Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 22 JULY 1885

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 22 July, 1885.

Questions.—Question without Notice.—Formal Motions.—Personal Explanation.—Motion for Adjournment.—Licensing Bill.—Crown Lands Act of 1884 Amendment Bill—second reading.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTIONS.

Mr. DONALDSON asked the Minister for Works—

1. When will the plans, sections, and book of reference of the Western Railway to Charleville be laid upon the table of the House?
2. Are tenders likely to be called for during the current year?

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

1. In about three weeks' time.
2. Probably in September next.

Mr. CHUBB asked the Minister for Works—

1. What progress has been made in the boring operations for coal at the Bowen Coal Field, and what result (if any) has been obtained?
2. *(a)* Is it intended during the present session to submit for parliamentary approval plans of the Bowen Coal Field Railway, or any portion thereof?—*(b)* If not, what is the cause of the delay?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—

1. According to the last report the bore was down 170 feet. A coal-seam of 6 feet has been cut at a depth of 71 feet, from which depth to 150 feet small banks of coal have been met with.
2. Decision *re* parliamentary plans is held over, pending further development in connection with boring for coal.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked the Minister for Works—

When the plans of the railway from Herberton to the coast will be laid on the table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—

Parliamentary plans of the first section of the line from Cairns to Herberton will be laid upon the table of the House this session—probably in six weeks.

Mr. KATES asked the Minister for Works—

1. What progress has been made with the survey of the Ipswich and Warwick Direct Railway line?
2. Is there any likelihood of plans, sections, and book of reference for that line, or portion of it, being submitted to Parliament during present session?
3. Are there any surveyors engaged with the survey of Warwick and St. George line? If not, when does the Government intend starting the survey of this line?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—

1. The survey was within fifteen and a-half miles of Warwick at the end of last month.
2. It is anticipated that the surveys will be so far forward as to admit of the plans, sections, &c., being laid upon the table of the House this session.
3. Instructions have been given to commence this survey as soon as a surveyor can be spared for the purpose.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: May I ask the Minister for Lands, without notice, when he expects to lay the annual report of the Lands Department on the table of this House? Seven months of the year have gone, and it is time we had it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. B. Dutton): It will, I hope, be laid on the table within a week.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to:—

By Mr. SMYTH—

That there be laid on the table of the House, all Correspondence with reference to the removal of Charles Eastlake, Government agent, from the labour vessel "Young Dick."

By Mr. PALMER—

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

1. Number and area of all reserves for timber and State forests in the colony.
2. The district where each is situated.
3. Number of nurseries or plantations for growing seedlings for distribution, and where located.
4. Total amount of expenditure and revenue received from forest reserves all over the colony.
5. Number of forest rangers or officials in charge of reserves; their salaries, duties, and where located.
6. Number of prosecutions for illegally cutting timber for last twelve months.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Before you proceed to the Orders of the Day, I should like to correct a statement made by the leader of the Government last night. Hon. members may recollect that I found fault with that part of the Bill which allows a foreigner to be put on the electoral roll before he has been naturalised six months, and the Premier told me that I was a member of the Government which passed that provision. I was not aware of that at all, but I know the hon. gentleman's opinion was asked in 1878 by the bench at Charters Towers. I have hunted up the papers since last night, and I find that the bench at Charters Towers asked—whether by telegraph or in writing I do not know—the hon. gentleman and two other barristers for their opinion on the matter, and that opinion exactly coincides with what is laid down in this Bill. It is this: "An alien must be naturalised at the time of making his claim, but need not have been naturalised six months previously;" yet the hon. gentleman last night tried to father the provision to which I referred on the Government of which I was a member. The three barristers whose opinion was asked by the bench at Charters Towers were Mr. Griffith, Q.C., Mr. Pring, and Mr. Patrick Real. Mr. Pring afterwards became Attorney-General in the Government of which I was a member, and he then acted on the opinion which he held in common with Mr. Griffith and Mr. Real.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member in speaking last night objected to the provision declaring that it shall not be necessary for a foreigner to be naturalised for six months before making his claim for registration. I interjected, "You were a member of the Government that introduced that provision in the law," and I was quite right. It is the 34th clause of the Electoral Rolls Act of 1879, which was introduced by Sir Arthur Palmer when he was Colonial Secretary of the Government of which the hon. member was Minister for Works. There the clause appears for the first time on the Statute-book. My opinion that that was the law before did not make any difference. It was a doubtful question before that, and the hon. gentleman was a member of the Government which passed the law containing the provision.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: I ought to have moved the adjournment. I meant to do so, but though I have not done it, perhaps I may be permitted to say that the hon. gentleman is perfectly right. I, however, contend that he was the real author of this provision. Mr. Pring, when Attorney-General of the Government of which I was a member, acted upon the opinion which he had expressed in common with Mr. Griffith and Mr. Real. Those three gentlemen were the authors of the arrangement.

Mr. HAMILTON: There is a matter, Mr. Speaker——

The SPEAKER: There is no question before the House, and the hon. gentleman cannot speak unless he moves the adjournment of the House.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. HAMILTON: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move the adjournment of the House, in order to give myself an opportunity of showing how the system of recording the attendance of members is working. I was present in the House last Thursday, but my name does not appear in the list of members who were in attendance. It was stated by an hon. member on this side, when this system was proposed to the House by the Premier, that it would create endless mistakes and confusion, and here is an instance, in the second week of the session, of a mistake occurring. Possibly, if some other members take the trouble to examine the list they will find mistakes as to their attendance also. I move the adjournment of the House.

The SPEAKER: With regard to what has fallen from the hon. member, I may say that the Clerk-Assistant and Sergeant-at-Arms have been most careful to notice the presence of each hon. member. Hon. members will recollect that Thursday last was an exceedingly short sitting, and neither the Clerk-Assistant nor the Sergeant-at-Arms were able to recognise the hon. member in the House.

Mr. HAMILTON: I was sitting here.

Mr. CHUBB said: As to the hon. member being here, I may say that I met him in the Library immediately after the House adjourned, and I jocularly said to him, "You have lost your two guineas." He replied, "No, I have not; I was just in time."

Mr. DONALDSON said: I would suggest that for the future, in order that the attendance of members may not be omitted, it would be as well to have a roll on the table, and let each member who chooses sign his name. Then there would be no difficulty afterwards. It is quite possible that the Clerk-Assistant may not notice an hon. member coming into the House.

Mr. BEATTIE said: I should like to have some information on this matter. Last Thursday the House sat just thirty-one minutes. Is it going to be the rule that the Clerk is to take the names down during the first half-hour of the sitting? I ask this question because a member may be detained and not be able to get to the House until 4 o'clock or a few minutes after 4.

The SPEAKER: I may inform the House that the rule at present is for the Clerk-Assistant and the Sergeant-at-Arms, immediately on the assembling of the House, to tick-off the names of members present. If any members appear subsequently their names will be ticked-off also. No matter what time they appear in the House their presence will be noted. That is the only course we can take until a Standing Order has been prepared and submitted for the approval of the House, which will be done as soon as the Standing Orders Committee can conveniently meet.

The HON. Sir T. McILWRAITH: I do not think the Sergeant-at-Arms is competent to perform the duty of time-keeper for us. It would appear, sir, from what you have said, that if the House sits up to 12 o clock at night, and a man comes in at two minutes to 12 o'clock, he will be entitled to two guineas. I do not think the Sergeant-at Arms is competent, as I have said, to act as time-keeper for us, and I think it would be *infra dig.* to ask our Clerk-Assistant to attend to it. There is one way by which every member who is present may have his presence noted, but I almost fear to suggest it because of the floods of eloquence it may give rise to, but it is this: a member may be perfectly certain of securing his two guineas by rising and making a speech, for *Hansard* will not forget him.

Question—That this House do now adjourn—put and negatived.

LICENSING BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the laws regulating the sale of intoxicating liquors by retail, and for other purposes relating thereto.

The PREMIER said that, in moving that it was desirable that the Bill should be introduced, he proposed to follow the practice which had been adopted before in the House when a Bill of more than usual length and importance was proposed to be introduced, and he would therefore make some observations before the Bill was laid on the table. The subject of the licensing laws was a difficult one, and was at present dealt with by no less than eight different Acts upon the Statute-book, and many amendments, it was well known, were required. They had affirmed on more than one occasion that it was desirable that the system of local option should be adopted, and that no Bill would be satisfactory which did not provide for it. The Government cheerfully accepted that mandate of the House, and it was proposed in this Bill to deal with it. The Bill was founded to a large extent upon their existing laws, as the general principles of licensing were not likely to be materially altered. There were some changes, however, in the Bill to which he would briefly refer in order that members' attention should be directed to them when reading the Bill after it was introduced. The first alteration was with respect to the constitution of the licensing authority. The course at present adopted it was proposed to retain—that was, that the justices of the peace should be the licensing authorities; but it would be provided that in any district special justices might be appointed for the purpose, and when they were so appointed the jurisdiction of the ordinary justices would be excluded. That was much the same system as the licensing boards under the present law. It was proposed also to adopt a provision that was suggested in a Bill intro-

duced into the House by the late Government, in 1880 he thought, to allow special licenses in special districts. That was to say, that where new goldfields were established, or where sudden increases of population arose, the ordinary formalities might be dispensed with. In dealing with the question of licenses, they proposed to allow a new kind of license, a license for the sale of wines made in the colony. That was a matter that had often been discussed, and he, for one, believed it was desirable to encourage the sale of wines made in the colony. He did not intend to discuss the reasons why he had arrived at that conclusion now. Another matter they proposed to deal with was the question of bars, and how many bars should be allowed in any licensed house. They proposed to use the term "licensed victualler" as the term for the holder of a hotel-keeper's license, and they proposed that if more than one bar was required, application must be made to the licensing authority for permission to keep it, specifying the situation of it. Only one extra bar would be allowed, and only on approval by the licensing authority, and on payment of an extra fee. Great objection was taken at present to the sale of liquor at bars in out-of-the-way places where young men assembled and remained longer than they should; in out-of-the-way corners of the hotel building, where it was said that a great deal of harm was done. It was proposed to allow an appeal from the refusal of a license in cases where the refusal of the license was made on technical grounds, and not because of the personal unfitness of the applicant or unfitness of the house. The vexed question of the authority of auctioneers to sell liquor it was also proposed to deal with, and to declare that they might sell on behalf of a wine or spirit merchant, or for the trustee of an insolvent or intestate estate. Whether they might or might not, at present, was a vexed question. It was proposed further to make it illegal to sell any liquor to a child under the age of fourteen; or to any person under eighteen, for consumption on the premises. In the provision dealing with the hours of selling there was also an alteration, and it was proposed that the hours of selling should be from 6 in the morning till 11 at night, except on Sundays; and the keeping open of licensed houses on Sundays was to be prohibited altogether. The latter provision was not to apply to travellers, in respect of whom a very great difficulty arose. That difficulty had, however, been tolerably well solved in England by the experience of the last ten years, and it was proposed to adopt the provisions to be found there as affording a practicable solution of the difficulty. It was proposed, however, with respect to the hours of selling, that an hotel-keeper might, if he thought proper, close his premises at 10 o'clock at night and until 7 in the morning, and the wine-seller might, if he chose, close his premises at 6 in the evening and until 10 in the morning. As to local option, it was proposed that that should be exercised by the ratepayers of the district. The general scheme was that not less than one-tenth of the ratepayers of a certain area might apply to the chairman of the local authority to take a poll on one or more of three resolutions. The area must be a municipality, a division, a subdivision, or a part of a subdivision clearly defined, so that there was at once provided a returning officer and an electoral roll—the roll of ratepayers. The three resolutions were—First, that the sale of intoxicating liquors be prohibited; second, that the licenses be reduced to a certain number specified in the notice; and third, that no new licenses be granted. Then provision was made for taking the poll. The first resolution must be carried by a majority of two-thirds, the others by a bare majority. If the first resolution were carried, no new poll was to be taken on the subject for three years; the others were to be final for two years. Then a form of ballot paper was provided which would afford every facility for carrying out the voting. Those were briefly the most important changes proposed to be made. There were some minor provisions with respect to inspection, prevention of adulteration, the providing of proper accommodation, and so on. He believed the Bill would be found to be carefully framed, and deal with most of the subjects recognised as requiring legislative action.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Bill was a very long one and a very important one, and it was to be hoped that the Government would not do as they had done with another measure, but would give members of Parliament time to read the Bill, and give the public outside time to understand what members of Parliament were about. He was quite sure the public would want to know all about the Bill.

The PREMIER said it was just because he thought it desirable that the Bill should be thoroughly understood that he had followed a practice not very common in the House, of calling special attention to some of the most prominent parts of it, yet the hon. member took upon himself to blame the Government for not doing exactly what they were doing.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that, so far from that being the case, he had just said to one of his colleagues who remarked that it was far from the usual course, "Yes, it is an unusual course, but it is a very good course."

The PREMIER said he had misunderstood the hon. gentleman, and would withdraw his remark, but it was certainly singular that the hon. gentleman should have taken that opportunity of making the suggestion. With regard to the Bill, he was very desirous that every opportunity should be given for its consideration from every point of view, and he did not propose to move the second reading for a fortnight.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could not agree with the leader of the Opposition in thinking that it was a good system which had been adopted by the Premier—to comment on a Bill which was not in the hands of members generally. Hon. members on the Opposition side of the House could not hear half of what the hon. gentleman was saying, and even if they had been able to hear him it would have been impossible to follow his remarks when they had not the Bill in their hands. He was glad to hear that it was not proposed to deal further with the matter for a fortnight, but he distinctly objected to the Premier or any other hon. member introducing a measure and giving a running commentary on it before it was in the hands of every member of the House. Perhaps the hon. the Premier would tell them the reason why hon. members had not been put in possession of copies of the Bill that morning, so that they might have been able to follow him in his remarks.

The PREMIER said he had followed a practice very common in the House of Commons and in other legislative bodies—where a gentleman introducing a Bill made a short explanatory statement to draw particular attention to points likely to require particular attention. It was also the practice that a Bill was never circulated until it had been introduced in Parliament.

Question put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the resolution to the House. The resolution was adopted; the Bill was presented and read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 5th August.

CROWN LANDS ACT OF 1884 AMENDMENT BILL—SECOND READING.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the adjourned debate on Mr. Dutton's motion, "That the Bill be now read a second time"—

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—The Premier has reintroduced an old custom of making an explanation of the salient points of a Bill in moving for leave in committee to introduce it. Such a step as that, of course, is useful to hon. members, by drawing their attention to more salient points. I think the hon. member would have found it difficult to have made a speech drawing attention to the salient points of this Bill, because it has been so drawn as to hide them; and I am sure the hon. member would have found it difficult to show that any salient points exist in it at all. The speech of the Minister for Lands, at all events, certainly did not direct our attention to its salient points, and was outside the Bill altogether. I will endeavour, in the remarks I wish to make, to show the House the effect of this Bill, and how far we have receded from the policy enunciated by the Government last year, and which is embodied in the Crown Lands Act of 1884. The Land Bill as introduced last year contained the principle of free selection before survey, and all the clauses were framed on that basis. Notice of motion, however, was given by the hon. member for Darling Downs of an amendment altering the basis to survey before selection. That amendment came before the House, was accepted by the Government, and the subsequent clauses were passed on the new principle which had been adopted. The clause so accepted reads as follows:—

"Before any land is proclaimed open for selection it shall be surveyed under the direction of the Surveyor-General, and divided into lots of convenient area for selection, with proper roads and reserves for public purposes, and such lots shall be marked on the ground by posts not less than three feet in height at the corners of the lots."

The Government took some time to consider this matter, and when the Bill had been gone through it was recommitted for the purpose of allowing the Government to put in a reservation by which, under certain circumstances, they could put that clause out of operation. Accordingly, when the Bill was recommitted a new clause was introduced by the Government to the following effect:—

"With respect to land which before the passing of this Act had been proclaimed open for selection or sale by auction under the provisions of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1876, or any Act thereby repealed, and as to which it is practicable to divide the land into lots without actual survey, and to indicate the position of such lots by means of maps or plans, and by reference to known or marked boundaries or starting points, the following provisions shall have effect:—

1. The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the board, may suspend the operations of so much of the last preceding section as requires the land to be actually surveyed and marked on the ground before it is proclaimed open for selection, and may require the Surveyor-General to divide the land into lots, and to indicate the position of such lots on proper maps or plans.
2. The land may therefore be proclaimed open for selection in the same manner as if it had been surveyed, and the delineation of the lots on the maps or plans shall be deemed to be a survey thereof, and the lots shall be deemed to be surveyed lots for the purposes of this part of the Act.
3. The powers conferred by this section may be exercised at any time within two years after the commencement of this Act, but not afterwards."

