as such, having a great number of inmates, it ought not only to be a secure place of custody, but ought to be constructed of such material that there would be no apprehension of any danger from fire. Then there was £4,000 additional for the Rockhampton Supreme Court; £7,000 additional for the Townsville Post Office; and £100,000 for other buildings. The latter was intended to be spent in small buildings, such as police offices, and others; and also repairs to buildings. It would be impossible at the present time to enumerate the various ways in which the money would be spent; but he might say, that it was not the intention of the Government to apply any of the vote to the erection of any buildings of magnitude. It was to be a contingent reserve to provide for small buildings. That was not a new item. If hon. members turned to the Loan Estimates of 1879, they would find precisely the same item, although not to the same extent, because the Loan Estimates were not so large. The vote was initiated then, and had been very useful. It was deemed wiser to have a miscellaneous service to which small buildings could be charged.

Mr. NORTON said that as there was a sum of £40,000 for a Library and Museum, he would like to ask the hon. gentleman what was to be done with the present Museum building. Why could it not be turned into a Library? It appeared to be in good condition and would make an excellent building for that purpose. If that were done they would not want so much as £40,000 for a

museum. That vote was altogether very extraordinary. There was £347,000 for Brisbane alone, and for other parts of the colony, £11,000. There was £100,000 for Miscellaneous Services, and half of that amount would be devoted to Brisbane.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said some hon. members were always under an apprehension of the aggrandisement of Brisbane, simply because from time to time money was voted for public buildings which were necessarily situated there. He thought that it was an element in their discussion on the Estimates which it was about time they stopped introducing. They ought to regard the seat of government as a place where from time to time they must necessarily provide large accommodation for the public business. That item, so far as Brisbane was concerned, entirely derived its importance from the fact that the Public Offices, Parliamentary Buildings, Government House, and Custom House all happened to be in Brisbane; it was simply the accident of Brisbane being the capital. In every country in the world the requirements of the seat of government were studied. With regard to the Library and Museum, the present building was not capable of extension, and he did not think the Government would view with favour any proposal for doing that, so as to afford accommodation for a public library. He would like to see the Library and Museum in a central position, where it would be accessible to the public, and where it could be extended if required. He would also like to see an art gallery; but that would mean great expense, and it was a little beyond their means at present.

Mr NORTON said that in such a big loan as that, while they were about it they might as well have put down half-a-million for an art gallery. With regard to the present building, it need not necessarily be extended to be utilised for a library. It was in a central place and in a quiet street; and it was a building that would have to be used for some purpose. It was absurd to have a building and not know what they were going to do with it; and it would make a first-class library. He thought it was rather soon to go in for a library and museum for Brisbane. They should wait for a revival of the prosperity which seemed to have departed at present. Queensland was not in the flourishing condition now that it was in some years ago. They had passed through a terrible drought, and there was depression in the squatting industry and in the sugar industry, and other businesses were also affected. He did not believe in that enormous loan; still, on his side of the House they could do nothing but object. They were bested division after division by the majority against them. The Government would have to take the responsibility; he washed his hands of it. What was wanted, he supposed, was to expend the £40,000 on a joint building. But what was to become of the present building? Surely it was not a "white elephant," and they could find some use for it! The hon. member said it was a mistake to introduce a discussion upon the relative proportion of the expenditure in Brisbane and other places. But he had not introduced it. The item itself introduced it. There was £347,000 set down for Brisbane, and only £11,000 for places outside Brisbane. He did not object to Brisbane getting more than a proportionate share of the expenditure, but when it came to an enormous disproportion like that it was time to call attention to it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he presumed the vote of £40,000 for a public museum and library was put on the Estimates on the recommendation of the trustees of the Museum.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he knew the trustees did make a recommendation, and they made it in quite sufficient time for the Treasurer to consider it on those Estimates. Whether it came before the hon. gentleman or not he did not know, but it had been sent to the Colonial Secretary. The recommendation which they made was that the present building should be used as a library, and as it was already much too small owing to the number of additions to the Museum every year, it was time to begin the building of a museum which would be large enough for the future requirements of the colony, so that in the course of three or four years it might be finished, when the contents of the present Museum could be removed, and the present building made into a public library. He believed it would make a very good building for a public library if it was necessary to have one. It was not well fitted for the purpose for which it was built; the site was badly chosen for a museum, as the building could not be extended. It would not do to have a library in a street where the readers of books would be annoyed by the noise of vehicles passing up and down. He had no objection whatever to the vote, as he believed a public library would be of great use, not only to Brisbane, but to the whole colony. It could be utilised for the whole colony as well as for Brisbane, as was the case with the Public Library at Melbourne. The books of the Public Library at Melbourne were distributed to the different libraries in Victoria. A number of books were circulated to each library, and when those were returned another lot were circulated. The library here could be conducted in the same way. He agreed with the hon. member for Port Curtis, that taking the whole vote the item for Brisbane was a very large one. But he would point out that there was nothing whatever on the vote for Ipswich. He did not know where the members for Ipswich could have been when the Treasurer framed the estimate.

