

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 1885

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 14 October, 1885.

Question.—Formal Motion.—Elections Bill—consideration in committee of the Legislative Council's amendments.—Motion for Adjournment.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Bill—recommitment.—Friendly Societies Act of 1876 Amendment Bill—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTION.

Mr. STEVENS asked the Colonial Secretary—

If the Government have yet made any arrangement for the introduction of immigrants from Germany direct?

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

The Government have not yet made any arrangement.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to :—

By Mr. ANNEAR—

That there be laid upon the table of the House—

1. A return showing the number of tons of manufactured wrought iron work indented from Great Britain for railway rolling-stock, from the 1st of January, 1883, to date.

2. The number of tons now under indent and the price per ton, covering all charges when landed in the colony.

ELECTIONS BILL—CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

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

On clause 61, in which it was proposed to omit the word "six" and insert the word "four," and also to add at the end thereof the following words :—

" Provided that the Governor in Council may direct that the voting shall, in any electoral district, or at any polling place or places in an electoral district, terminate at any hour later than 4 o'clock, but not later than 6 o'clock, in the afternoon, and in any such case the voting shall terminate at the time so directed accordingly."

The PREMIER said the amendments made by the Legislative Council in that clause were these : They proposed that the poll should close at 4 o'clock instead of 6 o'clock as was proposed by the Committee, with a discretionary power to the Governor in Council to extend the time to 6 o'clock at any particular polling place or polling places where that might be desirable. He believed himself that the amendment was an improvement. In the greater number of cases 4 o'clock would be late enough, but there were exceptional cases in which 6 o'clock would be more convenient. The clause was not passed in the shape the Government originally intended, but now it was more in the form they desired. He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. KATES said he was very glad that the Premier had decided to agree to the amendment. When the clause was passed by the Committee it was passed hurriedly. There were many places in the country where there were only a few votes to be polled, and where 4 o'clock would be late enough ; and as the Governor in Council would have the power to extend the time to 6 o'clock when it was considered necessary, he thought the amendment was a good one, and that it should be accepted by the Committee.

Question put and passed.

On clause 81, in which it was proposed to insert the following new paragraph—

" The returning officer shall also examine the rolls which have been used and marked by himself and the presiding officers at the several polling places, and ascertain whether any electors appear to have voted at more than one polling place, and shall make out a list showing the names and numbers of all electors who appear to have so voted at more than one polling place, and shall forward a copy thereof to each of the candidates, and shall enclose the original list in the sealed packet to be made up by him as hereinafter provided."

The PREMIER said the amendment in that clause imposed upon the returning officer the duty of going through the rolls which had been used at an election, after he had received them from the presiding officers, with the view of ascertaining whether any elector had voted at more than one polling place. That would be a very interesting fact to know in each case, and would be of great assistance to candidates if they wished to take any steps to petition against the election. Of course, the information was available now if they had a scrutineer at each polling place, but not otherwise. He thought that on the whole the amendment was a good one. It would give the returning officer some additional trouble, but except where there was a large number of polling places that trouble would not be considerable. He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

On clause 82, in which it was proposed to omit the words " If he is then registered as an elector of the electoral district"

The PREMIER said the Council proposed an amendment in that clause enabling the returning officer to give his casting vote in the event of a tie, whether he was a registered elector or not. That raised an extremely nice point. The returning officer must be an elector when he was appointed. He might afterwards cease to be an elector, and in that event, of course, not being an elector, he ought not to vote, and if there was a tie he could not give a casting vote to decide which candidate was elected. What would happen after that he (the Premier) confessed he did not know. In England both members were entitled to be sworn, but neither of them could do anything. Here he supposed a fresh writ would have to be issued. After carefully weighing the arguments for and against the amendment, he was disposed to think that perhaps the balance of convenience was on the side of allowing the returning officer to give a casting vote. He therefore moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS said he thought they should not pass that amendment hurriedly, but that they should give it some consideration. It seemed to him an absurd thing to send a man from one district into another where he was not an elector, and in which he had no interest whatever, and allow him to decide by his casting vote an election which might be of vital importance to the district. He thought it would be very much fairer to have an election over again in case of a tie, than to allow it to be decided by a man who had no personal interest in the district.

Mr. ARCHER said if the parties in an electorate were very evenly balanced he did not see that any harm would be done by the returning officer giving a casting vote. He thought the amendment proposed by the Legislative Council was an undoubted improvement, and that it should be accepted by the Committee.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Legislative Council's amendment in clause 101, which was purely a verbal one, be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair and reported that the Committee had agreed to the amendments of the Legislative Council. The report was adopted, and it was ordered that the Bill be returned to the Legislative Council with a message intimating the concurrence of the House with the amendments.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I want to bring before the House a matter which I think is one of necessity, and which the Government and the House ought to know all the particulars of. A few years ago it was agreed between the Post and Telegraph Department and the Railway Department to appoint officers who should be servants jointly of both departments. That was done for purposes of economy. In many places there are station-masters to whom the Railway Department could not afford to give an adequate salary, but by being put in charge of the post-office, and in some cases the telegraph office, attached to the station, their remuneration is increased so that they can live. In many cases it is a bare living. I believe the system has worked very well—at least, it has worked in the interests of the colony—and I never heard any complaints about it while I was in office. Six or seven months ago the Telegraph Department, thinking probably to reduce their expenditure, made an arrangement with the Railway Department that in some instances,

when a change of officers took place, a reduction in the postal or telegraphic salaries should be made. Of course, the Railway Department had nothing to do but submit, and I believe a circular on the subject was issued by the Commissioner. Immediately afterwards the Telegraph Department made another arrangement by which the salaries of certain officers were to be reduced from the 1st of July, and that has been carried into effect. Now, I suppose there are nearly a dozen railway stations where a reduction has been made, and in some cases the salaries have been brought down below the cost of bare living. I take, as an example, a railway station and telegraph office with which I am well acquainted, as I live near it—the Eagle Farm Junction. The master in charge of that station is, I believe, a very good railway servant, and has been a very long time in the service. His daughter, two years ago, was appointed telegraph operator, at a salary of £40 a year. Besides doing the telegraphic work for the public, she does, of course, the telegraphic work for the Railway Department, and, in addition to that, she gives material assistance to her father in working the station. It happens that at that particular station there are a good many awkward curves, which prevent the station-master from seeing along the line; the points by which the station is worked are 150 yards from the signals, and there are three sets of signals. The daughter's salary has been reduced since the 1st of July to £10 a year—3s. 10d. a week. I ask any person if it is possible for a girl seventeen years of age to live on 3s. 10d. a week? We have heard a good deal about "The Song of the Shirt," but I think the song of the telegraph operator in such cases can quite match it.

Mr. ARCHER: Tick, tick, tick!

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes—tick, tick, tick, instead of "stitch, stitch, stitch." Another strange thing in connection with the case is this: When the girl did not get her usual salary at the end of the month, of course she wrote to the Superintendent of Telegraphs, asking why the reduction had been made. He replied the next day that he had nothing to do with her salary—it was £10 a year, and he had nothing more to do with it; and he referred her to the Railway Department. Four letters have passed from her and her father to the Railway Department without drawing forth an explanation or answer of any kind. I believe the same is the case at other stations. There is a great deal of discontent amongst the railway servants, as they are uncertain when and by how much their salaries may be reduced without the slightest explanation. I have been informed that there have been one or two resignations in consequence. The Telegraph Department may be justified in trying to work with economy, but they should not do it by beginning at the lowest grade. They should begin with salaries which might be reduced without affecting the cost of living. Again, if the Railway, and Postal, and Telegraph Departments are to reduce salaries in every place that does not pay, how many post-offices and railway stations in the colony will be shut up altogether? How many more reductions are yet to be made I do not know. I have brought the matter before the Minister for Works, the Commissioner for Railways, and the Under Secretary for the Post Office, and I am now obliged to bring it before this House. But that is not the only matter. On the South Coast Railway there are three station-masters to whom the Post Office Department still pays salaries. I may say that in the arrangement made between the Telegraph Office and the Railway Department the money was not paid from the Post Office to

the individual, but was handed in a lump sum to the Railway Department; and the railway pay-clerk paid each individual. That system has not been lately adopted by the Post Office. They thought they would have more guarantee of being paid for stamps or any little balances that might arise between the officer and the department, by holding the individual responsible; therefore the Post Office salaries are paid to the officer personally. The officers at the three stations I have mentioned have, under instructions from the Traffic Department, been actually compelled to send the cheques they received from the Post Office to the Traffic Manager's office. They have never seen the cheques since, and have received no explanation whatever. I think it is time the system was inquired into. I do not hold the Minister for Works responsible; but I think the Premier himself ought to inquire into this matter. There is something very strange in connection with it. The Minister for Works knew nothing of it until I told him, and the Commissioner for Railways knew very little more. Now, there must be something radically wrong about a department when such a reduction takes place without the responsible head of the department knowing anything about it. If the salaries of those officers are not paid by the Telegraph Department they ought to be paid by the Railway Department; they must be paid by some department. Because the two departments do not work well together, that is no reason why the operators should be ground between them like a grain between two millstones. The money is voted by this House, and should be paid to the servants for whom it is voted. I move the adjournment of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member is quite right in saying that he brought this matter under my notice. I knew nothing at all about the telegraph operators' salaries being reduced until he told me, but the moment the hon. member mentioned it to me I made inquiries into the circumstances of the case. I found that there had been communications between the Traffic Department and the Telegraph Department in connection with the pay of the operators on the South Coast line at the time that line was opened to Beenleigh. The Traffic Manager thought it would be better that the station-master should receive his whole salary from the Railway Department, and not have a portion from that department and the other part from the Telegraph Department. I think the hon. member is mistaken when he says that the station-master's salary was reduced. A cheque had been sent by mistake from the Telegraph Department to the station-master, and it was returned because the railway officials had already drawn their full pay from the Railway Department. At all events that is the information I have received. With reference to the reduction of the salaries for the telegraph operators on the line, that was entirely done at the instance of the Telegraph Department, but the moment the Traffic Manager's attention was drawn to it he wrote to the Telegraph Department remonstrating with them for reducing the salaries. They declined to pay any more than they originally paid. Since the matter was brought under my notice I have taken steps to see that those operators will have whatever has been deducted from their usual salaries refunded to them. I think the time has arrived now when all persons employed on the railway line should be paid their salaries by the Railway Department alone and should not draw them from two sources; and whatever allowances may be made by the Telegraph Department should be paid into the Railways. It is always

inconvenient to have officers of a department paid from two sources. However, I have promised that whatever deductions may have been made from telegraph operators' salaries shall be refunded as soon as I get the necessary information as to what the deductions amount to.