This was introduced on the part of the Government. Between the passing of clause 43 and the completion of the Bill, before it was recommitted, they had, according to the statement of the Minister for Lands, consulted the department, in order to meet the only objection that had been started by the Ministers to the adoption of the principle of survey before selection—namely, that the department would not be equal to the work of surveying sufficient to keep the market supplied with land. After that consultation with the department they came to the conclusion that they should have some power given them by which they could suspend clause 43 in order to enable them to let selectors have land—holding by the principle of clause 43, and at the same time departing from it to some extent. That was thoroughly explained. Instead of waiting for survey before selection under certain circumstances, which were optional to the Government, they were allowed to make plans and papers approximately near, and after gazetting them the lands referred to were to be open to selection. One would have thought, if the Government really believed in the principle of survey before selection, that that power of going beyond clause 43 was ample, and that there would have been any amount of land open for selection. I may say, however, in order that the House may understand my argument, that the Minister for Lands did not object to the principle of survey before selection, which he said was the principle he believed in. It was simply the inability of the staff of the department to survey sufficient land to suit the selectors who would be requiring it. The objection on the other hand made by the Premier was this: He professes also to believe in the principle of survey before selection. He professes also to believe that the department is quite capable of keeping the market well supplied with surveyed land, but he doubted whether there would not be some influence brought to bear by certain parties in the colony upon the Survey Department to keep back surveys in order to prevent the land from being selected and taken away from the pastoral lessees. That is the only objection. Well, the House went into recess, and the Government, after many promises of what they would do, were left to do the best they could to supply the market with land. The result, sir, has been that no land has been in the market that has been acceptable to selectors. And still, mind you, Mr. Speaker, they had in the Act unlimited power to suspend the operation of clause 43—not in one district only, but in the whole of the districts of the colony—to suspend the operation of clause 43 in any portion of any survey district all over the colony. Now, sir, with such a power of suspension, surely one would have thought that we would have had plenty of land to suit the moderate amount of selection that is going on at the present time. I find that when the Act was passed—at all events up to the latest statistics published by the department—there were open for general selection throughout the colony at that time 19,028,174 acres; for homestead selection, 1,460,902 acres; making a total of 20,489,076 acres throughout the colony open for selection. By clause 44 of the Act, the Government got power to suspend the operation of clause 43 with regard to every acre of that land, and they had, therefore, 20,000,000 acres to deal with without the principle of survey before selection coming into full operation. They now propose to take further suspensory powers of this clause in certain survey districts. Those districts are Beenleigh, Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Warwick, Gympie, Maryborough, and Bundaberg. Now, sir, at the present time, or rather they had to operate on in those districts by way of general selection, 2,691,597 acres; homestead selection, 729,590; making a total of

3,422,186 acres, or, in round numbers, 3,500,000 acres. With that quantity in those districts, and 20,000,000 acres, in round numbers, all over the colony, surely the Government had power in their hands to place enough land before the selectors to keep them well supplied. It is a matter of history now that they have not done so, and they have given dissatisfaction in every district in the colony, because land has not been open for selection under the new Act. I have shown that they had virtually unlimited power under this clause. They could have done almost what they liked, because they took the power to deal exceptionally, outside the principle of survey before selection altogether, with 20,000,000 acres all over the colony and 3,500,000 acres in particular districts, which they wish to have further power over now, under the pretext — I have seen it alleged, at all events, in newspapers which support the Government, as a reason why they have not kept the market supplied with land for selectors — that the Act passed last session provides that the pastoral lessees need not come under its operation until the end of August if the pastoral lessee chooses. That is quite right. The pastoral lessee need not come under the Act until the 31st August, unless he pleases, and, as a matter of fact, there is an inducement held out to him by the Act not to come under its operation until that time. He may come under it at any time after the 31st March, but he need not do so until the 31st August, and thus there is a reason in the Act itself why he should postpone doing so until the last moment, that reason being that the longer he defers coming under it the longer will be his lease. As a matter of fact, therefore, they have not come under the Act to any considerable extent; but still, sir, it is known that the whole of the settled districts, and, I believe, a great part of the unsettled districts, will come under the Act. But the fact that the pastoral lessees have not come under the Act yet, and therefore their runs are not subject to be divided, and the resumed portions subject to be surveyed, is no justification for the Government at all in not having land open for selection, because they knew perfectly well, or as business men they ought to have known, that the whole of the settled districts will come under the Act. If they wished to get possession of the land—and it ought to have been their desire to get possession of it, in order to have it open for selection—they ought to have intimated to the pastoral lessees, in the month of March, or before that, that if they came under the Act at once they would be in no worse position than if they reserved their right not to come under it until the last possible moment. If they had done that the pastoral lessees would have come under it, and they might have had 300 or 400 surveyors at work in a short time. If they had made that announcement in January, they could have had numbers of surveyors at work from that time up to the present. But what is the fact? That, without any additional surveyors having come to the colony, there are plenty of idle surveyors here at the present time. The whole of the settled districts have been virtually open to the Government since the month of January, over seven months; the whole of the halves of the runs in those districts have been virtually at their disposal for that period, because I say again that if the Government, as business men, had simply announced that by coming under the Act in March the pastoral lessees would be in no worse position than if they delayed doing so until the last moment, I believe every one of them would have come under it months ago. It may be asked, would that be a legal and proper thing to do—to offer them that inducement? I say yes; it would be a perfectly proper and legal thing to do. Their leases are to date from the 1st January or July nearest the date on which the division is approved by the commissioner. Very well; the commissioner could approve of it some time after August; so that the Government have had it entirely in their power to have got the whole of the squatters in the settled districts to come under the Act in the month of January last. But they have refrained from doing so, and now come forward and say that they could not get land surveyed because they really had no land to survey. To show, sir, how unanimous the House was in passing clause 43, I will quote the speech of the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, who moved it. He points out various advantages to be derived from it, and I refer to his speech because he was speaking as the representative of a district which is included in the schedule of this Bill, and a district in which the Minister for Lands told us it was impossible practically to work the present Act unless he gets further powers. The hon. member, Mr. Kates, is the representative of one of those districts—namely, Warwick—and this is what he says, speaking of course with a general knowledge of the colony, but with much better local knowledge:—

"The chief object of his amendment was to prevent what had been termed in that committee 'peacocking'; to prevent intending selectors from picking the eyes out of runs; to prevent them selecting the choice pieces; and to compel them to take up the land as surveyed, good, bad, or indifferent. By the introduction of the amendment into the Bill, reserves would be left for main roads, for townships, for water, and for road-making material; and divisional boards would be relieved in a great measure from being compelled to resume, and to open roads at a considerable expense, which very often caused a deal of heartburning and dissatisfaction and unpleasantness between the ratepayers and the board. The board would be relieved in a great measure from deciding boundary disputes, for selectors would not be compelled to apply to members of the board to decide matters in connection with overlapping, etc. The new clause would also do away with a great many of the objections raised by hon. members opposite, in connection with compensation for improvements, because intending selectors would at once know what they had to pay for improvements. It had been said by the hon. member for Normanby that a selector might avoid payment for a woolshed by selecting in such a way as to cut out that particular improvement. If the amendment were not introduced a selector might make a starting point five or six chains from a fence, on the resumed portion of a run, and avoid payment for the fencing; and not only that, but have the use of the strip of land between the boundary and the fence. As he said before, the advantages to be derived from passing the new clause were various and manifold. The question had been raised at various meetings in different parts of the country, and at nearly all those meetings it was unanimously held that the introduction of such an amendment was desirable. It might be raised as an objection that they could not get surveyors for the work; but he thought that objection would be overcome by bringing surveyors from other places. It might also be objected that the amendment would retard settlement; but it was not at all likely to have that effect."

That is one of the arguments by which Mr. Kates carried the amendment in the Committee, and so completely convinced the Minister for Lands that he immediately rose and said that he believed in the principle of survey before selection but for the practical difficulty of finding the surveyors. If the department were able in the course of a few months to survey sufficient land he had no objection to offer. But what does he tell us now in the remarkable speech that he made last night? Speaking of some lands to which Mr. Kates was referring when he carried his motion last year, he said the Bill was introduced—

"So as to be able to deal with certain lands in the districts named in the schedule. Many hon. members must know what is the general character of the lands still available for occupation in the districts named

here. They are composed in many instances of broken scrubby ridges, and poor, sterile, stony ranges, with here and there fine isolated patches, but so difficult of access, so difficult accurately to describe, that it is almost impossible for any survey to be carried out in those districts so as to meet the requirements of settlement. In all the other districts named, of course selection has been going on; the land has been picked over and over again; and though the 44th clause enables the Government to suspend the operation of the 43rd clause, and map out the land on maps or plans, still those maps or plans or descriptions must hang on certain well-defined points; and in many cases these lands are so situated that there is no alienated land near enough to the points it is necessary to define. Consequently there is nothing upon which they can hinge."

Mind, Mr. Speaker, this is the power that they got. The House had carried the principle of survey before selection, and the Government asked power to suspend it to this extent: that in certain districts, and on lands which had previously been open for selection, the Government could suspend the clause and make maps as near as they possibly could to the features of the country upon paper, and the survey was to follow afterwards. The Minister for Lands does not combat one single argument brought forward by Mr. Kates, nor by the numerous gentlemen upon both sides of the House, who spoke on the same subject, and all in favour of survey before selection. He does not combat this, but he says that there are certain isolated places in the districts of Beenleigh, Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Warwick, Gympie, Maryborough, and Bundaberg — in other words, the whole of the settled districts as far north as a point half-way between Bundaberg and Rockhampton. He does not say that these arguments do not apply there still; but he says that there are some isolated places that cannot be surveyed because there is no point upon which to hinge a survey. If that means anything it means this: that he cannot carry out a progressive map starting from some point in the consolidated survey as it has gone out from the coast. It was never intended when we passed the 44th clause that that should be the case—that we should have one starting point. It was never intended that anything like that should happen, nor, I believe, does the hon. gentleman really mean what he says, because he proposes that a start should be got from a man who knows the district, who chose a place for himself according to the old principle of selection before survey; and that shall be a starting point for the new survey. That is the remedy that is actually proposed by the hon. gentleman. He says we cannot start a survey, because there is no point upon which to hinge a survey; and our remedy is that somebody, who is neither surveyor nor anything else, shall go and take up a selection, and that that shall be a hinge upon which to start a new survey. Is not that perfectly ridiculous? Another argument that he uses is this: He says that it is perfectly impossible to get at the value of all the land. A surveyor may—to paraphrase his words—go and survey a part of the land in these districts; he may cut it up into allotments; but it is so mountainous, so different, one lot from another, that he will be unable to fix the price. What is the remedy the Minister for Lands proposes for that? He proposes that in the proclamation showing the whole district open for selection one general price shall be fixed, without surveying it. Is that a rational way to get over the difficulty—that because the Government cannot assess the particular values of these different lands, therefore they are to proclaim a price that is applicable to the whole district? The men must go and choose what they want themselves. The real meaning of the hon. gentleman is this—and he scarcely referred to it except when he ended his speech upon this matter: He said he had left the first part of the Bill and gone on with the second part, upon which he would dwell shortly. He completed that, and in a few remarks at the end of his speech he said :—

"In the other matter of selection before survey—

Referring to the first part of the Bill—

"it is impossible for a survey department or any officers connected with it to carry out the surveys in such a way as to suit the requirements of selectors."

The point I wish to draw attention to in summarising the measure is this, that the first part of the Bill is that which refers to selection before survey. The fact of the matter is that the Government last year having adopted this principle —hostile, I assume, to very strong arguments from both sides of the House—looked about for a loophole to get out of it, and they proposed clause 44. They find now that that does not give them sufficient power, and they therefore ask for power that will virtually allow them to admit of selection before survey throughout the whole of the settled districts. That is what they ask now. The hon. gentleman shows that there is no necessity for it, as it is a mere matter of giving a mountain selection to some selector in the Warwick or Toowoomba district. Why should we go to the trouble of bringing in a Bill to suit that one particular selector? Not the slightest necessity has been shown for taking into consideration this particular case by an Act of Parliament; for the provisions of the Act surely give the Government the power to deal with it. What the Government actually want is greater power than clause 44 gives. If all they want is to satisfy the wants that were set forth in the speech of the Minister for Lands last night, they have got it in clause 44 of the Act of 1884. But what do they really want? They actually ask us to suspend completely clause 43, so far as it is applicable to the whole of the districts of Beenleigh, Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Warwick, Gympie, Maryborough, and Bundaberg. But the speech of the Minister for Lands was directed to the wants of a few selectors. He said that it is our intention to do so-and-so, forgetting that it is not in the power of the Government to do what he proposed. He talked confidentially, as if speaking on behalf of the board, but I do not think that he was doing so, and if he was I believe they are in advance of the requirements of the colony. I believe the hon. gentleman was speaking his own mind when he said we want power to deal with those mountainous lands, where it is impossible to find a point upon which to hinge a survey. The power he asks for is this: he asks for unlimited power to suspend the operation of clause 43 in the whole of the settled districts, which comprise the entire southern portion of the colony from a point south of Rockhampton. He asks the House to give the board power to extend that schedule to the whole colony, so that virtually the proposal in this Bill is to reverse completely the policy of 1884 and revert to free selection before survey. If he wishes to go upon that principle I am quite prepared to meet him. I accepted with reluctance the new principle on which we started, but I believe that if we were sufficiently advanced with our surveys that principle would work wonderfully well yet. I believe the Government have dilly-dallied and done nothing during the last nine months, when they ought to have been surveying with a speed unequalled in the colony before. Instead of doing that, however, they have neglected their work, and have now come down to the House with a Bill in which their intentions are completely disguised —asking for power to adopt free selection before survey for the whole of the settled district south

of Rockhampton. I believe this proposal has been caused by the condition of the Treasury. I believe, also, the Minister for Lands is to blame for the way in which he has worked the department. He should have kept faith with the House, and have had troops of surveyors at work in every part of the colony where selection was likely to take place. If this had been done there would not have been the slightest reason for bringing in the Bill now before the House, but he has neglected his opportunities, waiting until he sees what will be the operation of other parts of the Bill in which he is more interested. I have not the slightest doubt, as I have observed, that it is the condition of the Treasury that has led the Minister for Lands to the conclusion that he has come to. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that the Act passed last year is a complete failure so far as the Treasury is concerned. He knows perfectly well that it was distinctly stated in the House that the Act of 1884 would be a financial success—indeed, it was promised by the Government that it would be a financial success; but it is a notorious fact that the principles of the Land Act are not believed in by many of the members on the other side of the House. I am perfectly satisfied, from the conversations I have had with some members on that side, that the House generally does not believe in the principles of the Land Act of 1884. I believe that Act was pushed through under the pressure of the ten-million loan, and now, when that part which it was stated would be a success is proving to be a failure, the Treasurer is pulling the Minister for Lands up, and we have introduced in this surreptitious way a Bill reversing the decision of the House as given by it last year. I do not believe the House will stultify itself. I am of opinion, at all events, that we ought to give the Act a fair trial. It is the first time in the history of the colony that we have been asked to repeal an Act—for it is virtually doing that—almost before that Act has come into operation. Let not hon. members think for a moment that this is the inoffensive, quiet, little, unpretentious measure the Minister for Lands endeavoured to make it appear in his speech last night. It is a Bill to give the Government power to throw open for selection before survey every acre of land in the colony that is liable to be thrown open to selection under the Act. This is not a power that a Government ought to have. We have agreed to the principle of survey before selection, and let us, as I have already said, give that principle a fair trial. If we are to depart from it, let us know the reason why. If the reason is that the Act has not brought in that amount of money to the Treasury that was expected, let us understand that that is the reason why we are asked to retrace our steps and reverse the policy of 1884. But in the name of common sense do not let us repeal an Act simply because we do not understand it. I am perfectly satisfied that the reason given by the Minister for Lands is not the real reason for introducing this Bill. I believe the real reason is, that the Treasurer having found that there is not sufficient money coming in under the process of survey before selection, the Government have determined to adopt the more speedy process of selection before survey. We are bound, I contend, to give selection before survey a fair trial. But if we adopt this Bill we will put it into the hands of the Government to throw open all land in the settled districts for selection before survey. They will have unlimited power, with the approval of the board, to abolish the 43rd clause of the Act of 1884, or rather to keep it in suspense. I have so far dealt with the first part of the Bill. The next part is not particularly satisfactory either. It is a curious comment on the action of the Minister for Lands. The hon. gentleman is one of those men who have not got the slightest notion of what the lands of this colony are except the notion that he gained in that long sojourn of his out west. He commenced last year with the idea that he was the exclusive owner of all information in connection with the settled districts, but he has shown all through that he knows little about the subject. I remember that last year some of the Government supporters urged the hon. gentleman to allow the owner of land to select land adjoining, but the only concession he made was that residence on one part should count for residence on another—that is, where both were paying rental at the same time. But he refused to grant the concession whether having the land under the Act of 1876, or being the owner in fee-simple and residing on it, should give anyone the right to select land under the Act of 1884; that was adjoining land. Now this clause proposes to do it; but, with his old enmity to the homestead selector, he makes this proviso in clause 4—that the homestead selector is not to get the benefit of it. The whole thing is detestable. What, in the name of common sense, has the homestead selector done that he should have the antipathy of the Minister for Lands displayed against him on every opportunity? He knows perfectly well, if he thinks about it at all—which I very much doubt—that the effect will be that this House will repeal it. If the ordinary selector has the right to live upon his land, got under some previous Act, and now held in fee-simple, surely the homestead selector should have the same privilege. I do not see why he should not have it, but by this proviso of clause 4 he is debarred.

The PREMIER: Why don't you read clause 4?

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: What for?

The PREMIER: It does not mean that.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I read the clause to mean that, and I know the Minister for Lands means it to be read in that way. The reason he gave for it was this:—

"The proviso at the end is to prevent advantage being taken of the special provisions given by the 74th section of the principal Act, which may be termed, I suppose, the homestead clauses, by which men were enabled to take up land at 2s. 6d. per acre on condition of expending 10s. per acre in improvements, but they were not allowed to acquire more that 160 acres."

With this clause 3 I quite agree, but with clause 4 I cannot agree, because I think the homestead selector should have the same privilege as the ordinary selector. I have now gone over the different clauses of the Bill. I have shown in the first place that such a Bill was perfectly unnecessary, and that if all that was wanted to be accomplished by the Government was what was shown in the speech of the Minister for Lands in introducing it, they have full powers to do all that and a great deal more under the Act of 1884, clause 44. I have next shown that they are asking here for a power that we should give to no Government, and a power that no Government would ask for unless they had some reason further than is stated here for asking it. I have shown further that that reason is undoubtedly that the Government are anxious to put funds into the Treasury, and that that can only be accomplished by subverting the Bill passed last year and declining, moreover, to give their own Act a fair trial. The other parts of the Bill are not worthy of very serious consideration; but I ask the attention of the House specially to those I have mentioned, and if they are of the same opinion as they were

last year, in believing that the principle of survey before selection is a principle that ought to be adopted, or, at all events, should have a fair trial, they will decidedly object to pass the second reading of this Bill.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman seems to think that this Bill contains some very dangerous provisions not apparent on the face of it. He appears to think that it is an insidious attempt on the part of the Government to induce Parliament to reverse the policy agreed to last year. I am sure the hon. member does not seriously think so. Nobody thinks so.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: Yes; we do.

