

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 15 JULY 1885

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 15 July, 1885.

Motion for Adjournment.—Questions.—Formal Motions.
—Crown Lands Act of 1884 Amendment Bill.—
Elections and Qualifications Committee.—Police
Officers Relief Bill.—committee.—Members Expenses
Bill.—committee.—Local Government Act of 1878
Amendment Bill.—New Guinea Islanders Employers
Compensation Bill.—committee. Additional Members
Bill.—committee.—Adjournment.

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

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I
regret very much, except for one reason, that I
was not able to be in my place last night when

the Premier read a letter which he had received
from Mr. Gordon, the Chief Inspector of Stock.
The reason why, to a certain extent, I do not
regret it is that I could not last night have laid
my hands on the interim report, to which I have
before referred as being incorrect and misleading.
I have now got that report, and will read portions
of it to the House after having commented upon
the letter written by Mr. Gordon and read to
hon. members by the Premier. In that letter
Mr. Gordon says:—

“The history of the whole transaction is that, *unsolici-
tated by anyone*, I deemed it advisable in the interests
of the colony generally, and as a reply to the many
inquiries made of me as to our probable losses in sheep,
to submit a preliminary or interim return on the 2nd
May last, of the number of sheep, as at 1st January,
returned up to that date.”

The next paragraph reads as follows:—

“My principal reason for doing so was that the
hon. the Colonial Treasurer had casually in the street
directed my attention to a report that had been circu-
lated in England, to the effect that our losses amounted
to more sheep than we actually had in the colony. This
interim return I recommend should be published in the
Press.”

Now, I think if words mean anything that would
certainly indicate that Mr. Gordon would not
have issued his interim report had he not, as he
says, casually met the Colonial Treasurer in the
street, who called his attention to a certain report.
I consider that Mr. Gordon would have been fail-
ing in his duty as a Government official had he
not immediately inquired into the matter and
published his interim report. He was incited to
that by the Colonial Treasurer. Therefore we
can hardly call it a report made without solici-
tation, for although we know that a Minister does
not usually solicit an officer to do what he
desires, the hint given by the Colonial Treasurer
was quite enough to set him to work on the
report, and I think that contention is borne out
by the last paragraph in Mr. Gordon's annual
report where he says:—

“It having been brought under my notice”—

He had evidently not found it out by himself.

“It having been brought under my notice that our
losses in sheep had been grossly exaggerated in Eng-
land—that a report had been circulated to the effect
that they amounted to more than the total number of
sheep actually in the colony—I deemed it advisable to
follow the example of a neighbouring colony, and
submit an interim return of sheep in April last for
publication.”

According to the letter which I have read, it was
brought under his notice by a Minister, who was,
however, not his departmental superior. Mr.
Gordon does not mention that in his report, but
that is the inference from the letter from which
I have quoted. Now, with respect to this interim
report, I use every word with regard to it that I
used before—it is incorrect, inaccurate, and mis-
leading. It mixes up, so as to bear out every one of
those epithets, the word “decrease” with the word
“losses.” No one disputes that the figures given
in that document, so far as the information was
in his possession at that time, are a correct and
accurate statement of what particulars he had in
his possession, subject, as he himself said, to a
few returns to come in which would not materi-
ally alter his figures. But the gravamen of the
charge which I have laid against Mr. Gordon,
and which I shall continue to lay against him
until it is disproved, lies here in the letter dated
Brisbane, 2nd May, 1885. In that letter he
says:—

“I have the honour to forward herewith preliminary
return of sheep on which assessment was paid as at 1st
January last, showing the increase or decrease in each
pastoral district respectively”—

Mark the word "losses," not "decrease," because I have made a marked difference in any remarks I have made between "decrease" and "loss"—

"and to suggest that it be given to the Press for publication, for two reasons:—

(1) Because stockowners generally are most desirous of ascertaining our losses; and (2) because, as will be seen from the return, our losses of sheep last year—over the whole colony—have been grossly exaggerated."

Now this return was made, so far as I have been able to ascertain, *adpropos* of nothing. It is said to have been made for the special purpose of contradicting a statement which I cannot find in any English woolbroker's return that I can lay my hands on. I have, even to-day, looked through the reports of the leading woolbrokers in England, and I could see nothing that would warrant the assumption that our losses in this colony have been grossly exaggerated in England. We have not been informed where the statement referred to was made; but, admitting that it was made, I say that this return is misleading—that the losses in Queensland up to the time the report was prepared by Mr. Gordon were immensely greater than was stated in that report, which purported to be a return showing the actual losses in the colony, and I will prove that by the returns made by Mr. Gordon himself. I will not go beyond Mr. Gordon's statements. What does he say in his annual sheep return? He states that, after deducting the increase of sheep for the year, the decrease is found to be 1,736,891. The report goes on to say—

"This shows an actual decrease for the year of 15·46 per cent. The above figures, however, do not by any means represent the actual loss caused by the late protracted drought."

If this return was meant to show anything to those who made misstatements at home it was to show our actual losses during the drought, because it was with regard to them that the statements, if made, had been made. Therefore, the report is misleading, incorrect, and inaccurate; and it is admitted to be so by Mr. Gordon himself. I have been taken to task for daring to say that the losses sustained by the sheep-farming portion of the colony—which actually means a loss to the State—are 4,500,000, representing a cash value of £3,000,000; and it is unfortunate for the papers that levelled the charge at my head, that they had not more carefully gone into the interim report furnished by Mr. Gordon. If they had waited only one day they would have seen that the figures I quoted were almost absolutely correct, as per Mr. Gordon. He says on that subject that the loss through drought during the last two years—and, I think, it will be admitted by those who are conversant with pastoral matters that last year's loss was two-thirds of the whole—he says the loss was 7,281,000; and two-thirds of that number will make 4,800,000 sheep lost to the colony last year. He also takes the money loss, which he makes to be £3,829,900; and two-thirds of that comes very nearly to the figures I quoted. I say, therefore, that the statement I made with reference to the loss of sheep and the money loss was absolutely correct, and if anything, within the mark. And as the *Courier* and the other papers making the charge have appealed to Cæsar, to Cæsar I have taken them, in the shape of Mr. P. R. Gordon. I will also call attention to the fact that Mr. Gordon in his annual report admits under his own hand in black and white that the return as at 1st January is not correct; and if hon. gentlemen will look at that report they will see it stated—

"I am prepared to admit, however, that they do not represent the correct number of sheep actually in the colony at 1st January last."

Now, Mr. Gordon had the same data, with the exception of some unimportant returns, in his

hands when he issued the interim report, but he did not then indicate that they were incorrect even as regards the decrease; he gave no hint that they were incorrect; on the contrary, he led the public to believe that to all intents and purposes they were correct. Mr. Gordon further goes on to check the correctness of his figures by a calculation which I am perfectly certain no man in the colony could make without taking a considerable amount of time, and even then the check would be very imperfect. He says—

"As the above figures do not represent the sheepskins exported, it will be seen that the quantity exported by sea alone gives an average of over 3 lbs. 3 oz. per sheep on the numbers returned."

The public are thereby led to believe that the figures are correct; but before he could arrive at any estimate with regard to the numbers on such a basis it would be necessary to have in his possession—which I am sure he had not—a percentage of the greasy and washed wool exported. As a matter of fact, in the export of wool there has been an increase to a considerable extent of greasy wool; therefore to say that, because the return gives an average of over 3 lbs. 3 oz., his figures are correct, is absurd, and not worth taking into consideration in a report such as this. What I rose more particularly to point out, and what I have pointed out successfully, is that this interim report, which was issued almost at the instance, if not at the instance of the Treasurer, was one calculated to utterly mislead the people of the colony, and it was on that ground that I challenged Mr. Gordon's accuracy and correctness; and I challenge them now. And not only have I proved from other sources that I was correct in my statements but also by Mr. Gordon's own report. As I said before, when Mr. Gordon wrote his interim report he had all the information, except some unimportant public returns which he possessed when making his annual report; and I was perfectly justified in calling attention to the matter in the way I did. I should have been failing in my duty had I not pointed out that if his calculations were based on losses the total of 1,800,000 for the last year was incorrect, and that the losses were almost absolutely what I stated them to be before Mr. Gordon's report was put into our hands at all. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman characterises the preliminary report made by Mr. Gordon on the 2nd May, 1885, as inaccurate, incorrect, and misleading. I suppose "inaccurate" and "incorrect" have very much the same meaning. The substance of the hon. gentleman's contention is that the report only shows the decrease in the number of sheep in the colony, and does not show the actual loss. The distinction the hon. gentleman apparently draws is that it ought to have shown the difference between the number of sheep in the colony on the 1st January, and the number there would have been if all the sheep in the colony previous to the 1st January had remained in it, and a number of other sheep had been introduced and a number born—an increase that did not occur, but which he considers should have been added to the decrease so as to make up the total loss. If Mr. Gordon's preliminary report had purported to show the latter result, and had given figures relating to the former, it would have been misleading. The hon. gentleman's argument is based on that assumption, but Mr. Gordon's preliminary report does nothing of the kind. What Mr. Gordon says is this:—

"I have the honour to forward herewith preliminary return of sheep on which assessment was paid as at 1st January last, showing the increase or decrease in each pastoral district respectively."

How can anybody suppose that a return giving the numbers on the 1st January, 1884, and the 1st January, 1885, showing an increase or decrease, would be intended to give any information respecting the number of sheep there would have been if a number of sheep had been introduced or born in the colony? The return shows what it purports to show—the difference between the numbers in two succeeding years; and that is what most people in England understand by a loss in sheep—so many less than there were before. In one sense the word “loss” is a correct word to employ. It is not the word Mr. Gordon used—he used the appropriate words “increase” and “decrease.” A man may buy a piece of property and expect to make £1,000 on it; and if he sells it at a loss of £500 he may say that his loss is £1,500 on the transaction; but ordinary persons would say that he had lost £500. It all depends on the sense in which the words are used. Mr. Gordon, in his preliminary report, used the words in their ordinary sense, but the hon. member uses them in a different sense—a sense in which they may be used, but the sense in which they are not used by ordinary people.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Mr. Gordon uses the word “losses.”

Mr. MOREHEAD: In his letter he uses the word “losses.”

The PREMIER: In his preliminary return Mr. Gordon goes on to say that it is given to the Press for publication for two reasons—

“Because stockowners generally are most desirous of ascertaining our losses; and because, as will be seen from the return, our losses of sheep last year—over the whole colony—have been grossly exaggerated.”

Well, I fail to see where the misleading part of that is. Certain facts are given for a particular reason—namely, that the losses have been grossly exaggerated. So they appear to have been, and I presume that any person with ordinary intelligence would understand exactly what was meant to be conveyed. It is stated, for instance, that the number in the Mitchell district have greatly decreased, and in some districts there has been an increase. I think the hon. gentleman has made a hasty and inconsiderate attack upon Mr. Gordon, and he might just as well gracefully acknowledge at once that he has made a mistake. Mr. Gordon simply did his duty in sending in the interim report. I for one cannot see the advantage of endeavouring to depreciate the credit of the colony. The truth should be told, although we have no right to exaggerate things in our favour, and when we tell the truth we should not use words in a double sense. Of course, an estimate can be made up in the way which the hon. member proposes, and that is the way figures are said to prove anything; but I apprehend it is the duty of a public officer to give in his reports plain figures and facts.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Read Mr. Gordon's report.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman says, “Read Mr. Gordon's report,” and I presume he refers to a passage wherein he says:—

“I am prepared to admit, however, that they do not represent the correct number of sheep actually in the colony at 1st January last, because, in a majority of instances, the numbers on which assessment were paid were computed from the shearing ‘tallies’; and it has been represented that in some districts heavy losses occurred in the interim between shearing and the 1st January.”