MR. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad to have heard the remarks of the Minister for Works and to be assured that this matter will be attended to. I also have received a complaint, that one station-master has been reduced by as much as £20 per annum; and I promised to bring the matter before the House so as to have it investigated. I am very glad the hon. member for Townsville has brought the subject before the House.

MR. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I know a case similar to the one referred to by the hon. member for Rosewood. It is that of an officer who was for several years in receipt of £40 per annum, and only last week he was reduced to £20. An alteration of that kind should never have been made by any department. I am glad the Minister for Works is prepared to undo all this mischief, and refund those servants.

MR. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree with members who have spoken on both sides of the House, that a great injustice has been done in the case of the telegraph operators. I have always maintained that these operators have been underpaid. They require a technical education, and yet are paid the lowest salaries. And, if the hon. member for Townsville had not raised the question, very probably they would have been ground down still lower. With regard to the £12 a year which a certain station-master on the South Coast line received, the Minister for Works has said that there is no actual reduction of salary so far as he knows. I am told, however, that at the end of each quarter a cheque for £3 is sent to the station-master, but that he cannot use it. He gets a letter always from Mr. Thallon to send the cheque back to him, and then he sees it no more for ever. That is the information I have received; also, that there have been reductions of salaries which were already so miserable as to be hardly enough to keep body and soul together. The Minister for Works ought to get information from his own department on this subject, and not look for it from the outside public. I know the relations between the Telegraph and Railway Departments are continually strained. They at least were so at the time I was Postmaster-General. Jealousies exist between the permanent heads of the departments which ought to be removed. I am very glad to hear from the Minister that the telegraph operators are to be put right, and that other officials, now poorly paid, are not to suffer still further reductions.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House, I would say that it is very much to be regretted that the parties whose salaries were reduced did not communicate with the head of the department at once. I assure the House that I was not aware of the reductions, that I had no knowledge of them until the matter was brought under my notice by the hon. member for Townsville. I can only assure the House again that justice will be done, and that I will have a thorough inquiry into the matter.

MR. ALAND said: Mr. Speaker,—There is one matter mentioned by the hon. member for Townsville which the Minister for Works has taken no notice of. That hon. member said that one employé wrote four letters to the Railway Department, and that none of them were acknowledged. Now, I think that is going too far. Th

humblest individual in the Government Service should have his letters answered if they are respectfully written, and should not be compelled to write four times, and then not get an answer. It strikes me that the responsible head of the department should have those letters brought under his notice. If they are such as should come before him they should have been placed before him before now.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears to me from what has fallen from hon. members that the Telegraph Department has got very hard-up indeed. I would just point to the fact that the department is now making a charge for portorage. I live a short distance out of town—at Milton—but within the delivery of the penny post. Formerly telegrams for me used to be delivered free, but now I find that for telegrams brought to me there I have to pay 6d. or 1s. for portorage. It is not done by any fixed rule, but at the caprice of the officer of the day, or else by someone in the endeavour to earn an honest penny. At any rate the matter is well worth inquiring into.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I have just one word to say on this question. Friction between departments of the Public Service is extremely to be deprecated. Indeed, it is not only to be deprecated: it should be put down with the strongest possible hand. All the departments of the Government are one service—they are servants of the people of the country—and any difference between themselves ought not to be tolerated, or at least ought not to be allowed to cause inconvenience to the public. I speak rather warmly on this matter, because I remember when this system was first introduced, of arranging that certain station-masters should act as telegraph masters where there was not work enough for two persons. I was Minister for Works at the time and I know the difficulty there was then to overcome the friction between the two departments. I succeeded, however, in conjunction with the then Postmaster-General, Mr. Mein, in overcoming the friction, and I was under the impression that things had gone on all right ever since.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: So they have, till lately.

The PREMIER: I think the arrangement is a good one, and the officers of the department should not endeavour to give effect to their original objections in that way after so many years' experience of it.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—This complaint appears to have been made known pretty widely. It has also come to my notice that those station-masters have had their salaries reduced to the amount, I understand, which they receive from the Telegraph Department. The remark of the Minister for Works, that persons who have complaints to make should make them direct to the head of the department, is all very well, but if anybody did so there would be such a hue and cry amongst the understrappers that he would soon be a marked man. I do not see why the Minister should be troubled with complaints that can be rectified by the under secretaries, but he should insist on their bringing before his notice all complaints of more than ordinary seriousness.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—It is quite evident that it would never do for every officer in a department to write direct to the Minister. Ordinary complaints must naturally be left to the subordinate, who has a special knowledge of the case. The thing is to see that that subordinate does his duty properly in bringing the matter before the Minister. Although it will be a great mistake to allow direct com-

munication to be made to the Minister, still I am satisfied, with what has fallen from the hon. gentleman, that he will see that in future his attention is called even to the most minute complaints.

Mr. BEATTIE said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree with the hon. member for Blackall that it would be undesirable to allow all complaints to be sent to the head of the department, but in a case like the one mentioned, where four letters have been sent to a subordinate without getting an answer, the persons making the complaint would be quite justified in writing to the Minister. After the promise the hon. gentleman has made to the House, I trust he will put a stop to his subordinates lowering or increasing salaries at their own beck and nod. It is an extraordinary thing that an under officer should be allowed to reduce the salary voted by Parliament to other officers of the department. I was glad to hear the Premier say that he deprecated anything like friction between the departments. All the departments should be considered as one department for the benefit of the general public. But it is a fact that the officials of one department look down upon the officials of another; they look upon them as commoner men and treat them with very scant respect indeed. The Traffic Department, for instance, is looked upon with anything but respect by many of the other departments, although the officers in it are the hardest-working men in the service. They are treated simply as common individuals; they are not in the higher walks of life. The idea of reducing a young woman's salary from £40 to £10! The thing is so monstrous that I hope the Minister for Works will deduct it from the salary of the individual who caused it to be made. It will teach him a lesson not to do it again.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I am very glad that I brought this matter before the House, although I certainly would not have done so if I could have got an assurance from the Minister for Works, the Commissioner for Railways, or the Under Secretary that the thing would be rectified. I am satisfied with the promise made by the Minister for Works. Whether a mistake has been made about the South Coast Railway or not, I do not know, but it is a fact that the Under Secretary of the Post Office does not recognise the Railway Department as paymaster of Post Office officials. He makes no mistake as far as he is concerned. The cheques are sent to these officers, and they are ordered by the Traffic Inspector to be sent back to the Traffic Manager's office. I am glad, however, that the hon. gentleman intends to inquire into the matter and have it rectified. I also agree with what was said by the hon. member for Blackall about the inadvisableness of allowing all complaints to be made direct to the head of a department; but in the particular case in question the individuals who wrote the letters were certainly entitled to a reply. When an individual becomes a pest by writing it is time he should leave the service, but until then his complaints should be attended to. I beg to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he had received a message from the Legislative Council, returning the Probate Act Amendment Bill without amendment.

UNDUE SUBDIVISION OF LAND PREVENTION BILL—RECOMMITTAL.

Upon the Order of the Day being called for the third reading of this Bill—

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this Order of the Day be discharged from

the paper, for the purpose of recommitting the Bill, to correct verbal errors in one of the clauses.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the Bill was recommitment for the purpose of reconsidering clause 8.

The PREMIER said hon. members would remember that yesterday, when they were considering the clause which now stood as clause 9 of the Bill, it was suggested that provision should be made for the transfer or conveyance of land to Her Majesty, or on account of the Public Service. An amendment to that effect was made in that clause, and he had noted that it would be necessary to recommit the Bill in order to make a corresponding amendment in clause 8, but he forgot to do so. He moved that the words "(3) A transfer of land to Her Majesty or any person on behalf of Her Majesty or on account of the Public Service," be inserted in clause 8 at the bottom of page 2.

Amendment put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, a further verbal amendment was made in the next line of the clause by omitting the words "conveyance or."

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the Bill to the House with further amendments.

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

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT OF 1876 AMENDMENT BILL—COMMITTEE.

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

Preamble postponed.

Clause 1—"Repeal of part of sec. 1 of 40 Vic. No. 13"—put and passed.

On clause 2, as follows:—

"The Registrar-General of Queensland shall be Registrar of Friendly Societies."

Mr. NORTON said it was stated in the course of the discussion last night—he did not know on what authority—that the Registrar-General would not be able to undertake this work, or rather that he would not be able to carry it out properly. It was stated that it would require the appointment of an actuary to do it properly. Could the Premier inform the Committee if the work could be done in the Registrar-General's Office?