The PREMIER: I am sure hon. gentlemen opposite do not. They only pretend to think so. I give them credit for a great deal more sense than to think anything of the kind. I shall say something about the first part of the Bill directly, but the first clauses I shall refer to are the 3rd and 4th clauses, which the hon. gentleman appears to have entirely misunderstood. He says that, during the passage of the Act last year, it was suggested in committee that the privilege might be given to the occupier of land under the Act of 1876 to take up a selection adjoining, under the Act we were then passing, without being required to perform the conditions of residence upon the adjoining selection if he were already residing upon the selection he had taken up under the Act of 1876 or his freehold. The only answer to that is that no such suggestion was made. If such a suggestion had been made it would have been seen at once that it was simply an oversight to omit it from the Bill. A similar clause was in the Act of 1876. It was not an omission to be very much ashamed of, because when dealing with a large subject like this it could not be expected that some mistakes or some omissions might not take place. They certainly could not congratulate themselves upon receiving from the other side of the House any suggestions during the passing of the Act about omissions that were being made. It is simply an omission, and now that the attention of the Government has been called to it we propose to remedy it. It was the 29th section of the Act of 1876. But I can see no reason why a homestead selector should be allowed to extend his selection under the Act of 1884, any more than the homestead selector under the Act of 1868 was allowed to extend his selection under the Act of 1876. The hon. gentleman told us that the 4th clause was due to the fact that the Minister for Lands is an enemy of the homestead selector. Surely, if he reads the clause he will see nothing of the kind. It simply means this: that a homestead selector is to be a homestead selector. If he wants to get his land at 2s. 6d. an acre he must live upon it. That has always been the law, and so far from its being an insidious attack upon the homestead selector it is merely a re-enactment of the Act of 1876. When the Legislature of 1876 allowed a selector the privilege of extending the area of his selection and counting the two adjoining selections as one, they also made it a provision of the Act that selections in homestead areas should not be extended in that way. In fact the provisions of the Act of 1876 with respect to this matter were very much more severe than the provisions in this Bill, and much more severe restriction was by it placed upon homestead selectors than in this Bill. They did not allow a man who had taken up a selection in a homestead area upon which residence was necessary to extend his selection at all. It certainly never was intended or allowed that a man should acquire a selection at 2s. 6d. an acre without fulfilling the condition of residence. The Bill provides simply that if a man wishes to get land at 2s. 6d. an acre he must reside upon it. That is all the section means, and I ask where is the blow at the homestead selector in this? If the hon. member thinks that there is a blow struck at the homestead selector by these clauses, he simply does not understand them. The clauses merely correct an accidental omission. The hon. gentleman's speech simply amounts to this: that the Land Act has been badly administered since it was passed. The hon. gentleman when speaking upon this subject always exaggerates the time that has elapsed since the Act became law. It was assented to on the 23rd December, and came into operation on the 1st March. For four months and a-half that Act has been in operation. An entire change had to be made in the system of dealing with land; a new system had to be brought into operation; the Land Board had to be got into working order; all the land has to be surveyed and valued; all improvements have to be valued; and the land has to be proclaimed at least a month before it is open for selection. How much of that can be done in four months, over a colony like this? The members of the board do not know everything, any more than Ministers know everything. The hon. member complains that things have not been done that in the nature of things it was impossible to do in the time that has elapsed.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That is what we said.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman's criticism is entirely devoid of force when we consider the time that has elapsed. I know the Land Board and the Minister for Lands have been continuously at work all the time, and I think any impartial critic will say—of course, the hon. gentlemen opposite object to everything the Government do—it is their view of the functions of an Opposition—but every impartial critic will say that, in the time that has elapsed since the passing of the Act, the Land Department and the Land Board have done a surprising amount of work.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What have they done?

The PREMIER: A very great quantity of land has been proclaimed open for selection. As fast as the board get the valuations, and are in a position to fix the price, so fast the work is done. But the hon. gentleman says that, had the Government only done what they might have done, there are 20,000,000 acres of land which might have been proclaimed open for selection.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I did not say that. I said the Government had 20,000,000 acres open to operate on, and they might have started the surveyors in January and had enough to supply the market.

The PREMIER: I understood the hon. gentleman to say that it might have been all open already. Some of it might have been done, and some of it has been done. However, that is quite beside the point. Last year reasons were given in this House for adopting the principle of survey before selection. The hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Kates), who moved the clause, which was afterwards adopted by the House in a slightly altered form, urged the reasons why the system of selection before survey had been bad. They were very sound reasons indeed. Those reasons had been in operation for a series of years in many parts of the country; their evil results had become manifest, and the hon. member for Darling Downs proposed to remedy the evil. The House took those reasons into consideration, but what the House did not consider at that time was that there were many parts of the country in which the evil was already done,

and where it was too late to adopt the system of survey before selection. That consideration the House had not sufficiently before them—that is to say, the members on this side of the House; members on that side of the House carefully avoided expressing any opinion on the subject—they adopted again their view of the functions of an Opposition, and said that everything the Government said was wrong. I am glad to hear the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition say to-day that he thinks the principle of survey before selection is a good principle if properly carried out.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I did not say so.

The PREMIER: Is the hon. gentleman afraid to express his opinion? The hon. gentleman would not commit himself last year to anything; but I understood him at last to say he thought that. Has the hon. gentleman any conviction on the subject? Is he afraid to say whether he objects to this Bill on principle or on the technical ground that it differs from the Bill of last year? Surely he has courage enough to say whether he believes in it or not! If he does believe in it he should assist the Government. He ought to have one opinion or the other. Well now, I say we passed that without giving it sufficient consideration. We had not present to our minds—that is, hon. members who desired to assist in making a good Act—I do not know what the views of other hon. members might have been—but those hon. members who were doing their best to frame a good Act had not present to their minds the fact that in many districts of the colony the land had been picked over and over again—that therefore, when people had the free run of the whole land and would not select a piece of it, it would be futile for the Government to attempt with this rejected land to determine what portions selectors must take. This must have commended itself to anyone if it had been suggested. Those familiar with the districts mentioned in the schedule to this Bill will know that for years and years the land there has been picked over and over again; and that to insist that selectors should only take up surveyed blocks would certainly cause considerable delay—delay first of all in the survey, which would probably be entirely thrown away. Suppose we surveyed several pieces of land, and that while persons wanted to select in that district they would not take any of those pieces. Then so much money would have been wasted and so much delay caused. Next time the surveyor would probably make another mistake. The object of survey before selection was that where you have a large tract of country you might avoid the evils pointed out by the hon. member for Darling Downs, and prevent the eyes of the country being picked out. Those reasons do not exist where the eyes of the country have already been picked out; and where the reasons cease to exist then the conclusions drawn from them ought to cease to be carried out. The hon. member says we can do all this under the existing law; but we cannot, because the limitation of the power given to the Government by the 44th section of the Act of last year is too great. The suspensory provisions are to be exercised only in cases—

> "Where it is practicable to divide the land into lots without actual survey, and to indicate the position of such lots by means of maps or plans, and by reference to known or marked boundaries or starting points."

Now, in these cases it is not practicable, so that with respect to these lands the 44th section ceases to operate; and these are just the lands to which the Bill was intended to refer. The definition put in is too limited. What is the proper thing to do under these circumstances? Are we to suspend the rule forbidding selection on this land until actual survey has been made, or are we to adopt the other alternative and make surveys, as to which the chances are five to one they will be useless when they are made? Anyone can see what is the proper thing to do under the circumstances. The evil has been done, and exists. It is not likely there will be any townships or water reserves on these so-called refuse lands in the settled districts, and no more evils are to be feared in those cases. It is proper, therefore, that a suspensory power should exist. The hon. member says—as if it were something very absurd—that in these cases we are going to offer all the land at a uniform rate for the whole district. What have we been doing since 1868? Is it not what we have been doing all along? And it is exactly what we shall do still.

Mr. NORTON: Have we not altered that?

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman seems to be one of those who are determined that the Act of 1884 shall be a failure if they can make it so. As soon as a blot is found in the Act they insist that it shall remain there. They prophesied that the Act would be a failure, and they are anxious that any obvious defect in it shall not be amended, in order that they may prove to have been true prophets.

Mr. STEVENSON: But where is it going to end?

The PREMIER: I have pointed out why further suspensory powers should be given. The hon. member says it means in effect the repeal of the system. I suppose he refers, if his language has any meaning, to the words, that the suspensory power may be exercised in other districts on the recommendation of the board. Of course, if the board and the Government were to agree as to any other place where it is desirable to have selection before survey, that would be the effect. If that is what the hon. gentleman objects to, I can only tell him that they are the most unimportant words in the Bill. So far as the operation of the Land Act of 1884 is concerned, I wish it to be distinctly understood that the Government believe that the principle of survey before selection is a good one, and that they have not the slightest intention of departing from it, unless where reasons for its operation cease to exist. But the Government do not regard the administration of the land laws as a joke, or as a matter to be administered for the purpose of doing an injury to some person, or bringing some person into disrepute, but to suit the needs of the colony. But, good as a system may be, occasions arise when it should be relaxed, and that is the principle adopted in all wise legislation. I hope the House will give effect to it in this instance. If it is thought undesirable that suspensory power should be given without the consent of Parliament, the Government do not care, because they can always appeal to Parliament when additional relaxation is necessary. That it is necessary in some cases at the present time has become apparent, and the hon. member's laboured attempt to prove that it was unnecessary must have confirmed the impression that already existed in many hon. members' minds that it was absolutely necessary. I have pointed out what the Bill is intended to do, and I hope it will pass. It will certainly facilitate settlement, and will not interfere with the principle of survey before selection. The Government only ask for limited power, and it is all they would use even if Parliament gave them greater power than that sought for.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry I cannot indorse all that fell from the Premier

in connection with this Bill. There has never been the slightest doubt on my mind, nor on that of any other hon. member, that this Bill aims a death-blow at clause 43 of the Act of 1884, which provides for survey before selection. We are giving the power entirely out of our hands. Not only does this Bill deal with lands in the settled districts specified in the schedule, but it gives power to the board, as was pointed out by the leader of the Opposition, to include any district in the colony; that means the whole colony if the board choose to do it, and if that does not mean repealing clause 43 I do not know what it means. The Premier told us that the reason for introducing the Bill was because there are certain places in the districts mentioned which are inaccessible to surveyors, and therefore impossible to be surveyed. That is not the real reason at all. The real reason, to my mind, is that the money did not come in fast enough. I myself never expected a large revenue from the land at the present time, although there will be in years to come. How can we expect a large revenue in threepenny, sixpenny, and ninepenny bits of annual rental? But afterwards the money will come in all at once in lumps. The chief causes of the failure at the start are owing to the Land Board. They started, in my opinion, before they were ready. Instead of putting the Act into operation on the 1st October, they were anxious to start at once, to show the people that they were willing to do business. What did they do in my district? They proclaimed land—refuse land for twenty years, which people objected to take up as second-class pastoral—they proclaimed it as agricultural land. It made people stand aghast, and wonder what would be done next. They put £1 an acre on this land, while at the same time improved selections could be bought for 15s. or 16s. an acre. But people will take up land, although it is bad and high in price. I have to-day obtained a return from the Warwick district showing that at the first land court there people fought very shy of it, only six selectors applying for land open at the time. At the second land court they picked up more courage, and sixteen selectors applied for land. This morning I got a telegram stating that since the last land court, on the 23rd June, up to this date, sixty-eight selectors applied for land. The board made a great mistake with regard to the land. They ought to have inspected it before classing as agricultural what should have been thrown open as pastoral land, and then there would have been no grumbling and muddling over it. I may as well state that in America this clause —survey before selection—was talked over and over again, and was ultimately accepted. When the question was before this House in committee, the hon. member for Townsville very lucidly and very properly explained that in America survey before selection had proved a great success; and you, Mr. Speaker, at the same time also very ably pointed out the advantages of the system, especially in doing away with blackmailing and such like undesirable things. The 44th section of the Act, as has been pointed out by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, gives ample power to the Government to deal with these matters if they can find surveyors in sufficient numbers to survey the land. By that clause two years' time was given to the Government to have—in the settled districts where there is no great difficulty—marked off on the map feature surveys to enable people to find out the land they wished to select. With that clause in the Act, I think, with the leader of the Opposition, that there is no necessity at all for this Bill at the present time. It will make members of this House look rather foolish when we meet our constituents and are told that the very best clause of the present Act has been wiped out, as it is about to be wiped out, by the introduction of this Bill; that the clause which was unanimously accepted as the best in the Bill——

Mr. FOOTE: No, no!

Mr. KATES: I say yes. I would like to ask the hon. member, if he had a paddock of 10,000 or 5,000 acres to sell, if he——

Mr. FOOTE: No; I am not a land monopolist.

Mr. KATES: Well, if he had a 20-acre paddock to sell, would he like anybody to go on it and pick out the very best parts and say, "I will take these, and you may keep the rest." I do not think the hon. gentleman would agree to that; and yet he proposes to do with the property of the State what he would never like to do himself.

Mr. NORTON: He can't see it in that light.

Mr. KATES: I think the hon. the Minister for Lands would have done much better if he had brought in an amendment in a different direction—an amendment which would have been far more acceptable to the country than this—and that is to give grazing farmers five years to fence instead of three. I have noticed that grazing farmers will not come forward, because they are afraid that they will never be able to fence in their runs in three years; but I am sure that if they were given five years they would come forward. This question was fully debated last year, and during the recess, Mr. Speaker, I have found from various opinions that it is very necessary to amend the Act in that direction—giving five years instead of three to fence. Now, what does this Bill propose? It proposes that farming selectors should be their own surveyors; that in taking up agricultural farms men should go into the bush, mark a tree directed to the cardinal points, and survey the land in rectangular lines. Well, sir, when people hear of this kind of thing I do not think they will feel inclined to go into the bush and mark rectangular lines directed to the cardinal points. The survey fee is one of the first fees to be paid down. The moment a selector goes into a land office, the first thing he is asked is to pay down the survey fee; and why, sir, cannot the Government get surveyors in numbers to go out and survey these lands? Surveyors will be able to do the work much more quickly and better than farmers or selectors, and they will be paid for it. I do not think that this Bill will be acceptable to the settlers of the country. They are so well satisfied with survey before selection that they will certainly not like a Bill which gives the board power to suspend survey before selection all over the country if they like. In speaking on this land question I wish to make a few remarks in connection with the survey of runs. I see that some trouble has arisen in connection with one run—Welltown—and I would suggest to all the pastoral lessees to divide their runs themselves, and give the Government the choice of which half they would like to take.

Mr. NORTON: That was proposed, but the Government would not accept it.

Mr. KATES: I do not see why the Government should not do so. They would get the choice of the two halves they wish to resume, and it would do away with a good many lawsuits perhaps, and a good deal of trouble to the board. It is useless for me to say anything more, sir, after the able remarks made by the hon. the leader of the Opposition in regard to this Bill. I cannot see my way clear to accept it, and I do not think the country will accept it; and unless the Government limit the time, or

define the districts so as not to allow the board to do away with clause 43 altogether whenever they like, I shall have to oppose the second reading. It is a Bill that is not wanted. The chief argument used by the hon. the Premier in favour of it was that there is a lot of bad land in districts that have been picked over, over, and over again; but considering that all this land is in the settled districts, and that there is no difficulty in marking off feature surveys as has been done hitherto, I do not see the necessity for it. As I have already pointed out, people are beginning to take up land under the Act. In my own district there have been sixty-eight selections within the last fourteen days although at first there were only six, and I am sure that the same thing will take place in other districts. I therefore think it extremely undesirable to interfere with clause 43, and for that reason I feel constrained to oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. FOOTE said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to make a few remarks upon this Bill, which appears to me to be a very short measure introduced by the Government for the special purpose of meeting the requirements of selectors. The view that I entertain of it is simply this: The Government find that there is a desire on the part of the people to acquire land to settle upon, but they cannot get the necessary staff of surveyors to survey it—that is, to carry out the Act of 1884 by having the land surveyed before selection; and consequently they have introduced this measure empowering them to allow selection to take place before survey, in the old settled districts named where the land has been picked over to a considerable extent, in order to facilitate settlement. I understand it to be the intention of the Government that this Bill is not to be put into operation any further than is absolutely necessary in the districts mentioned, and that being the case I fail to see the harm or injury that is likely to accrue from the passing of the Bill, as referred to by the hon. member for Darling Downs. I can quite understand that hon. gentleman sticking out for clause 43, because I believe it was introduced by him, and no doubt he looks upon it as a very important part of the present Act. It may be very important in his estimation, sir, and I believe it is important, though at the time it was passed I thought it was a wrong step, and I told the Government that by sanctioning it they would only hamper the working of the measure they were then introducing. It is clear to me now, as it was clear to me then, that after the Bill had been brought into force and had been in operation for a year or two there would be sufficient land surveyed. I said to the Minister for Lands at the time, "You cannot get sufficient surveyors to survey the quantity of land required for settlement." But the Minister for Lands thought he could. It has since been proved that he cannot, and hence this measure.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: He has not proved that he cannot; but he will not.

Mr. FOOTE: In that case the Bill defeats itself, because the Government would have no leg to stand upon if they could find abundance of surveyors to carry out the work of the Act. But I fail to see that that is the case. The present Bill has been introduced for the purpose of facilitating settlement in certain districts where the Government cannot get the land surveyed. Perhaps it arises in this way: the hon. Minister for Lands said in his speech that the land had been selected over and over again, and that the principal portions of the good land had been taken out of the various districts. I suppose that, in consequence of that, where there are patches of good land, here and there, they cannot get surveyors to undertake the work. It may arise in that way, but I believe that this Bill can have no injurious effect so far as the districts named are concerned, and if it is only intended to operate in those districts for the purpose I have mentioned, I believe that selection before survey, as a rule, will be very beneficial to the country. I am not prepared to discuss the present Land Act—that is, the Land Act of 1884. It has not been sufficiently long in operation, and I do not see how anyone can offer an opinion upon it, beyond what they held at the time it was being passed through this House. Of course, I read all I can upon the subject, and I am sometimes struck with ideas. One idea which struck me was that the board places by far too great a value upon Crown lands, and thereby prevents settlement to a considerable extent. However, I suppose experience will teach them, as it has taught many others before them. As to the revenue derivable from Crown lands, it certainly must be some time before there can be any great revenue under the Act of 1884. As the hon. member for Warwick stated, I believe that in a few years there will be a vast revenue derived from that source. I do not see the difficulties in reference to this measure as the hon. member for Darling Downs sees them. I see the districts in which this Bill is proposed to be in operation are Beenleigh, Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba, Gympie, Maryborough, and Bundaberg.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: And everywhere else.