Mr. NORTON: They will take it out of the £100,000 for other buildings.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was afraid they would have their share. £100,000 was a very large sum to leave in the hands of the Treasurer, when they considered the sums left in the hands of the Minister for Works. The Minister for Works had got £300,000 or £400,000 to spend as he liked, for station buildings and other matters. However, he was an economical Minister for Works, and he was therefore not so much inclined to object to it. About those additions to Government House, were they really necessary? The amount set down for the penal establishment at St. Helena seemed to him uncalled for. He saw no difficulty about the building at St. Helena being retained for many years. The danger from fire to which the Colonial Treasurer had alluded as a reason for passing the vote, existed in the case of all wooden buildings; and most of the buildings in the colony were wooden buildings. Then, as to the safety, if the prisoners got out of the building they could not get away. The sea was the safety of the place. He did not think that £35,000 for the penal establishment at St. Helena was at all necessary. At present he believed it was not more than three parts full, though, of course, it would be better if it was only half full; still it could not be said that the place was overcrowded. There was also a sum of £10,000 set down for additions to the gaol; and it seemed to him that £45,000 was a very large amount for their penal establishments. It was no use trying to make any alteration in the

items. He would like the Colonial Treasurer to consider the advisability of turning the present Museum building into a library, and, when they started a public library, let it be a library only and not connected with the Museum.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Government had duly weighed the matter, though he certainly deemed it only judicious to consider whether the present building was not suitable for a library. A library was not only a place in which books should be arranged, but there was room needed for reading.

Mr. ARCHER: There is plenty of room there. The upper room would make a fine reading-room.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was nothing to the accommodation of the public libraries at home.

Mr. ARCHER: We must cut our coat according to our cloth.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if the site could be extended he quite agreed with hon. gentlemen. It would be of little use to establish a public library in a building which in a very short time would be too small to accommodate readers. However, no site had been definitely fixed upon, and doubtless the recommendations of the trustees and the opinions of hon. members would receive all due consideration. With regard to St. Helena, the present building was merely a stockade, and not a gaol in any true sense of the term. It was a matter to which the Colonial Secretary had paid great attention, and unless the building were really required the item would never have appeared on the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £100,000 be granted by way of loan for Bridges on Main Roads.

Mr. NORTON said the item was a very objectionable one, not in itself, but from the fact that the Minister for Works who had the spending of it was so easily "got at" on a previous occasion. No doubt the hon. gentleman intended to spend it in a proper and economical manner; but there was a danger that when the pressure was put on he would not distribute it so well as he might do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the Government had already promised to build bridges over the Pioneer River, Ross's Creek, the Endeavour River, and the Annan River. For that purpose £30,000 was voted last year, but the bridge over the Pioneer River would take £20,000 of that amount. Divisional boards were not able to undertake bridges of any magnitude; their revenue would not afford it. He would promise hon. members, however, that if they would allow the vote to pass—

Mr. NORTON: We cannot help it.

Mr. ARCHER: What is the use of twitting us in that way?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He would take care that it was judiciously expended. He did not care about having anything to do with the distributing of the vote, for it would be a very troublesome task.

Mr. NORTON said he should like to have a good share of the vote for his district. He wanted bridges over the Bowen River and Baffle Creek, and they might be built in such a way that they would do for railway bridges as well.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he could not make any such promise. Every application would have to be fully inquired into before it was granted.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the only objectionable feature about the vote was that it left the matter entirely in the hands of the Minister for Works. The bridges mentioned by the hon. gentleman had been voted by the House. It would not be a bad thing if the Government every session printed a schedule of the bridges they intended to construct. Then the House could pass them, and then it would relieve the hon. gentleman of the disagreeable responsibility of selecting the bridges to be built. The bridges now being made would be quite enough between now and next session. The hon. gentleman could then give a schedule of the bridges, application for which had been made up to that time.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £250,000 be granted by way of loan for Electric Telegraph construction. All the proposed lines were of that character that they brought the remoter parts of the colony into closer communication with the coast towns.