The PREMIER said he had satisfied himself that the work could be done in the Registrar-General's Office much more satisfactorily than anywhere else, because the greater part of it was statistical. Some of it was actuarial, and for that special work the services of an actuary would have to be employed. But, as he had said, the greater part of it was statistical, and that could be properly done only by persons who were conversant with it. That was the reason why he had introduced the Bill after full consideration. The correspondence laid upon the table yesterday he had seen before, but had almost forgotten, and upon reading it again it strongly confirmed him in that view. As he had stated last evening, he was convinced that to transfer the matter to the Registrar-General's Department would be by far the most economical, as well as the most efficient, way of doing the work. Of course it

would necessitate some extra expenditure, but the cost would be much less than having a separate staff in the Supreme Court Department.

Mr. ALAND said the hon. the Premier had stated that part of the work was actuarial. Would it necessitate the employment constantly of the services of an actuary, or would he be employed only from time to time, and could the services of such a person be secured in that way?

The PREMIER said that calculations would have to be made every year, but there would not be enough work to keep an actuary employed all his time, by any means.

Mr. SMYTH said he felt satisfied from what he knew that one actuary would not be able to do the whole of the business. Each of those societies had a number of branches—he knew one that had fifty-eight in Queensland. On a rough calculation there were over 200 branches of one kind and another, and if all the work in connection with them was done properly it would be very laborious. There was a statement in a return furnished to the House yesterday, which said that it cost about £1,700 to complete the returns in Victoria, and that it took about ten clerks to do the work. If the work in Queensland was properly carried out it would take two or three individuals. In addition to the friendly societies, were not also building societies included under the Act?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. GROOM said he was very glad that the Government had taken steps to carry out the Act. He held in his hand returns which those societies were supposed to furnish to the Government, and he was perfectly sure that a considerable amount of clerical assistance would be required to analyse them. He knew one society, a friendly society, where the conduct of the secretary had excited suspicion, and when an expert was called in to examine the accounts they were found to be £200 short. If the returns had been furnished to the Government annually, and had been checked by an officer in the Registrar-General's department, that discrepancy would have been accounted for, and the working men's savings entrusted to that society would have been placed in better hands; so that there was an absolute necessity for having those accounts checked by a competent person. He held in his hand the report of the annual meeting of the Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows, which was attended by 550 delegates from all parts of Great Britain, and found that all the speakers who addressed the meeting spoke in the highest terms of the Friendly Societies Act, and of the great amount of good which had been done to the society, and the amount of saving which had been effected. The Act had also revealed the true state of many of the branches of the order which had been believed to be thoroughly solvent. He had a copy of the fourth annual report of the Government Statist of Victoria, Mr. Hayter, a copy of which was also supplied to each of the friendly societies, so that they might be able to check the return of the Government officers by their own books; and the result was that they were able to see at a glance whether a society was solvent or not. The amount of money deposited in those societies was some times very considerable. In Great Britain alone, the accumulated funds of the Manchester Unity amounted to nearly £6,000,000 sterling; so that hon. members would see how necessary it was that some gentlemen of ability, who understood thoroughly the working of those societies, should be appointed to inquire into their positions, and see whether they were thoroughly solvent or not. It required a

great deal of knowledge to go into many of the matters connected with them, and that was where the great advantage of an examination of their accounts by competent officers came in. A great many working men were paying money into societies with a view of receiving a "sick allowance," or securing an allowance to their widows in case of their death; and, unless it were proved beyond dispute that those societies were in a thoroughly solvent state, confidence in the minds of the working men would be destroyed as to whether they would receive any benefit or not. The whole of the speakers, including some of the highest officers in the order, at the session held last year, bore testimony to the excellent working of the Act, particularly in Victoria. The valuable information collected there had satisfied the officers of the order in England that since the establishment of the Friendly Societies Act in that colony an immense amount of good had been done, and public confidence had been gained to a very large degree. No doubt some hon. gentlemen would ask what was the use of going into those particulars, but he would read to the Committee one paragraph from the report of Mr. Hayter, the Government Statist of Victoria, in which he said :—

"In conclusion, I may observe that I have made inquiries of some of the leading members of friendly societies, with the view of ascertaining whether sufficient advantage is derived from the friendly societies' statistics to compensate for the trouble and expense attendant upon their annual collection, preparation, and publication? And in reply I am assured that as a means of checking improper practices in dealing with the funds they are most valuable; the probability being that many an irregularity would be committed did not a strong impression exist that these statistics would be the means of bringing it to light. The valuations give an account of the position of a society at a given time, but the statistics contain a record of its proceedings between the periods of valuations, and show whether the funds are honestly and economically administered, and kept properly invested, precautions without which the valuations would be of little use."

That was exactly what he was explaining. From his own knowledge, a society, which he need not name, had, during the last six months or eight months, discovered defalcations to the extent of £200; but had the accounts been properly audited some twelve or fifteen months ago by a competent person that society would not have been mulcted to that extent. The Government had taken a wise course in endeavouring to carry out the provisions of the Act, which had been proved to be so successful in Great Britain.

Mr. BEATTIE said there was no doubt that the Act would do a great deal of good, and he would be very glad to see the proposed alteration made; but it would be necessary to have some one to assist the Registrar.

The PREMIER : Of course it will.

Mr. BEATTIE said a lodge might have a great deal of money to its credit at a bank, and at the same time not be in a solvent condition. That was the information that lodges generally required. The hon. member for Gympie said the scheme could not be carried out without a very large expenditure; but he thought it could be done with a very small expenditure. Most of the work to be done by the Registrar-General would be of a statistical character, and an actuary would only be engaged periodically to make up the return. He would point out that the society referred to by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Groom), in which defalcations had been made by the secretary to the extent of £200, could not have been a friendly society, because it was a matter of impossibility that that should occur, unless a very large number of the executive officers were mixed up in the transaction. It could not have been a purely friendly society.

Mr. GROOM : It was a purely friendly society.

Mr. BEATTIE said that all the information in connection with the matter ought to be given to the colony generally, because any society of that description in existence in Queensland ought to be held up to public scorn by every working man, for his own protection and that of his wife and family. He had been connected with friendly societies here for the last thirty years and had known of defalcations taking place, but they were generally caused by the careless manner in which the executive officers attended to their business, and the auditors must be as guilty as the secretary who committed the defalcations. He therefore thought the Government were acting wisely in making the alterations proposed in the Bill, with the view of having the provisions of the Friendly Societies Act enforced. He understood from the Premier that it was the intention of the Government to employ an actuary to make an examination into the affairs of friendly societies, ascertain the ages of members, and make a return showing the solvency or otherwise of the various benefit societies established in the colony. That would do a great deal of good, and he was perfectly satisfied that the societies at present in existence in Queensland would not object to contribute towards the expenses of such an officer, as they wished to obtain the information which it was proposed the actuary should furnish. The society with which he (Mr. Beattie) was connected had been seriously considering, for the past three months, whether they should send a full statement of the affairs of the whole of their branches in this colony to Mr. Templeton, of Victoria, in order to get his opinion on the subject. He believed that information could be got from that gentleman which would allay any fears there might be in the minds of members as to the solvency of the society. He must repeat that he was sorry to hear the statement made by the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Groom) in reference to the defalcations of a certain official, because he was certain that the hon. gentleman would not have made that statement if there had not been some foundation for it.

Mr. SMYTH said that, in justice to the hon. member for Toowoomba, he must state that he could corroborate everything the hon. gentleman had said respecting the defalcations by the secretary of the benefit society to which he had alluded. It was a branch society, and the secretary did appropriate £200 in cash, but he was not prosecuted, because the branch was unregistered. He (Mr. Smyth) believed that if the Attorney-General would inquire he would find that not one-fourth of the friendly societies in the colony were registered. Consequently, the members had no protection against defalcations, because the society had no standing in a court of law.

Mr. BEATTIE said that was just the point. Societies which were not registered were only co-operative companies, and that Bill would not apply to them until they were registered under the Friendly Societies Act.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, since the passing of the Friendly Societies Act until a short time ago, hon. members had laboured under the delusion that the work of administering the provisions of the Act would be done by the Registrar of the Supreme Court. He found, on reading the correspondence on that matter, that it was an impossibility for that officer to have done the work at any time since the passing of the Act; and, of course, every year it was becoming more impossible for him to do it. And he (Hon. Mr. Macrossan) did not think it would be done by the Registrar-General.

The PREMIER: He will be able to get it done.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that if that officer got the work done he would certainly require more than one additional clerk, which the Premier appeared to think would be sufficient. In Victoria the Registrar of Friendly Societies had a large staff, and did not do all the work; the Registrar did the legal work, and the Government Statist did the statistical part and drafted the report for Parliament. An actuary was employed in that colony, and an assistant actuary, with several supernumerary officers, and altogether the work cost about £1,700. Mr. Jordan, when Registrar-General, stated, in a letter dated the 21st of May, 1883, that the number of societies in Queensland was about the same as the number in Victoria. Of course, the number of members was not so great, but he (Hon. Mr. Macrossan) did not see how the work could be done for much less than it cost in Victoria, if it was to be done well, and he thought that if they did it at all it ought to be done well. It was clear from what had fallen from the hon. member for Toowoomba that it was time the working men understood the position they were in, and that friendly societies must be registered if they wished to secure the protection of the law, and have some kind of guarantee that the money raised by them would not be wasted. He thought that if an actuary was appointed that officer should see that the contributions of members were really large enough to meet the demands that would be made upon the society when those members who had joined young became old. That was the danger which it had been pointed out had existed in Victoria. Societies were established in that colony in the early days of settlement, and those who were young then were old now. The societies had a large amount of money to their credit, no doubt, but the difficulty was whether that would be sufficient in the course of ten years to meet their liabilities. He thought that information of that kind should be obtained in Queensland.