Mr. FOOTE: Those are the only places named here, at any rate. I suppose the Government, according to the leader of the Opposition, will have power to put it in operation anywhere they think necessary. If that is the intention—and I doubt it—I am still disposed to entrust the Government with this measure, as I think they will not do anything that will be detrimental to the settlement of the colony or to the interests of the Land Act.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Bundanba, who has just sat down, has given this Bill a very qualified support with his tongue; but no doubt he will give it unqualified support by his vote. He goes upon the "if" principle. "If" it be intended to facilitate settlement it is a good Bill, and reflects on the Government credit for having introduced it. I think it is always best to give a Government credit for not having good intentions. The hon. gentleman certainly misunderstood clause 2 when he said it was only to apply to the districts mentioned in the schedule, because it is distinctly stated that it shall apply to any other district which may be recommended by the board to be added to the list therein specified—which means the whole colony—if the Government have the intention to do so. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, I think, was not quite correct in saying that members who advocated the principle of survey before selection last year did not consider that the land in the settled districts had been selected and picked over a good deal. I think he was mistaken, and that if he looks at *Hansard* he will find that the members in this House who spoke upon that question were members representing the settled districts. I have just run over *Hansard*, and I find that including Mr. Kates himself, who proposed the new clause 43 as it stands now in the Bill, Mr. Salkeld spoke in favour of survey before selection, Mr. Grimes, Mr. Groom, Mr. Horwitz, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Isambert, and Mr. Mellor—all representing settled districts. I do not find Mr. Foote's name; perhaps I overlooked it. On this side of the House there were Mr. Palmer

representing Burke, and myself. In fact, I do not think anyone spoke against the principle of survey before selection unless the Minister for Lands. So that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government was mistaken in thinking it was not well considered by members of this House before it was adopted. He is also mistaken in saying that members upon this side of the House did not express their idea of the principle; because I spoke plainly upon the subject. I think I spoke as strongly upon the subject as any member in the House; and I know that the hon. member for Burke also advocated it strongly. I cannot find the name of the hon. member for Bundanba, who says he warned the Government against adopting this principle. He must have warned them privately.

Mr. FOOTE: Not in a speech. The Minister for Lands can tell you about that.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: I think it is a great pity that the hon. gentleman, if he held such an opinion, did not express it in the House, as he ought to have done if he was so much opposed to it then as he says he was. He has told us that he warned the Government that it would hamper the operations of the Act. I do not think it does hamper the operations of the Act. I think the Government have quite sufficient power under clause 44 to do all that is required, and they have that power for a period of two years from the passing of the Act. If they cannot, with the power given by clause 44, do what is necessary towards facilitating settlement in the settled districts where land has been picked over, it will be much better to abolish the principle of survey before selection altogether. It is no use trying to disguise the matter by saying it is only wanted for those particular districts. I do not believe it is wanted for those districts, but for other districts; and the Minister for Lands thinks it is wanted for other districts, and it is to other districts that it is meant to apply. In fact it is meant to be applied so far as the board choose to recommend; but why was the Northern district not put in the schedule?

The PREMIER: We can do without it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I know some land in several districts in the North which is of inferior quality. For instance, in the Cook district there are millions of acres of land which, I think, would not be selected by anybody; certainly at the price proposed by the board at the present time they would not be selected. If it be necessary to abolish survey before selection in the southern part of the colony, it is just as necessary to do so in the northern part, but I do not believe that it is necessary anywhere. I believe the principle to be a good one, and that it ought not to be suspended in the way proposed by this Bill. I do not believe in putting such power into the hands of the Government as would be given them by this Bill. Of course it may be said that I express this opinion because I am in opposition, but even if I were on the other side of the House I would not believe in giving such power to the Government. I think that every member of this House who believes in the principle of survey before selection being a right principle to be acted upon should not vote for the second reading of this Bill. If we pass this Bill, in two or three years we will have the very same excuse alleged in regard to districts further west, to which the provisions of this measure may be applied, as are now alleged with reference to the settled districts. That excuse will be put forward possibly by the present Ministry, for the purpose of keeping the land open for selection before survey. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, and believing, as I do, in the principle of survey before selection, I will certainly oppose the second reading of this Bill.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson) said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman who has just spoken seems to have as much diffidence as to the intentions of the Government as the hon. member for Bundanba has expressed confidence in their intentions. I think that the Bill should be chiefly regarded in this light: Is it necessary at the present time to encourage settlement? I believe that the more the Bill is examined the more it will be seen that it will act in that direction. The hon. member for Mulgrave, in his speech this evening, made a statement which, I think, should not go forth to the country unchallenged, because, if true, it would to a considerable extent affect the necessity for this Bill. The hon. gentleman stated that when the Land Act was passed last session there were about 20,000,000 acres upon which surveyors could immediately enter for the purpose of dealing with them under the provisions of the new Act.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Under clause 44?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes, under clause 44. If I mistake not, the hon. gentleman stated there were about 20,000,000 acres upon which the surveyors could immediately proceed in furthering the operation of the new Land Act; and in addition to that, that there were 3,500,000 acres in the districts specially mentioned in the schedule of the Bill before the House.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: The 3,500,000 acres were included in the 20,000,000.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: At all events the hon. gentleman stated that there were 20,000,000 acres with which the Land Board could deal, or upon which surveyors could enter for the purpose of opening up settlement in the colony. If that statement went forth unchallenged, and if it were substantially correct, it might show that the Government has been remiss in not proceeding with the survey of these 20,000,000 acres, and that there was really no necessity for the Bill at the present time. But the real position is this: that a very large proportion of that 20,000,000 acres—a very considerable proportion indeed—ceased to be Crown lands when the new Land Act came into operation, and therefore could not be dealt with until the subdivision of runs had taken place. The residue of the 20,000,000 acres consisted of isolated patches of land in an inferior class of country, towards which settlement was not likely to gravitate; and it is to encourage settlement upon these isolated patches that the present Bill has been introduced. It will allow settlers an opportunity of judging of the country, and, if they find it suitable in their estimation for settlement, they can then, if this measure should pass, proceed to select, under certain conditions, before survey. I think this is a fair statement of the position. I do not think it is desirable that the statement to which I have referred should go forth to the country unchallenged—namely, that when the new Land Act came into operation there were 20,000,000 acres on which surveyors could proceed in anticipation of settlement. The new Land Act has not, I contend, had a fair trial, and there has not been sufficient opportunity for judging whether the principle of survey in advance of settlement is wholly applicable to the country. The principle received the approbation of the House, but I may say that it was a somewhat impulsive piece of legislation, because it was introduced in a rather precipitate manner. But,

having received the approbation of the House, it should certainly receive a fair trial, and that trial can only be made under much more favourable climatic conditions than we have had since the Bill was passed, and in a greater length of time than has elapsed since then. But even if the principle of survey before selection be confirmed by experience, it will not in any way do away with the necessity for this Bill, which does not interfere with the policy of the 43rd clause of the Land Act of 1884. The object of this measure is simply to encourage settlement upon those isolated portions of country, the expense of surveying which—and this is by no means the least favourable argument—would be out of all proportion to the area of the portion to be so surveyed, inasmuch as there is not likely to be any considerable quantity of land available for settlement which could be surveyed at one time, and which would reduce the proportionate cost of survey. It has been contended by the hon. member for Townsville that under the 44th clause of the new Land Act the Government possess all the powers which this Bill confers upon them, but I respectfully submit that the mode of operation under the 44th clause is entirely dissimilar to what is provided for here. The 44th clause would not be in any way so applicable, or deal so effectually with the matter under consideration, as the present Bill. I rose chiefly to point out the exact state of affairs in connection with the representation of the hon. member for Mulgrave, that there was such an immense area of land which the Land Board could have dealt with earlier than they have done at the present time. The hon. gentleman further intimated that the Land Board had shown considerable inactivity in not inviting the pastoral tenants to come under the Act earlier.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Not the Land Board; the Government.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Well, that the Government had shown considerable inactivity in not inviting the pastoral tenants to come under the operation of the Act in January last. Well, I do not know whether the invitation would have been as readily responded to as the hon. gentleman seems to imagine. I have learned on very good authority that, even had the Government pressed the pastoral tenants to come under the operation of the Act earlier, it is a question whether they would have had sufficient time to make their arrangements for the removal of stock and to make other necessary arrangements in connection with pastoral occupation, and come in earlier than they are now doing. At any rate, that is a matter upon which there may be a division of opinion, and I have given the information supplied to me from authoritative sources. It was not the inclination of the squatters, or to their convenience, to come under the operation of the Act at an earlier period than they have done. I trust hon. members will give the Government power to deal with this Bill, and will have full confidence that they have no intention to depart from the provisions of the Land Act of last session in respect to survey before selection, but they wish to be authorised to deal with these isolated portions of country that cannot be dealt with advantageously under that system.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—It is a pity that the right of discussion upon the Government side of the House, so far as the contention of the Premier is concerned, should not have rested with the Premier himself, for it is perfectly certain that neither the hon. gentleman who has just sat down nor the hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill knows anything about it. The hon. gentleman who has just sat down told us, and I do not know whether his remark applied to the Act itself—and if it did I perfectly agree with him—or to the amendment upon the Act, moved by the hon. member for the Darling Downs, and if that is the application I disagree with him; the hon. member told us—and I have taken his words down—that the late Land Act was an act of "impulsive legislation."

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No, the amendment.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The amendment, was it? The hon. gentleman says his remark applied to the amendment of the hon. member for Darling Downs, and yet that amendment was carried without a division—was assented to and even assisted by the Government—and the hon. Colonial Treasurer calls it an act of "impulsive legislation." How, I ask, could there have been any impulsive legislation when the hon. member for Darling Downs proposed a material alteration in the Bill as introduced to this House, and that alteration is accepted by the Premier a once, the phraseology only being amended? It was accepted most willingly by the Premier, who admitted at the time, and I suppose he will admit it now, that the principle of selection after survey was a proper system for settling a population upon the lands of this colony.

Mr. STEVENSON: It was printed and in the hands of hon. members weeks before it was passed.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am reminded by my hon. friend that the words "impulsive legislation" could not in any way apply to that amendment, because it was printed and in the hands of hon. members for two weeks—for many days, at any rate.

Mr. KATES: For three weeks.

Mr. MOREHEAD: For twenty-one days before it was brought on for consideration in this House, proving that it could not in any way be called "impulsive legislation"; yet those are the words applied to the action taken by this House with regard to this question, by the Colonial Treasurer. We know, however, that the hon. member is in the habit of indulging in long-winded speeches, and that his phraseology might be terser than it is. The hon. gentleman further stated—and it is a very remarkable statement—that the reason a large majority, possibly, of the leaseholders of this colony have not come under the Act of 1884 up to the present time—though of course they have got up to the 31st of August to decide whether they will or not—is that they have to consider the question of the removal of their stock. I think the hon. gentleman must have had in his mind the Queensland 4 per cents. I fancy his idea of stock must be more connected with his fiscal position than with his knowledge of the country. For my own part, I do not think the squatters have considered that question, though I am sorry to say Providence has taken away a large number of stock during the last few years; nor do I think they have received due consideration for that at the hands of the Colonial Treasurer. The Premier, in dealing with this second clause, appeared to be quite surprised that anyone could suppose for a moment that if this Bill became law it would be applied to any portions but unproductive lands—that anyone could suppose for a moment that it would be interpreted to apply to the whole of the colony. Does the hon. gentleman imagine that any member of this House—I, who have known him for many years, will not be deceived—will be deceived—that they will not at once see that this clause will be applied, and that we may have free selection before survey all through the colony? With one sweep of the pen all the lands in that schedule I see opposite me may be thrown open to selection before survey. The

hon. gentlemen knew that; but he was not straightforward enough to admit that that construction might be put upon the clause.

The PREMIER: If the Government and the board agree that might be the consequence.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I will take the very nice way in which the hon. gentleman has put it—that if the possibility arises that the Government and the board agree such a result may follow; and I ask is it not better that this House should provide against that very remote possibility? I can quite understand that possibility arising, and the board agreeing upon the subject, and that the whole of the land within the schedule see before me may be thrown open for selection before survey—a principle which this House, assisted by the Government themselves, has already objected to. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, because I take it that, so far as regards this Bill, the hon. the Minister for Lands is a nullity—he did not understand the original Bill, and I am perfectly certain from what he said the other night that he does not understand the amending Bill he has introduced—I would like to know, then, from the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, in what position will the owners of land who have brought their land under the Act of 1884 be placed in with regard to this Bill? Is there to be repudiation again? Is this Bill to enforce a repetition of the disgraceful repudiation which departmentally exists under the present Act?

The PREMIER: I do not understand you.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. gentleman can understand me perfectly well if he likes. I will put it to him again: I will assume the case—and there are many such cases—of a lessee holding lands in the settled districts under the old Act, and coming under the Act of 1884. I will deal with them first. They have an existing right, and surely that right cannot be interfered with by any action, either of the board or of the Government, in altering the conditions under which they surrendered their existing leases, and came under the new tenure.

The PREMIER: What rights do you mean?

Mr. MOREHEAD: The rights that become existing as soon as these lessees come under the Act of 1884.

The PREMIER: I do not know what you mean.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I do not know if the hon. gentleman knows what I mean, but I am perfectly certain that every other hon. member in the House knows what I mean. The hon. gentleman is probably puzzling as to how he will get out of the difficulty.

The PREMIER: If you tell me what you want to know I will answer it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I ask the hon. gentleman this question: Assuming that a lessee under the Act of 1869 has abandoned his rights under that Act and come under the Act of 1884 under the inducements held out to him under the Act of 1884, how will he be affected by this Bill? Having asked that question, I will ask one consequent upon it. How will a lessee, whose right to come under the Act of 1884 does not expire until the 31st of August, and who does not exercise that right until the 31st of August—how will he be affected by this Bill? I would ask the Premier, who is really the Minister in charge of this Bill, what will happen assuming that every man—and these are assumptions that we are bound to take into consideration—assuming that every leaseholder within the schedule accepted the provisions of the Act of 1884, which they are entitled to do until the 31st of August—what will be the use of the 2nd clause of this Bill? It appears to me, as far as I can understand the legal position, if any one of those leaseholders, or all of them, elect to come under the Act of 1884, this Bill is of no use whatever. The ground is cut altogether from under the feet of the Government, because if all those leaseholders came under the Act of 1884 this Bill would in no way apply to them; that is to say that if any leaseholder in the schedule holding under the Act of 1884 comes under this Bill, the 2nd clause—which is the whole of the Bill—is of no avail whatever. I think the Premier will agree with me that such is the case.

The PREMIER: I do not understand your argument.

Mr. MOREHEAD: My argument is this: that there are certain leaseholders in this colony—those leaseholders being embraced by the schedule passed by this House—invited by the State to accept the provisions of the Act of 1884, and for the sake of my argument I say they all accept the conditions. If they have all accepted the conditions, then the 2nd clause cannot apply, because they have surrendered the existing lease or promise of a lease on condition that they shall receive a certain other lease from the Government. They lose a certain portion of their runs and get a lease of the remainder. This 2nd clause, most decidedly, if it was passed, would give the Government of the day power to deal with the resumed portions of those runs under different conditions to those under which the leaseholders accepted the other lease. There can be no question or divergence of opinion upon that point. I point out that as one of the fatal objections to this Bill. Another fatal objection, as has been pointed out by other speakers, is that this House is pledged, without division—without any difference of opinion, against the principle of selection until after survey. There can be no doubt that this House spoke with almost unanimous voice, and gave a decision with almost unanimous voice, on that subject. The hon. member for Rosewood believes in the principle of selection after survey. Now, it has been urged as one of the reasons why selection should be allowed to take place before survey, that in certain districts there is a scarcity of surveyors; but I am informed on the highest authority—I say the very highest authority advisedly—that there are fifty surveyors at the present moment competent and willing to survey any portions desired to be secured by the public. My authority is the Hon. A. C. Gregory, who gave me permission to mention his name, and I take it that his name will be received as a guarantee of the accuracy of the statement I make; therefore the slender pretext of the want of surveyors goes for nothing, and I hope this House will not, under the guise of allowing selection in some small portion of the colony to take place before survey, pass a measure which will, if it becomes law, utterly upset the undivided opinion of this House when it passed the Act of 1884. I do trust that hon. members will pause before they vote for the second reading of this Bill. I am glad to find the hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Kates) has stuck to the opinion he expressed on a previous occasion; and I hold that a gentleman such as Mr. Kates, knowing as he does the wants and necessities of the farming class on the Darling Downs, the most important agricultural portion of the colony, who has affirmed and re-affirmed what he stated when the Act of 1884 was under discussion—the opinion of that hon. member, so far as agricultural settlement is concerned, is entitled to the highest respect at the hands of the House. When that hon. gentleman has seen no reason to change

his opinion, we should have much stronger reasons adduced by the members sitting on the Treasury benches for this alteration of the law than we have heard up to the present time.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree in a great measure with the remarks made by the hon. member for Darling Downs and the hon. member for Balonne, with respect to the power proposed to be given to the Government. If we, on this side, were in opposition we should have strenuously protested against it ourselves; and what is fair for one side is fair for the other. What we would have done in opposition I believe in doing sitting where we do now; and I have no hesitation in giving my opinion on the subject. It is proposed to give an indefinite power to the Government at any time to actually repeal the most vital clause in the Bill passed last year. If the second reading of the Bill be passed there will be no difficulty in finding members enough on this side to strike out that portion of the clause in committee which allows the Government at any time to include any other district in the schedule—merely striking out a very few words which will remedy that evil. The Bill is a good one, on the whole, looking at it from the selectors' point of view. There is a number of almost useless lands which no selector would take up under ordinary circumstances. They are not only useless to the State, but a nuisance to the neighbouring selectors, being mere harbourages for vermin; and it would be a very good thing if we could actually give these lands away, from the selectors' point of view, because then the vermin on them would be destroyed. Looking at it from another point of view, that of the ratepayers of the divisional boards: these Crown waste lands pay no rates, yet roads have to be made in their direction and by them at the expense of the selectors, who pay the rates; but if the lands were taken up in any way, under any circumstances, rates would be paid by those who hold them, and the general burden of rating would be lightened. I shall vote for the second reading, but I hope we shall be able to strike out the part which gives the Government that indefinite power of which I spoke, which the Liberal party have always endeavoured to prevent.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—The object of this Bill is simply to save to the country the cost of surveying land which will not be taken up, and it is well known that it applies to the settled districts, where the land has been picked over and over again. I think it would be a very great mistake to go to the expense of surveying this land, for you cannot compel a selector to take it up simply because it is surveyed. If it is left to the selector to take up this land well and good, because if it is not selected the cost of survey will not fall on the country, and that is the whole and sole object of the Bill—to deal with land picked and re-picked over and over again. I have yet to learn, however, what the country has lost or suffered by free selection. I look forward to the time when we shall be in a position to provide land for all the requirements of settlers without delay. In the Western districts plenty of land can soon be surveyed to provide grazing farms and in the case of those farms it will not make much difference whether there is survey before selection or not; but, as I said before, I have yet to learn what the country has suffered from selection before survey during the whole time the Acts of 1868 and 1876 were in operation. A selector will not be bound to take up land merely because it is surveyed, and if the land is worthless the country will have to pay the cost of the survey, unless this Bill becomes law. That is exactly what we wish to avoid. The hon. member for Balonne talked very largely about repudiation, but I do not understand what the hon. gentleman means by repudiation. He says that, because a lessee was under the impression that one-half of his run would not be taken up until surveyed, it will be repudiation to throw open the land to free selection before survey.