Mr. PALMER asked if the report on the telegraph survey between Palmer and Thursday Island had been laid on the table of the House?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could not give the hon. gentleman the information he required. The papers might have been laid on the table during the session.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum of £500,000 be granted for Loans to Local Bodies. Hon. members were aware that that sum was reproductive, being lent to public bodies at 5 per cent. interest under the Public Works Loans Act. The item also included £6,000 each to the Girls' and Boys' Grammar Schools, Brisbane, to be lent under the security of the endowments and subject to the payment of interest.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum of £250,000 be granted for Water Supply and Storage. That was a very important vote, and one which hon. gentlemen would feel interested in. It was intended by Government, notwithstanding the breaking up of the drought, to take steps to prevent as far as possible the disastrous results of droughts in the future.

Mr. PALMER said he would not delay the Committee, as he was getting full of the business. He would suggest to the Treasurer that the present was the very best time to proceed with water storage operations, and sinking was the only means by which a permanent supply could be obtained.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Government had ordered an Australian water-auger from Melbourne. The Government also hoped to be able to obtain men who understood the working of the machine thoroughly.

Mr. NORTON: What was the cost of the machine?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: £1,100, without the engine.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: How deep will it bore?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: 1,000 feet.

Mr. NORTON asked if the whole of the money would be expended in boring?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Hydraulic Engineer was in favour of boring, but he did not go altogether against dam-making.

Mr. BLACK said he was happy to be able to support the vote, and he looked upon it as

probably the most useful in the Estimates. It was not necessary to say a great deal on the advantages of water storage, for everyone knew the frightful losses that had been sustained by the various industries through the failure of water supply. The Treasurer said the Government were getting boring machines from Melbourne; but he regretted very much that energetic steps were not taken to obtain the very best American machines. Water conservation was no new thing in that country, and if they would also import skilled labour to work the machines, which he was afraid they could not obtain in the colonies, great advantages were likely to ensue from their efforts. He had had some experience of water-boring machines. He had tried the Tiffin borer, the Victorian Tiffin, and the Wright and Edwards auger, one of which was in the Harbours and Rivers Department, ready to be let to any local body foolish enough to hire it. He looked upon that machine as a perfect toy, and as being perfectly useless, as it would only bore to a depth of eighty feet, and would not penetrate rock. The proper policy would be to get good machines and skilled labour to work them, and he hoped the Government would take the matter into their serious consideration, because although the expenditure would have to be spread over about five years, the money could not be more judiciously expended than in the way he mentioned. He should not say any more, because he believed the Government had a sincere desire to do their best to ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants in the interior as far as water supply was concerned; and he believed the Hydraulic Engineer was thoroughly competent to carry out the scheme if he were allowed the best apparatus. He did not believe in the colonial apparatus; he had seen it break down over and over again; and the American apparatus that had been used the colony was not adequate for sinking the great depth required. They must have the very best machinery of very great power; they must commence with a bore of ten or twelve inches, and tube every foot of the way; then reduce the bore when they came to rock. That required very expensive apparatus, which he did not believe could be got for the sum mentioned. As this was the last important night of the session, he again entered his protest against the extraordinary way in which the Government had forced seven millions of money through the Committee in one sitting, and with so little deliberation. He was certain that the country would be aghast when they read the report of the proceedings, and that the members who sat silent for the sake of getting a little temporary relief from the labours of the session would be accused of having failed in their duty. He, himself, had criticised the Estimates, not for the sake of delaying the proceedings, but because he considered it his duty. He did not think Queensland, or any other colony could point to proceedings in Parliament where seven millions of money had been voted away in about as many hours with so little discussion. The Estimates should have been brought down and discussed a month ago at least. The House had not had an opportunity of expressing its opinion on those Estimates.

Mr. KELLETT: Who is the cause of that—blocking the Land Bill?