Probably they did. However, there is nothing to my mind which is in any way misleading in the report. The exact facts are stated, and I

cannot suggest any way in which an officer of the Government could have more properly made a report than the one Mr. Gordon has adopted.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said: The hon. gentleman who has just sat down has stated that my hon. friend has made a rather hasty and inconsiderate attack upon Mr. Gordon. I will not say much about that. I know nothing except from the extracts I have heard read this afternoon, but judging from the speech made by Mr. Morehead, I have come to the conclusion that a most inconsiderate attack has been made upon him by the hon. gentleman which was not justified by facts. I will give my version of what I have seen. Unfortunately I have seen neither newspapers nor Parliamentary reports until this morning, but I have since given the matter some attention as I understood my friend was going to bring it forward. I have no charge to make against Mr. Gordon, but I will simply state my views on the subject. Mr. Gordon, in the month of May, published a statement which on the face of it showed there was a decrease in the number of sheep to the extent of 1,850,565. I may say that it was an unusual report, but so far as Mr. Gordon's books were concerned and the returns he had received, I assume it was correct. In his note to the papers enclosing the report he gives as his reason for sending it that it is for the benefit of stockowners generally who are desirous of ascertaining the actual loss of sheep, and because the losses of sheep have been grossly exaggerated. Of course stockowners are always anxious to know the loss, but the real reason appeared to be to contradict certain rumours which had exaggerated the number of their losses. Now, what were those exaggerations? I do not know of any exaggerations that Mr. Gordon could have referred to except some rumours that had come from home that there were losses to a certain number of millions of sheep. The hon. gentleman says it cannot be reckoned a loss if a squatter finds at the end of the year he has just as many sheep as when he started. Now, I have seen reports constantly in the papers, unfortunately, that the estimates for the coming harvest in Great Britain show a decrease of thirteen millions of bushels. What does that mean? It means that there is a decrease on the average expectations of the farmer, and a consequent decrease of the profit he actually worked for. That is what are the actual losses. If the farmer ploughs and sows and pays his rent and his men, and at the end of the year he has not a bit more corn than he had when he started, are we to consider that he has suffered no loss? Is it not pure silliness to make such an assertion? And when Mr. Gordon talks about the real losses the colony has sustained, he mentions the figures seven and a quarter millions. Mr. Gordon knows perfectly well what the loss actually has been, and he knows the difference between the words “decrease” and “losses.” At the time he published that report there was no doubt that it had the effect of misleading the public. We know perfectly well what the losses are, and are well aware that if we pay our rent, and pay our men, and do not have a natural increase, we are suffering a loss; and are we, as the hon. gentleman states, to consider that if we have the same at the end of the year as what we started with, we have suffered no loss? It is perfect nonsense to talk in that way, and the hon. gentleman must know that well. You cannot possibly estimate the amount of loss by the decrease which has taken place, but you have to take a great many other things into consideration. What are the real facts of the case? The Premier is going on a political tour, and he wants to show things in as favourable a light as

possible. He may possibly, in addition to that, wish to contradict unsatisfactory rumours and show the affairs of the colony in a legitimate light, and for that I do not blame him. I understand that he suggested to Mr. Gordon that he should give him statistics to contradict these rumours, and Mr. Gordon prepared those statistics. I think, if Mr. Gordon had been informed that these statistics were to be used for the purpose of contradicting the rumours which had come from England, he ought to have stated in his report what the rumours were, and he should have pointed out that his figures would not represent the actual loss. The rumours are that we have sustained a certain loss. We have actually lost to the extent of seven and a-quarter millions, and when the statistics were prepared by Mr. Gordon, if he knew what the actual loss was, he should have stated that the figures given by him represented simply the difference between the number of sheep tallied at the beginning of the year and the number tallied at the end of the year. He ought to have stated that, but he did not do so, hence we have found men contradicting one another in a somewhat unreasonable way. The statistics, I believe, were used by the Premier, in one of his public addresses, to contradict the rumours referred to and to show that our losses had been a great deal less than they really were. I have had carefully examined for me all the most prominent brokers' reports, and I failed to find mention of any of those rumours to which reference has been made—not one had put down our loss at anything like what Mr. Gordon has himself done. It is wrong to get a public servant to make out statistics for a certain purpose. If Mr. Gordon had simply stated the difference between the tally of sheep this year and that of the year before, that would have been all right, but in that very letter he goes on to say that our losses had been greatly exaggerated. Do not the outside public from that at once draw the conclusion that Mr. Gordon estimates our loss at the amount he has put down? He calls it there, the "decrease," but, in his letter accompanying it to the Press, he describes it as our "loss"; and in so doing he was wrong. And the Press have been wrong in the most unjustifiable attacks they have made on my friend Mr. Morehead.

MR. MOREHEAD: As there seems to be no desire on the part of the Colonial Treasurer to speak on this subject, I will, with the leave of the House, withdraw the motion.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson): As my name has been mentioned in connection with this matter, I will just make one or two remarks upon it. My attention having been called to various reports that had appeared in the London Press—

THE HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Where did they appear?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not recollect at present.

MR. MOREHEAD: I have tried to find them, but without success.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: My attention having been directed to certain reports in the London Press as to the heavy losses in sheep which had occurred in this colony through drought, I, on meeting Mr. Gordon, directed his attention to them, and stated that I should be glad to receive from him information as to whether those representations were correct or had been exaggerated. Mr. Gordon expressed his willingness to afford me that information, and in the report he sent in he stated that the loss of sheep in the colony had been over-stated by the papers to which I refer. I was glad to be put in possession

of such reassuring evidence that our losses had been over-estimated. Previous to that, while on a visit to New South Wales, I had been informed by several gentlemen interested in pastoral pursuits in this colony of the exceedingly heavy losses that had occurred in New South Wales, and it was intimated to me by them that the probable loss in Queensland would exceed even that in severity. I believe that has been shown not to be the fact, the loss in New South Wales having been proportionately greater than the loss in Queensland. I can assure the House that the request I made to Mr. Gordon was to obtain information of a reliable character, not to enable the Premier to refer to the matter during any tour he might be making at the time, but to set at rest the uncertainty that existed as to the extent of our loss. I do not think the Premier was making any political tour at the time. Certainly the report was not obtained from Mr. Gordon for any other purpose than to endeavour to give authoritative information to those interested in pastoral pursuits that the loss of sheep in this colony had not been so great as was represented. I think myself that rather too much has been made of this matter, both in the speech of the hon. member for Balonne and in the outside comments upon it. I agree with the Premier that, while we must all deplore the adversity that has fallen upon the whole of Australia by drought, and, deeply interested as we all are in building up the greatness of Queensland, and while there is no necessity to conceal the truth, it is exceedingly unwise at the present time to endeavour to prove the unreliability of returns which have been published to show that certain reports were untruthful. Hon. members on both sides will admit that Mr. Gordon, in his capacity as Inspector of Stock, has performed his duty at all times satisfactorily, and that any information furnished by him is given without any desire either to conceal our losses or to over-estimate the prosperity of those interests on which he has specially to report. Mr. Gordon, I think, was fully justified in referring to the comparative condition of the pastoral industry at the present time and last year, and in showing that the actual decrease in the sheep of the colony was not as had been represented. It would be a very difficult thing to estimate what the increase on the year would have been under auspicious seasons.

MR. MOREHEAD: He has made it; there it is.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: It is a mere estimate. In the report he furnished he dealt fairly with the actual decrease which the figures exhibited. As I have already stated, enough has been said on this subject, and nothing has transpired to reflect upon Mr. Gordon in his capacity as Inspector of Sheep for this colony.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to take advantage of this motion to draw the attention of the House to a subject which is exercising the mind of the public a great deal at the present time. I refer to the Timber Regulations at present in force. I believe the hon. the leader of the Opposition has tabled a motion with reference to these regulations; I was not in the House at the time, and did not know till this afternoon that he had any intention of doing so. Some months ago the Government issued regulations with regard to timber which were considered very oppressive—

THE SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that the hon. the leader of the Opposition has given notice of a motion which involves a discussion of the Timber Regulations, and therefore he cannot, on a motion for the adjournment of the House, anticipate that discussion.

Motion, by consent, withdrawn.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. FERGUSON asked the Colonial Treasurer—

1. How many barges, if any, are being constructed for dredging operations in the Fitzroy River?
2. How soon do the Government expect such barges to be completed and sent to the Fitzroy River?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied—

1. Six barges and two tugs.
2. Two within a month, remainder as built.

Mr. PALMER asked the Colonial Treasurer—

1. If the services of the dredge "Platypus," now working at Cooktown, cannot be made available for the bar at the Norman River during the present south-east trade winds, before her return south?
2. If not available this year, at what time will a dredge be at the disposal of the Harbours and Rivers Department for such purpose?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied—

1. No.
2. While Government are endeavouring to provide as early as practicable for the dredging of the bar of the Norman River, it is impossible to say at present when a dredge will be available.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to:—

By Mr. FERGUSON—

That there be laid on the table of the House a Return showing—

1. The quantity of silt raised by the dredge in the Fitzroy River during the first six months of the present year.
2. The number of punts, steamers, and boats employed in connection with the dredging operations in the time stated.
3. The number of men of all grades engaged in the works for the time named.
4. The cost of all labour employed for the period.
5. The cost of superintendence of the works for the time stated.
6. The cost of coal and other materials used for that time in the working of the dredge, steamers, punts, and boats.
7. The number of hours the staff employed were actually engaged during the six months.

By Mr. BLACK—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a Return showing—

1. The number of electors in each electorate of the colony up to the latest revision of the rolls.
2. Approximate area of each electorate.
3. Number of representatives returned by each electorate.

CROWN LANDS ACT OF 1884 AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was affirmed in Committee of the Whole that it was desirable to introduce a Bill to amend the Crown Lands Act of 1884 with respect to the selection of land before survey, and in other respects.

The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER said: Members of the Elections and Qualifications Committee at present in the House are requested to come to the table to be sworn.

The members of the Committee—Messrs. Aland, Foxton, Macfarlane, Buckland, Jessop, Palmer, and Scott—thereupon presented themselves and were sworn.

POLICE OFFICERS RELIEF BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that, having briefly explained the principles of the Bill yesterday when moving the second reading, he presumed it would be unnecessary for him to now dwell upon its provisions. However, for the information of hon. gentlemen who were not present when the Bill passed the second reading, he might state that it was intended to restore to certain gentlemen holding positions in the Civil Service rights which they had acquired under the Police Superannuation Fund, but which rights were lost upon their being transferred from the Police Force to the Civil Service. He therefore moved, without further comment, that the preamble be postponed.

Question put and passed.

On clause 1—

"When any member of the Police Force constituted under the Police Act of 1863, who became a member of that force before the fourteenth day of September, 1869, and who while he continued to be a member of such force regularly contributed to the Police Superannuation Fund established under that Act, has heretofore been or shall hereafter be appointed by the Governor in Council to another office in the Public Service of the colony, not being an office in the Police Force, the Governor in Council may direct that such person shall have and be subject and entitled to the same rights, obligations, and privileges as if he had been a member of the Civil Service under the provisions of the Civil Service Act of 1863 and the Civil Service Act of 1863 Extension Act, and had been appointed to his office under those Acts on the day on which he was appointed to the Police Force, and such person shall thereupon have and be subject and entitled to such rights, obligations, and privileges accordingly."

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he was not present when the Bill was read a second time, and would ask the hon. gentleman in charge of it if he had any information as to the number of persons to whom the Bill would apply?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it referred at present to seven officers who entered the Police Service, some of them as far back as 1857. They were subsequently transferred to positions in the Civil Service. They had paid their contributions regularly, but after the Civil Service Act had been repealed they did not acquire any rights, and could not claim any.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 passed as printed.

On clause 4, as follows:—

"In any case in which any such member of the Police Force has been so appointed to another office before the passing of this Act, he shall within three months after the passing of this Act pay to the Colonial Treasurer, to be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund, a sum equal to the amount which would have been deducted from his salary for the whole time that has elapsed since his said appointment if he had been a member of the Civil Service under the provisions of the Civil Service Act of 1863 and the Civil Service Act of 1863 Extension Act, and had received as such member a salary equal to the salary that he has received from time to time as an officer of the Public Service since such appointment."

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked how long it was since any of those officers had been transferred, and thereby lost their rights?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the date upon which the last officer was transferred was the 1st February, 1880. He had ever since continued to pay his contribution to the Superannuation Fund.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: What is the date of the oldest one?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the oldest officer entered the service in 1857, and was transferred on the 6th July, 1872.

Question put and passed.

On clause 5, as follows:—

"A sum equal to the amount which has been contributed to the Police Superannuation Fund by any person in respect of whom the Governor in Council makes any such direction shall be transferred from such fund and paid to the Consolidated Revenue Fund."

Mr. BEATTIE said he would ask if the payment of those officers had been made in accordance with the salary received when they were in the Police Force, or in accordance with the salary received after they were transferred to another department?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Upon current salary.

Mr. BEATTIE said that, with reference to those claims, he did not know whether the rumour he had heard was correct. The rumour was to the effect that the fund was nearly all absorbed. He did not know what state the Police Superannuation Fund was in; but perhaps the Colonial Treasurer could give them that information.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said that was the information he wanted to get. If the Superannuation Fund were not exhausted, it very soon would be by the alteration of the present Act, and the position of the police would be this: that very soon they would have the superannuated police pensioners upon the consolidated revenue and not upon the Superannuation Fund at all, because it would be all absorbed. The basis of the Act was a superannuation fund, not a pension fund.

The PREMIER said it was a pension fund distinctly. After a time, the men were superannuated and drew a pension out of that fund. It was because the burdens upon that fund were increasing so much that the fund required increasing too. But there was no immediate fear of its being exhausted. Before September, 1869, all members of the Public Service were entitled on retirement to a pension, whether in the Police Service or Civil Service; those who belonged to the Police Force contributed to one fund and the members of the Civil Service to another. In 1869 the Civil Service Act was repealed, and by joining the Civil Service and being transferred, certain members of the Police Force lost the benefit of the payments they had made before. If they were going to receive money from the revenue, the contributions ought to go to the credit of the fund which bore the burden. It was certainly quite right that that fund should receive the benefit.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the hon. gentleman had expressed in a roundabout way what nobody had denied. If there was no fund and nothing to the credit of the Superannuation Fund, what were they to do? He pointed out that the Police Fund was not a superannuation fund, but would soon be a pension. He drew the distinction between a pension and a superannuation to be this: that in a superannuation fund the members who contributed thereto would ultimately get back the amount of their contributions, and in a pension fund the money came from the State. He drew the attention of the House to the fact that as the police would be getting so much more than their contributions there would soon be no fund, or nothing like enough to meet the claims upon it. It was founded upon a wrong basis. The fact was perfectly clear that the fund would very soon be exhausted, and it would certainly never meet the claims upon it. In that case the claims of the superannuated men would have to be met by the State out of the consolidated revenue.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not think that those small sums would make any material difference as to the position of the account. It would be understood that all the contributions which had been paid since the men had accepted appointments in the Civil Service had gone to the consolidated revenue. The payments made to the Police Superannuation Fund were very small. He thought it only right

and proper that if the consolidated revenue was to be drawn upon in future for the officers who would obtain their rights under the Bill, the amounts which those officers had contributed to the Police Superannuation Fund should be transferred to the consolidated revenue. It would not be greatly affected by the small amounts in question.