The PREMIER said he quite agreed with what the hon. member had said. It was very important that the information to which he alluded should be given, and it would be one of the first duties of the Registrar-General to obtain it. Of course it would be understood that he (the Premier) did not say that the Registrar-General personally would do the work, but he thought that that officer was the fittest person to supervise the work, and that was the reason for the introduction of the Bill. The Registrar-General had large experience of statistical methods, and many officers of his department were also trained to that kind of work. He (the Premier) was quite sure that Parliament would approve of any expenditure necessary to ensure the work being done properly.

Mr. JORDAN said that the Attorney-General last year stated that with the assistance of an additional clerk the Registrar of the Supreme Court could carry out the provisions of the Act. That additional assistance was granted: a clerk was appointed for that purpose, and the Attorney-General expressed the opinion that that would be quite sufficient. Now, he (Mr. Jordan) noticed that the whole twelve months had passed over and nothing had been done. The next thing was that a letter was received from the Registrar of the Supreme Court, stating that the work was altogether unsuited for the duties of his office, and should be done by the Registrar-General. Then the Registrar-General was informed by the Colonial Secretary that he should undertake the work, and in reply the Registrar-General addressed a letter to the Colonial Secretary, pointing out how, according to his view, the provisions of the Act should be carried out, showing the amount of responsi-

bility the work would involve, and expressing the opinion that it should be under the direction of a gentleman who had the advantage of a legal training, and that the services of an actuary would really be required to properly carry out the provisions of the Act. The Colonial Secretary of the day, in a letter which he caused to be written to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, evidently expressed the opinion that that officer did not seem to have given much attention to the Act. He gathered from the letters of the Registrar of the Supreme Court that that officer had really never read the Act at all. It was a remarkable thing that an Act passed in 1876 for the public well-being should have been a dead-letter for all those years; that the Registrar of the Supreme Court should have been under the impression that he could not carry out the provisions of the Act for want of one additional clerk; that when he got that additional clerk he should do nothing for twelve months; and that he should then express an opinion that the Registrar-General should do the work. He was afraid the Premier himself had not carefully studied the Act—if the hon. gentleman would forgive him for saying so—since he had expressed the opinion that the Registrar-General, with the assistance of one additional clerk, could easily do the work. The administration of the Friendly Societies Act in Victoria was in some sense under the direction of the Government Statist, Mr. Hayter. That gentleman, in a letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary, detailed exactly all the arrangements for carrying out the Act in Victoria. He said the registrar was a barrister, to begin with, and there was an actuary employed, with six supernumeraries to assist him. The expense in Victoria was £1,700; and the Registrar-General of Queensland, although the number of societies in this colony was not so great as the number in Victoria, had expressed the opinion that, as they were new to the work, it would probably cost as much as in Victoria, where they had been familiar with the work for a number of years. That seemed very reasonable. He did not want the Committee to be misled, and receive the impression that the Registrar-General was going to perform the duties required under the Act very easily, with perhaps slight additional assistance. The Registrar-General had his hands pretty full, and it would be unfair to expect him to fulfil the duties required by that Act with very slight additional assistance. It was the prevailing impression that the Registrar-General of Queensland could do any amount of work. When the census was to be taken he had to take it, and was not paid for it. The enumerators were all paid, the collectors were paid, the very messenger in his office was paid, but he was not paid.

Mr. ALAND: He had a big salary.

Mr. JORDAN: His predecessor was paid and his successor would be paid. When a Liberal Government was in, he was not paid; when a Conservative Government was in, he was paid. He (Mr. Jordan) liked to be on the Liberal side, because it was the economical side, and saved the public funds; but economy could be carried so far that it became injurious parsimony. They could not reasonably expect the Registrar-General to perform the duties connected with the Act unless he had a proper staff; there must be an actuary constantly employed, and a staff of officers. He was glad to see from the feeling of the Committee that there was a determination to have the Act thoroughly carried out; but he hoped they would not labour under the delusion that the Registrar-General could do any amount of work. That officer strove to do his duty efficiently, but they were in danger of imposing too much upon him.

Mr. GROOM said he wished to draw attention to a matter which could not be too widely known, particularly amongst the working classes of the colony. He found that of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows in Queensland there were no less than eighteen societies unregistered. The result was that all those societies were precisely in the position of the society he had named. If a defalcation took place no prosecution could follow, nor could any investigation of the accounts be made, unless the societies were brought under the provisions of the Act. It was for the members of each society to ascertain for themselves, from their officers, at the weekly or fortnightly meetings, why the society had not been registered.

Mr. MACFARLANE said there was one point upon which he wished for information. He saw by the principal Act that the Registrar had to be supplied with a statement of the accounts of each society made up to the 31st of December in each year. He was interested in a building society registered under the Friendly Societies Act; and they could not possibly keep the law, because their financial year ended in July. He wished to know if it would not be sufficient if an annual return were made without requiring it to be made up to the end of December? Their financial year ended on the 31st of July, and it would be impossible for them to make up the returns to the end of December.

The PREMIER said he did not think it would be impossible, though it might be inconvenient. There would not be much difficulty in the society making arrangements to alter the date when their financial year should close, and hold their annual meeting in January. They did not comply with the law unless they sent in the returns required.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4, and the preamble, passed as printed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

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

SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson), the House went into Committee further to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. B. B. Moreton) moved that £4,370 be granted for the salaries of officers, and contingencies, in the office of the Secretary for Public Instruction. Hon. members, he said, would see that there was an increase in the vote of £270. Two clerks had been added to the staff. One clerk who got £200 left during last year, having been transferred to another department. One had been brought in at £100, and that left £100 in hand. Another clerk had been raised from £120 to £140, another from £100 to £120, another from £80 to £110—these increases amounted to £70—whilst two new clerks were appointed at £150. The net increase in salaries was thus £120. In the item for contingencies there was an increase of £150, chiefly for outlays during last year.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he was surprised that, whilst the Minister had proposed an increase of £120 for salaries in the Secretary's office, he did not propose a far larger increase in the right direction. He (Mr. Isambert) spoke strongly last year on the question as to why the educational system of the colony, whilst it cost such a

large amount, had no teachers' training college. He pointed out that the young teachers here lacked the necessary amount of training. The system did not provide the means of giving them the education they required. The Secretary for Public Instruction in his last report, paragraph 8, said:—

"It was stated in last year's report that the number of teachers trained in the colony was not sufficient to supply the requirements of the State schools in course of erection, and that provision had been made through the Agent-General for securing the services of British teachers of extended professional training, including a residence of two years at a training college, recognised by the Privy Council, and a subsequent experience in the charge of schools. In accordance with that provision twenty-eight male teachers, possessing the requisite qualifications, arrived during the year. Twenty-one of them were married teachers, who were immediately placed in charge of State schools, and the remaining seven, being unmarried, were appointed assistants in large schools. I am glad to be able to report that they have been carefully selected, and promise to be valuable additions to the teaching staff of the department."

He had no doubt those teachers were valuable additions, and he had not the slightest objection to good and valuable teachers being imported; but before they did import teachers they should pay some attention to their own article. They invited young people in the colony to devote their lifetime to the profession of teaching. There was no nobler profession that he knew of. It was far nobler than practising at the bar. The clergy were only noble in so far as they taught people how to live better lives. But, whilst they invited and induced young people to adopt the profession of teaching, they did not provide the necessary machinery for their education. He could not describe their conduct towards those young people otherwise than by calling it the obtaining of services by means of false pretences, and that was as bad as obtaining money by similar means. The colony spent a large sum annually in scholarships, and what did they get for it? Most of those who took scholarships became lawyers or doctors, and many of them went out of the colony. Those scholarships robbed the private schools of their best pupils—pupils whose parents could in most cases well afford to pay for them—and sent them, at the expense of the State, to the grammar schools, where perhaps they did not get as good an education in many respects as at the ordinary State schools. He was very glad that the hon. member (Mr. Kates) had moved that land should be set apart for the purpose of founding agricultural colleges and universities for higher education. If the Government would reform the grammar schools, universities would be established, and with them training and agricultural colleges could be combined. The young people of the colony who devoted themselves to teaching would then receive a proper education, and that would be a far greater blessing to the country than all the scholarships they gave to make lawyers of them. They would gain a theoretical and practical knowledge of agriculture, and, by being appointed throughout the country, they would diffuse a large amount of useful knowledge as to the production of the various articles of sustenance in the best and most profitable manner. But the colony, instead of training its own teachers, was content to import them, and went on bringing into existence, at its own expense, what it had already too many of—lawyers. A vast amount had been spent on the education of young people who seldom did the State any real service, but became lawyers or doctors, and in many instances left the colony to practise their professions elsewhere; while the teachers, who remained in the colony, were treated in such a scurvy and scandalous manner. It was not expenditure that he objected to, but expenditure

in a wrong direction, for a certain kind of expenditure, even on a large scale, would not only in the end be a saving, but would be one of the greatest blessings to the colony.