Mr. BLACK said that, with regard to the Land Bill, he would point to the case of New South Wales, where they took twelve months to put through their Land Bill. He did not think the other side of the House, with an enormous majority, could complain of any unneces-

sary delay. In such important matters hon. members, even if they were in the majority, should be prepared to accept fair criticism; and he maintained that nothing but fair criticism had been exercised towards the measures the Government had got through during this session. He did not suppose that in any previous session so much important business had been transacted. But for the extraordinary ability of the Premier of the House that business would not have been got through. Although it had been his duty on many occasions to differ from that hon. gentleman, he might say that for ability—unassisted ability in the majority of instances—he had never met anyone to compare with the Premier of Queensland; and although he should continue to differ with the Premier on many subjects, he hoped that the colony would long have the benefit of the great ability, zeal, and perseverance that hon. gentleman possessed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was very gratified at the very kind manner and the very good taste in which the hon. gentleman had spoken concerning the Premier, especially as that hon. gentleman had been absent during the latter part of the evening through fatigue. It was a generous expression on the part of one who usually criticised adversely his hon. colleague. He was sure they all felt that that gentleman was one of whom the colony might well be proud. With regard to their action that evening in dealing with the Estimates, he did not entertain any apprehension. The hon. gentleman who had just sat down had involuntarily admitted that the Estimates must be good, inasmuch as they had been framed under the advice of the Premier, of whom the hon. gentleman had spoken in such deservedly eulogistic terms. He considered that hon. gentlemen, who had sat so patiently up to that late hour passing those Estimates, deserved the thanks of the country; for he believed that the passing of those Estimates would do more to advance the greatness of the colony than almost any other financial operation that been attempted in Queensland since it had had an independent existence. He agreed with the hon. member that the session had been a most fruitful one; and instead of the country regarding their actions with apprehension, he believed it would be admitted that the Parliament had conferred on the country benefits which would be felt for a considerable period. With regard to what the hon. member had said in reference to water supply, the hon. member had hit the right nail on the head as to the defects of the system in the matter of plant, and men to work that plant; and he was glad to say that those defects had been remedied. Government had been in communication with some American borers who had had experience in California, to discover on what terms they would come here and attend to boring in different parts of the colony; and he trusted some satisfactory conclusion would be arrived at when they heard from those men.

Mr. JORDAN said he had been informed that there was a boring apparatus that had been invented in the colony, and which he had heard described as better than either the diamond drill or any other existing apparatus. The inventor was Mr. Fawcner, who had taken out a patent for it. He had been disappointed that they had nothing of a system of water conservancy and water supply for the whole colony, or of a Bill to empower the Government to establish water-trusts throughout the colony. He hoped the Government had some such measure in contemplation for next session.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the business had been so engrossing that the

Government had not had time to consider that matter. But if a measure of that kind were necessary it was possible the Government would see their way to introduce it. Meantime the wants of divisional boards would be attended to.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said an omission has been made in the statement of the hon. gentleman, in regard to the water supply and storage, which he hoped was inadvertent. He trusted the hon. gentleman did not intend to bore for water wherever he pleased on private property, as well as on public lands.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Government would not sanction boring except on public reserves.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the year 1884-85, by way of loan, a sum not exceeding £100,000 for the Defence of the Colony. He was not able to give the Committee very much information on this head. It was deemed proper, in framing the Loan Estimates, that some provision should be made for the defence of the colony; but the precise manner in which that money was to be expended he was not prepared to mention. Doubtless the Colonial Secretary would inform Parliament as to how it was to be expended before it came to be paid away.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he supposed the only way in which it could be expended was in buying war material, for the Volunteer Force was to be paid from the vote already passed.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1884-5, by way of loan, the sum of £35,000 to defray the difference between the amount voted and amount received on loans of 1881, 1882, and 1884. That was an unprecedentedly small amount of deficiency, and he trusted the sale of the present loan would be achieved under much more favourable circumstances.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES No. 1, 1884-5.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the year 1884-5, a further sum of £40 for the Legislative Assembly. That sum was an addition to the salaries in the Estimates-in-Chief, and was devoted to the two messengers referred to when the Estimates were formerly before the Committee.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1884-5, the sum of £6,243 to defray expenses of the Colonial Secretary's Department. That sum included the compensation to Mr. Clarkson for loss through non-delivery of title-deeds, obtained on the motion of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley; additions to the salaries of clerks of petty sessions, and Colonial Stores, omitted from the Estimates-in-Chief; the provision intended for the Defence Force; expenses of gunboat "Gayundah"; addition to the salaries of medical officers and of the secretary of Central Board of Health; and votes for Schools of Arts.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £66 be granted for Inspector of Orphanages.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £1,740 be granted for the Colonial Treasurer's Department. Provision was made for the steamer "Pippo," which had been removed from Rockhampton; for a junior clerk in the Harbour Master's Office, whose salary was omitted from the Estimates-in-Chief; for lighting North Channel, Moreton Bay, necessitated through the altered arrangements of the port in connection with the pile lighthouse in the place of the lightship; and lighting Hinchinbrook Bar and Mourilyan Harbour. The old lightship at Moreton Bay had been refitted and sent to the Norman River, and provision was asked for the salaries of the lightkeepers; also for the expenses in connection with the powder magazine at Cairns.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £1,250 be granted for the Department of Public Lands. The vote provided for the salary of the Commissioner at Mourilyan, omitted from the Estimates-in-Chief; also the salaries of two bailiffs and rangers of Crown lands, likewise referred to when the Estimates were under consideration. There was a sum of £350 for the reserve at Charters Towers, which had been promised; and a sum of £100 for the Board of Inquiry into the Diseases of Animals and Plants.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked whether £350 was the sum promised for the reserve at Charters Towers?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was based on the amount granted to Gympie.