Mr. BEATTIE said he agreed with all that, but what he wanted to know, and he had not got the information he had asked for yet, was whether the Police Superannuation Fund was in funds at the present time or not? The information he had received was that there were no funds available for that fund. Of course he knew that for the last fifteen or twenty years a number of men had been placed on that fund, and something might occur which would give rise to a very great deal of discussion. He knew that in other colonies something of this kind had occurred—that when a man had nearly reached the time when he would become entitled to be superannuated, and receive a superannuation allowance, he was found guilty of some offence and dismissed; and in consequence of having been dismissed from the service he lost his right to a superannuation allowance. He did not mean to say that cases of that kind had occurred here, but instances of that description had taken place in the other colonies. There had been a large amount of discussion upon the general management of that particular fund. A great many officers were now taking advantage of that fund—he did not mean constables, but officers of the force, senior constables and sergeants; and he heard a great many say that the amount at present belonging to the fund was so small that if a few more claims were made upon it they could not be met unless the money came out of the consolidated revenue of the colony.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said that what the hon. member for Fortitude Valley had stated was perfectly true. By the way in which the Police Superannuation Fund had been administered they would not have funds to carry out its provisions for much longer. When he was Treasurer he expected to have to bring in a Bill dealing with the subject, in order to take the amounts due out of the Police Superannuation Fund out of the consolidated revenue. He did not think that any such deplorable cases as those mentioned by the hon. member had occurred here.

Mr. BEATTIE: No; I have not heard of any here, but I said I had heard of such cases occurring in the other colonies.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said there was no question about this: the Police Superannuation Fund ought to be carefully watched. He knew there were men getting pensions from it at the present time who were certainly not entitled to them—men as strong and healthy as the Speaker or himself.

Question put and passed.

Clause 6—Short title and preamble—passed as printed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the House resumed; the Chairman reported the Bill without amendment; and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

MEMBERS EXPENSES BILL—COMMITTEE.

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

On clause 1, as follows:—

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

"2. The allowances for mileage and passage money shall not be payable in respect of more than one journey to and fro in or for any one session unless in the event of an adjournment extending over thirty days, in which case they shall be again payable after such adjournment.

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

"4. The allowances aforesaid shall be payable at the expiration of each calendar month.

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

Mr. BLACK said he had voted against the principle of the Bill last session and this session; but a very large majority in the House was in favour of the Bill, and he wished now to point out one defect which, if the Bill was to become law, should be remedied. When the Bill was introduced last session, it was understood that it was to equalise the positions of members of the House to a certain extent—that was, that members who were compelled to come down to the House from long distances and reside here during the whole of the session were to be reimbursed the expenses they incurred by so doing. They were placed at a manifest disadvantage as compared with those members who lived near the capital, and who only perhaps had to attend two or three days during the week, or were able to get back to attend to their legitimate business on the days on which the House was not sitting. By the present Bill those members were reimbursed their expenses for the whole of the time during which the session lasted. That was to say that if the session lasted six months, as it did last year, members residing near town would get the full reimbursement allowed by the Bill—for three days a week for thirty-six weeks would give a sum of £200; whereas country members living at a great distance from Brisbane—the Northern members in particular—after the first hundred days they were actually absent from home, would receive no remuneration whatever. If it was intended that the Bill should provide proper reimbursement to members for the time they were actually in attendance on the House, then the words "two hundred pounds" in the 5th subsection of the 1st clause should be omitted altogether. If the principle of payment of members was a sound one, there was no reason why members should not be reimbursed for the actual time they were absent from their homes attending to the business of the country. He did not know whether the Government had taken that matter into their consideration, but it seemed to him that if the application of the Bill was to be equally fair to all members they should be reimbursed their actual expenses in attending Parliament, no matter how long or how short the session might be.

The PREMIER said the matter referred to by the hon. member received tolerably full consideration last year. If the session lasted as long as the session of last year no town member would get the maximum amount fixed by the Bill, as, after all, there were only eighty-two sitting days in that session. He thought wherever remuneration was given for expenses the maximum should certainly be fixed. The maximum amount was fixed in Canada, where the same principle was observed as that adopted in the Bill before the Committee.

Mr. NORTON said he would ask whether, in the event of a member not incurring any

expenses, and notwithstanding the fact that he had attended Parliament, he would be allowed expenses?

The PREMIER said he did not understand what the hon. gentleman meant. Did he mean that a member must send in an account of his expenses?

Mr. NORTON: No, I do not.

The PREMIER said the expenses were fixed at two guineas a day. What did the hon. gentleman mean by expenses not having been incurred? If they allowed a member so much a day they did not ask him whether he had expended that amount.

Mr. NORTON said the 1st paragraph of the 1st clause of the Bill provided that "every member of the Legislative Assembly shall be entitled to receive and be reimbursed the expenses incurred by him." If those expenses were not incurred he did not see why a member should be paid; yet, according to the schedule, he was to be paid two guineas a day for each day on which he gave his attendance in Parliament. If a member lived beside the House he might have no occupation and might attend the House as a pastime merely; and certainly such a member could not in any sense of the term whatever be said to have incurred any expense. Therefore he contended that, if they took the logical meaning of the clause as it now stood, any member living in town who might be in the position that he would not incur any expenses would not be entitled to any allowance. He would like an explanation of that matter from the Premier.

The PREMIER said the expenses would be taken as a fixed sum of two guineas a day; no question would be asked an hon. member as to what expenses he had incurred, or whether he had incurred them in cab-hire or in paying for his board and lodging.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he was not going to discuss the principle of the Bill. He was absent when the Bill passed its second reading, but he had discussed the matter often before and given his vote, and he did not wish to take up the time of the Committee in discussing the principle of the Bill again. He would, however, draw the attention of hon. members to one point in the measure. The Premier had made a statement just now to the effect that, under the operation of that Bill, even such a long session as last year would not result in a town member getting his two guineas a day.

The PREMIER: I said that last session, long as it was, would not give the town members the full amount of £200.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: That was not an answer to the argument brought forward by the hon. member for Mackay. The principle on which a Members Expenses Bill had come before the House under the auspices of the hon. gentleman was, that they should pay the Northern members and those men who could not afford to leave their business, and spend the whole of their days down here. It was on that ground that the measure got the support that it did, but it had gradually been transformed to what it was now, a Payment of Members Bill, and it was inequitable in its present shape because it provided that the Southern member should be paid his full two guineas a day when he was absent from his business, and it did not give the same justice to the Northern members. The Bill professed to recognise the principle that members who had to absent themselves from their business in attending Parliament should be paid. Many hon. members living near town did not lose a day on which they did not attend Parliament. For instance, the Chairman of Committees could attend to his business

and to his family affairs every day that he was not actually present in the House; and there were a good many other members in the same position. But there was another class of members who came principally from the West and North who were in this position: that in order to pay due attention to their Parliamentary duties they must sever themselves from their families and business and come and live in Brisbane. It was to recognise the principle that town members should be paid for their attendance at the House, and country members for the time they were away from their families and business, that the Bill was pressed to have been introduced. It was provided in the 3rd paragraph of the schedule that a member should be paid two guineas "for each day on which a member gives his attendance in Parliament, or during which he is necessarily absent for the purpose of attending Parliament from the town or place in which he usually resides or carries on his business." The principle therein enunciated would result equitably; each member would be paid for the time that he was actually forced to be away from his business and family, at the rate of two guineas per day, but by the 1st clause of the Bill, whenever the amount came up to £200—which he found would be reached in about fifteen weeks—the Northern member would cease to be paid. It was not an answer to that argument to say that the Southern member had not got his £200. According to the principle of the Bill, the Northern member would get nothing after the lapse of 100 days, while the Southern member would get paid all the rest of the session. He was not afraid to address to hon. gentlemen who would pass a Payment of Members Bill the argument that it would be an inducement to the Southern member to protract the session while the Northern member would be anxious to get home as soon as he had received his £200. It was no answer to say that the system worked well in Canada, because they only had the statement of the hon. member opposite in proof of the fact; and they all knew the wild statements he made about the Canadian defences last year. They also knew what was going on in Canada at the present time, and they were not going to do a thing just because it was done in Canada; they were quite as well able to do for themselves as the Canadians were. He was even prepared to say that the system did not work well in Canada. The Bill was inequitable, and the result would be that Southern members would be paid a great deal more than the Northern members for their labour.

The PREMIER said that wherever a maximum was fixed—and he never heard of such a Bill without—it was in the nature of things that there must be some inequality in extreme cases; but in a session of ordinary duration the system proposed would work with perfect fairness. In a session of four months the Northern member would just earn the maximum of £200, and it seemed a pitiable sort of argument to make a few pounds more or less to the Northern member a basis for departing from the principle of the Bill. As a matter of fact, during an ordinary session of three and a-half or four months, the Northern member would get twice as much as the Southern member; so he could not see where the injustice to the Northern member came in. They had heard a great deal of the Northern member, but they never heard of him from a pecuniary point of view before. Of course hon. gentlemen opposite would like to alter the Bill; but they had worked out all the figures before, and there could be no excuse for further delay.

Mr. NORTON said he did not think the argument in regard to Northern members was half so pitiable as a proposition to pay Southern

members for expenses they never incurred, while Northern members would not receive half the amount of expenses they incurred. There were Southern members who did not lose five shillings a day by attending to their Parliamentary duties, and yet it was proposed to give them two guineas a day—simply for amusing themselves in some cases.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the pitiableness was in the Bill itself; it did not lie in the fact of hon. members contending for more on behalf of Northern and Western members, but in the fact of the Government bringing in a Bill to pay members at all. If there was any principle in paying members a maximum of £200, there was some principle in paying Northern members the full amount of their expenses. Until the time he was elected a member he had been for several years a continuous resident of the North, but after his first year of Parliamentary experience he found that he could not reside in the North and attend Parliament as well; the consequence was that he came to reside in Brisbane, his business allowing him to do so, and since then he had ceased to reside in the North from the fact of becoming a member of Parliament. And how many local members had the Northern constituencies now? There were the member for Mackay and one of the members for Kennedy; and that member for Kennedy, being obliged to attend to his own business, was not now present. There was no comparison between the disadvantages of local members representing Northern or Western constituencies and members living in the South representing Southern constituencies. The former had to be away from their homes and business every day, while the ordinary business of Brisbane and Ipswich members was not interfered with in the slightest degree by their Parliamentary duties. In the face of that, the Premier said the Bill was an equitable measure. Like the hon. member for Mackay, he had voted against the Bill. There was a time when he was in favour of payment of members, but that time had gone by long since. The example of Victoria had prevented him being a continuous advocate of payment of members. The Premier laughed sneeringly; but when he (Mr. Macrossan) changed his opinion he told his constituents that he would never vote again for payment of members. The hon. gentleman had referred to Canada, but what had been the result in Canada, and in every one of the United States? The result was that as soon as members ceased to receive their pay the session closed, whether the work was done or not. Of course that suited Ministers very well, and a session in the States Legislatures very seldom exceeded forty or fifty days. The moment members received the maximum amount put down they went home, and the session frequently had to close for want of a quorum. If the hon. gentleman was serious in his intention to pay members, he should pay them in such a way that those living at a distance would not be placed at such a disadvantage as they would be by the Bill, compared with those who represented the Southern constituencies. The same argument applied, though not to the same extent, to the members for the Wide Bay district, who could return to their homes more easily than Northern and Western members, but who had also to be absent from their business and homes. The fairest way would be to strike out the 5th subsection entirely. It would be well to leave out the maximum and let members be paid for the actual length of the session, whatever it might be.

Mr. ARCHER said he was rather surprised at the remarks of the Premier in answer to the arguments of the member for Townsville. Was

the hon. gentleman not aware that paragraph after paragraph had appeared in the leading American papers to the effect that Congress had closed, had opened again within a week, and that members who could not by any possibility have returned to their homes—the San Francisco members—had been paid their travelling expenses? In those cases the House would not have adjourned, and the business would have been concluded in one session if it had not been for the payment of members. The members there received 1,000 dollars apiece for their travelling expenses. There was a great deal in the contention that members who were away from their business were not in the same position as others. They might, when definitely paid for the time they were away from business, and the Government ought to see that the session closed as quickly as possible. In his opinion the passing of the measure would introduce into the House a worse tone than had hitherto prevailed in it.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman must be mistaken about the American Congress adjourning and meeting again in a week, and members getting their expenses there and back. That would at least show that somebody was guilty of fraud.

Mr. ARCHER: Induced by the law.

The PREMIER said he was very ignorant of the Constitution of the United States if Congress could prorogue itself and sit again within a week. Congress was summoned by law or by the President. He knew that such things had happened in the colonies, but, where payment of members existed, he did not think a member was paid his travelling expenses unless they were actually incurred. In America the travelling expenses amounted to a lump sum of 5,000 dollars for the session, and in Canada the payment was per day. He was sure there need be no inclination to immediately close the session after remuneration had ceased, and if the arguments of hon. members were correct, such practices need have no effect here, because very few members indeed would be affected by such an unworthy motive.