Mr. MOREHEAD: As a matter of personal explanation, Mr. Speaker, I may be allowed to say that I did not assume for one moment that the present Government would think it repudiation to take any such action with regard to any person who came under the Act of 1884.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I take it for granted that the pastoral lessee coming under the Act of 1884 will have his run divided. It will be divided for the purpose of settlement, and therefore he will have no further claim on it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: By the conditions under which he comes under the new Act.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I take it for granted that when a run is divided the lessee has a lease for one-half, and the other is thrown open for settlement. Where is the repudiation? Exception has been taken to the Bill on the ground that it will not only apply to these particular districts, but can be made to apply to almost every district in the colony. I do not think that is a matter of much consequence. I am sure the Minister for Lands is quite willing to strike out that portion—

"Or any other district which may be recommended by the board to be added to the list of districts therein specified."

I presume that if that is struck out there can be very little objection to the Bill, because I do not think there is a single member of the House who wishes to put the country to the cost of surveying worthless lands which might never be taken up. If the selector chooses to take it up before survey, I do not see that the pastoral lessee can suffer one bit by it. I hope this Bill will be carried.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—I should very much like to know what the intention of the Government really is in this matter. I agree, I am happy to say, with a great deal that has fallen from the hon. the Minister for Works; I fail to see that the country has ever suffered by selection before survey; on the contrary, I believe that principle has done more to promote settlement than the Bill of 1884, which has provided survey before selection. I am very much afraid that that one principle has had a great deal to do with the stoppage of selection throughout the colony. But, sir, if it is intended, as the Minister for Works has suggested, to strike out from this Bill the clause "or any other district which may be recommended by the board," thereby leaving the application of selection before survey to the districts in the schedule to this Bill, I am decidedly opposed to the Bill in that shape. On the contrary, if the Government are prepared to extend this schedule to the whole of the agricultural districts of the colony, leaving out those districts which are suitable for grazing settlement, then I am in accord with the Minister for Lands in this matter. The Minister for Lands pointed out last night that the lands chiefly contained in the schedule to this Bill are of a comparatively sterile and worthless character. A great deal of the land was inaccessible, and the expense attending the survey would undoubtedly be so great as to swallow up the rentals the Government would derive from the land for many years to come. I was not in the House last session when this objectionable clause of survey before selection was passed; I was away in the North; but as

soon as I heard of it I was able to see at once that the success of the Bill was very much jeopardised by that principle having been introduced into it. I certainly, later on in the session, took the opportunity of pointing out that the enormous expense the Government would be put to in surveying large areas of land that would probably never be selected would prevent the success of the Bill from a revenue point of view. I am very glad to find that the Government, before it is too late, have come to see that if they anticipate getting any revenue from the Land Bill of 1884, sufficient to pay a portion even of the interest on the ten-million loan, they will have to remodel it very considerably. And it is not only in this one clause that the Government will have to retrace their steps. I am afraid they will have very much to amend the clause giving the right of freehold to the selector. It has not been pointed out why the operation of this Bill should be limited to the southern portion of the colony, and not extend beyond Bundaberg. I am prepared to show that the quantity of land selected outside the scheduled districts is considerably in excess of that selected in the scheduled districts. Any facility given to selectors should certainly be extended to those districts where it has been proved by the experience of the last eight years that selection has taken place to a very great extent. I find that during the last eight years the area selected in the scheduled districts of this Bill amounts to 1,830,147 acres, whereas the land which has been selected outside the scheduled districts is 2,947,954 acres. That proves that outside the scheduled districts selection has been more rife than it has been inside, to the extent of 1,100,000 acres. Unless it is intended that selection should be drawn as much as possible to the southern portion of the colony, I consider that the schedule contained in the Bill is framed on a very bad principle indeed. I can quite understand that if the Government wish to settle population as much as possible in the southern portion of the colony the Bill will have that effect, because selectors will be able to get land with ease in the South, whereas great difficulties will be experienced if they want to select anywhere else. I maintain that it was always one of the best principles of the old Land Act that selectors could please themselves in acquiring their selections. The man who wished to settle down selected the piece which he considered most suitable for his requirements, so that if he happened to take a bad piece of land he could never blame the Government for it. He could select the locality which was most suitable for his avocation—he could select an area within his means; and the great feature of selection before survey was that he could at once, on his application being approved by the land commissioner, take possession of his land, and form a home for himself without any delay. Since the new Land Act has come into operation I am sorry to see selection has almost ceased. In the northern portion of the colony selection and *bonâ fide* settlement was carried on to a very great extent, but since the passage of the Act, there has been comparatively little settlement because there has been little or no selection. I do not think it is at all just that that portion of the colony where selection proceeded so rapidly, and from which the Government have been and are still deriving such a very large revenue, should be excluded from the operation of this Bill, and that people in the northern portion of the colony should be unable to acquire land with the same facility as those in the South. I have no apprehension that selection before survey is likely to have any injurious results. I have maintained that all along, and I must say the Government are going back most emphatically from one of the chief principles in their Land Act. But I am very glad to see it, and I should be very glad indeed to support this Bill if the Government would only give some assurance that the provisions contained in it should be made to apply to the whole agricultural portion of the colony and not merely restricted to the South. But when we come to the power given by the 2nd clause to the Land Board to extend the system to the entire colony, we cannot fail to see that it would be introducing a most injurious principle. It would be introducing the system of "peacocking," which has been referred to, to the grazing areas. There is no doubt that very large areas of land in the Western and inland districts would be entirely ruined if that system were allowed to prevail. Waterholes would be selected, and large areas up to the amount limited by the Act—20,000 acres—would be selected in such a way that thousands of acres surrounding those selections would be rendered utterly valueless. Therefore I do not think the House should allow this clause to pass, although the Minister for Works has stated that it is very likely the Government will allow it to be struck out. I only hope they will extend the operation of the measure as I have indicated, and that if selection before survey is considered a sound principle for the southern portion of the colony it should be extended to the entire colony as far as agricultural settlement is concerned. There is no doubt the hopes the Colonial Treasurer expressed last year with regard to the Land Act have not been realised. We have been told that we must give the Government more time in order to allow the operation of the Act to be brought into force. Well, the small minority we possess on this side is a sufficient assurance to the Government that they will be allowed that time. But I must say we watch very carefully, and no doubt, in many cases, very anxiously, to see what the effect of that Act will really be from a revenue point of view. Up to the present time, as the Treasurer fully knows, it has been a total failure. When we consider that that hon. gentleman, in the modest estimate he framed last year, anticipated that there would be at all events a revenue of £10,000 to the credit of the Land Fund up to the end of June, and when we find that that modest estimate was only realised to the extent of some £700, we must fear there is something radically wrong in the Land Act of 1884, and that we shall have before very long to resort to additional taxation in order to make up the deficiency brought about by what I consider one of the most pernicious Land Acts ever passed by the Legislature of any of the colonies. However, that is a matter that we can, of course, only form an opinion about; but I must say I do think that the realisation of revenue from our land policy is not at all likely to result in success. I am very sorry that a matter in connection with our homestead selectors that I raised during the debate on the Address has not received any attention from the Government, now that they have brought in an amendment to their Land Act. I then pointed out the very unsatisfactory position that our homestead selectors of the future were placed in, in consequence of the vagueness of the Land Act of 1884. This House well knows that when a clause similar to the homestead clause was reinserted in the Land Bill it was intended that the homestead selector should have his selection, as before, at 2s. 6d. an acre, on fulfilling certain conditions laid down. I pointed out on that occasion that instead of getting his land at that price it was quite possible he might have to pay 10s. an acre for it. That is a matter that the Government should set most distinctly at

rest. The way I pointed out that an injustice was likely to be done was this: According to the Act, when a man selects land for a homestead selection, that land may have been assessed by the board at 3d. an acre, in which case, after having paid five years' rental, and having resided on the land, he would have paid in all 15d.; and by the payment of another 15d. he would then be entitled to the freehold of his land. That was the intention of the House in introducing the clause. But it may happen, and it frequently will where land is of any value—and it is perfectly useless for homestead purposes unless it is good, and that will be nearly all over the north of the colony—that the board will assess the land at 2s. an acre. In that case the selector will have paid 10s. at the end of five years. There is no provision in the Act by which, after having paid 2s. 6d. an acre, he is to cease further payment; nor is there any provision for giving him the refund between 2s. 6d. which he should pay, and 10s. which he will have actually paid. I can only say that when the Bill comes into committee I shall ask the Minister for Lands to give a distinct explanation as to what position the homestead selector is really in. I know that that gentleman, from his own expressions, is not particularly impressed with the value of the homestead selector to the colony, but I know there are hon. gentlemen on both sides who differ very much from him in opinion on that subject. I certainly hold that the homestead selector has been one of the best colonists that Queensland has had; and, although the price at which he acquires the land is merely a nominal one, the benefit which accrues to the colony from having a large class of homestead selectors more than counterbalances the loss which the colony sustains by almost giving its land away for nothing. Taking the returns for the last eight years, to show the number of our homestead selectors as compared with our conditional selectors, I find that during that period we have had no less than 6,452 homestead selectors, as against 7,011 conditional selectors. And I maintain that the homestead selector who takes up his selection, forms a home for himself upon it, complies with the conditions, and settles down on the land with his family, does as much good to the colony in the way of settlement as the man who takes up a very much larger area. To show that the relative proportion between the two classes is still maintained, I may mention that during the last year, notwithstanding the very severe crisis which pervaded all the agricultural districts of the colony, there were no less than 1,130 homestead selectors, as against 1,147 conditional selectors. There were only 17 conditional selections less taken up last year than there were homesteads. I have found, Mr. Speaker, that in bad times the homestead selector is always ready to select land, and for this reason: in the settled districts, especially along the coast, he finds great difficulty in getting employment, and if he can only secure a homestead under the homestead clauses of the Act, he argues with himself—"I will go and take up a homestead; the rental of the land is well within my means, and it will be cheaper for me to reside on my own piece of land than to go travelling about the country looking for work, which I am not likely to get here." I think it is a great pity that so much discouragement has been given to the homestead selector by the Land Act passed last year. The Premier complained that during the passage of the Act last year he received very few suggestions from this side of the House. I can recall to the hon. gentleman's recollection a speech where he stated emphatically that any suggestions that were made from this side of the House would be received with the greatest suspicion. I believe those were the words the hon. gentleman used; but, notwithstanding that, I think this side of the House can claim that they succeeded in very considerably modifying some principles contained in that Land Bill; and there was one case in which I think the country may thank this side of the House more than anything else, and that was in preventing that serious act of repudiation which the Government contemplated in endeavouring to do away with the pre-emptive right. Although in this House this side were unable to carry their principle in a division, I am glad to think that the principle which was strongly affirmed by this side of the House was indorsed by the other Chamber, and that the Government were compelled at the very last moment, rather than jeopardise the passing of the Land Bill, to have that clause reinserted, and a gross act of repudiation was thereby undoubtedly prevented. So far, at all events, this side of the House may take the credit for having compelled the Government to do an act of justice when passing that measure. I do not understand, Mr. Speaker, in the event of this Bill becoming law, how the Government propose, or how the Land Board will decide, what the rental of these lands—the almost useless lands described by the Minister for Lands—is to be. The Minister for Lands described the lands to which the schedule is supposed to apply as—

> "Composed in many instances of broken scrubby ridges, and poor, sterile, stony ranges, with here and there fine isolated patches."

If this is the description of the land to which it is intended to apply, in the hope of inducing population to settle down here, it will be a very poor lookout indeed for the selectors; and all the time the Government are endeavouring to induce settlement over these sterile districts, as described by the Minister for Lands, we have miles of the most magnificent agricultural land lying idle in the North for the want of the same principle, of selection before survey, being applied to it. I have no hesitation in saying that if the lands of the North were thrown open to selection the same as is proposed in the South, the selection in the North would be far in excess of what it is in the South. I cannot agree with the remarks that have fallen from several hon. members, that clause 44 gave the Government ample power to provide for selection before survey. I do not consider that it does anything of the sort. That clause, as I understand it, allows a system of survey to be made in the office, and when it was under discussion I certainly pointed out the impossibility of the Lands Department being able to make such surveys satisfactory. Even if they surveyed the land, in the office there would still remain the same difficulty, that the selector could not find out where his selection was. He would go into the office and select No. 57 or No. 105, or whatever the number might be; but it would be utterly impossible that he could identify that selection when he saw it. We must have either one thing or the other—either selection before survey, or let the Government employ a sufficiently large staff of surveyors and have survey before selection, in which latter case the inevitable result must ensue, that the Government will have to pay more for surveys than the land will realise in the next ten years. I have no further remarks to make beyond those I have already made. I must say that I cannot, although I believe in selection before survey, give my support to this Bill in its present shape. If the Minister for Lands will give me an assurance that this schedule shall be extended to the whole of the agricultural districts throughout the colony, I will give him my hearty support; but

if settlement is to be restricted, as it will be by this Bill, to the southern portion of the colony, I condemn the principle of the whole Bill.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—When the Land Bill of 1884 was passed last session, I expected for it the same fate as has been experienced by the Divisional Boards Act, which was very complicated and difficult in its administration until experience indicated what amendments were necessary, and exposed its shortcomings. Therefore, I am not at all surprised to see this Bill before the House, and I am perfectly sure that the House will be treated annually to an amendment to the Land Act of 1884. But this is no blame to the Government. Past Land Acts have shared a similar fate. Wholesale alienation was the effect of the past Land Acts, which was just the very thing desired and highly prized by those in favour of those Acts. The House last year insisted upon survey before selection more by reason of the panic which the wholesale alienation of the previous Ministry had caused than anything else. It has been said that up to the present time the Land Act has been a failure so far as revenue is concerned. This is, of course, as compared with the success that attended the administration of the laws by the late Government, who simply squandered the public lands for the sake of making up a deficit. To a certain extent the necessity for survey before selection has been done away with by the high price which has been placed on the land, and by the inability of selectors to acquire freeholds as they could in former times. The fencing clause in the new Land Act has also operated in that direction. I object to the 2nd clause of this Bill giving the Government or Governor in Council power to extend the provisions of the measure to any district in the colony they may think proper; but not that I do not trust the present Government; I do trust them, because I believe they are in favour of the settlement of the colony by small selectors, while several Administrations before them have been in favour of the wholesale alienation of the public lands. But we do not know how soon the present Administration may have to give way to another Government more in favour of the alienation of land in large quantities. Therefore, what we will not trust to future Governments in which we might not have the same confidence we have in the present Administration, we should not give even to the Ministry now in office. If the Government will agree to strike out the 2nd clause, as the Minister for Lands has indicated, I think the Bill will be a good one, and that it will meet with the approval of the House. If it is found necessary to extend its provisions to any other districts, that can be done by another Bill when the circumstances demand it. Hon. members will not object so much to coming here and spending a little time in the House now that they are going to receive two guineas a day. The hon. member for Mackay has described, in language than which no better could have been chosen, the benefit that small selectors are to the colony. To every sentiment he expressed on that subject I willingly subscribe. But this makes me wonder at the action often taken by the hon. gentleman. How well he seems to understand the circumstances of the selector! how eloquently he described that in bad times most of the homestead selections took place—that men unable to find employment would rather select homesteads and settle down than go wandering about the country! Does he not know that that is the most fatal reply to his bogus arguments as to the wholesale introduction of men who, as he says, will reduce the wages of working men already in the colony? Does he not know that the men the Government propose to introduce—namely, agricultural labourers—are the very men who will select homesteads and become employers themselves instead of employés. I hope, for the honour of the hon. gentleman, that he will leave those bogus arguments alone in the future. The hon. gentleman also expatiated on the millions of acres lying idle in the North, but he very carefully refrained from mentioning the millions of acres lying idle which have been selected for speculative sugar companies, which it was intended to form should they be able to introduce black labour. He did not mention that these lands, taken up for speculative purposes, which have been frustrated by the low price of sugar, are now lying idle. Survey before selection is in many respects necessary, as it will save a large amount of expenditure for roads and bridges by securing these means of communication in places which will not require a very considerable outlay to make them available for traffic. Now that the expense of maintaining the roads has been thrown upon the people living in the districts, they feel the hardships that follow the making of roads in unsuitable places. Thousands of pounds might be saved to divisional boards if roads were surveyed before any selection took place. For these reasons, I think we should adhere to survey before selection, and wherever it is found that this is inconvenient let the Government come down to the House with an amended schedule.