Mr. CHUBB said that when the Estimates-in-Chief were under discussion it was explained that the item for the Bowen Reserve had been omitted by a blunder, and the Minister for Lands promised to place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates. He should like to have an assurance now that it would be available.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the promise should be fulfilled. Executive sanction would be given for the payment of the money, which would be placed on the additional Supplementary Estimates, which would not be brought down till next session.

Mr. PALMER said that unless some other towns in the North received as much consideration as the towns in the South in regard to reserves, the Minister for Lands would hear from him, at all events, next session. Hughenden, though not possessing so large a population, was quite as well entitled to a grant as Charters Towers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said a promise had been given to the hon. member for Kennedy (Mr. Lissner) in regard to the reserve at Charters Towers, but he had resisted items of that kind ever since.

Mr. PALMER said he hoped that in future the hon. gentleman would treat all places alike.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Minister for Lands received fair warning what would be the result next session if he failed to deal with all reserves alike.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £6,243 be granted for the Department of Public Works. That was to provide for buildings now in course of construction.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a sum of £100 be granted as an allowance to the widow of the late J. Griffiths (annual). Hon. gentlemen would no doubt approve of the form in which the money was put down—as one annual allowance instead of a lump sum.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not suppose a single member would object to the vote, but he would ask whether it was to be granted unconditionally? What was to be done if she remarried?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the advantage of the system was that the Committee would in future be able to consider her altered circumstances if she changed her condition.

Mr. FOXTON said he did not agree with the hon. member for Townsville. Suppose she were to die next year? He believed there was a family of eight or nine children—young ones, too. As the Treasurer said, they could always consider the vote when it came before them, and under the circumstances he thought it was only just and fair to pass the vote.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman said he disagreed with the hon. member for Townsville. Did he disagree with his asking a question? He simply asked the hon. Colonial Treasurer what he would do if Mrs. Griffiths married again.

Mr. FOXTON said the hon. gentleman suggested the possibility of Mrs. Griffiths remarrying, and he (Mr. Foxton) said, suppose she died; and then the hon. member said the annuity would end.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he suggested nothing. What the hon. gentleman imagined was drawn out of his inner consciousness. He simply asked if the vote was to be granted unconditionally. The hon. gentleman did not seem to understand him. He was satisfied with the answer he received.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £100 be voted for the assistant inspector and clerk, at Ingham, in connection with Pacific Immigration, six months.

Mr. CHUBB asked who was the officer?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I cannot answer at the present moment.

Mr. CHUBB said he would like to know whether it was the gentleman who, a short time ago, when a number of islanders were engaged, and there was no interpreter present, was able to certify that they understood their agreements.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions agreed to in Committee of Supply, and the same were read by the Clerk.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the report was adopted, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

WAYS AND MEANS—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

That there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1884-5 a sum not exceeding £2,980,000, to be raised by way of debentures or the creation and sale of inscribed stock, secured upon the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, bearing interest at a rate not exceeding 4 per cent per annum, to defray the expenses of immigration and other public works and the deficit on previous loans.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported the resolution to the House, and obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

The resolution was adopted, and read by the Clerk.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a Bill be introduced founded on the resolution.

Question put and passed.

LOAN BILL.

The COLONIAL TREASURER presented the Bill, which passed through all its stages and was ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in moving the adjournment, said he hoped hon. members would attend on Monday, as it was necessary to make a House, not only to pass the Appropriation Bill, but also to receive the return Bills from the Council.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Can the hon. gentleman tell us what the Government intend to do with the Queensland Spirits Duty Bill?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The Premier will be in his place on Monday next, and will announce the determination of the Government respecting it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: That was one of the Bills which the Colonial Secretary said should be passed along with the Officials in Parliament Bill. Of course, if the hon. gentleman does not intend to go on with it this morning, there is no chance of it being passed afterwards.

The House adjourned at nine minutes past 4 o'clock a.m.