Mr. PALMER said that on looking over the Estimates he found that the vote for the department—inspection, special instruction, State schools, buildings, provisional schools, grammar school scholarships and exhibitions to universities, and technical education—amounted altogether to £179,377, being an increase on the amount voted last year of £32,479. In the report of the Under Secretary he was unable to trace exactly how the money was spent. There should also be a column in the report showing what the cost of State education had been to the colony since its initiation. His own researches into the matter showed that during the nine years the Act had been in operation the cost to the colony had been £983,771; but that did not include private subscriptions, nor the interest on money expended for buildings and so on. It could scarcely be said that the report was a full, accurate, and reliable return of the total amount of the education vote during the past nine years. He had gone carefully through the report, but the figures did not come out as plainly as they ought to do. Now that they had a Minister for Public Instruction who could devote his whole time to the work of the department, he might see that the return was made fuller by adding the local subscriptions and all other expenses in a concise form, and then hon. members might see what the annual expenditure on education in the colony really was, and also what it had been from the beginning. The increase of £32,479 on those items alone seemed a very large increase for one year, but whether they got value for it depended upon the quantity and quality of the work done. In the dozen schools in and around Brisbane, right under the eye of the department, the difference between the enrolment of pupils and the average daily attendance showed that there were absent for the whole year over 1,000 children. The enrolment was altogether out of proportion to the attendance. In the report it also stated that 107 schools reported that 640 children were known to be growing up without any education whatever; and he thought they might very fairly put down another 640 that they knew nothing at all about. He knew scores of children who never entered schools at all. Scores! Well, his knowledge was limited, and the scores that he knew of might be represented by hundreds in other localities. They made no pretence of going to school, and he thought it was time that the compulsory clauses of the Act were put into operation. No doubt round about Brisbane one of the chief causes of the non-attendance was the value of the labour of boys, many of whom could earn from 10s. to 15s. a week. That might be a reason for non-attendance, but it was no excuse for allowing boys to grow up in ignorance and enlarge the larrikin class to the extent they did. He had noticed in the report of the working of the Education Act in England that the enrolment amounted to 96 per cent., and the attendance was 75 per cent.; while in Queensland the average daily attendance was only 50 per cent.—a wonderful difference, and one which should be accounted for. There were some other items that he should refer to when the votes in which they were came on.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said, that with reference to the remarks that had fallen from the hon. member for Burke, bearing more especially on the question of compulsory education, he might state that the question had not been away from his mind. Since he had been in the office he had been

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making inquiries into the subject, especially as it applied in and about Brisbane; he had also been in communication with the other colonies where compulsory clauses had been put in force, and during the next recess he should think over the matter a little more than he had done. Having collected all the information he could get together, he did not think that Queensland was very far behind—in fact, was not at all behind the other colonies where the compulsory clauses were in force. He had a few figures before him which, he thought, would be interesting to hon. members as showing the position in which Queensland stood in relation to the other colonies which had the same system of free education in operation. With reference to Victoria, he should say, in the first place, that he could only give information respecting the year 1883, as the whole of the statistics for 1884, so far as education was concerned, were not yet published; but as those figures did not vary very much from those of the previous year, probably they would not vary very much from those for 1884. On the 31st December, 1883, the estimated population of Victoria was 931,790; number of schools in operation, 1,750, or 1 for every 532 of population; teachers, 1,775 males, 1,838 females—total, 3,613; average attendance of pupils, 118,328, giving 32 children to each teacher; total expenditure, £541,563, giving 11s. 7½d. per head of population, and £4 11s. 6½d. per child. In New South Wales, with a population of 921,129, the number of schools was 2,032, or 1 for every 453 of population; teachers, 1,618 males, 1,557 females—total, 3,175; giving, for the average attendance of 95,215 children, a mean of 30 children to every teacher; total expenditure, £774,357, making 16s. 9½d. per head of population, and £8 2s. 7½d. per child. He might state that that expenditure included high schools as well as elementary schools, so that the cost per child would be probably about £5. In Queensland, with an estimated population on 31st December, 1884, of 309,913, they had 413 schools, giving 750 per head of population to each school. They had 562 male and 599 female teachers—total, 1,161; average attendance, 27,863, or 24 children to every teacher; total expenditure, £150,160; cost per head of population, 9s. 8½d.; per child, £5 7s. 8½d. In South Australia, with a population of 312,781, the number of schools was 452, or 1 for nearly every 692 persons; teachers—400 males, 600 females, total 1,000; average attendance, 25,048 children, giving 25 to each teacher; total cost, £133,607, or 8s. 6½d. per head of population, or £5 6s. 8d. per child. New Zealand—population 564,304; number of schools, 987, or 572 per head of population; teachers—1,130 males, 1,317 females, total 2,447; average attendance, 72,657, giving 29 children to each teacher; total expenditure, £365,002—12s. 11d. per head of population, or £5 0s. 6d. per child. It would therefore be seen that all the colonies were running very much upon the same lines—the expenditure and cost per head of population and per child being very much the same. He might mention that one reason why South Australia showed a little cheaper per head of children than Queensland was the fact that they employed 600 female teachers as against 400 males—thereby lessening the cost of teaching considerably. Another point to be observed was that while in Queensland they had only 24 children to each teacher, in Victoria they had 32, in New South Wales 30, in New Zealand 29, and in South Australia—which ran very close to Queensland in all figures relating to education—25. In all those colonies, with the exception, perhaps, of New Zealand, which he was not quite sure about, they were

putting the compulsory clauses into effect. Therefore they were all on very much the same footing. As to the question of finding out the number of children who did not attend school in the colony, it was very difficult indeed. In New South Wales they attempted to do it by taking the number of children in daily attendance, and the percentage of children of school ages to population for last year, based on the percentage of children to population at the last census; but even then, taking those figures and working them out, and deducting from the total enrolment 12 per cent. for multiple enrolment, they brought out certain figures which were admitted to be unreliable. He might point out that as soon as the census was taken next year the Government would be able to arrive at some idea as to how many children there were who were not receiving any education at all. It must be borne in mind that there were a great many, especially in Brisbane, who had no reason to be away. If hon. gentlemen looked at all the newspaper offices, at a certain hour of the day, they would see a number of boys going out with papers, while at the same time those very papers were remarking on the necessity of putting into operation the compulsory clauses of the Act. They might assist in the matter by not employing those boys during school-hours. It was only a fortnight ago that he passed down Elizabeth street, and met a gentleman trying to get about twenty boys to hold their tongues. He was told that they were waiting to take out a certain paper that morning and circulate it about town. In reply to a question he put, they said they went to school when they had not other things to do, but they had to earn some money sometimes, so they took out papers. Of course they were not totally neglected; they attended school sometimes during the week; but to find out those who were receiving no education at all would be rather difficult. The compulsory ages of boys were from six years to twelve years; but there were a great many who went as clerks before they had completed their fourteenth year. The average ages of children attending school were from seven years to fourteen years. In infant schools they were taken from four years; but where there were no infant schools the lowest age received was five years; and in a very few years they went out to do work of some sort. He knew that boys who had been educated at the public schools were very much thought of by bank managers and others, because they could generally write very well and were well taught up to the time they left school. With regard to the statement of the hon. member for Rosewood concerning training teachers, if he would look at page 7 of the report he would see what was done, so far as pupil teachers were concerned. Last year—1884—there were 782 examined and 624 passed. They received salaries, and were taught up to the time they passed class IV. Therefore, they were raising a class of teachers by this method, although there was no regular training school. A very great many fell out before they reached a certain age, and went into other occupations, it was very hard to prevent them doing so. They got their pupil teachers up to a certain standard, and frequently, when they were most valuable, they left.

Mr. SCOTT said there was one point which he raised last year which he would again draw attention to—namely, the attendance of boys at school. The number enrolled was 52,536, and the average daily attendance was 27,863—somewhere about half. That was a very important matter; education was costing the colony £200,000 a year, and the average daily attendance was 27,863, making a very large sum per head. The Minister for Education had stated that there was

a great difficulty in ascertaining the number of children who were neglected; but there would be no difficulty in ascertaining the number who actually did not go. Some means ought to be taken to enforce better attendance from those boys who were on the roll. Anyone who went about the streets could see numbers of boys roaming about the different corners whose parents believed them to be at school. There should be persons appointed to go about and see what boys ought to be attending school and were not. He did not think it would be well to put the compulsory clause into operation, but a great deal of good might be done by inspectors such as he had suggested, to go about the streets and find out what those boys were doing loafing about the streets during school-hours, as thousands were doing. Something like 25,000 were doing that every day, all over the colony, and he thought that the scheme he had suggested was well worth the consideration of the hon. Minister for Education.

Mr. ALAND said he thought it was too much to say that 25,000 children were roaming about the streets.

Mr. SCOTT: I have only read the figures from the returns.

Mr. ALAND said the remark was of too sweeping a character. He did not for one moment say that the average attendance at the schools was any larger than what was stated in the report. He did not cavil at the figures, but he cavilled at the remark that the children were loafing about the streets, although he had no doubt that a certain percentage were playing truant. They knew that in the country districts a good many children were kept at home by their parents at different times of the year in order to help them with farm work, and in various other ways. That would account, to a very large extent, for the difference between the number on the rolls and the average daily attendance. He did not see that the department was really very much to blame for that, because in a great many cases when the children were absent notes were sent by teachers to the parents inquiring for the cause, and he did not see what other plan the department could adopt. If the parents of children in Brisbane, and in other towns in the colony too, would really see that their children were at school, and would pay attention to the reports which the teachers sent home, the matter would be remedied to a very great extent. It was to be lamented that the average daily attendance was only about 50 per cent. of the number upon the rolls; but if the parents would be more careful in seeing that the children were at school the difficulty would be to some extent obviated.