Mr. WHITE said: Mr. Speaker,—I have no objection to this Bill if the powers asked for in the 2nd section are confined to those lands that have already been open for selection, and which have been picked over. The attitude of the two parties in this House is very plain and distinct on the land question. Hon. members on the Government side are watching the interests of the people, but hon. members on the Opposition side are watching the interests of a class, and by a system of sophistical reasoning, and by some combination of intrigue that I cannot understand, they have secured the support of a portion of the people. They have persuaded that important but perverse section of the people that "Codlin is their friend, not Short." I am sorry the hon. leader of the Opposition is out. I do not like to attack that gentleman behind his back. During the recess the leader of the Opposition visited the North again and again, seeking popularity. On reading his Bundaberg speech, with his long garbled tirade against the Land Act, I was sorry for the people who were so edified by the information that was foisted upon them. I would be very unwilling to accuse that gentleman of wilful misrepresentation, but would the people believe me if I told them that that hon. gentleman, who, in his own estimation and in the estimation of his supporters, is the only gentleman in Queensland fitted to be its Premier—if I told them that that hon. gentleman is so blinded by prejudice that he does not know the provisions of the Act which he takes such credit to himself for improving? I will quote from his Bundaberg speech, and I find the hon. gentleman says—

> "No more homesteads were to be granted. The Opposition, however, fought hard to retain the homestead clauses in the new Act and make them even easier, and they succeeded, but could not get better terms for the homestead selector than seven years' residence. The Opposition tried to make it five years, but the Government were too strong."

Now, the Land Act provides for five years' residence, and the selector when he goes on to his land can claim his certificate in five years; but the present Government, in order to favour the working man, the poor man without means, gives him two years to play upon. He can take up a selection and go to work and earn money, and provide himself to go upon it in two years, and

then he can get his certificate; but, according to the hon. gentleman's speech here, the Opposition opposed that. They wanted the homestead selector to be confined to five years, and if he was not able to go on his selection at the present time he was not to have a homestead selection at all. That was the position they took up, and, according to the hon. gentleman's statement, that should be the reading of it. The hon. gentleman goes on to say—

"Another disability was put on selectors under previous Acts, and, in addition to the homestead selector having to wait seven years to comply with his conditions, he has to wait, in the first instance, for survey before selection, and may not select more than 160 acres; that is, if he fixes upon a block which is surveyed as 165 acres even, he is debarred from getting it as his homestead."

Does the hon. gentleman want to have the homesteads without any limit? He could say the very same thing if the homesteads were 640 acres. He could say that the surveyor might put in 645 acres, and debar the homestead. There must be some limit; but with regard to the homestead selector, the hon. members of the Opposition, I believe, are still astray with reference to the privileges the present Government have given to the homestead selector. Every man who selects the maximum in an agricultural area can avail himself of a homestead. Orders have been given to the various surveyors to confine themselves exclusively, in agricultural areas, to 160 acres; therefore, the selector who takes up the maximum that is proclaimed settles upon 160 acres, and, by personal residence for five years on one of the blocks of 160 acres, he can claim that as his homestead and hold the other block as well. The hon. gentleman goes on further in his speech, and says that—

"This Act limits the area of a selection to what surveyed blocks may have been thrown open, and if a selector gets a block he wants he has to put in continual personal residence, not by bailiff, for ten years; and if he fails for one year to comply with his conditions he has to commence his ten years' service all over again."

With regard to the conditional selections, the selector has a fifty-years lease, and he can put a bailiff on and hold that selection during the fifty years by bailiff. But mark the beauty of the design of the Act: the monopolists are perfectly excluded. If he wants to acquire the fee-simple of that selection during the fifty years he must go and reside on it himself. That is the Act, and it is a pity the country cannot understand what it really is. Hon. members opposite, including the leader of the Opposition, in their tours up north have tried to keep the people in the dark about that Act, and have misled them, but their acts will recoil upon themselves. It is, I consider, a matter of vital importance to make the people understand what the Act really is, and to feel that it is for their own good. Well, in another tour made by the leader of the Opposition, in March, at Townsville, he says:—

"But to effect settlement and induce people to come here and settle on the land, and make it a land of which we should be proud—in that respect he thought the measure would certainly fail."

Now, we know, or the people ought to know, that the settlement the hon. leader of the Opposition would be proud of would be a landed aristocracy, their tenants and labourers. That is the settlement that hon. gentleman would be proud of, and his statements are misleading. Further on he says:—

"Now, supposing the squatters got their indefeasible leases for fifteen years, and the balance of the land was successfully leased to the tenants—and that was immediately what would be the result—you would have tenants for the balance for thirty and fifty years, and there would be nothing left; so that as soon as the Act comes successfully into operation there would be nothing left for any other immigrants that might come into the colony, and there would be nothing in our land laws to induce them to come. In fact, it was clear that if the principle of the Act was successfully carried out the result would be ruin to the colony."

Well, that is a piece of logic that I think it would puzzle the mind of a Philadelphia lawyer to comprehend, but knowing the predilections of the hon. gentleman we can very well understand it after some consideration. The hon. gentleman seems very much inclined to confuse the provisions of the Bill. We have a Bill providing for closer settlement of 200,000,000 acres of land in fifteen years—nearly 14,000,000 each year—and the Land Board can settle 10,000 persons yearly upon that 14,000,000 acres of land. In fifteen years 150,000 families would be settled on the land, but the hon. gentleman jumps at the conclusion that that may be done immediately by a stroke of the pen, and there would be no possibility of the land monopolists getting an undue share. That is what puts the hon. gentleman about. Near the close of the session last year the hon. the leader of the Opposition said in this House that he hoped to see all the land in the colony out of the hands of the Government, and that those that could not work on their own land must lease from private landlords. As an individual and as a representative of the people, I will expose and oppose those schemes of the hon. gentleman with all the energy which I can command; and I assert, without fear of contradiction, that land monopoly has been the scourge of every civilised country in the world, including the rising young colony of Queensland. I believe that hon. gentlemen opposite have no desire that I should show how the land monopolists have obstructed the progress of prosperous settlement in this country. On the continent of Europe, with the exception of portions in three or four States, the people in all the countries on the face of the Continent have literally rolled the land monopolists overboard; and I shudder to think what they must have suffered before they got rid of the common enemy. In Ireland, the people have not yet succeeded in throwing the land monopolist over, but they have begun their work, and it is only a matter of time when over the monopolists must go. I have been astonished at the moral twist of the hon. member for Townsville, who poses as the working man's friend, and who is the special favourite of Irishmen. He, instead of describing to us the fathomless misery created and caused by land monopoly in Ireland, uses all his specious, plausible sophistry to gain the support of Irishmen to a policy that has been the curse of their dear old land. And what better is the state of affairs in the Highlands of Scotland among people possessing all the characteristics which go to make up the best men the world ever saw? These people were divided into clans living upon their own land, and having chiefs who led them in every act of bravery; but there was an English Government, composed entirely of land monopolists. They conferred upon these chiefs all the land belonging to these clans, and these chiefs soon lost their patriotism, and sold their people's land to the southern loons. Then came the clearings, when the people were driven out of their own fertile glens like flocks of sheep or herds of cattle. I think hon. gentlemen opposite are ready to exclaim—"England is the happy hunting-ground of the land monopolist. There is where the relations of landlord and tenant are all that can be desired." Well, sir, in England, for a long series of years, the public mind was so occupied with wonderful discoveries, inventions, science, manufactures, trade and commerce, that the land monopolists were left in all their glory to deal with the agricultural populations according to their heart's

desire, and only amusement was created from time to time at the proverbial grumbling of the tenant farmer; but the attention of the nation has been aroused by a cry of agricultural distress, not from the ruined tenant, mind you, but from the land monopolists themselves. About three years ago, being fully acquainted with the cause of loss to the tenant, to the landlord, and to the community in the north of England, I made a tour through several of the midland counties to satisfy myself whether the conditions were the same, or what difference, if any, there might be. I got a list of the farms to let in the various counties, and found my way to the local agent with whom I talked over the conditions. A man was sent to show me over the farms, generally an old servant, who knew all the ups and downs for many years back, and from him, by insidious inquiry, I learned all the information I sought to acquire. In that way, sir, I viewed farms in Lancashire, in Cheshire, in Shropshire, in Herefordshire, in Worcestershire, in Warwickshire, and in Northamptonshire. Many of these farms were unoccupied—the beautiful homes and excellent farmhouses were empty. Many of the fields were lying in the rough furrow, covered with couch grass and desolate; and this, sir, in a small country of 56,000,000 acres—only one-eighth part of Queensland—containing 35,000,000 souls, and consuming imported produce to the value of £150,000,000 sterling per annum. This is the result of landlordism. In Worcestershire, I entered a third-class railway carriage, where sat two gentlemen; one of them did not attract my attention, but the other I instinctively knew to be a landowner. Fancy a land monopolist, one of the hereditary type, in a third-class carriage! If the hon. leader of the Opposition succeeds in getting his own way we shall soon require third-class carriages in Queensland, not only for agriculturists and labourers but also for the land monopolists themselves.

Mr. MOREHEAD: We will all go together.

Mr. WHITE: That is a type of landlordism. The monopolist viewed the fields with considerable interest as we went along, and then he broke the silence by saying to the gentleman next to him—"The tenant is best off; the tenant can leave the farm, but the landlord is fast with it." And then he went on to say that he lost £1,000 by a farm coming into his own hands. That is landlordism. Not one word of sympathy was said about the tenant, who was turned out to look for a home and a living, and most probably ruined. In England and Wales alone, taking three years as an average—I think the years 1879, 1880, and 1881—as many as 3,664 tenant farmers became bankrupt. Add to these figures the large number of ruined tenants which are never recorded, whose honour is so keen, and the purity of their moral feeling so intense, that they would rather face death than bankruptcy; yet whose circumstances are such that they cling to the farm with the tenacity of desperation, until the rent is sufficiently in arrear, when the farm is let to some other tenant. The landlord has no desire for exposure, so he allows the poor ruined tenant to call a sale in his own name at the usual time, and the proceeds are handed over to the agent, rarely anything being left for those relations who have lent the tenant money from time to time to take him over his difficulties. A seed merchant told me that they never send in a claim under such circumstances, knowing that the landlord would take all. These ruined tenants are ashamed to meet their old neighbours. They shrink into some large town, where they try to earn a miserable living, but they soon die broken-hearted.

Mr. MOREHEAD: This is like an address from Booth.

Mr. WHITE: It is very easy for those wealthy Brisbane men to laugh at such a thing, but it is not so nice for those involved in the ruin, I can assure them. Look at the position of those who are unable to hold their own, and who occupy farms from 100 acres to over 300 acres, with a working capital of £500 to £2,000 or £3,000. These men work for their own living, and they are glad if they can only hold their capital together. There is no interest for money employed under a land monopolist. Look at the great loss to the community; the great sum of £700,000,000 is employed in agriculture, and I firmly believe that 80 per cent. of that vast sum is yielding no interest. The hon. member for Townsville has told us that the reason for that depression is to be found in the leasing system, and the competition from America; but there is no leasing system in England, and it is absurd to talk about competition from any country ruining agriculturists who have the best market in the world at their doors. The cause will be found in landlordism. Twenty per cent. of the farms are all that can be desired—well farmed and profitable; the remainder are exhausted; and anyone who is foolish enough to increase the fertility of any of these farms is sure to be imposed upon, and the farm let to some other tenant, who will milk it dry, skim the cream off, and leave it. I know a farmer who entered upon a farm at £600 a year—his son is one of our best Queensland farmers at the present time. His rent got up to £900, and five years ago it was let to another tenant over his head for £1,200 a year. If £6 or £8 were put into each acre of the worn-out land, under the management of a good farmer, that outlay would yield 30 per cent; but the landlord is like the dog in the manger. While staying at an hotel in Worcestershire, a landowner and his lady came there on a visit to the Salt Baths. He was a superior specimen of the class; his face was the very expression of benevolence. In talking with him about the agricultural depression, I made the remark that landlords seemed so shy about treating with energetic men who had means and ability to make the farms profitable. A cloud came over his beautiful face, and he exclaimed—"Oh, it would never do for a landlord to let a strong-minded man on to his estate. He would set all the tenants by the ears." Look at their servile condition. Go to a Conservative landlord's estate and talk politics to them; they will look startled and lower their voices as if the walls or the hedges in the fields had ears. If you used all your logic to show them that the ballot was secret, they would still remain convinced that if they voted contrary to their landlord's wishes he was sure to find it out. And an eye is kept on the local post-offices—a jealous eye—to see that they are not getting any Liberal literature to read. And they must attend the Church of England, which was built expressly for the purpose of keeping down any rising independent spirit, and where the tone of their worship is much in this fashion—

> "God bless the squire and his relations,
> And help us keep our proper stations."

Now, sir, I wish to give the reporters a spell, and, with your permission, I shall read some letters from a newspaper correspondent—a farmer whom I have the pleasure of personally knowing. I have marked off the portions that I will not read—the portions that are not applicable to the subject we have under consideration. These letters are to give the opinion of another authority besides my own on the subject.

The SPEAKER: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but I desire to remind him that the question before the House is a Bill to amend the Crown Lands Act of 1884. I have not stopped the hon. member before, because I did not like to abridge the hon. member in his speech in any way, but it does strike me that the hon. member is slightly diverging from the question before the House.

Mr. WHITE: Of course if the House objects, sir, I shall not read the letters. But the land question is of such great importance to Queensland at the present time that anything touching on it ought to be brought before the country. Perhaps it is not desirable to read those letters to the House, but I would like to read another article of great importance—that is, the Tenant Farmer's Catechism. I think, sir, the people of Queensland ought to be posted up in the position the country would be in at the present time if certain lines of dealing with the land were allowed.

"THE TENANT FARMER'S CATECHISM.

"Subjoined is a copy of a remarkable document, entitled 'The Tenant Farmer's Catechism,' which has had an extensive circulation for some years past among the tenant farmers of the Sister Isle. The catechism, which is anonymous, is a curiosity worthy of attention:—

"What is your name?

"My family name was originally Man, but through fraud, injustice, and usurpation of my birthright I became dependent on my master, Tyranny, and in my servitude am known among my compeers as the Victim of Oppression.

"Who were the immediate causes of this change of name to a servile cognomen, and also of the condition to which you are doomed?

"My landlord and his agent brought it about in the days of my ancestors; and hence from my youth I was made a child of sorrow and an inheritor of a bundle of rags.

"What did your landlord and his agent then do for you when you became subordinate to their power, whether in your youth or in your manhood?

"They did promise and vow three things in my name—Firstly, that I should renounce all the comforts of this life, and all the pleasures found therein; secondly, that I should be a hewer of wood and drawer of water; and, thirdly, that I should be a slave for them all the days of my life—a mere chattel of their household and drudge on their estate.

"Do you not think you are bound to believe, in your conscience, and do as they promised for you?

"No, verily; and by God's help I will endeavour to shake off the chains by which I am bound, and better my condition socially and materially, and strive to continue in the same till my life's end.

"Rehearse the articles of your belief.

"I believe that God is no respecter of persons; that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and that every man should enjoy the fruits of his labour, for the labourer is worthy of his hire. I also believe that I do not enjoy the fruit of my labour, for I am compelled against nature to give it to men who reap where they do not sow and gather where they have not strewn, who are better known in the banqueting hall, the foreign club house, or on the betting field than in the school of industry, or amongst their honest, hard-worked, and careworn tenantry, save when the corn is ripe. I also believe that I am not able to pay my rent from the produce of my farm, and that the pomp and vanity of those men, who, like birds of passage, leave when they get the last grain of corn—men who live in ease and indolence, rolling about in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day on the toil and sweat of their fellow-creatures, and revelling on the bread of idleness—have reached their highest climax, and that it is full time they should be brought to know and feel that the stalwart and industrious farmers are the bone and sinew of the land on which they toil as slaves, and that they will no longer endure or submit to the burdens heaped on them by a class of extravagant harpies, called landlords, who are the chief cause of the grievances and disturbances in this country. I believe in the fall of rents, the lowering of taxes, the suppression of crime, and the emancipation of all serfs—whether social or political—from the domination of the privileged few.

"What do you chiefly learn in the articles of your belief just enumerated?

"First, I learn that justice demands such a state of things to cease, that rents must fall, and that tenant-right must be carried to the satisfaction of the people, no matter what Government rules or who wields the sceptre. Secondly, that honest, independent men must be sent out to value the land on equitable principles, and a fair price laid on according to quality, whether in the interest of the nation or in that of territorial proprietors, and that landlords are not entitled to benefits arising from the improvement of the soil, as all is owing to the labour of the industrious farmer; and, further, that proper security must be given to the tenant farmer that he or his heirs cannot be removed so long as they pay their rents and conduct themselves as becometh honest and peaceful members of society. Thirdly, that all classes will go hand in hand and stand shoulder to shoulder in this legal warfare, and never give up till they bring landlord and tenant on a closer basis of equality; and if need be, stand there, opponents face to face with tyranny, in the hour of battle; for he who would not fight for his rights and his daily bread would not fight for his sovereign nor be true to his country in its hour of need."

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I think, sir, the Premier should call the attention of the hon. member to your ruling. This is foolery altogether, and I, for one, object to have our time wasted in this way.

Mr. WHITE: The document is not very long, and it is necessary that I should read it all.

Mr. ARCHER: I would ask, Mr. Speaker, if we are discussing a Bill to amend the Land Act of 1884, or what we are discussing? I should be glad to hear the hon. member say anything about the question before the House, but this has certainly nothing whatever to do with it.

Mr. WHITE: I am fully convinced that this article that I am reading is very important, and for the good of the country, on the very question we are discussing to-night. I can quite understand the opposition of hon. gentleman opposite to its being read.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Sir, I rise with regard to the ruling you gave just now, and I think the House, if asked, will see that that ruling is upheld. That is the duty of the Premier. At present the hon. member is reading a travesty of the Church of England catechism. I do not say that that catechism is in any way sacred to myself, but the travesty of it is certainly most offensive to a large number of hon. gentlemen who are members of the Church of England. On that ground alone the hon. member should not be allowed to persevere with it. You have given your ruling that the hon. member is not in order in the course he is pursuing, and I do hope the House will uphold and insist upon your ruling.

Mr. WHITE: The reason why I persevere in reading this article is because we do not want to have our land held in the same way as it is held in the old country. I want to bring further proof that it will be ruinous to the colony if we permit those principles to be carried out here. There is very little more of the article, and with your permission I should like very much to finish it.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is certainly out of order in the way in which he is dealing with the subject under discussion. I feel very reluctant to interfere with any hon. member who may think it his duty to refer to any subject which bears, however remotely, on a question before the House, but for the last ten minutes or quarter of an hour the hon. member has been going away altogether from the subject under discussion.

Mr. NORTON: Mr. Speaker——

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is in possession of the Chair.

Mr. WHITE: No; I have finished.