Mr. HORWITZ said he could not see his way clear to support the Bill, because he did not believe in voting money to be put into his own pocket. He admitted that last year he voted for the Bill, but since then he had altered his opinion and would not vote for it until the principle was indorsed at the next general election. There was a great deal to be said in favour of and against the measure, and the principal reason why he had changed his opinion was that such a Bill would place too great a power in the hands of any Premier, who would by its provisions be able to retain on his own side the needy members of the Chamber. Of course he had sufficient confidence in the present members of the House to know that they would not be operated upon in that way, but he was afraid that at present it was not a safe course for them to adopt the measure. If a division was called for he should vote against the Bill on the principle that he had already mentioned—that he would not vote money to be put into his own pocket.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he thought the leader of the Government would expedite the work of the Committee if he met arguments in a fair way. The hon. gentleman would allow him to recall to his mind how the Bill had got into its present shape. The Bill was not the Bill brought forward last year, but it was that which eventually left the House. When it was brought forward last year it was a Bill of a somewhat different character. It was a Payment of Members Expenses Bill, and on that

account it received more consideration at the hands of certain members on the Opposition side of the House who would not have voted for actual payment of members. The principle of the Bill then was to pay the men who actually had to leave their homes to attend to their Parliamentary duties. It was seen how that would operate, and that a great many of the supporters of the Government would not get their two guineas a day for attendance in the House. The great bulk of them, in fact, would not be paid at all, and the consequence was that the Bill was changed. They claimed the right to be paid for their attendance in Parliament just as the Northern and Western members claimed the right to be paid. Then came the compromise proposed by the Premier himself, which was that he would pay two classes of men—the men who were actually away from their homes and work, and the men who actually attended Parliament. Both Northern and Southern members would be paid exactly at the same rate for the time they were away from home attending to their work in Parliament—the former for the whole time, and the latter for the actual number of days they were present in the House. That principle was quite clear and was supposed to be equitable. But by the present Bill the Northern members would be treated inequitably, because they would only be paid two guineas a day up to a certain point, while the Southern members would get their pay during the whole of a protracted session. Granting, for the sake of argument, that the former principle was right, this was how it would have operated last session: The session lasted 171 days, and Northern members might fairly be allowed seven days to get to and from their homes. That would be, in all, 178 days, which, at two guineas a day, would give each Northern member £373 16s. Supposing the Southern members attended every day on which the House sat, their pay for eighty-two sitting days would be £172 4s. How would the new principle operate in a session of similar length? The Southern member would get his £172 4s., while the Northern member would get £200. In fact, the thing had been reduced to a salary—to payment of members pure and simple. They had departed entirely from the principle of the Bill of last year, and brought in an inequitable measure for the payment of salaries to members; for what was the use of haggling over the question when the difference between the two amounts was only £27 16s., so long as the House sat the same number of days as it did last year? Anyone could see that the other side had run away from their principles, and had secured what they pretended they did not want—namely, payment of members.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman based his argument entirely on the fact that the last session was an unusually long one. There must be a maximum somewhere, whatever amount they made it.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: Why should there be?

The PREMIER said he had already given reasons why there should be, and he had never heard anyone say there should not be a maximum amount fixed.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: I see no reason why there should be.

The PREMIER said that without a maximum, hon. members might prefer to be always sitting. If they had no particular occupation, they might live in town and draw their two guineas a day all the year round, which would be a very good livelihood for some people. That was one of the dangers to which any system of payment of members was exposed, and he had attempted to guard against it in the present measure. In all

countries where the system had been introduced a maximum was provided; whether £200 was a proper maximum in the present case it was for the Committee to say. To say that because there was a maximum it was reducing it to payment of salary was absurd. In case of a session of average length, a Northern member would receive not quite twice as much as a Southern member. There could be no absolute equality, and it was necessary to adopt some rough rule which would as nearly as possible act equitably to all persons. As had been pointed out, if any injustice would be done, it would not be done to more than a very small proportion of hon. members; and that only in the case of an extraordinarily long session.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he had often wished to hear some reasons why there should be a maximum sum mentioned in the Bill; and now, at length, the Premier had given two. One was that they did it in Canada.

The PREMIER: I did not refer to Canada. I said they did it everywhere.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: The hon. gentleman said at an earlier part of the night that it was the rule in Canada. He did not know the fact, but if the Premier had coupled other things with it he would have found that that precedent told the other way. The other reason was, that unless a maximum amount was fixed members might be tempted to sit all the year round. Looking at the character of the Northern members, he did not think there were many of them who could have any influence in protracting a session. But looking at the Government benches, he saw a number of members there who would certainly protract the session until they got their £200. The Southern members would sit until they got the maximum amount, and then they would let the session slide. In short, there was nothing whatever in the reasons given by the hon. gentleman. If a maximum was necessary, it ought to have been based on the average length of a session.

The PREMIER: So it is.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: That was what the hon. gentleman had not done; if he had the sum would have been nearer £300 than £200. If payment of members was a right principle why not admit it, as it was put in the Bill itself? It was a Payment of Expenses Bill, and the members from the North actually incurred those expenses. Why should they be told after a certain time that they could stop if they liked, but they would not be paid? The principle of the Bill was laid down in the preamble and the schedule; the hon. member ought to stick to that and strike out the maximum.

Mr. DONALDSON said that when the Bill was before the House last year he endeavoured to point out that if the Southern members wanted to prolong the session so as to receive the full pay it would be at the expense of the Northern and Western members. There would have to be 100 sitting days before the city members would receive the full amount, while a very short session would be sufficient for the country members. As an illustration, he would point out that in his case last year the Parliament sat 168 days, and it took him 12 days to come and 12 to return—192 days altogether. Under the Bill he would have received for that time about a guinea a day. That was certainly an exceptionally long session, but he wished to point out the injustice to the country members if the town members wished to prolong the session. The suggestion made by the hon. member for Mackay might be a wise one—to increase the maximum in case the business of the session demanded that they should sit very long. Admitting that it was right to

give reimbursement of expenses at all, he thought the Government might yield a point and increase the maximum to £300.

Mr. JORDAN said he thought it was the feeling of the Committee that the Bill now before them should become law. It proposed not only the payment of expenses but the payment of members in a modified form. He thought they should avoid any appearance of injustice or unfairness, and as it had been pretty clearly shown that in the case of a protracted session the country members would be at a disadvantage as compared with the town members, it seemed to him that while the Premier had given good reason for fixing a maximum there would be no inconsistency in fixing it at £300. He hoped the Premier would see his way clear to accepting that suggestion. Like the hon. member for Townsville, he had altered his opinion on this subject, but in a directly opposite way. Formerly he was strongly opposed to the principle of payment of members; he had the old English idea that the honour of a seat in the House should be sufficient without any money payment; but the circumstances in these colonies were very different from those in England. Of course, in England a good deal of legislation was class legislation, which made and kept men rich; and those gentlemen who were wealthy by the law of primogeniture would die of *ennui* if they had not something to do. In these colonies, on the other hand, time was too valuable to be thrown away. He was strongly in favour of payment of members now, for during the twenty-five years he had lived in the colony they had lost the services of many of the ablest men in the House, because their time was too valuable and they were not able to afford to remain members. He believed the character of the House would be raised if they were to retain the services of talented men by honestly paying them for their labour. If a man did his duty as a representative of any constituency he would find lots of work on his hands, what with correspondence, committees, and attending the House early and late during long sessions—and he would fairly earn his £200 or £300. He thought it was an honest thing that men should be paid, and he would like to be honest throughout in the matter, and make such an alteration in the Bill as would make it perfectly equitable for all the members of the House, and especially those coming from a distance.

The PREMIER said that one of the stock arguments against payment of members was that it made professional politicians. If they gave a member of Parliament a fixed salary, sufficient to keep him all the year round, there was a good deal of force in that argument; but in all the debates that had taken place since the matter was first introduced—in 1872, he thought—it had always been insisted upon that the remuneration should not be sufficient to make it worth a man's while to go into Parliament for the sake of the remuneration. For that reason £200 had always been fixed as a maximum, and he did not think that was enough to induce any man to go into politics as a business. If they made it £300 they might find lots of people quite content to offer themselves for the remuneration; it would be more than they had ever made before. He should be very sorry if the result of the measure were to introduce professional politicians—men who looked upon their seat in Parliament as a means of livelihood, and who would therefore be influenced in canvassing the electorates by other motives than those which should actuate them. That was one reason why he had always voted for fixing a low maximum. He thought that many hon. members would agree with him

that it was very desirable that the Bill should be passed in the same form as it was before. He knew that hon. members who were opposed to it would like nothing better than that it should appear as if the House had not made up its mind on the subject, and required further time. The Upper House would naturally say that its special function was to give them further time to make up their minds, and that when they had shown themselves of the same mind two years running it might be justified in considering the matter favourably. They might very reasonably say, "When the other House shows that it is in earnest—when it shows that it is of the same mind two years running—we shall be justified in considering the matter favourably." But so long as the opponents of the measure or their friends could show that the House had not made up its mind on the subject, so long would that be adduced in another place as a very strong argument why the Bill should be thrown out altogether.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the argument used by the hon. gentleman was one of the most extraordinary he had ever heard. He now came forward and attempted to terrify them with what the effect would be if the Upper House did not accept the Bill.

The PREMIER: I only exposed a transparent ruse.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: Would the hon. gentleman just hold his tongue while he (Sir T. McIlwraith) was speaking? If he had looked into history a little he might have found some strong arguments in favour of payment of members, because the House had, on three occasions, he believed—at any rate he was certain as to two—adopted the principle, not in the mawkish way it was now introduced, but honest, straightforward payment of members. But although they had done so the Upper House said, "We do not believe in payment of members," and threw the Bill out, and they would be perfectly justified in throwing it out again if they did not approve of it, no matter in what form it went before them—whether with the proposed amendments or without them. The reason the Premier had given would not actuate the Upper House now, because if they had been inclined to be influenced by the firmness of the Assembly they would have passed the Bill before, as it had been passed three times by that House. Another argument adduced by the Premier why payment of members should be granted was, that it would be a bad thing for the colony if professional politicians were enabled to get into the House, and it was proposed to prevent them from getting in by fixing the amount of remuneration at £200 a year—a sum that no respectable man would be satisfied with. But was not that one of the strongest arguments against payment of members? Because they were certain to get the same men in the House—men who would make their living out of politics—and they would get, instead of £300-a-year men, £200-a-year men—a lower class still. That argument was as clear as possible, and he had never before heard it used in the way it had been by the Premier that night. He (Sir T. McIlwraith) did not care what way the amendment was put—whether as suggested by the hon. member for South Brisbane or by the hon. member for Warrego; but, as a matter of principle, the equitable way was to strike out the 5th subsection of the clause under discussion, because there was no reason at all why a maximum should be fixed. They proposed to deal equally with both North and South, and by striking out that subsection they would remunerate all members on exactly the same principle—paying two guineas a day for every day a member was absent from his home or his business attending the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had yet heard no reply given to the remarks of the hon. member for Warwick (Mr. Horwitz), who had pointed out the gross impropriety of members voting money to themselves, which they were practically asked to do by the Bill. If the House resolved, in its wisdom, that members of Parliament, or of the Assembly, were to be paid, let the principle be applied to future Parliaments, or let them go to the country to decide the question one way or the other. They were not elected to vote salaries to themselves. As the hon. member for Warwick very properly pointed out, the question of payment of members was not a burning one at the time of the last elections. It was one that had since been brought up by the Premier, who had used all the old stock reasons in favour of it. He (Mr. Morehead) maintained that they had no right to vote the money of the taxpayers of the colony to pay themselves, when the people had never been consulted on the subject; and if the hon. member for Warwick or any other hon. member moved as an amendment that the payment proposed should apply only to future Parliaments, he should support it, in order to put on record his opinion, and that of other hon. members who agreed with him, that they had no right—he did not believe that they had even a constitutional right—to vote money to themselves in that manner. The hon. the Premier, in speaking just now, said that £200 a year would not be enough to induce professional politicians to enter the House: but what guarantee had the hon. gentleman given the Committee that the £200 would be a fixed quantity? What guarantee had he given that if they got the £200 members of the House—some of whom might perhaps wish to marry, or found that they could not keep themselves on £200 a year—would not ask for £300, £400, £500, or any sum the majority of the House might choose to vote? There was no finality. If there was there might be something in the hon. gentleman's argument. Once the thin end of the wedge was brought in, and people were led to understand that they could get a sum of money by entering the House, there would be men who would come into it, although the sum was only £200, and afterwards they would ask for remuneration on a higher scale. As he had already said, there would be something in the hon. gentleman's argument if there was any finality in £200 or even £300. The Bill was the introduction of the thin end of the wedge for the payment of members. It was like the opening of a dam; at first the water rushed out slowly and steadily, but eventually it carried away the dam and everything else. In the same way, as soon as the Bill became law—if it ever did become law—he believed, from the experience of other colonies which had adopted the principle of payment of members, that they would find men coming into the Assembly for the sake of £200 a year, and then they would try and get more. He should like the hon. gentleman to tell the Committee whether he assumed that there was to be finality in the £200. Evidently the hon. gentleman would like it to stop at £200 in order to prevent professional politicians from getting into the House, and he wished he would explain how he was going to do that, and also to say whether he was prepared to accept the reasonable proposition of the hon. member for Warwick—to limit the payment that might be sanctioned or granted by the House to members of future Assemblies and not extend it to the present.

The PREMIER said: Of course there could be no finality in such a matter, because future Parliaments might fix the remuneration at any amount. They could not help that. The hon. member knew that very well.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Of course I do; that is the danger.

The PREMIER: As to making the measure apply to future Parliaments, he thought that matter had been fully discussed. The present Parliament was elected pledged to payment of members.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition side: No, no!

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Yes!

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Members' expenses!