Mr. ARCHER said he would like the Minister for Public Instruction to give the Committee some information as to what was the cause of the enormous increase of over £35,000 in the Estimates of this year as compared with the amount voted for 1884-5. It was a matter for the serious consideration of hon. members, whether in view of the large expenditure of the department they would be prepared to sanction the additional expense that would be entailed by carrying out the compulsory clauses of the Education Act. If they were to add the salary of the Minister for Public Instruction to the estimate of the department they would find the colony was paying about £200,000 a year for education. It might, perhaps, stagger them if they were asked to pay £80,000 or £90,000 extra for compelling, not only the attendance of all those children not going to school, but also the regular attendance of those at present enrolled. He believed the Committee were prepared to make a sacrifice as great as could be expected from so small a community; but that was a matter which could be

ully discussed when the Minister had made up his mind on the subject. He was very much pleased with one remark made by the hon. member for Rosewood, and that was his statement of the high estimation in which he held the teachers. He (Mr. Archer) looked upon the profession of teaching as one of the most honourable in which a man could engage, but unfortunately there were exceedingly few so constituted that they could become teachers. The hon. member also made some remarks about getting teachers from home. That would not be at all necessary if the pupil-teachers who entered the service were all of the class who would become successful teachers. One of the first qualifications of a teacher was that he should like that particular kind of employment. Pupil-teachers, however, often went through their apprenticeship for the purpose of getting a little higher education than they received in the State schools, and were then ready to accept the very first offer made to them by which they could transfer their services to some more lucrative employment. There was hardly any office in town, not excepting the Government offices, in which there were not some State school pupils who preferred getting their living as clerks to entering a mechanic's workshop. The colony was importing men who had nothing like the same advantages as colonial youths, as far as education was concerned—men who had to go into a shop at twelve or thirteen years of age, whereas colonial boys could wait until they were sixteen; and if the latter went into mechanics' shops they would find that in the matter of education they were far above the majority of those who came from the old country. The demand for pupil-teachers would be well supplied if there were not so many other temptations held out to them to go into offices where they could get a higher salary than it was possible for the State to give them. He would be glad if the Minister for Public Instruction would give them some information as to the items that had led to the very large increase in the estimate.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that, with regard to the remarks made by the hon. member for Leichhardt in respect to attendance, he might state that in New Zealand the total net enrolment for last year was 117,423; the mean quarterly enrolment, 96,840; and the average attendance 75,391, which gave a percentage on the total net enrolment of 61.78, and on the mean quarterly enrolment of 77.9. In Queensland the total net enrolment was 46,250; mean quarterly enrolment, 39,925; average attendance, 27,863; percentage on total net enrolment, 60.24; on mean quarterly enrolment, 69.79. In South Australia the total net enrolment was 42,758; mean quarterly enrolment, 35,854; average attendance, 25,048, which gave a percentage of 58.6 on the total net enrolment, and 69.8 on the mean quarterly enrolment. In New South Wales the total net enrolment was 167,134; mean quarterly enrolment, 139,135; average attendance, 95,215; percentage on total net enrolment, 56.96; percentage on average attendance, 68.42. In Victoria, in 1883—the statistics for which were the only ones he could obtain—the total net enrolment was 188,949; mean quarterly enrolment, 172,419; average attendance, 118,328; percentage on net enrolment, 53.19; on mean quarterly enrolment, 68.62. So that Queensland was moving with the other colonies in that respect. In reference to what had fallen from the hon. member for Blackall, as to the increase in the estimate, it would be observed that there was an increase in salaries of £13,500, which was rendered necessary by the employment of 143 new teachers, and the higher

classification of many others already in the service, who thereby received an increase in their salaries in addition to the increase given to them last year. There was an increase of £20,390 in "contingencies." There was a larger number of scholars, and the capitation increased proportionately. The cost of cleaning school-rooms, and the travelling expenses, were rather heavier than before. Then, £10,000 additional was put down for buildings. Applications were coming from every corner of the colony for new schools. The schools round Brisbane were over-crowded—the Fortitude Valley school, the Petrie terrace school, the Kangaroo Point school; and a new school just opened at Rocklea would have to be enlarged, as it was built for 100 and there were already 150 pupils going to it. If they were to give the children of the colony the instruction the House insisted on there was nothing for it but to increase the number of schools. He would take the best care possible that the items on the Estimates should not be exceeded, but he must inform the Committee that when, as it sometimes happened, the department thought it necessary to refuse applications for new schools they got letters immediately to know if they were going to leave the children destitute of teaching. There was a large school going up at Rockhampton, which, if he remembered aright, was to cost £7,000; and he believed there was a great necessity for it. Then there was a considerable expenditure for repairs—painting and one thing and another to keep the schools in order. He did not know that he could give any more general information; but he might be able to give more minute information on any particular subject.

Mr. BLACK said he was sure the Committee were extremely gratified at the very interesting information the hon. member had given; but he would advise the hon. member, if he wished to get through his Estimates, to talk a little less and let them do the talking. He did not think the Committee were very much interested in the very minute analysis—even to the extent of going into decimals—of what was doing in the other colonies; they wanted to know what was being done in this colony. If the figures the hon. gentleman had given were of any value they should have been submitted as printed documents, which could be studied. To come to a more practical matter, they found the Education Department required £35,748 more this year than last; and the country wanted to know if it was getting an equivalent return for the increased expenditure. There was no member of that Committee who valued primary education more than he did, or who was more prepared to stick up for the education of the youth of the colony; but it had been the constant remark, when the Education estimates came up, that they were very apt to exceed what was the original intention of the Education Act. They were imparting to the youth of the colony an education which raised them above the situation in life they were likely to occupy, and for which their parents ought properly to pay. It was a matter for very great regret that when they were asked for a vote of nearly £200,000 for education they should find such an alarming increase of larrikinism. That was a matter which the Minister for Education might take into consideration—he might see whether he could adopt some means by which the lads who had excited his sympathy in Queen street might be brought in and educated, and led up to better things. That would be far more satisfactory to the colony than to know how many pounds, shillings, and decimals education cost in the other colonies. He would ask the Minister for Public Instruction how it was that, on page 37 of the report of the department,

it was stated that the parliamentary vote for the year was £170,622 15s. 9d., whereas in the Estimates they found the amount voted was £163,093. There was a discrepancy of £7,000.

The PREMIER : That is not in my copy.

Mr. BLACK : If the hon. gentleman would look at page 37, Table K, he would see "Parliamentary vote for the year, £170,622 15s. 9d."

The PREMIER : That is for the year ending 31st December, 1884.

Mr. BLACK : If the hon. member would turn to the first page of the estimates for the Department of Public Instruction, he would see that the amount voted for 1884-5 was £163,093.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that in reply to the hon. member for Mackay, he could tell him that the sum of £170,622 15s. 9d. was made up of the halves of two years—that was the latter half of 1883-4 and the first half of 1884-5. The expenditure for the first half of 1883-4 was £76,511 4s. 1d., and for the half-year of 1884-5, £94,111 11s. 8d., making a total of £170,622 15s. 9d. Of course, there were two financial years—the Treasurer's financial year, and the calendar year, for which the department kept its account.

Mr. BLACK said he thought it was a great pity that, now they were going in for such very high class education, the principle of making accounts intelligible did not apply to the Education Department. He was not prepared to dispute the figures quoted by the hon. gentleman in any way, but he thought the hon. member must agree with him in saying that the Committee were entitled to reliable information. When there were voluminous statistics put before them, such as they had got, it was necessary that they should be reliable and accurate; and in reference to the Education Department it was desirable that above all others such should be the case, and that they should not be able to find such extraordinary discrepancies as they had done. They were told, undoubtedly, that the Parliamentary vote for last year—he took the figures as they stood—was £170,622, whilst as a matter of fact the statistics showed plainly that it was £163,093. Was it necessary to so complicate the accounts as to make them entirely unintelligible to ordinary members of that Committee? They should be so definite that there would be no need for the Minister to explain the discrepancy. But, referring to the general principle of the Education vote, he would repeat that the Committee should be very jealous when they noted that an increase of something like 20 per cent.—in fact over 20 per cent.—was taking place in the Education vote for the present year, as compared with that of previous years, or as compared with last year. On an occasion like that they should be perfectly certain that the country was deriving the full benefit from that very large increase of expenditure. He knew that there were many hon. members in that Committee, and a very large number of the people outside, who were looking rather jealously upon the educational system of the colony. They knew that when it was decided to give free education to the youth of the colony the people of the colony endorsed that view, believing that education was to be confined to rudimentary education—to what was known as the three R's—in other words, reading, writing, and arithmetic. When they gave the people of the colony universal suffrage it was undoubtedly a wise step to qualify the youth of the colony to exercise that vote in an intelligent manner, which could be only attained by a certain amount of rudimentary education. He had said before—and he knew it was an opinion endorsed by