Mr. NORTON: I am almost sorry that it has become necessary for any member on this side to interfere with the speech of the hon. member who has just sat down. We, on this side, have

been somewhat blamed because we were not prepared or not anxious to go on with business at a late hour. Last night the leader of the Opposition called the attention of the leader of the Government to the fact that it was not customary to initiate fresh business after a certain hour of the evening. That business was initiated in spite of what was said. After having treated us in that way last night, I think the hon. gentleman should not have insisted upon our stopping here to-night to listen to the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley. I must say that those remarks interested me, although nine-tenths of what he said had nothing whatever to do with the Bill before the House. Nobody knows that better than you, Mr. Speaker, although you are reluctant to call a member to order. I can quite understand that you should hesitate in doing so, because it is not your business unless a thing goes too far. I listened, as I said, to the hon. member with pleasure, because I believe he takes a real and sincere interest in the subject he was discussing, although we all knew perfectly well that it had nothing to do with the Bill. I should like to ask the hon. gentleman, as he has said so much upon the subject of land laws, what he does with his own farms? I think he has a couple of his own. I suppose he sets up for a model landlord. In saying what I have been saying, I must express my opinion that what the hon. gentleman had to say with regard to the Bill had almost as much to do with it as the remarks of the Ministers. We have had speeches from four Ministers in the House upon the subject of this Bill, and it was not until the fourth got up (the Minister for Works), that we were told what was the reason for bringing it forward. We were told by the Minister for Lands a great deal about this land, which is open for selection but which is not surveyed, being very bad land indeed; we were told something more by the Premier, and more by the hon. Treasurer; but it was not until the Minister for Works got up that the House was informed that the reason for bringing in the Bill was to save the cost of surveying that land where it was not likely to be taken up. There is not one circumstance that has been mentioned as existent at the present time, which was not known to every member of this House, or ought to have been known, when the Act was passed in 1884. There is not one circumstance that has been brought forward as a reason for introducing this Bill which was not known then, and patent to every member of this House. Does the Premier expect us to believe what the Minister for Lands said—that he was not aware that those lands which had been open for years had not been picked over and over again? The thing was referred to over and over again in the House when the discussion was going on, and in committee, and it is perfectly absurd to ask any one for one moment to think that members were not as conversant with the facts of the case at that time as they are now. It was pointed out to the Minister for Lands, at the time that this principle was agreed to of survey before selection, that it would be necessary for him to have large areas of land surveyed before it could be taken up, because it was not reasonable to expect that selectors who wished to take up land would simply take up any piece that happened to be surveyed. It was pointed out then, as distinctly as anything could be, that in order to give the selectors a fair chance of getting the land that they wanted it would be necessary to have large areas surveyed and thrown open, in order that men might pick and choose nearly the same as they did under the old Act. It was pointed out to the Colonial Treasurer at that time, that the Government would have to pay the whole of the cost of these surveys—that, not as under the old Act, would the selector, when he selected a piece of land, pay the survey money and have it surveyed afterwards. In this case, when the Government took the responsibility upon themselves of surveying the whole of the land, they would have to pay the whole cost of the survey before they got one penny in return. Now the Treasurer realises that he is not even beginning to see symptoms of bringing anything like the revenue he had anticipated from it, and now, when it is brought home to him in such a way that he cannot possibly ignore it, the Government bring in this Bill to enable selectors to take up this country and save the Government a great deal of money. That is the reason, and everybody knows it, why the Bill was introduced. There is no other reason for it. There is scarcely one provision made in the new Bill which is not contained in the old one. The provisions are not so full, I admit, in the old one; but at the same time there is no necessary provision in this Bill that is not embodied in the principal Act. Referring to the Act which was passed last year, I think it is fair to assume in a discussion of this kind that at the time that Act passed the Government had no intention—it had never even suggested itself to them—that they would so soon as this have to bring in a Bill of this nature. As a matter of fact it has been admitted by remarks made by the Premier in speaking upon this Bill that at the time the Act was passed the facts of the case were not put before hon. members so fully as they might have been—that they did not then realise the fact that the whole of this particular country had been picked over and over again. I have already expressed an opinion upon that; but if that was the case we are fairly entitled to assume that at that time the Government had no intention of bringing in an amending Bill so early as this—yet the Bill is brought in. The Government had no intention of bringing in an amendment until the principal Act had had a fair trial at any rate. Notwithstanding that, we are asked to accept the statements of the Ministers that it is only intended that this Bill, if it becomes law, shall apply to those particular portions of land. There is no reason for doubting the words of the Ministers who referred to the subject in those terms, but is it not possible that before twelve months are over there may be another reason for a change of opinion, and a necessity for bringing in another Act to amend the original Act, and so amend this amending Act? They will take the power which they propose to give themselves under this Bill, and will not limit selection before survey, but will throw open the whole of the lands of the colony which can be thrown open for selection before survey. I think that is a very natural consequence of the present Bill, which gives them the power which they ask for. If it turn out that it is not a success, there will be every reason on the part of the Government for throwing open the land and getting it taken up as soon as they can. There will be every reason for spending as little as they can in the cost of survey until that cost has been paid by the selectors when they select the land they wish to take up. That is the power they ask for. They profess to want to throw open portions of resumed runs in the settled districts which have not been selected. They ask for power to throw open portions of runs in the whole of Queensland at any time when it was thought necessary to do so. The whole of the country which now lies under the schedule can be brought under the Act, and every run can be operated

upon and divided by it; so that this Bill will really give power, if it were passed in the shape in which it is introduced here, to throw open what is called the "resumed portion," that is, the portion which can be resumed of every run in the colony. That is the position which is not clearly put before us, but which we as members, knowing the meaning of plain English, cannot fail to see. I think there is quite sufficient reason in that, when it is further considered, to view with the very strongest suspicion a Bill of this nature. But, sir, beyond that, we on this side of the House are charged by the Premier, whenever a fault is found in the Act, of wishing to retain it there. Is that a fair way of putting it? It strikes me that the hon. gentleman is something like a cuttle-fish. When he sees anything approaching him that he thinks rather dangerous he sends out his ink and then says—"How dirty the water is; how much better we could see if it were clear!" When the Act was before the House it was fairly discussed by members on this side, and some important amendments were proposed by members sitting on this side of the House; but in almost every instance any amendments of importance were rejected, simply because they came from this side of the House. As the hon. member for Mackay has said, any amendment which emanated from this side was regarded with the greatest suspicion. As a matter of fact, in order to get some amendments entertained by the Government, members on this side had to throw them out as suggestions and leave them to be taken up and adopted by supporters of the Government. In one or two cases amendments were thus proposed and accepted. We felt, however, that any serious amendment which we might propose was bound to be rejected, because it was always made a party question; and yet we are blamed now for wishing to retain any imperfections which may have been discovered in the Act since it became law. That is not the case, however. Under the amendment proposed in the measure now under consideration any Government will have the power to throw open land for selection before survey. Now, it was pointed out by members on this side of the House, when the present Land Act was before the House last session, that if the Government wished to have selection going on their object would be frustrated by the provision then passed. It was clearly pointed out that the Minister for Lands could not possibly find a sufficient number of surveyors to survey the land and have it thrown open for selection at the time it was wanted. In spite of that—I do not say that this was pointed out by members of the Opposition any more than by members on the other side of the House — the Government adopted the principle of survey before selection. But when the Bill was passed they found that they could not go on with the surveying—I do not know whether they realised it before—simply because the runs were not divided and they could not operate upon them until they were divided. I think selection should have been allowed to go on under the same conditions as under the old law for two or three years, until the new Act could be brought into force properly; but the Government insisted upon having it their own way, and accepted, without the slightest hesitation, the amendment proposed by Mr. Kates. The consequence, as we have seen, was that as soon as the Act came into operation selection was stopped all over the colony, and we are blamed now aecause we did not prevent the Government making their own Act a failure. We expressed the opinion on this side of the House, that it would be a failure as a revenue Act, and the hon. member for Townsville, the Hon. J. M. Macrossan, brought forward figures showing that it must be a failure—that it was utterly impossible for it to be anything else but a failure. The Treasurer professed to answer, or attempted to answer, the the hon. member for Townsville, but he answered him in a way that did not take away one atom of strength from the argument of the member for Townsville. I think it was distinctly shown then that the Land Act of 1884 could not be a successful revenue Act, because some considerable time must elapse before anything like an enlarged revenue could be received from the public lands under its provisions. Now, it is claimed by members on the other side of the House that one could not expect the Bill to be anything but a failure in this respect so far, simply because there has been no time to test its provisions. Nor has there been time; we know that perfectly well. Hon. members say that the Act must have a run of a few years. Then, how long, I would ask? In time the Government will have to pay compensation under the Act, and I maintain that all the excess of revenue which is derived from the lands during the few intervening years from the time the Act begins to pay will be paid in compensation. Is it possible that an Act passed under such conditions can bring in the largely increased revenue which the people of the country were led to expect it would produce? Before the House met last session—before the Land Bill was introduced—Ministers were stumping the country and delivering themselves at banquets and on other occasions, and they spoke very freely with regard to their expectations concerning the Land Bill that was to be brought forward. I remember that my hon. friend, the Minister for Works, spoke very freely indeed on this subject. The effect was that the public were led to understand that as soon as the new Act became law an increased revenue from public lands would begin to flow into the Treasury. That was the feeling which was induced throughout every part of the colony by the representations made by Ministers themselves, and nothing was done to remove that impression until it became law, under the powerful influence of the ten-million loan. Then it became quite apparent to everybody that it could not by any possibility bring in an increased revenue for a considerable time; that for at least twelve months after it became law it would bring in a smaller revenue than was realised under the old Acts. Then hon. members sitting on the Treasury benches said, "You must give us time: the Act has not had a fair trial; nobody expected it to bring in a revenue all at once." Then how is the interest on the ten-million loan to be paid, seeing that the receipts from land are not as large as was expected? We were led to believe that it would be paid from the revenue obtained under the new Land Act. However successful the Land Act may be in the future, the interest on the portion of the loan already floated cannot be met within the next five years from that source. In the meantime, the interest must be met in some way. How is it to be done? That is a question we have a right to ask now, and I do not think any one of the Ministers can answer it. Ministers can now see the consequence of their action last session. I believe the Treasurer sees more plainly than anyone else that the effect of having passed the Land Act last year will be to reduce—to very considerably reduce—the revenue which the Treasurer has hitherto derived from the lands of the colony. I believe the hon. member has had the good sense to look over the figures supplied by the hon. member for Townsville, and that he has found those figures are so incontrovertible that neither he, nor anyone else who knows anything about the matter, can resist their powerful logic, but must come to the conclusion that he must provide in some

other way for bringing money into the Treasury. I say this Bill has been passed not to bring revenue into the Treasury so much as to save it from going out. Until a large amount of selection takes place there will be no revenue under the new Act whatever, except the rents from leases, and that will not be very much greater than before. If the whole of the lands are to be surveyed before selection there will be many thousands of pounds flowing out of the Treasury every year before one single pound is got back out of selections taken up under the Act. If the Act is to be successful at all, it might be possible, if the Government put on a large staff of surveyors, and had good land surveyed and thrown open, to at once get a refund of the money paid before selection; but the probabilities of the Act being so far successful are so extremely doubtful that the Treasurer must see that a very large sum will have to be paid out of the Treasury before he gets anything of it back. As I have said, until the Minister for Works spoke not one of the Ministers who had preceded him had assigned any reason for the introduction of this Bill, and the reason assigned by the Minister for Works is the one I have already stated—that the Government were not prepared to pay for the survey of large blocks of country that were likely to remain idle for some years. There is not one circumstance that has taken place connected with the Land Act that ought not to have been known to every member in the House when the Act was passed last year; and if the Ministry, as the Premier professes, were not aware of what would take place with regard to the halves of runs thrown open to selection, it is a disgrace to him that he should be so ignorant. I cannot imagine anyone who takes the slightest possible interest in the Land Acts of the colony, to say nothing of those who took all the care supposed to have been taken by the Government in preparing that special Act, who could ignore or be ignorant of the fact that the halves of the runs thrown open years ago had been picked over and over again. We were told by the Minister for Lands that the parts of the runs he refers to were poor sterile country, sandstone ridges with a good spot of country here and there, that would no doubt be just the spot for a cattle-duffer. Is that the reason they were thrown open? We were told when the Land Act was introduced last year that all the unoccupied country would be taken up under the provisions of the Act. We were not to have any vacant Crown land whatever. The people, we were told, would rush for the land and be glad to take up any land they could get and to use the worst parts of the country as grazing land if they might get them under the Act. But how is it now? We are told now that it is not worth the while of the Government to survey the land, because it will not be taken up at all. Well, I say there are thousands of acres and hundreds of thousands of acres in these places the Minister for Lands refers to which are very fair grazing land, and are not sterile sandstone ridges, and not impenetrable scrubs. There are thousands of acres in these places of very fair country, though the great objection to most of them is that they are badly watered. Under the Act it is expected that those who take up this land will take the precaution to provide themselves with water. I am not referring now to the settled districts, but to the Western districts, where the country is good, and where small graziers will be glad of the chance to take it up although there is no water on it, if they could get it at a rate that would enable them to carry on their business and provide for the conservation of water. Would it not be in a country like this, near the coast districts, if there is going to be such a rush for grazing land—which I do not think there is—would it not be reasonable to throw open the country at a moderate price, taking into consideration the fact that it is so badly wanted? If the Government will throw open that land at such a moderate price as will enable selectors to put their stock upon it, and carry out the necessary improvements to provide water, it will be taken up at once. As a matter of fact, thousands of acres as bad as that land of which the hon. the Minister for Lands speaks, and even very much worse, have already been taken up, just because they happened to be in a particular locality, and the selectors took a fancy to them. I am quite prepared to say of my own knowledge that there are thousands of acres taken up which are infinitely worse than the land now open for selection. I intend to oppose this Bill. I believe it to be unnecessary; and I believe every provision necessary is already provided in the 44th clause of the principal Act. I say that if the Government, at the time they introduced that 44th clause, were not conscious of the difficulty they would have in getting selectors to take up land as soon as the Act was passed, they ought now to bear the consequences of their act, and let them show whether their Act is going to be the success they prophesied or not. Hon. members on the Opposition side said it would not be successful, and I do not think it can be expected for a moment that members on this side of the House, knowing that any amendments coming from their side were treated with the utmost suspicion —I say, it cannot be expected that we should come forward now to help the Government to avoid reaping the fruits of their own want of knowledge in bringing forward a Bill which they carried through this House, not on its own merits, but by the influence used by the Government in holding back, until the very last moment, and until the Land Bill was absolutely safe, their ten-million loan.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—As one of those who strongly urged survey before selection on the second reading of the Land Bill of 1884, I must say when I saw this Bill, now in our hands, I took very strong exception to it, and I do so still. I think it has been pretty well argued out on both sides, and very little light was thrown upon it until the Minister for Works got up and told us, in respect to what I consider a very objectionable part of the Bill, that there would not be a great objection offered to its being wiped away. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman spoke with the authority of the Minister for Lands or not, in making the statement, but I do not think he would have made it unless he did so. However, I think his statement takes away a great objection to the Bill on both sides of the House. I think this is the Treasurer's Bill, and that his name ought to be attached to it instead of the Minister for Lands, because it is evidently introduced in order to save revenue—in order to save a very large amount of money, which would be expended in the survey of these inferior lands which would not be taken up for a very long time. I believe that if the Lands Office had gone to work and administered the Land Act quickly and promptly—if they had thrown open the bad land at low rentals it would have been taken up by somebody, and it would have been taken out of the hands of the Crown. In fact, I believe more people would have been supported on it if it had been given away for nothing. I am satisfied that that is the system we should try and introduce with regard to land that has been over and over again rejected — after it has been open for six months and not taken up, let it be reduced in price 50 per cent. I hope that all these lands that we are told are useless and only fit for cattled-uffers, will be thrown open to the people at a very nominal rental. As

for the other part of the Act, I think it is advisable it should be amended; but I am sorry to see that it is necessary so soon to amend a measure that we took so long a time and so much trouble in passing. When speaking in favour of the leasing principle, of course I only referred to grazing land in the outside districts, and I do not believe in that portion of the Bill which makes leasing apply all over the colony. I only believe that leasing would be of advantage to the country in the outside districts, and it was there especially that I believed survey before selection should take place. I believe that the farmers and small selectors believe in a freehold, and will continue to believe in it. If the large areas were thrown open, the leaseholders in time to come would themselves suffer the same fate as the holders of inside lands. I hope that the Minister for Lands will give us his assurance that he is prepared to eliminate that part of the 3rd subsection which seems to be the stumbling-block.

The PREMIER: I said so when I spoke on the Bill.

Mr. KELLETT: If that is so all difficulties will be removed.

Mr. J. CAMPBELL said: Sir, I have not heard anything since I came into the House which would lead me to alter my opinion in reference to selection before survey, but I certainly would be disposed to confine it to the thickly populated districts; and I hope that some clause will be inserted to prevent the Land Board extending their operations out west. I agree thoroughly with the hon. member for Mackay in that respect, and I do not think the time has come when we should ruthlessly disturb the pastoral tenants in the western portions of the colony. With reference to the Land Act, I do not look upon it as so much of a failure as the administration of it, and I am surprised that land that has been open for the last eighteen years and not taken up should be thrown open at the ridiculous figure the board has put upon it. Land that could be taken up to my own knowledge, and which was taken up by me fourteen years ago at 5s. an acre—that and similar and adjoining land is now thrown open at a rental of 3d. an acre. In my own district the department has sacrificed settlement to everything. Land has been thrown open in large areas, and the consequence is that there has been no application for it, and will be none. I am glad to think that the Minister for Lands has fallen in with the views expressed by some gentlemen in that district and decided to treat this land under the homestead clauses. I think that nearly all the land in thickly populated districts, such as Toowoomba, Warwick, Ipswich, and every large centre of population, should be thrown open to encourage settlement as much as possible. I was surprised at what fell from the hon. member (Mr. Kates), and, without being at all egotistical, I can assure him that I know the selectors in his district better than he does himself. I am intimately acquainted with them and with their land, and the majority of the men in the north-west part of his electorate are anxious that as much of the land that is left should be thrown open in homestead areas. I know also that they are most anxious that selection should take place before survey, because the good pieces of land are so small that it would be impossible to get a surveyor to survey them in such a way as to satisfy the people.