The PREMIER said he understood that it was pledged to payment of members on the basis now proposed. The Bill was called a Members Expenses Bill, and he thought it a very fair one. The majority of hon. members were pledged to it. Of course the minority of hon. members were not, and it was very proper on their part to oppose it. The Bill ought to have become law last session, and it was now brought in to apply from the beginning of the year. As for postponing it to another Parliament, that was another matter altogether.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was quite willing to admit that the principle of payment of members having been affirmed by the House so frequently it gave them a certain moral right to pass a Bill to pay themselves. It had been asserted time after time since he had been a member of the House, so that he did not look upon the argument to pass the Bill and make it apply to future Parliaments only as a very valid one. But while admitting that, he thought the Premier had no right to impute motives to him or to any member of that House by saying that they wished to put the Bill into such a shape that the Upper House would not pass it. That was entirely a mistake. He admitted the principle of payment of members as having been passed. He admitted that a majority of that Committee were pledged to support it; but he wanted to make the Bill an equitable Bill in passing it through that Committee. He wished to make the Bill as much as it could be a Members Expenses Bill, but in its present form it was not a Members Expenses Bill at all. It would not reimburse members who came from long distances the expenses they were put to by leaving their homes and business. It might pay the expenses of members who lived about Brisbane or Ipswich, but beyond that it would not go. Therefore, his sole motive in trying to debate that Bill that evening was to make it a fair Bill, and the hon. gentleman had no right to say that he had any other intention. If there was no other amendment to be proposed, he would propose one in subsection 5, and would give hon. members an opportunity of proposing any others.

Mr. BROOKES said he really was in the difficulty, and it was not the first time he had been, of not knowing whether the hon. member for Balonne was sincere. Could he possibly be sincere in expressing his earnest wish that there might be some finality? He did not think that the hon. member was serious either, in the picture he drew of members beginning at £200 and going to £500. He really thought such remarks as that did not contribute to the debate at all. His (Mr. Brookes's) long residence in the colony had given him some little ability to speak about professional politicians. He would like to know whether there ever were in Queensland or anywhere else in all the world better samples of professional politicians than the squatters. To be in that or the other House was their sole end and aim, for the purpose of perpetuating all their monstrous privileges and for keeping away all rivals from their special rights. He could

name some of those professional politicians, and he would not do so in any offensive way. He trusted the leader of the Opposition would understand him. He wished to know what that hon. gentleman was if he was not a professional politician? He distinctly said that it was worth the while of that hon. gentleman, and of some other gentlemen very near him, to be in power, because it fitted admirably with their own business. Was not that being a professional politician? It was difficult to say that without being offensive, and he did not mean to be offensive. He was dealing with facts, and it was a fact that ever since there had been a Parliament in Queensland the pastoral interest had been overweighed in the House, and that it had been the business of the pastoral lessees to secure a predominance of political influence in that House: they had been from the beginning professional politicians. The hon. member for Balonne was emboldened further to say that where there had been payment of members there had been political corruption. Surely the hon. member spoke without thinking! He defied him to name a single instance in confirmation of his remark. They all knew that Victoria could not possibly have attained its present position as an Australian colony but for its adoption of payment of members. It was only by adopting that principle that the democratic principle—which was a true Australian principle—was able to hold its own against capitalists and land-sharks in Victoria. The hon. gentlemen might cough at it. He dared say it was a disagreeable fact for them, and a little coughing would do them no harm.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The coughing was on your side.

Mr. BROOKES said he wished it to be distinctly understood that he represented it as being an incontrovertible fact that the people in Victoria would be under the heel of capitalists and land-sharks and the great squatters now, if it had not been for the adoption of the principle of payment of members.

Mr. ARCHER: That is your opinion.

Mr. BROOKES said it was not his opinion at all. Of course when he said that he meant that it was not his unsupported opinion. It was an historical fact, and his opinion was based upon his knowledge of that fact. That reminded him that an hon. gentleman who was present repeated in the House yesterday that he had said the North had neither money nor brains. He (Mr. Brookes) never said any such thing, and he would take the opportunity of again correcting that hon. gentleman, who ought to have known better.

Mr. HAMILTON: You did say it, and you apologised afterwards for doing so.

Mr. BROOKES said he did not. He was speaking of the hon. member for Mackay, who was continually posing as the representative of the North. He (Mr. Brookes) denied that he represented the North, and asserted that he represented Mackay only, and a mere handful there. If the hon. gentleman did pose as representative of the North, certainly the North had neither money nor brains. No fact was better known than that, after the elections in England came off next November, the very first movement of the Radicals there would be to have payment of members.

Mr. ARCHER: How do you know that?

Mr. BROOKES said the hon. gentleman asked him how he knew that? He might have also asked how he knew his name was "Archer"? He had never seen the hon. gentleman's baptismal register. Payment of members was part of the programme. It was intended to have this

colony a democratic colony and not a plutocratic. The only defence the House could raise was the defence which the constituencies had asked them to raise. The hon. member for Balonne said it was not a burning question at the last election. It was a question upon which everybody had agreed. It would be quite a mistake to suppose that non-payment of members did anything at all to ensure purity of government. Now, as showing the opinion, to some extent, of the neighbouring colony of New South Wales, at a lecture given by a member of the Assembly, Mr. Heydon, he made a remark expressive of his opinion that they should have payment of members in New South Wales; and a voice from the audience ejaculated, "They pay themselves here." That led up to the idea that without a payment of members, such as was intended by the Bill, there were modes and methods by which members could reimburse themselves; and he thought anyone who was acquainted with the history of this colony would have no difficulty in finding out what those modes were by which members paid themselves. Of course, it followed naturally, if the mode of payment was not an open payment—a legislative payment—it was almost inevitable that it should be a corrupt payment. He averred now that in this colony, from the very beginning of their existence as a colony, it had been well worth the while of certain gentlemen to secure seats in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council for purposes that were not public purposes. Then, also, he would remember that he was speaking in a Legislative Assembly, and that whatever he said would go throughout the colony, and he would not wish to speak in any other manner than a manner befitting that Legislative Assembly. Remembering then where he was speaking, and what he was who spoke, he said this: That, looking at the purity of Parliament, and the purity of administration, and the necessity there was that that Parliament should fairly represent all classes in the community, leaving no class out, he could see no other way of arriving at that desirable end save by payment of members. They knew that while the pastoral lessees followed an occupation which gave them a deal of leisure, those engaged in commercial pursuits, especially at a distance from the metropolis, laboured under a great disadvantage, and he said that their voice was not heard in that House as it ought to be heard. That was the opinion of a large number of electors—those who went by the familiar name of "working men." He used the term in a technical sense. Somebody said the previous day that lawyers were not working men, and that "they toiled not, neither did they spin." He regarded that as a mere play upon words. Hon. members would know what he meant—namely, that the great mass of electors and their interests did not find sufficient voice in that House, for this reason, that the men who were best acquainted with their interests, and their temptations, and their struggles, were prevented from going to the House on account of the expense. The sum named in the Bill was in his opinion fair and equitable, and he would not wish to see it unduly increased. He thought that as it stood it was an amount which would enable small shopkeepers from distant places to represent the localities in which they lived. Some had said—and he believed that in some cases it was said conscientiously—that the members of that Committee ought not to vote that money for themselves. He regarded that opinion as having its origin in a mistaken idea. At all events, the way he put it to himself was this: Is it a right thing to pay members? Is it a right thing for a member of the Legislative Assembly to receive a money remuneration for loss of time

and, as would be the case sometimes, to pay the expense of someone attending to his business during his absence? Those questions he answered in the affirmative. Therefore it seemed to him to follow fairly and necessarily that if it was right for members of that House to pass a Bill for the payment of members, and it must be passed some time by some members, it was no violation of any principle of honour or honesty in making the measure apply to this present session of Parliament. He would now refer to the question of indemnity. The hon. member for Balonne often said things on the spur of the moment which would not bear reflection. He often thought that that gentleman made remarks and then went and inquired whether his remarks had any pertinence afterwards. Only the mischief was that he had said the thing. The hon. gentleman could not therefore complain if his opinions were sometimes called in question. He (Mr. Brookes) thought no hon. members would have a disparaging word to say against the Dominion of Canada. For the information of the House and the public he would read from a volume called "Parliamentary Procedure and Practice in the Dominion of Canada," by John George Bourinot, Clerk of the House of Commons of Canada. He would read an extract from that to give hon. members a knowledge—a present knowledge, for hon. members might have read it before, and he did not say it was new to them, though it might be to some—of how the matter was worked in Canada. At page 146 of that work, under the heading of "Members' Indemnity," he found the following:—

"The members of both Houses receive a sessional indemnity, besides a travelling allowance, and forfeit a certain sum for every day of absence from their duties in the House.

"The Act of 1867, relating to the indemnity to members, and salary of the Speakers, gave each member 6 dollars for each day's attendance, if the session did not extend beyond thirty days; but if it should be longer he would receive a sessional allowance of 600 dollars. In 1873 the Act was amended so as to increase these amounts to 10 dollars, and to 1,000 dollars, whilst the salary of each Speaker was raised from 3,200 to 4,000 dollars annually. A deduction of 8 dollars per day shall be made from the sessional allowance for every day on which the member does not attend a meeting of the House."

He would commend what followed to hon. members, because it bore upon a point which had been adverted to in the debate:—

"But this deduction will not be made for days of adjournment when the House is not sitting, or in case of illness. When the member has been in attendance at the place where Parliament meets, members are paid 7 dollars for each day as the session advances, as well as mileage at the rate of 10 cents a mile going and coming. At the close of the session the sum due a member will be paid him by the accountant of the House, on his making and signing before the same, or a justice of the peace, a solemn declaration of the actual number of days he attended the House, and of the number of miles travelled, as determined and ratified by the Speaker of the House."

It remained now to be shown that in consequence of that rule or that law the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada had given any signs of decay. He did not think that that could be shown. It was only common sense that such a rule as that in a widely extended place like Canada must work for good. People in Australia were rather apt to imagine that they knew precisely the best way of administering their affairs without anybody telling them. He was certain that the more hon. members of that Committee examined the question and searched into the practice in Europe, in Canada, and in the States, the more certainly would they come to the conclusion that it was just as fair to pay private members of the House as it was to pay Ministers of the Crown. The

claim in both cases stood on precisely the same footing. There was one other little matter which hardly deserved attention, but one upon which he would just say a word or two, and that was the nonchalant manner in which some gentlemen on the other side of the Committee had treated the proposed payment under that Bill. Some had said that they would not receive it, and some that they would give the money to charitable institutions. He would speak plainly on that matter. He regarded those statements as merely hypocritical talk. As to those who talked so mightily about giving the money to charitable institutions, he would like to know what they gave to charities. He would venture to remark that their names did not top the lists of subscriptions to any charitable institution, and that if they got two guineas anywhere within reach of their fingers they would just clutch them as anybody else would, and the charitable institutions would know nothing about them. He did not wish to detain the Committee, but he would quote another extract showing that in the opinion of a very eminent person Canada had not suffered any decay or at all retrograded from the practice of paying hon. members of Parliament. He would quote from a speech of the Marquis of Lorne, delivered in reply to a farewell address of the Parliament of Canada, in 1883; and the following were the words he used descriptive of Canada:—

"A judicature above suspicion; self-governing communities entrusting to a strong central government all national interests; the toleration of all faiths, with favour to none; a franchise recognising the rights of labour, by the exclusion only of the idler; the maintenance of a government not privileged to exist for any fixed term, but ever susceptible to the change of public opinion, and ever open through a responsible ministry to the scrutiny of the people—these are the features of your rising power."

He only wished that those words might be taken as a correct description of the grand colony of Queensland. He gave his vote in favour of payment of members, as he had said before, because he was firmly persuaded that it would do more than anything else to bring the interests of the people under the notice of Parliament; to procure for the people able, competent, and experienced advocates; and because it would do very much indeed to remove from the legislation and debates of that Assembly that municipal and parochial character which, he was sorry to say, they too often possessed.

Mr. PALMER said that the words used by the junior member for North Brisbane some time ago were so plainly stated in *Hansard* that he would simply read them, and leave hon. members to judge for themselves whether the words were used as stated. In referring to separation, the hon. member said:—

"How should he refer to the way in which the hon. member for Mackay spoke of separation—about the North separating from the South? Did they not all know that the North had not a shilling to bless itself with? They were as poor as crows—the whole lot of them."

Mr. MOREHEAD: I think the Premier has some land outside of Townsville which will bring him in a lot of money.

Mr. BROOKES said the House knew very well what he meant; and he asserted that the North had not the materials out of which they could be separated. They had neither money nor brains—that was worse still.

Nothing need be added to those remarks. He could scarcely understand how those who voted against the Bill then under consideration could vote for an increase in the amount to be paid to hon. members; and he hoped the Premier would adhere to the minimum proposed in the Bill.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH asked the Premier to explain the operation of subsection 3. It was only right that hon. members should understand it before coming to a decision on the clause.

The PREMIER said he remembered the same question being asked last session—by the same member, he believed. The words of subsection 3 were:—

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

He would take the case of town and country members separately. If the House were appointed to sit four days in the week, and a town member attended on two days, he would get only one-half of the allowance—that was simple enough. A country member received an allowance for every day he was necessarily absent from his usual residence for the purpose of attending Parliament. He would, of course, be necessarily absent seven days in the week. If Parliament was appointed to sit four days in the week, and the country member attended two days out of the four, there would be deducted from the seven days' allowance a sum bearing the same proportion to the whole sum as two days to four days; that was to say, he would get only half of the seven days' allowance. If he attended one day out of three days, two-thirds of his allowance would be deducted. That was exactly the same explanation he gave last year.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not remember asking the question last year at all; but he would put another case. Supposing the session were to last fifty working days, the Northern members would be entitled to pay for 100 days. If a Southern member were away seven days he would be mulcted £14 by the clause; but if a Northern member were absent seven days he would be mulcted to the extent of £28. Where was the equity in that? The thing was preposterous. Why should a Northern man be fined twice as much as a Southern man for non-attendance?

The PREMIER: Because he gets twice as much as the Southern member.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said that, taking the case he put before, the Northern man would get £200, while the Southern man would get £172; but if each was absent for seven days the amounts would be almost equalised.