many hon. members and by persons outside the House—that they were going beyond the original intention of the Education Act. They were educating the youth of the colony above the position which was intended when the Education Act was passed, and they were now seeing results which he thought would not add to the success of the Education Act in the future, or necessarily add to the prosperity of the colony. They knew how difficult it was to get the youth of the colony to embark in any of the industrial occupations of Queensland. He would like the Government, if they could only see their way, to establish some sort of industries that would be suitable for the highly educated young men and young women of the colony, whose comparatively high education was being brought about by the constant expansion of the Education vote. It was almost impossible to get the youth of the colony to embark in agricultural pursuits. And as to domestic servants, they were certainly educated far beyond that. Again, when domestic servants were required they had to be imported from England or the Continent. He would repeat that the youth of the colony were being educated above the position in life which their parents—so many of whom formed the best colonists in Queensland—would have or had been perfectly satisfied to fill. The consequence was that the young men and young women of the colony were centring in the towns. And what did they do in the towns? They were not so profitably engaged as they would be if they were encouraged to spread through the country districts, and if they, above all other things, embarked in agricultural pursuits. The pay they got in the towns was certainly not encouraging, and, as Ministers knew well, if it was once known that there was a vacancy in any branch of the Civil Service, scores of applications were immediately received. It was pretty well recognised that the Civil Service of the colony, through intense competition and the necessary accompanying small pay, was looked upon by those who ought to understand it—the parents of the children—as about the very worst service their children could be engaged in. Another matter which should receive some attention was the fact that the Government had entirely abandoned the vote for the support and encouragement of model farms or agricultural colleges in the colony. He did not know what their reason was for arriving at that decision. He was quite prepared to admit that the experiments hitherto made in the southern portions of the colony had not been attended with success. That, however, was no reason why the Government should not have gone farther afield, and have tried some of the more northern portions. It would have been one of the grandest experiments they could have undertaken to have gone to some of the tropical regions of the North and established agricultural schools or colleges there. Those institutions could have been established with the assistance of the European labour—the youth of the colony, of which there was such a large supply, and which was remaining unemployed in the centres of population. He was alluding to the increase of larrikinism in the colony, reference to which was to be seen made almost every week in the newspapers. He did not mean to say that that class was uneducated. Indeed, he believed that if they were to get a number of the larrikins of Brisbane together it would be found that the majority of them were fairly well educated—that was, they could read and write. But there were no openings in the colony for youths who had been, to a very great extent, neglected by their parents, in which they could be profitably employed. That, again, opened up a very large and wide

question connected with the educational system of the colony. That question was—How was it that, with the primary education many of those lads had obtained, they preferred to become waifs and strays of our large communities? He was prepared to give his answer to that question, and that was, that while the State gave them that education which it was bound to give to every boy and girl in the colony, there was a very much more important branch of education which was entirely neglected, and that was the religious education of the young. But that was too large a subject to do more than briefly refer to on the present occasion. It might be the duty of parents to give a religious education to their children, but it was certain that in a majority of the cases where the lads developed into larrikins that duty had been entirely neglected by them. He hoped the Government, instead of encouraging a constant increase in the Education vote, would look at the question from a practical standpoint; and see if they could not reduce the cost of education by compelling those who wished to have their children educated up to the higher standards, to pay for it out of their own pockets—to combine the present system, whereby the State acknowledged its responsibility for education, with the principle of compelling those parents who wished their children to acquire the higher branches of knowledge to contribute a certain amount out of their own pockets for that purpose. The parents to whom he referred would not be reluctant to do so, but as long as they could look upon the State as a sort of milch cow to pay what they should be called upon to pay, so long would what he considered the discouraging results of their educational system become more and more apparent.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that, with regard to the Minister for Education, he felt almost inclined to apply to him the remark applied last night by the hon. member for Stanley to the Attorney-General—that he was not as green as he looked or pretended to be. The hon. gentleman knew well what were the requisites of a really good teacher, and in paragraph 9 of his general remarks on education in his report he stated that one of those requisites was residence for two years at a training college. If that was necessary for a teacher imported from England, it was even more necessary for teachers trained in the colony. In a training college professors would be collected who were each perfect in his own line—men who possessed a peculiar power in showing their pupils the art of teaching. He did not advocate that those teachers should be trained without some safeguard being given to the State. It should be stipulated that a pupil entering the college should give a bond to the amount of what his two years' training would cost the State—say £100 or £150—and if at the end of that period he went into some other occupation than teaching in a State school he should pay that amount over to the Government. If he remained in the service, and gave the State three, four, or five years' service, or whatever other period might be decided upon in the Education Department, then his obligation should be considered discharged. By that plan the State would be sure to get a higher class of teachers. One of the votes to be asked for was an item of £3,302 for scholarships and exhibitions to universities. He held that so long as there were children in the State who were not educated, so long would that vote be what he called a fraud on the people. The State had no business to encourage in such a manner the higher education of naturally quick-witted children at the expense of those who were backward. It would be far better for the State to confine its efforts to the teaching of elementary knowledge to all the children. He

would rather see a vote of £10,000 for an agricultural and teachers' training college than that £3,302 for pushing on quick-witted children. Good as the educational system of the colony was in many respects, there was no reason why it should not be improved. While teachers were engaged in pushing on the quick-witted children to prepare them for scholarship examinations, they were neglecting the other children under their charge. If the parents of quick-witted children wished them to go in for the higher education, let them pay for it, but let the State teachers endeavour to benefit the children in general. The duller children required more of a teacher's attention than the quick-witted ones. It had been said that if the scholarships for the sharper boys were done away with the grammar schools would make a very poor show. They were robbing the primary schools of some of their very best boys and stuffing them into grammar schools. He ventured to say that if a very indifferent teacher were given a lot of such quick-witted boys, collected from all parts of the colony, he could make a better show than the best teacher with average boys. It was no great trouble to teach quick-witted children; it was a pleasure to the teacher. He hoped next year the Government would see their way clear to do away with that fostering of those who were already strong, and bring in a measure to establish a teachers' training college. The amount of blessing it would produce all over the colony by those young teachers getting the highest education and imparting it again to children all through the length and breadth of the land would be very great. As the hon. member for Mackay had said, the moral education of the youth of the colony was very much neglected. Of course, since they had so many religious sects, and they could not make a State church and bring them all under one head, it was all the more incumbent upon them to give their teachers the highest moral teaching they possibly could, so that they might bring a large amount of moral training to bear upon the children under their care without trespassing on the realm of religion. Then, with regard to compulsory education, he thought it would be a good step in the right direction if the Minister for Education would not leave so much to the local committees. He knew one school in his district where application had been made to the Minister to enforce the compulsory clauses. There was a large amount of nonsense entertained by English people with regard to the liberty of the subject. How much of the liberty of the subject would be interfered with by enforcing the compulsory clauses? The majority of parents—those who sent their children to school—would not be interfered with at all. It was only parents who allowed their children to become truants—who did not understand their duty to their children, who would be interfered with—perhaps 3 or 4 per cent.—and the more the liberty of the subject in the case of those people was interfered with the better it would be for the State.

Mr. MACFARLANE said it had been observed by several speakers that all the departments into which public instruction was divided had been increased. Looking at Schedule B he saw there were altogether eleven heads under which the Education Department was tabulated, and out of that number there were increases in nine. He had never objected to the amount of money spent up to the present time for the purposes of education. He thought it was far better for them to be liberal with their primary schools, and see that they were well conducted and properly paid for, than to be stingy and give only a partial or very poor

education. It was far better to spend a little more money for education than to have to spend it, perhaps, in punishing criminals. He maintained that the better their youths were conducted the more likely they were to become good members of society. With regard to compulsory education, which so far had been a dead-letter, he thought it ought at least to be tried in some of the towns of the colony to see how it worked. He knew a certain town in which there was a family of six children living just across the road from the public school, and to his knowledge not one of them ever went to school. Unfortunately, the father worked in the country and the mother did not care whether they were educated or not, the consequence being that the children were left to grow up as best they could. Of course, the effect could not but be injurious to those children, and it might have a very expensive effect upon the country, because children brought up in that way could not be expected to have the same reverence for law as children who were properly educated and who were more likely to be law-abiding. He therefore thought it would be well for the Government to consider whether the time had not arrived when the compulsory clauses should be tried in some towns to see how they would operate before they took further action in the matter. As to the higher education referred to by the hon. member for Rosewood, he thought there was a good deal to be said in its favour. He did not object to scholarships to the grammar schools, because they were inducements to quick-witted boys to do the best they could to become good members of society, but in regard to the exhibitions given to grammar school boys he had changed his mind entirely. Up to the present time he had always supported them, but looking back to the persons who had benefited by them he found they were generally of the higher classes of society.

The PREMIER: No; quite wrong.

Mr. MACFARLANE: As a rule they were persons who were well able to pay for their education.

The PREMIER: No; almost never.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was very glad to hear it, and stood corrected. What he had said referred more particularly to the grammar school that he knew most about. Another point he wished to refer to was the great number of young men who left the Education Department every year and went into other walks of life. He thought that must show either that they were not adapted for teachers, or that they found that their abilities were better rewarded in mercantile life. It would be interesting to know the number who left the department every year. He himself knew a good many, and the number must be very considerable. He thought that so far as teachers were concerned they ought not to be parsimonious. It was far better to pay them a fair salary so as to retain them in the department than that they should leave in such large numbers every year. The matter of religion had cropped up, but he did not intend to speak on that. He believed the time would come when the Bible would be read without comment in the State schools of the colony. One remark he wished to make—and he hoped the Minister for Education would pay attention to it—was this: There were different kinds of education. They talked of higher education, and the Committee would scarcely believe that at the time they were actually assisting to give the very lowest form of education in the colony. In his own district there was a State school, and a part of the ground belonging to it had actually been granted for a racecourse, and that racecourse was running right through the playground

of the school. He thought the Minister for Public Instruction had made a mistake in granting that land for a racecourse so near a State school; and it was very likely to produce larrikinism. There was nothing he knew of that boys were fonder of than going to see a race, and many times they would leave school and go a mile or two for that purpose. The Government had actually brought the racecourse right through the school grounds, the school being the first, and the racecourse brought up to it. Not only that, but they had knocked down the fence, or proposed to do it, so that the circle of the racecourse might run through the playground at the back of the school. He wished the Minister to tell them whether he had definitely decided not to allow such a thing to take place. The school was invested in a board, and that board was entirely opposed to the racecourse going through the playground. The board were the representatives of the children and the parents, and they were all opposed to it. That ought to be sufficient to prevent tampering with the school-ground. He hoped the hon. gentleman would be able to tell him that it was decided that such a thing should not take place. It had been in abeyance for a long time, and the sooner it was settled the better.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that, in reply to the hon. member for Ipswich, he might state that the hon. gentleman had rather contradicted himself. He first told them that the site was already destroyed by a racecourse being taken through it, and shortly afterwards he asked if the arrangement was completed or not? He had evidently made a mistake; either there was no racecourse going through the school-ground, or else it never had been proposed. The fact of the matter was that he (the Minister for Public Instruction) had received a communication from the residents about Ipswich, asking to have an exchange of land from the racecourse with some from the school reserve, and he saw no reason whatever for not agreeing to it, as he considered the land they were to get from the racecourse to be very suitable for increasing the school, and a better site. However, some time after that, he had a strong remonstrance from the two hon. members for Ipswich, who said there was a strong feeling against the thing being done, so he left the matter in abeyance. Shortly after that he received a numerous signed petition from the inhabitants of Bundamba praying that the exchange might be made. He had sent that application to the school board, and awaited their answer. The thing was in that state at present.