Mr. GRIMES said: I, sir, was one of those who supported this 43rd clause, which is now sought to be suspended by this Bill. I did so for very good reasons—having seen the operation and result of selection before survey. I have listened very attentively to the speeches made this afternoon; but my views have not been the least shaken by anything I have heard. The hon. member for Darling Downs (the Minister for Works) said he failed to see any evil effects that would follow selection before survey. Well, I think while he was speaking he gave us in his arguments the evil results that follow selection before survey. He told us that a large portion of the lands which are comprised in the districts mentioned in the schedule are lands that you cannot get a sufficient quantity of to get surveyors to form homestead areas. Well that is just the result of selection before survey. The eyes of the country are picked out—the water-holes are taken up, picked spots are selected, and now there is nothing to induce a man to go and select further in those districts. That, I think, is a very good reason why we should not continue the evil of selection before survey. I freely admit that as far as the districts mentioned in the schedule are concerned, no more harm can be done by continuing the principle of selection before survey, but I certainly object to giving power to the board to have other districts that may be brought under the operation of the Bill. I think the evil which has already resulted from the system is quite sufficient to show that it should not be continued further. Some hon. members are anxious to have it extended to other districts. The hon. member for Mackay would have it extended to Mackay and further north; and he gives as a reason, "that there has been so much selection up there." We may possibly grant that there has been a deal of selection in the North; but has that large amount of selection tended to the real settlement of the land? I say it has not. I say that comparatively little of the land selected in the North has been really operated upon. It may be, and indeed is, occupied by bailiffs for speculative purposes—I found that out when I was up north. Numbers of persons were desirous to obtain partners with capital there, and I had numbers of applications with that object from Civil servants, auctioneers, clerks, and bank clerks. Nearly every individual in Mackay had some picked spot which he was prepared to operate upon as soon as he could get a partner with the necessary capital to commence operations. That is the way selection has been going on in the North; and if we still allow selection before survey there, there will not be a sufficient area of land left to form an agricultural settlement. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, but shall object to power being given to the board to recommend other districts being included in the schedule.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—We have already been sitting for a long time over a very small Bill, and I promise you that I will not take up the time of the House very long. I rose principally on account of two remarks made by the hon. member for Port Curtis (Mr. Norton). That hon. gentleman said that while the Act of 1884 was passing through the House members on the Opposition side prophesied that the measure would be a financial failure. That opinion did not come only from the Opposition; it was the opinion of members on this side that it would not be successful financially for the first, second, and perhaps the third year. Several members expressed that opinion; and I remember the Colonial Treasurer distinctly stating that he did not expect the measure to be a financial success for a year or two, but that in after years it would be a success.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I should like to see that statement,

Mr. STEVENSON: He never said anything of the sort.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I have no doubt that the measure will ultimately be a financial success — it cannot be otherwise. If we are not receiving revenue from our lands at the present time, we still have those lands to operate upon; and in four or five years such a revenue will be brought in from them as will astonish even the strongest opponents of the present land system. The hon. member for Port Curtis prophesied, and he is glad his prophecy has been fulfilled, that the Land Act is a financial failure. The measure has been in force four months and the hon. member pronounces it a failure! Surely we want more than four months to elapse before we can form an opinion. I think four years quite little enough to wait before we pronounce a decided opinion.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is pronounced a failure by the Government themselves.

Mr. MACFARLANE: The other remark made by the hon. member for Port Curtis was, that everything known to-day in reference to the Land Act was known when the measure was passing through the House.

Mr. NORTON: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACFARLANE: I deny the statement. I admit it was well enough known as far as the settled districts were concerned that a good deal of land was not taken up, but no one took any thought that the land was so small in area; and I think it very reasonable indeed, on finding out after the Act has been in force that certain parts of the settled districts contain a considerable quantity of land not taken up which would not pay for surveying, to allow that land to be selected before survey.

Mr. MOREHEAD: How did you find that out?

Mr. MACFARLANE: It was found out in the working of the Act.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Within four months?

Mr. MACFARLANE: Yes, within four months. The Land Board commenced their work and found land in the settled districts not surveyed, and that they could not survey them because they were in such scattered areas—a bit here and a bit there—and that it would be far better to allow it to be taken up by means of selection before survey, than according to the system laid down in the Act.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why not put the bits in the schedule?

Mr. MACFARLANE: As one who supported the hon. member for Darling Downs last year, when he proposed the 43rd clause, giving survey before selection, I should have opposed the 2nd clause if I considered it was intended to apply to other districts, but as it is the measure shall have my support.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—It was only the other day, in speaking on the Land Act, I stated that I supposed no Land Act was ever passed that was a perfect measure. But, sir, when the Act of 1884 was passing through the House I looked upon the portion of the Act to which this Bill refers as containing one of its most vital principles. At that time I supported the hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Kates), and would have voted with him had he gone to a division. I am a thorough believer in survey before selection, and, as the hon. member for Townsville stated, it is the opinion of eminent authorities that the great success of the land laws of America is owing to that principle. Such being the case, I should not be acting consistently if I said I would vote for the second reading of this Bill if amended in committee. It is something very remarkable to see how the new arrivals in the colony find their way on to the land with the meagre information at their command. I should like hon. members to go into the Library and see the information that the land laws of New Zealand, with maps attached, give to new arrivals in that colony. It has been urged that there is a lack of surveyors, but I know that there are plenty of competent surveyors, both in Brisbane and in different towns of the colony, out of work at the present time. I have introduced two or three to the Minister for Lands myself. Only four or five months ago both sides of the House were thoroughly agreed that there should be survey before selection, and I think it is too soon to ask anyone to turn round and say he will vote against what he considers to be one of the vital features of the Bill. At the time the Land Act went through, I supported the Government faithfully, not only on that question, but on every other, and I think I should be very unfaithful to my convictions if I were now to vote for wiping this clause out of the Act of 1884. If this goes to a division, I shall vote with my hon. friend the member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, on what I believe to be one of the best principles contained in the Land Act.

Mr. GOVETT said: Mr. Speaker,—Having been a large selector of grazing farms before survey, I beg to state that I am a strong advocate of survey before selection. At the time I speak of, the country was everywhere in possession of wild dogs and the blacks, but now there is settlement here, there, and everywhere, and the time has come when there should be a little more order in things. I think survey before selection is the only true system of conducting the sale or leasing of lands in this colony. I have seen the evil effects of selection before survey in the other colonies; it has meant ruin to thousands of good and useful settlers. Another evil is that it leads people to suppose that they are going to get land that they are not going to get. Men scramble this way and that way, fancying they are going to get this and that waterhole, which they find afterwards they are not to have because someone else's selection overlaps theirs. I have been convinced for a great many years that survey before selection is the best system. A man ought to know before he pays his money what he is going to get for it, but if he selects land before survey he does not know, because he gets cut out by his immediate neighbours. I strongly hope that this House will not do away with survey before selection.

Mr. MELLOR said: Mr. Speaker,—It seems as if the majority of this House thought that there was going to be a change of principle altogether, and that there was going to be selection before survey all over the colony. I do not think that is the case at all. I distinctly think that the lands mentioned here, that have for so many years been selected over and over again, ought not to be surveyed by the Government. There are thousands and thousands of acres in our district that are not worth surveying. There are people ready to select on them; immigrants are continually coming out, and sending for their friends to come to them; but if they wait till the Government surveys these lands they will get tired and many of them will go away. I think that if we were to pass this Bill it would tend very much to the success of the Act that is in operation at the present time.

Mr. STEVENSON said: Mr. Speaker,—One or two questions have been asked from this side of the House, to which I think we should have satisfactory answers before the division takes place. My hon. friend the member for Balonne

asked the Minister for Lands what position, with regard to this Act, those lessees would occupy who have already elected to come under the Act of 1884, or who may elect to come under it before the 31st of August, because they have the option of coming under it up to that time. Is this amending Bill to have any effect on them, or are they to stand as if this Bill had not come in at all? The hon. member for Balonne went further. The Minister for Lands has elected to specify two or three districts here; but by the second clause of this amending Bill we are to give him power to include the whole of the lands embraced in the schedule to the Land Act. Supposing the whole of the lessees within that schedule elect to come under the Act of 1884. I believe most of them will; not because they like to do it, but because it is simply a case of being "between the devil and the deep sea"—simply because they would rather submit to the provisions of the Act than be at the mercy of the Minister for Lands of the day, and perhaps submit to have their runs resumed as a whole, instead of part of them being resumed under the Act. I should like to hear from the Premier, or the Minister for Lands, or whoever has charge of this Bill, what effect it is going to have on those lessees who have already come under the Act of 1884, or who may yet apply to do so before the 31st August. Are they to be subjected to the principle contained in this Bill, of selection before survey. Will this Bill have any effect on them or not? I know the hon. gentleman has no right of reply under the present circumstances, so I shall move the adjournment of the debate in order to give him an opportunity of answering that question. It is a most important question, for those lessees who have already come under the Act of 1884 have done so believing that they would be subject to the principle contained in that measure, of survey before selection. The Minister for Works tried to fence the question by saying that the Government had power to do so-and-so with the resumed portion. I say the lessees have come under the Act on the distinct understanding that they have the grazing right on the resumed land until it is surveyed, and that no selection can take place until that survey has been effected. Is that the case, or is it not? I move the adjournment of the debate.

The PREMIER: Earlier in the evening the hon. member for Balonne asked a question in connection with this Bill which I was unable to understand for some time. He talked about a violation of vested rights, which, he said, were conferred by the Act of 1884, and he wanted to know whether this Bill, if passed, would affect those vested rights. There are two answers to be made to that. The first is, that if the operation of the Bill is limited to those districts where land has been already proclaimed open for selection and rejected over and over again, and which it is not worth while to go to the expense of surveying, it could not possibly apply to any lessees the hon. member has referred to. That is one answer, and I have already said plainly enough that the Government propose to omit from the second clause of the Bill the words allowing it to be extended without the consent of Parliament. The only question before the House is whether the obstruction to settlement caused by the existing rule in the old settled parts of the colony shall be removed or not. That is the question, and there is no other question, and hon. members who vote against this Bill are voting to prevent land, which cannot be taken up at the present time, because it is not worth surveying and because we cannot survey it suitably for selectors, being taken up at all. That is the question, disguise it as hon. members may please. But as to the vested rights, I fail to see where the vested rights come in. Does the hon. gentleman know what he is saying? Does he mean that pastoral lessees have a vested right to prevent settlement? The only vested right they can have is that they shall not be disturbed on the resumed parts of their runs, until it suits the convenience of the Survey Office to have the land surveyed. What vested right is that? It simply means that, by delaying the survey, they may retain possession of the land longer than they otherwise would. That is what the argument means, if it means anything at all. If the land is resumed, what business is it of the former lessee what becomes of it, whether it is sold by auction or given away for nothing? He has no vested right to it. As the Act stands, he will keep possession of it until the survey officer has time to survey it. The only vested right is a vested right to prevent or delay survey!

Mr. ARCHER: How can you talk so absurdly?

The PREMIER: That is the only thing that can be called a vested right; and in such a sense the term is a farce. As the adjournment of the debate has been moved, there is another point on which I wish to say a word. I never before heard a member of this House, especially a member who has held office under the Crown, give as his reason for opposing an amending Bill that, as the Government were responsible for the imperfection in the principal Act, therefore it should remain imperfect as far as he was concerned. Imagine a man, with the responsibility of a legislator upon his shoulders, giving as a reason for not amending an Act that it would embarrass a Government if the Bill were allowed to remain in a defective condition!

Mr. MOREHEAD: I believe even Solomon was puzzled about three things. I will not recount them to the House, because some of them might shock the finer feelings of hon. members; but he was puzzled, and therefore I am not surprised that our modern Solomon, who now leads the Government, can also be puzzled. He seems to be very much astonished that I should apply the term vested rights to certain rights which I consider to be vested rights, conferred under the Act of 1884. I do not know altogether the legal bearing of the word "vested"; but, so far as grazing is concerned, there is a right. Therefore, I hold that any innovation, outside of an innovation that may come upon him under the Act of 1884—some alteration in the mode in which the land he pays rent for may be secured or taken away—would be an interference with the grazing rights which he had obtained by coming under the Act of 1884. That is the reason why I used the term "vested right." I may have been wrong in law in applying such a term; but in equity, and certainly in common sense, I would imagine that the pastoral lessee would certainly be entitled to such a right as I have indicated, as a "vested right," when he liked to come under the Act of 1884. I say that if the 2nd clause in the Bill now before the House is extended in the way it may be extended, it will be a gross interference with what I consider a vested right—a gross breach of faith on the part of the State, who have induced a pastoral tenant to abandon a certain tenure and come under the new one, under certain conditions. I am not going to bandy legal phrases with the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government. I am not capable of doing so—I do not understand the law sufficiently; I wish to goodness I had been a lawyer, for I do not know but that I would not now be able to beat him. I cannot understand how it is that the Minister for Lands does not defend his own bastard emasculate measure—his bantling.

What has happened? The hon. gentleman got up last night and made a most lame and impotent defence of this apparently great departure from the present Land Act. That Act was carried through the House, and through the Committee of this House, by the Premier, and now the Minister for Lands gets up and makes a miserable speech upon the subject, and then leaves it to the Premier. And what do we find to-night? That the Premier, upon pressure both external and internal—he seems to suffer both from the outside and inside—says he is perfectly prepared, after having heard what has been said, to abandon the 2nd clause, or that portion which appears to be objectionable to both sides of the House. Surely this is a lamentable position for the Government to abandon themselves to. Surely if they had believed that they had done wrong in the former instance, and that there should be free selection before survey, they should stick to it! They have not stuck to it. It was apparently an afterthought, I suppose, for some reasons which we do not know, for them to come down to the House and bring in a Bill that indicates a complete change of front; and when exception is taken by both sides of the House, they again change and say they are willing to go back to the old position. I shall insist upon an answer from the Minister for Lands, or the Minister whoever he may be, who is in charge of this Bill, as to what will be the position of the Crown lessees, who either have up to the present time brought their runs under the Act of 1884, or who have the power of bringing them under the Act of 1884 up to the 31st of August next, after this Bill becomes law. I again ask—putting that suppositious case, which may be an actual one — supposing a lessee pleases to come under that Act, as he may do, how will he be affected if this measure becomes law? I trust the Government will see the stupidity of the position to which they have abandoned themselves, and will abandon the Bill. I hope there will be a division upon it, and I hope that the members who are steeped to the lips in the principle of selection before survey will give their votes as honestly as they gave them before. No one has spoken more strongly than the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, whom I am glad to see in his place; and I am sure, if no one else calls for a division upon that question, that he will.

Mr. NORTON said: I do not wish to detain the House; but with regard to what fell from the Premier, I have not the slightest doubt that he alluded to me in the remarks he made just before he sat down. I do not know whether it is my fault that I did not make myself as clearly understood as I ought to have done, or whether the Premier mistook what I said; but my argument was this: that members on this side of the House represented the facts of the case last year, and that all the amendments they wished to introduce were rejected, and they were told that anything they chose to propose would be regarded with the utmost suspicion. I pointed out that, although four Ministers had spoken, it was not until the fourth had spoken that we were given the true reason why the Bill was introduced. My argument is that if Ministers choose to introduce a Bill of this kind in order to get themselves out of the result of their mistakes, and expect this side of the House to help them, they must honestly state what is the reason for introducing it. We are not going to have a Bill "smuggled" in, and our support obtained under false pretences. That is my objection, and I would ask the Premier what man can be lower than a man who refuses to rectify a fault—that is a man who, under the circumstances in which he is placed, can attempt to palm off a Bill upon this House, and not give any true reason for its introduction? That is low and abominable, and I only regret that the true reason for introducing this Bill was not given until the Minister for Works spoke, and when he, in his natural straightforwardness, told us what that true reason was.

Mr. HORWITZ said: Mr. Speaker,—It is not my intention to take up much of the time of the House. The Premier was good enough to inform us a few months ago that if the members for the settled districts voted against the Bill then before the House, they would vote against the interests of their districts. I hold still the same opinion that I held last year when this very important question came before the House, being introduced by the hon. member for Darling Downs. I was in favour of survey before selection at that time, and I still hold the same opinion. My reason for saying this is that I know, in my own district, certain persons who had selected land upon different occasions, and had commenced fencing and putting up buildings. It took some time before the surveyor came upon the ground, and then they found that they had to shift for miles. A good many people threw up their selections because they selected before the land was surveyed; and that is the reason why I am in favour of survey before men shall have the privilege of selection. I know, Mr. Speaker, that when a small selector feels inclined to make a home he likes to know what piece of land is his. If selection before survey is allowed, a man would never know whether he would get the same land he selected. With regard to the district of Warwick, I know there is very little land in that district left for selection, and a great deal of what there is available is not considered suitable for settlement. There is, however, a large amount of good land a short distance from Warwick which would soon be settled by a large population if the Government would only survey the line to St. George. The country would receive a larger revenue if the Government pursued that course, but they are rather backward in this important matter. I know there are surveyors in certain localities who have nothing to do. If the Government would only put a number of surveyors on the line to St. George and proceed with that work it would be the means of settling hundreds and thousands of colonists. I shall not detain the House any longer. If the question goes to a division I shall, I am sorry to say, have to vote against the Government.

Mr. STEVENSON said: As I suppose there is no hope of getting an answer to my question, with the permission of the House I will withdraw my motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

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

AYES, 24.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Griffith, Dickson, Dutton, Moreton, Fraser, Brookes, Aland, Mellor, Smyth, White, Isambert, Jordan, Foxton, Kellett, J. Campbell, Foote, Buckland, Wakefield, Grimes, Macfarlane, Bailey, and Sheridan.

NOES, 17.

The Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith, and Messrs. Morehead, Archer, Norton, Hamilton, Black, Stevenson, Donaldson, Govett, Jessop, Palmer, Macrossan, Ferguson, Stevens, Horwitz, Annear, and Kates.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR LANDS, the committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: I move that this House do now adjourn. With regard to the order of the Government business to-morrow, the Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill will stand at the head of the paper.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: What will be the order on Tuesday?

The PREMIER: I cannot tell the hon. member now. I will tell him to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 10 o'clock.