The PREMIER said if each member lost by his absence seven days out of eighty-two, each would lose seven eighty-seconds of his pay.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said, taking last session as an example of how the Bill would operate and accepting the present minimum, the Northern member would get £200 and the Southern member £172 8s., neither of them being absent. Supposing each of them were absent fourteen days during the whole session, then the Northern member would get £144 and the Southern member £144—exactly the same amount in each case.

The PREMIER said he did not arrive at the same conclusion as the hon. gentleman. It was a very simple sum in arithmetic, and fourteen eighty-seconds of £200 did not appear to reduce the amount to £144. Fourteen eighty-seconds of £200 was not £55.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said after all the discussion they had had it seemed the Bill was really misunderstood still. He thought it would be much fairer to the Southern and Northern members if they really went back to the system of payment of members. He was not going to quibble over words. What was proposed was payment of members, no matter how it was looked at. The payment might be called refreshers or compensation, but still it was payment of members.

The PREMIER: You might call it indemnity.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he believed it would be far better to resort to the plain honest system of payment of members by a certain fixed price. It was preferable to pay a certain sum than to give one man double the amount of another man for being absent. It must be borne in mind that Northern members' expenses were nearly twice as much as that of Southern members. Take the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, as an instance. He was absent from his home for four or five days every week. Take the hon. member at the head of the Government. He was never absent from his home at all. He did his business the same as if he was not a member of Parliament, whilst the hon. member for Toowoomba was away from his business, and if he did not do it probably he had to pay someone else to do it for him. It was all nonsense to say that he got twice as much as the leader of the Government, because his expenses were three times as great. The fairest way was to pay all men alike and let the members' constituents deal with them as they pleased. He would put it to hon. members on the other side who had not expressed any opinion at all, whether it should not be so, and he was sure that many of the Government supporters were ready to adopt the pure principle of payment of members but for the gag that was put upon them by the Ministry. They were threatened that if they voted for anything like what he proposed the Upper House would throw out the measure. The Ministry, he believed, had the intention and the power to place a sun on the Estimates, just as had been done elsewhere, and let that sum be passed for the payment of members whether the Bill was passed or not, so that it was no use trying to frighten members on the other side from voting for what was right and just. He stated on the previous day that he did not believe in the principle of payment of members, and he also stated that he believed rather in paying a lump sum instead of paying according to the inquisitorial method proposed. The more he looked into it the more he disliked it, and if hon. members studied the matter they would dislike it more also. It would be far better to say they would pay £200 or £300 a year than adopt the proposed method. He would put the Committee to a test before they had done with the clause, but he would like to hear an expression of opinion from hon. members opposite.

The PREMIER: Let us get on with some business.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they would have got on with the business long ago if the hon. gentleman's colleague had not thrown a red herring across the trail through his nonsensical talk about squatters. He (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) could retort by saying that he never saw a Government with so many squatters in it as the present one. What had the number of squatters or lawyers got to do with the payment of members? He looked upon the one as being just as much of a professional politician as the other; in fact, the lawyer had more to gain by being in the House. Anyway, he would like an expression of opinion upon what he intended to propose.

Mr. MACFARLANE said most of the hon. members on that side of the Committee had freely expressed their opinion in reference to the Bill on a former occasion, and they were pretty unanimous as to the justice of payment of members. He thought also that from the expression of opinion on the other side of the Committee most of the members there were in favour of payment of members.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Of course they tried to make believe that they were not, but yet at the same time they were prepared to increase the amount from £200 to £300. He was not going to discuss the principles of the Bill, but there were one or two things in it which he should like to see altered. But he was not going to fight about mere details. The broad fact was that if the House sat three days a week Southern members who could get to their homes would be paid six guineas a week, and Northern members who could not get to their homes would be paid fourteen guineas a week. Personally, he would like to see the question dealt with in a simpler way. The Northern members were clearly entitled to more than the Southern members, and a simpler plan would be to pay the Southern members two guineas a day and the Northern members three guineas a day. But the Northern members had their own remedy. They had simply to remain in town for ninety-five days, which would exhaust the £200, and then go away home. Subsection 3 would have no effect upon them after they had got their money, for what would be the use of fining them in their absence? There was nothing in the Bill to which he had any objection. Since the age of sixteen he had been a Radical, and payment of members was one of the seven points of the Charter. He had always advocated it, and he should not be ashamed to take money that he had worked for.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member must have forgotten his catechism, talking about "seven" points of the Charter. When he (Mr. Macrossan) was young there were only six points in the Charter.

Mr. BEATTIE: The seventh is "Look after yourself."

The PREMIER: Five, I thought it was.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said there were six, and he would repeat them if the hon. gentleman wished. The hon. member for Ipswich had thrown a new light on the Bill by pointing out that Northern members could go home after ninety-five days, so that they would not be put to the expense of attending Parliament longer than they were paid for. How would the 3rd subsection work in that case?

The PREMIER: Pay them monthly.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: If they had the money in their pockets would the Treasurer issue a writ to get it back from them? He did not think the Premier had considered that part of the Bill. Would it be deducted from the money payable in the following session? However, as no hon. member on the other side seemed inclined to support an amendment making a certain sum payable to members of Parliament, he would move, as an amendment, the omission of subsection 5, as follows:—

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

In support of that he would say a few words as to the actual amount that would be received by town members and by country members. He had taken an average of ten sessions, leaving out the session of 1883, which was a peculiar one of two very short sitting periods, and he found that their average length was 67½ days, or about 20 weeks.

The PREMIER: Not at four days a week.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: But the House did not sit four days a week until towards the close of the session. For the greater part of the time it sat only three days a week. During those ten years there had been two or three

sessions extending considerably over that period. Last session there were eighty-two sitting days, in the session of 1877 there were eighty-six, and in that of 1881 there were seventy-six; but the average was sixty-seven days, or twenty weeks. Taking it at that rate, the Northern members, and all other outside members who could not attend Parliament regularly and to their business at the same time, would not receive such a sum as would induce what the Premier seemed to be afraid of, and those in opposition, too—namely, the creation of a class of professional politicians. The sum a country member would receive would be 280 guineas. Surely, the difference between that and 200 guineas would not be enough to make the establishment of a professional politician possible if it were not possible in the other case! At the same time the town member, taking the average number of sitting days as sixty-seven, would receive 134 guineas for his attendance, supposing he were present every day the House sat. It seemed to him that that was about as fairly as they could put it without interfering materially with the Bill. He appreciated to a certain extent the objection Ministers had to making any alterations in the Bill; they wanted to be able to say, "This is exactly the same Bill that we passed last year, and therefore you ought to pass it now." But if the gentlemen in the other Chamber were inclined to throw the Bill out it did not matter to them whether it was exactly in the same words; the principle was the real thing. Whilst appreciating the motives of the Ministry he could not give them any weight; in his opinion it mattered very little, so far as the passage of the Bill in the other Chamber was concerned, whether it was altered or sent up in its present form. He thought it was perhaps just as well to have a division upon that subsection. Hon. members would thoroughly understand that if the subsection were affirmed the sum of £200 was also affirmed as the highest amount that could be paid to any member, no matter how long he might sit. If the subsection were omitted, the consequence would be, that for a twenty weeks' session in one case it would be 134 guineas, and in the other case 280. He thought the Premier might very well accept that.

The PREMIER said he did not wish to discuss the matter further. At an earlier period of the sitting he had given his reasons for thinking that there should be a maximum, and that that maximum should be a reasonable one, and he did not think he could add anything to what he had then said. Of course if the amendment were carried it would prevent their going on any further with the Bill in its present shape, as another message would be required.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that if the subsection were negatived, the hon. member, who said he believed in a maximum, could propose any other maximum he chose.

The PREMIER: I want to leave it with this maximum.

Mr. STEVENS said he had been prevented by the late arrival of his train from expressing his opinion on the second reading, but he had opposed the Bill three or four times since he had been in Parliament, and he was totally opposed to payment of members. The chief argument offered in support of it was that the system had been a success in Victoria; but he thought that was a very unfortunate illustration. It could not be shown that the introduction of the system had done Victoria any good; and if that colony was in a flourishing condition it was owing to the constitution of the present Government. He could not support the amendment, because, since he was opposed to payment of members as a tax on the colony, the

only amendment he could consistently support would be one which would reduce that tax to the smallest possible amount.

Mr. HAMILTON said that he quite agreed with the hon. member for Warwick, that it would be very indecent conduct for them to vote money to pay for services performed by themselves. Had he been in the House on the previous night he would have been compelled to vote against the second reading. The reason which was nearly always urged in favour of payment of members was that it increased the choice of constituencies; but that reason could not be urged in the present instance, because the constituencies had already made their choice. They were the choice of the constituencies, and they had contracted to represent them for nothing, and should carry out that contract. However, now that the Bill had been introduced, it was their duty to make the best they could of it. The only reason given by the Premier for not putting Northern members on the same footing as Southern members was that there ought to be a maximum, and the only reason he gave why £200 should be the maximum was that professional politicians could be obtained at the exact price of £300. He would defer to the hon. gentleman's superior knowledge on that point. He regretted very much to notice that the junior member for North Brisbane, as usual, made insinuations against members on the Opposition side. Now, such conduct simply tended to lower the tone of the House, and was productive of no good. It should be their object to improve the Bill according to their lights, and not to conduct themselves in that manner. The Bill was introduced to pay actual expenses, and they should endeavour to adhere to that principle. It had been plainly shown that if that clause passed Northern members would not be placed on the same footing as Southern members. If the session lasted for over 100 days, seeing that £2 a day was considered a fair reimbursement for a Northern member during his absence from his constituency, for all the period over 100 days he would be actually deprived of £2 a day. The only objection the Premier urged to that argument was that it was very unlikely indeed that the session would last longer than 100 days. As that was the case he would suggest that no member should receive any payment for attendance in the House after 100 days had elapsed from the commencement of the session. Then Northern and Southern members would be placed upon exactly the same footing. The only objection Southern members could have to refusing to increase the maximum of £200 was that the session would not last over 100 days, but they could not object to his proposition, which placed Northern and Southern members on the same footing. If the House sat over 100 days Northern members would be out of pocket, and Southern members would not be reimbursed either.

Mr. FERGUSON said he intended to support the amendment for this reason: when the hon. the Colonial Secretary brought the Bill before the House last session he stated that it was introduced for the express purpose of meeting the requirements of Northern and Western members, who resided long distances from the seat of Parliament; and another reason he gave was that it would give Northern and Western constituencies the opportunity of being represented by local men. That was one of the strongest reasons why he supported the Bill. They knew that at the present time not one-half the constituencies of the North were represented by local men. The portion of the colony north of Rockhampton, including the districts out west, returned seventeen members, and out of that number nine were residing in the South and had their interests in the South. More than

one-half of the representatives of that part of the colony, including the Rockhampton district, were Southern men. The districts south of Rockhampton returned thirty-eight members, and of those thirty-five represented local constituencies; so that there were only three who did not reside in, or had no interest in, the district they represented. If the Bill would be the means of enabling the North to obtain local representatives it would do some good. At present the constituencies there could not do so on account of the expense of coming down to Brisbane and the loss of time it entailed, which was more than local men could afford. If the amendment was passed it would very likely increase the amount that would be received by Northern members. The representatives of the South would not benefit by it, because the session would not last long enough, and as it would not benefit more than half-a-dozen other members he should support it.

Mr. JORDAN said, after what he had previously said it would be necessary to say a few words in explanation, because otherwise it might be said that he gave a vote inconsistent with the opinions he had expressed. He should vote against the amendment, because he thought there was a good deal in the argument of the hon. the Premier—that the Bill should be passed in the same form in which it passed the House last session.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member who had just sat down, after delivering a strong speech in favour of the amendment, was now going to vote against it, and why? Because he had been threatened by the Premier that he would withdraw the Bill.

Mr. JORDAN said he had not been threatened, and the Committee had not been threatened by the hon. the Premier that he would withdraw the Bill.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: I heard the Premier say so.

Mr. JORDAN said that after listening to the arguments on both sides he had come to the conclusion that if the amendment were carried Northern members would be placed at a great advantage over Southern members. In addition to the fees per day, members from a distance would receive 1s. 6d. per mile travelling expenses each way, which in the case of a member who travelled 300 miles to attend the House would amount to about £45. On looking further into the matter, and considering the arguments used, he thought the Bill as it stood dealt very fairly with members coming from a distance.

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

AYES, 25.

Messrs. Griffith, Dickson, Moreton, Dutton, Sheridan, Foxton, Beattie, Grimes, Macfarlane, Midgley, White, J. Campbell, Buckland, Kellett, Jordan, Annear, Aland, Isambert, Smyth, Rutledge, Bailey, Stevens, Mellor, Brookes, and Groom.

NOES, 7.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Macrossan, Black, Hamilton, Ferguson, and Jessop.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That clause 1, as read, stand part of the Bill—put and passed.

Clause 2—"Allowances when to be paid"—passed as printed.

On clause 3—"No payment to salaried members"—

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH asked how the clause would affect anyone receiving a pension from the Crown?

The PREMIER said the clause would not affect such a person at all. A salary was given for services rendered.

Clause passed as printed.

Clauses 4 and 5, the schedule and preamble, were passed as printed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment; and the third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1878 AMENDMENT BILL.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Last evening this Bill was withdrawn, a mistake occurring in the printing, and the Order of the Day was discharged from the paper. I beg now to move that the order for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Local Government Act of 1878 be again read to the House.

Question put and passed; and the Clerk read the order as follows:—

"On the 9th July instant, it was resolved 'That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Government Act of 1878.'"

On the motion of the PREMIER, leave was given to introduce a Bill in accordance with the resolution read by the Clerk.

The PREMIER presented the Bill, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed, and the second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

NEW GUINEA ISLANDERS EMPLOYERS COMPENSATION BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1, as follows:—

"The employer of any islander so returned to his native island may at any time before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, send to the Colonial Secretary a claim setting forth the name of any islander so returned, the time when he was introduced into the colony, the cost and expense to the employer of his introduction, the time when the islander ceased to be employed, and particulars of the loss alleged to have been sustained by the employer by reason of being deprived of the services of the islander. Such particulars shall set forth in detail the mode in which the amount of the alleged loss is made up and computed."

Mr. BLACK said he understood from the remarks that fell from the Premier on the previous day that the compensation provided by the Bill was not merely for those New Guinea Islanders who were returned to their homes, but also for certain boys sent back to their islands in the vessel "Jessie Kelly" about twelve or eighteen months ago; that was, of course, assuming that the claims of the employers were made out to the satisfaction of the judge and assessors. Was that the case?

The PREMIER said that although the Bill was called the New Guinea Islanders Employers Compensation Bill, which he thought was a convenient name to give it to accentuate the purpose for which it was intended, it was framed intentionally to meet all other cases of islanders returned under similar circumstances. He did not know of any other case except the one referred to, a case brought before the House last year; if there were any they would be covered by the preamble of the Bill, which specified "certain Pacific Islanders introduced into the colony under the provisions of the Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1880." Any islanders would be included in that category.

Mr. BLACK said there was the case of Mr. Lloyd, with reference to which he had waited on the Colonial Secretary. Daly and Hellicar were the attorneys in the case.

The PREMIER said his memory did not serve him in respect to that matter, but the Bill had been drawn to cover any cases of that kind.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 2, as follows :—

"For the purposes of investigating such claims and assessing the amount of loss sustained by the claimants a court shall be and is hereby constituted, consisting of the judge of the Metropolitan District Court and two assessors."

"One of the assessors shall in each case be nominated by the Governor in Council and the other by the claimant."

"Provided that when the same person makes a claim in respect of the loss of the services of more than one islander the same persons shall be appointed as assessors in respect of the claims made for the loss of the services of all such islanders."

The PREMIER said there was one mistake in the clause—the word "Metropolitan" should be "Southern," and he therefore moved that the clause be amended by substituting the word "Southern" for the word "Metropolitan" before "District Court."

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that before that amendment was put to the Committee he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary why the judge should be a judge of the Southern District Court? He (Hon. Mr. Macrossan) believed that the majority of cases—in fact, ninety-nine one-hundredths of them—were Northern cases, and why should they not be tried by a Northern judge? There were two judges in the North, one a Supreme Court judge and the other a District Court judge, and it would certainly be less expensive to have the cases tried by one of those judges.

The PREMIER said it was not a question of place but of person—as to who should determine the cases. The Bill provided that they should be tried at such day and place as the judge should appoint, and no doubt he would appoint whatever place was most convenient. If it was most convenient to hear the cases in the North the judge would no doubt go there. The Judge of the Southern District Court was named because he was a judge of large experience, and of very great capacity for determining questions of fact, and who commanded general confidence.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Who is that?

The PREMIER: Judge Paul, who is, as I have said, a judge of very large experience indeed.

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

Clauses 3, 4, and 5—"Claims to be sent to judge," "Name of assessors to be given," and "Procedure of court,"—passed as printed.

On clause 6, as follows :—

"6. In assessing damages the following rules shall be observed :—

1. A claimant shall not be entitled to any damages that have not been actually sustained, or that are of a merely speculative nature; nor for any loss of prospective profits.
2. Regard shall be had to the length of time during which the islanders were actually employed by the claimant.
3. No greater damages shall be allowed than the actual net difference between the expenditure which has been actually incurred, or would have been incurred, by the claimant in respect of the introduction, maintenance, clothing, medical attendance, wages, and return of the islanders of whose service he has been deprived if such islanders had remained in his service for the full period of three years, and the cost of engaging other labourers to perform the same work which would have been performed by such islanders if they had remained in the claimant's service, together with any loss which has been actually sustained by the claimant by reason of his inability to procure other labour.
4. A claimant shall not be entitled to any damages unless he proves that he has used all reasonable means to supply the place of the islanders of whose services he has been deprived.

5. Regard shall be had to the probability of the islanders refusing or becoming incapable to work or dying before the expiration of the full period of three years."

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to have some explanation with regard to subsection 4, which provided that "a claimant shall not be entitled to any damages unless he proves that he has used reasonable means to supply the place of islanders of whose services he has been deprived." He hardly understood what was intended by the words "reasonable means." What were reasonable means was entirely a matter of opinion. If a planter sent to a labour agent supplying those labourers, or had sent down to the islands from which Polynesians were obtained, he supposed he would call that reasonable means. If that would be taken as sufficient, any employer could prove that he had taken "reasonable means"; but if "reasonable means" meant anything beyond that, and as sending to Europe, there would be great difficulty. If it meant "ordinary" means, there would be no difficulty.

The PREMIER: That is what is meant.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that instead of regard being had to islanders "refusing or becoming incapable to work or dying," regard should be had to the islanders living. Islanders were not brought to the colony for the purpose of dying—dying was a mere accident. He would ask whether there was an instance of islanders refusing to work?

The PREMIER: Plenty of them have run away.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that surely, if an islander became incapable of work, that would be sufficient punishment to the planter without depriving him of compensation! If he (Mr. Macrossan) had any interest in compensation he should look on the 5th subsection with great suspicion as being one which would work unfairly against his claim. It was all very well to say that confidence could be placed in the common sense of the judge, who was a man of experience in regard to questions of fact; but there were the assessors as well. And the question occurred to him—who was to pay the assessors? Would the claimant have to pay his own assessor, or would both be paid by the Government?

The PREMIER said the 13th clause was the place to deal with the payment of assessors. The 5th subsection of clause 6 was inserted to indicate distinctly that the Government, though they undertook to compensate employers, were not to be treated as if they were insurers of the lives of the men during the remainder of their term of service, supposing them to have remained in the colony. It was well known that a large percentage might have died or might have been sick in the hospital for a considerable time; so that it was an important element to take into consideration in determining the amount of compensation, and therefore attention had been called to it in the clause.

Mr. BLACK said that the hon. gentleman must bear in mind that most of the islanders returned had been a number of months in the colony—many of them twelve months—and that the mortality, as a rule, took place during the first six months after arrival in the colony. He did not apprehend that there would be any necessity to take the probability of the islanders dying into account at all.

Mr. JORDAN said that more importance attached to subsection 5 than the hon. member for Mackay appeared to think, and if he had remembered the percentage of the mortality amongst islanders he would have come to a different conclusion. The average mortality, to

say nothing of those who recently arrived in the colony, was from 6 to 8 per cent; and that was a very important element indeed to take into consideration. That large proportion swelled the Queensland death rate, and made it appear heavier than the rates of the other colonies; whereas if the deaths among Polynesians and Chinese were deducted, Queensland would have a better account to show in respect to the health-giving capabilities of its climate than any other colony of the group.

Mr. STEVENS asked whether the 5th subsection applied to islanders who had done no work? Last year some boys bolted from the Coomera on the day they arrived there. How would the subsection bear upon that case?

The PREMIER said the claim would be considered just the same way as others. The amount of work they would have done had they remained would be taken into consideration, and probably it would be found that one or half a white man could have done as much as two islanders. The claim would be decided on the facts adduced.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 12, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 13—

"The judge may allow and add to the amount awarded as damages such reasonable sum as he may think fit for costs, but not exceeding in any case fifty pounds"—

The PREMIER said that as it might be more convenient to try a case in Brisbane instead of up north, he thought witnesses' expenses should be allowed. He would therefore move that after the word "costs" the following words be inserted—"assessors' fees and witnesses' expenses."

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the clause was further amended by the addition at the end of the clause of the following words—"exclusive of fees and witnesses' expenses."

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 14—"Payment of amounts awarded for damages"—put and passed.

Clause 15—"Short title"—

On the motion of the PREMIER, the title was amended so as to read, "The Pacific Islanders Employers Compensation Act of 1885," and clause as amended put and passed.

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

ADDITIONAL MEMBERS BILL— COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider this Bill in detail.

Clause 1, as follows, passed as printed:—

"The electoral district of Fortitude Valley shall return two members to the Legislative Assembly, instead of one member as provided by the Electoral District Act of 1878."

On clause 2, as follows:—

"Notwithstanding the passing of this Act, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, or, if there is no Speaker, or he is absent from the colony, the Governor, shall issue his writ for the election of a second member for the said electoral district"—

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he had done nothing more than read the Bill, and had not had the advantage of hearing any of the speeches that had been made upon it. The Premier had better delay the further consideration of the Bill until the statistics asked for on that side of the House had been laid on the table. No one could find fault with the additional members that had been given, but there was great room to find fault for additional members not being given to certain other districts. He would instance first the district that he represented—the district of

Mulgrave. The reason given by the Premier last night why Mulgrave should not have an additional member was that the number of electors on the roll had decreased from 1,796 to 1,588 because a lot of navvies had gone away. He failed to understand how that could be. A very few navvies had certainly left the district, but since the last census there had been a large increase in the population of the district. Since that date the largest sugar factory in the colony had been established there, and several second-class ones, which were large compared with those of every other place but Mackay. Bundaberg itself had doubled in size during the last few years; and it was evident that a grave mistake had been made in the return submitted by the Government. No one who knew the district could say for a moment that it had gone back in population. In addition to the rapid growth of the town, settlement had taken place all over the district, and large works, in addition to those he had mentioned, had been established since the last census was taken. In the face of those facts he failed to see how the district had gone back in comparison with other parts of the colony. On the contrary, with the exception of Brisbane, where population had been aggregated owing to extraordinary causes beyond that of any other district, the Mulgrave district and Bundaberg had gone ahead in that respect of all the rest. Immediately after the census of 1881 he had a table prepared in the Registrar-General's office, showing the proportion which population bore to representation in each electorate of the colony—that was, taking into consideration the right system on which to base representation—namely, the manhood of each district. According to the newspapers—he had not read the speech—the Premier had declared that the principle on which he based his system of representation was one which he had always advocated and acted upon—namely, the gross population of a district. But the hon. gentleman was in error there, for he had only brought in and passed one Bill of the kind, and that was based—as he showed at the time and as was admitted by the hon. gentleman himself—on the male adult population principle. That was the principle that he believed they ought to proceed on, if they went on the population principle at all—and they were bound to go upon it in a democratic colony like Queensland. But he should like to see taxation as well as population represented—that those who paid taxes should be represented somewhat in proportion to what they paid. There were some districts in the North and West which, although they were not so populous as others, had a much larger proportion of taxpaying population. In the North they paid a very large amount more than in the South; and it would equalise matters were they to adopt the system on which the Palmer Administration acted, and on which the Douglas Administration also acted when the present Premier brought in the Bill to which he had alluded—a system which they were asked to depart from now. The hon. gentleman also said that the gross population basis was the system on which they acted at home. But that was absurd, for if it were so there would be as many members for the city of London and its suburbs as for the whole of Scotland, and he thought his countrymen would question the rightness of a principle of that kind, fond as they were of going to London and making their mark there. According to the paper of which he had spoken, some of the constituencies at the date of the last census were much over-represented. Thus Carnarvon was only entitled to 0·63 of a member, Drayton and Toowoomba to a member and a-half, Fassifern to 0·83. Fortitude Valley would at that time have been

over-represented by two members, but no doubt the population had greatly increased since then. Mulgrave was entitled to 1'48, and he was quite right in introducing the Bill he did in 1883, giving that district an additional member; and if it was entitled to 1'48 then it was certainly now, owing to the large increase in population that had taken place, entitled to two members. At that time Mulgrave was more under-represented than any other constituency in the colony, with the exception of the places that had now been recognised by the Government—namely, Townsville, Mitchell, and Fortitude Valley. Those places were more under-represented than Mulgrave was, but very close after the Mitchell came Mulgrave. He was quite sure that if they had proper statistics Mulgrave would come in for an additional member; and not only that, but if they had statistics such as could be easily prepared in the Registrar-General's Office a claim could, he felt sure, be made out for an additional member between Maryborough and Wide Bay. He did not think they should go simply on the argument of the number of electors on the rolls, and from what he could hear that was the only argument used by the Premier. With regard to the remark of the Premier, that when the new census was taken it would involve a Redistribution Bill, he thought that would depend very much on how things went at the next general election. If the present Opposition came into power, the hon. member would remind them what he said ought to be done; but if the hon. member and his party got in—he did not think they would get in—they were not likely to hear any more about the absolute necessity for a Redistribution Bill till it got near the end of the term of the next five years.

The PREMIER said that, with regard to the hon. member's suggestion that they might wait till they got further statistics, he had explained on the previous evening that the only statistics procurable were those laid on the table of the House. He was unable to get statistics as to the exact population of those places, though he had tried to do so; but what he could get was the number of names on the electoral rolls, which were in the Government Printing Office. He might have brought the rolls to the House, but it would have been a very big bundle. The numbers of names were taken and given in the return which had been laid on the table. He did not consider that they supplied a satisfactory basis to go on, but they gave some information, and if they supplemented that information with what they knew themselves as to the condition of the various places, they would see that the districts mentioned in the Bill were extremely under-represented. Though it was true, as the hon. member said, that the population of Bundaberg had increased very much while the names on the electoral roll had been diminishing, he thought a large proportion of that population consisted of South Sea Islanders—so large a proportion that out of 307 deaths in the district last year 178 were Polynesians, actually 58 per cent; and during the first three months of the present year the proportion was 63 per cent. Although he considered that portion of the colony should have additional representation soon, he did not think they had sufficient material before them to justify them in giving it now. The hon. member made some observations about the Redistribution Bill, which he seemed to think would not come on until after the general election. If the present Government were in office in 1887, when they would have the census to work on, they would bring in a Redistribution Bill. Circumstances had changed so much within the last ten years that they quite understood the necessity for the measure, and he hoped that when it was brought in it would be very much

on the basis of the English one—that there would be no attempt to make a party question of it, but that they would do what was fair by the whole country.

Mr. BLACK said he had no doubt that the Premier was correct as to the difficulty of bringing in an equitable Redistribution Bill at the present time, but the hon. gentleman had certainly not carried out in the present Bill his promise that justice should be done to the North in the matter of additional representation. The great want felt in the North was for more adequate representation, and he failed to see why certain electorates—the Mackay electorate, in particular—should have been left out, when it was so evident from the returns the hon. member had laid on the table of the House that there were a greater number of electors there than in several other electorates which returned two members. Not only was the number of electors sufficiently large to justify additional representation, but the revenue that the country was deriving from that district was a sign of a large population being settled there. There was another district which certainly was entitled to some consideration in the Bill, and that was Thursday Island, and the northern portion of York Peninsula. There was a large and growing industry there, and he was astonished that no means had been provided by which the residents of that portion of the colony could be represented in some way. Even had they not been allowed a separate member for themselves, there was no reason why the district should not have been added to the electorate of Cook. He thought hon. gentlemen could not be aware of what was going on in that portion of the colony. When he went there he was very much surprised to find that there had no representation whatever—in fact, they were practically disfranchised. They had no votes; they did not belong to any electorate. He would give the Committee some idea of what that district was doing in the way of production. The total value of the exports from Thursday Island in the year 1884 was no less than £160,613; the imports £46,986; the amount received by the Government for pearl-shell licenses alone £1,045. The total revenue received by the Government for the year was £11,049. There were 212 boats working in the pearl-shell fisheries, 59 of which were over 10 tons. In connection with Thursday Island there were no less than twenty-three pearling stations, all more or less inhabited by Europeans who, although they contributed to the revenue of the colony, yet had no votes whatever in returning a representative to look after their interests. He was very careful in getting an estimate of the population when he was up there recently, and he found that 977 men of different nationalities were engaged in the pearl-shell fisheries, in addition to whom there were 300 men, chiefly Chinamen, employed in bêche-de-mer fishing. The total number of Europeans that were employed in connection with the fisheries on Thursday Island was about 200. He had got that return from one of the Government officials up there, and he thought that the Premier himself must admit that some concession should be made to that portion of the colony so as to enable them, if not to have a separate representative of their own, at any rate to have them added to the Cook electorate so that they might have someone to represent their views. The Premier, or, at any rate, the Colonial Treasurer, must know the large amount of revenue that was being derived from what he might call the marine industry of the colony; and some means should be adopted by which the people engaged in that industry should be represented in Parliament.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he could bear out what had been said by the hon. member for Mackay with regard to the statistics of Thursday Island. The hon. gentleman was also correct in his statement that that place was not represented and had no one to look after its interests. Theoretically that was perfectly true, but practically it was not equally true. When he was up there recently he saw that the Government were looking after the interests of that portion of the colony, and that the people seemed to be very well satisfied with the recent appointment of a Government Resident. Moreover, if all was true that had been rumoured, that portion of the colony was likely to get double attention, not only from the Government here, but also from the Home Government—that was, if the idea of the military authorities of making it a coaling station were carried out. Of course, according to their Constitution it was an anomaly that any part of the colony should not be represented in that House, but at the next general election there would be no difficulty in the Government attaching Thursday Island to some other electorate. But whether that was done or not, he was sure that the people there would not be neglected.

Mr. HAMILTON said he wished to know if the Premier would accept a clause by which the Cook electorate would be divided into three districts, for with the overwhelming majority possessed by the Government it would be useless for him to propose the measure if they were opposed to it. He indorsed the remarks of the member for Mackay regarding the injustice suffered by the residents of the northern part of the peninsula in not having a representative. The member for Rosewood had said the Government were looking after the interests of that portion of the colony. They were certainly looking after the revenue, which was an exceedingly large one, but they were not looking after their interests in having overlooked them in the Bill now before the Committee. He thought he should have the Premier's support to his proposition, unless the opinion that hon. gentleman expressed before his advent to power was not his real opinion, but was merely expressed for the purpose of securing the support of the Cook constituency previous to the general election. At a banquet at Cooktown a few months before the general election he was reported in the *Cooktown Herald* to have said, "He would agree with Mr. Palmer"—one of the speakers at the banquet—"that the Cook might be divided into three electorates." Since then the population of the Cook district had not decreased to any appreciable extent, while the desirability which was then apparent that the district should be so divided was still as apparent. The Premier gave as a reason for the separation of Townsville into two districts the variety of interests it contained. The same reason existed in a greater degree in the Cook district, and therefore the same remedy should be applied. There they had the mineral interests, comprising gold, silver, tin, and other minerals; the pastoral and sugar interests, and the fisheries on the coast. When they thought of the magnitude of the mining interest in that electorate, it must be admitted that the mining interest alone was entitled to one member at least. Then they had tin lodes, which they could say without exaggeration were superior to any in the world. They had silver-mines of immense richness, and a vast extent of auriferous territory. If a division were decided on, he would suggest that the silver and tin country and the Hodgkinson Gold Field should be comprised in one of the divisions. The Premier had contended that population should be the basis of representation. He hardly thought that a three months' infant

should be entitled to an equal amount of representation to an adult taxpayer. In the old countries perhaps population was a fair basis to go on, but the condition of this colony was different. In a place like Brisbane, the proportion of male adults was about one in five; but on some of the mineral fields in Northern Queensland he had seen it in an inverse ratio, and one would sometimes find five times as many men as there were women and children. Then, again, extent of territory should be considered, and was doubtless, otherwise such places as Carnarvon, Dalby, Northern Downs, and Oxley would not have each a representative, as the aggregate number of the electors in those four electorates was only about equal to the number of electors on the Cook roll; but although the area of those districts was large compared with some of the electorates in the vicinity of the metropolis, they could put the whole four in his district, and forty like them, without the slightest trouble, and then they could scarcely find them. If revenue, again, were to be considered in the question of representation, then his constituency had a claim for additional representation second to no other in the colony. It had been truly said that the metropolis and surrounding constituencies were entitled to less representation than outside ones, as they were practically represented by nearly every member who lived in the metropolis during the session; and reasoning from that point of view, which was a correct one, his constituency was entitled to a larger amount of representation than any other in the colony, as it was at a greater distance from the seat of Government than any other electorate in Queensland. He hoped the Premier would see his way clear to carry into effect the sentiments which he expressed regarding the additional representation of the Cook when he was last there, and that his conduct would prove that his road to the Premiership was not paved with the same material that the road to a warmer place was said to be paved with—namely, good intentions.

The PREMIER said he gave last evening the reasons why he could not possibly propose to give additional representation to Cook at the present time. As he pointed out before, the male adult population there was larger in proportion to the gross population than in other parts of the colony, and yet the total number on the rolls at the last revision was less than the number entitling the district to return two members. So that to give additional representation to Cook, with those figures before them, would be unfair to the rest of the colony. As to dividing Cook into three electorates, he could not see the necessity for it at the present time, nor had they sufficient information to enable them to do it at present. He thought, from a general knowledge, that some parts at present in the Townsville electorate should be joined to some parts in the Cook electorate; but those changes would have to be made when they had more accurate information about the matter. Any promise the Government made they would keep, but he could make no proposition to increase the representation of Cook just now.

Mr. SMYTH said that his constituents had considered for a considerable time that they had a right to a second member. On the list before them they were set down as having in Gympie 1,659 voters, whereas when the roll was made up at the Revision Court, about a week or ten days ago, he found there were 1,871 names on the roll. He saw that Ipswich had 400 names less than that, and yet Ipswich returned two members. Rockhampton had some 1,480 voters, or about 400 less than Gympie, and yet Rockhampton had two members. When they

went to Townsville they saw that Townsville would by the Bill receive rather too much consideration. In fact Gympie was being left out in the cold altogether, although the population of Gympie could not be less than about 10,000 at the present time.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, taking that return as being correct, the number of electors in the Cook district was only 1,963; but he would remind the hon. gentleman that in those outside districts, where they had large territories sparsely populated, the number of electors on the roll bore a smaller proportion to the number of persons entitled to vote than in places like Brisbane, where it was very unlikely that a man would be six months in the district without having his name on the roll. Here there were people who made it their business to see that names were put upon the roll, but it was not the same in the outside districts. He felt confident that if every elector in the Cook district who had resided there for six months was on the roll the number would be very much greater than was at present shown by the return before them. However, that return was the only statistics they had on the subject, and they must take it as correct. The hon. member for Cook proposed that the district should be divided into three electorates. He would much sooner see an additional member given, and let the electorate of Cook return three members, than to have it divided into three electorates, each returning one member. He thought the system of small electorates was a very pernicious system. The Premier must have had some similar idea in his mind when he proposed to give an additional member for Fortitude Valley rather than to subdivide the electorate as he did in the case of Mitchell and Townsville. The hon. member for Gympie need not be afraid of Townsville getting more than a fair share of representation. He admitted that Townsville would get a fair share according to the return.

Mr. SMYTH: That is more than we get in Gympie.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member should complain to the Premier about that, and not to the member for Townsville. Gympie would be entitled to about a member and a-half if it had its full share of representation according to the return. The hon. member could not expect two members for one and a-half. Townsville was entitled to more than three members according to the return, because the number entitling an electorate to a member was about 1,040. Townsville would therefore be entitled to three members and have still about 300 to spare. He rose simply to say that he thought the Cook should not be divided. When the time came for a Redistribution Bill he hoped the hon. member at present at the head of the Government, if he had charge of that Bill, would see his way to increase the number of members instead of dividing the electorates, as proposed by the hon. member for Cook. He might say, in regard to Thursday Island, that it was time the people up there were represented instead of being looked after by the Government, as the hon. member for Rosewood had told them. That was not the English idea of government. The English idea was to have representation, and let the member for the place look after it and not let it be dependent upon the central Government to look after it. It was high time the Thursday Islanders, who had done a good deal for the colony, should be represented, and he hoped they would be represented as soon as ever the Premier could see his way clear to give them representation.

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Mr. HAMILTON said the Premier objected to his proposition on the ground that, taking the return before them as a basis of representation, Cook would not be entitled to an additional member; but when the hon. member for Mackay claimed that according to the roll Mackay was entitled to an additional member, then the Premier told them that the roll was not reliable. He agreed with the hon. gentleman in believing that the roll was not reliable. He had reason to believe in the first instance that there were many more names on the electoral rolls about Brisbane and various surrounding places than there were electors; but in his district, owing to the difficulty in obtaining names, there were a great many less. The hon. member for Townsville said he considered it desirable to make three divisions of the Cook district. One reason why he had proposed making that division was that he noticed that on the previous day the Premier gave as a reason for dividing the electorates dealt with in the measure before the Committee, that there was a variety of interests in them. He thought the same reason might hold good in the present instance, and be an incentive to the Premier to accept his proposition. The hon. gentleman had not said anything about the northern portion of the peninsula, and no reason whatever had been given why that had been utterly lost sight of.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4—"Mitchell district divided, electorates of Mitchell and Barcoo," and "Townsville district divided, electorates of Townsville and Musgrave"—passed as printed.

On clause 5—"First electoral rolls, lists to be made up from existing rolls under certain conditions," etc.—

The PREMIER said those provisions were adapted from the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act of 1878, relating to cases where it was necessary to provide rolls in a short space of time. He did not propose to call particular attention to them unless it was so desired. He might briefly say that they provided that a court should sit immediately after the passing of the Bill, at Blackall for the electorates of Mitchell and Barcoo, and at Townsville for the electoral districts of Townsville and Musgrave, and take the existing rolls and divide them into two, showing which electors should vote in each district. He could do it himself for the electoral district of Townsville, with the exception of eight or nine names. It would not take long to do it in either case. When the rolls were divided they would be printed, and the elections would take place immediately. As he had said, the provisions were very carefully adapted from the Act of 1878.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 6—"Present members to elect for which electorate they will sit"—

The PREMIER said he noticed that the member for Mitchell was absent, but the member for Townsville was present, and he thought the hon. gentleman should say for which electorate he would sit. The provision in that clause was rather for the convenience of the member for Townsville than the convenience of his constituents. If, in framing the Bill, the Government had followed the precedent of 1864, it would have been provided that he should remain member for the larger portion of the electorate, but for the reasons given the previous day that had not been done.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said it would not take the hon. member for Townsville long to decide that matter, but really he did not see why he should be asked to decide whether he

would sit for the new electorate of Musgrave, seeing that he had been elected for Townsville. Well, he decided to sit for Townsville.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7, 8, 9, and 10, and schedule, passed as printed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill to the House without amendment.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said : I move that this House do now adjourn. I hope to-morrow afternoon, after the third readings of the Bills which have been dealt with to-day in committee, to take the second reading of the Bill to amend the Local Government Act, which hon. members will see in the morning. There are some small changes in it from the Bill introduced before, but they are not very important.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN : There is no private business on the paper ?

The PREMIER : No. I should like to take the second reading of this Bill. It deals mainly with the question of waterworks and loans for waterworks. There are also some other provisions which are now in the Divisional Boards Act, but they do not provide for the case of conterminous municipalities.

Question put and passed.

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