Mr. NORTON said he supposed that the Minister who had charge of the department was always prepared, on occasions like the present to hear a good deal of discussion, although, he supposed, most of the remarks had been made previously two or three times. He did not think that the debate that had taken place would help to bring the system into favour. He was one of those who believed in the advantages to be derived from the education of the children of the colony; but he did not believe in the system, because the result of it was that a number of children in the country districts received no benefit whatever. They were so situated that it was impossible for them to do so, while, at the same time, their parents had to contribute, as taxpayers, as much towards the fund as anyone else. In that case it was a very great hardship, because he knew of people who were very far removed from any public school, and who were at the same time anxious to get their children properly educated, and they had not only to contribute to that enormous cost, which was

yearly increasing, but had actually to provide the full expense of educating their children besides. Of course that was a thing that could not be altered; but when to that was added the fact—as had been shown that evening—that of the children who could avail themselves of that educational system one-half, or about that, did not take advantage of it, it made the system appear very much worse. He did not say that one-half of the children who were nominally educated derived no benefit whatever; but the result was that if the sum-total was taken it was equivalent to one-half of the children only being educated. In looking at the question one could not help asking where it was to end. For the present year there was an increase of over £35,000, and it was time to see if it could not be cut down. He for one agreed with a great deal that had fallen from the hon. member for Rosewood. He did not believe in those exhibitions and scholarships, although he granted it was a fact that, as a rule, those who could not, under ordinary circumstances, send their children to universities, had received the benefit of them. He believed that the amount invested in educational purposes could be much more beneficially spent under the system suggested by the hon. member for Rosewood—namely, in mining colleges, technical colleges, or whatever they might be called. They would be much more useful, because information could be imparted to a very much larger number of people. For his own part he did not see how any reduction was to be made in the present vote, because the system was such that it was impossible to keep it down. There was one thing certain, and that was, that if it went on at anything like the rate it was going at present it would come to an end. That was a matter which the Minister for Education ought to take seriously into consideration. Of course, in the position in which he was placed, he had every opportunity of finding out what was going on in other colonies; and he should make a study of the question in order that he might ascertain how the system had worked there, not merely for the benefit of the children, but to see which was the most economical way. That that had not been done so far seemed to be apparent—he did not know whether it was so or not. He would suggest to the Minister that before he brought down another estimate to the Committee, instead of increasing the expenditure, he should try to devise some scheme for its reduction; he did not mean a reduction of the whole vote, but a reduction in the rate of increase. There was one thing that must be said with regard to the teachers, and that was that, as a rule, compared with other servants in the employ of the Government, they were not well paid. He believed the Minister stated that most of the teachers had received increases this year.

The PREMIER: Those increases are made in accordance with the regulations.

Mr. NORTON said he understood the Secretary for Public Instruction to say that the teachers not only got increases last year, but this year also, having been admitted to a higher grade. He did not think that anyone begrudged the teachers the money they received for their services, but he thought they should teach more pupils. He did not rise particularly to oppose the vote, but he could not, when the opportunity arose, refrain from protesting against the enormous expenditure, as other hon. members had done, because, compared with the advantages the colony ought to derive from their education system, the expense was very great. He thought that the mere fact of the expenditure being so large must in a few years lead to some other result, for unless the population and the revenue

increased much more rapidly than they were doing they could not go on increasing that vote at the present rate.

Mr. KELLETT said he had not much to say on the general question of education. He agreed with some former speakers that there was a great number of people in the colony getting free education for their children who could afford to pay for it. He had always thought that those who could pay for their children should do so, but that the rudiments of education should be given to those children whose parents could not afford to pay for their instruction. He thought that schools should be established in outlying districts where there were no private schools, but that even there those persons who could afford to do so should pay for the education of their own children. He was satisfied that if a system of charging fees was instituted a great number of people who now sent their children to school and paid nothing would be pleased to pay for them. He had heard that from many persons; from some among the farming class for instance, who were pretty well off; and he believed those people would prefer to pay for the education of their children. The vote for education was increasing year after year, and he thought it was time that a scale of fees was arranged and adopted. But what he specially wished to allude to was some remarks made by the member for Ipswich, and to give a little more reliable information founded on facts. The hon. member stated that something injudicious was about to be done by the Minister for Public Instruction by allowing a racecourse to be established alongside a school. Now, before the present Ministry assumed office there was a reserve originally surveyed and put up for auction by the late Government. Only a few allotments were sold, and those at very small prices; the rest were withdrawn, and the people of the district subsequently applied for the grant of that land as a racecourse reserve, the one that had been in use there before Separation having fallen into private hands, and, of course, become lost to the public. The application was granted, and a reserve was proclaimed, as other reserves had been proclaimed in other centres of the population by all Governments. At the time it was granted a promise was given that the exchange which had now been spoken of should be granted, the reason being that the land on which the school was built ran out into a long narrow strip right into the racecourse reserve. He believed that the reason why the land was kept in that shape was that it preserved the frontages to the Government, who expected that by keeping it they would be able to get more money for the land when sold than they would otherwise. The land proposed to be given in exchange for that asked for from the school-ground was higher, better suited for building on, or for a playground, or any other purpose; but there was some delay on the part of the inhabitants in getting the land surveyed, and the exchange was not made. When the present Minister for Public Instruction came into office the matter, which had been before the department for some time, was brought under his notice. He (Mr. Kellett) had not understood the cause of the delay, but he could understand it a little more now since he had heard of the action of the hon. members for Ipswich in the matter, and he supposed they must have been working under-hand previously. The Minister for Public Instruction was asked to go and inspect the land for himself, and see whether the proposed exchange was a desirable one in the interest of the department—whether it was a fair exchange or not. The hon. gentleman accordingly paid a visit to Bundamba, where the school was

ituated, and went over the land very carefully, and came to the conclusion, as he told a gentleman who was present, that he was satisfied that any man who understood the difference in value between the piece of low-lying land and the high land would see that the portion proposed to be taken from the racecourse reserve and given in exchange for the school land was the better piece. The Minister also took into consideration the fact that by granting the exchange it would enable the people to remove the buildings in connection with the racecourse reserve further from the school than if the exchange was not made. The hon. gentleman then promised to recommend the exchange to his colleagues. He (Mr. Kellett) was present at the time, and he thought it was as good as granted. But they found that a great hubbub was made by two or three "snufflebustlers" up there, some of whom he thought could hardly write their own names, but wanted to show that they had great authority in the district. They interviewed the Minister, and they got first one member and then another who were going to do something dreadful—they were going to resign their seats if the exchange was granted.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Who told you that?

Mr. KELLETT said he was told so in Ipswich, and the people seemed to think it would be a very good thing if they could get men who would look after the general interests of the public instead of little matters like that. The matter was recommended by the Minister for Education to his colleagues, and it had been in abeyance ever since. The Premier had promised that he would inspect the land himself; he supposed it would be necessary for the whole Cabinet to inspect it. He was certain that their inspection would bear out the statement he had made—that the land offered was far better than the land proposed to be taken away. That was the storm in the teapot which was going on; the cry was, "We are a lot of good people and we will block this racecourse." He (Mr. Kellett) advised the people to send down a petition, and they did send a very large one. A few names were those of leading men in Ipswich, but the rest were those of people immediately round Bundamba. Nine-tenths of the people about the place were in favour of the exchange. He knew the people, because he had lived just alongside for some time, and all the people with any common sense were perfectly satisfied with the exchange. That was the whole thing. The threat of the member for Ipswich that they would resign seemed to have kept the Ministry from making the grant recommended by the Minister for Education.

Mr. MACFARLANE said those were the reliable facts they were to get from the hon. member for Stanley, who would not be the member for Stanley in the next House. They were told that nearly all the inhabitants of Bundamba signed the petition in favour of the racecourse going through the school-ground. He was in a position to tell the Committee that the petition lay for four days in a public-house getting signatures—and they knew how anxious people were to please a publican. They were also told that the reserve was put up for sale, and that very few lots were sold; and no doubt they were expected to infer that the ground was not valuable. He was in a position to say that if that land were put up for sale in Ipswich to-morrow it would fetch £400 an acre. That was the land the country was asked to give away for a racecourse. The argument of the school board at Bundamba was this: That they selected the land because it was high, and would make a good, dry, hard playground for the children. The ground offered in exchange was lower ground. Besides,

the children were far better with their playground at the back of the school than on the main road at the side. The board thought it would be unbecoming to bring the racecourse right behind the school, as it would bring the children into far too near contact with things they had better keep away from. The remark the hon. member for Stanley had made as to a threat that the members for Ipswich were going to resign was very good for his story, but the story was something like the petition in the public-house. The strong argument of the board was that they objected to the exchange, and they had a perfect right to stick to the ground originally allotted to them.

Mr. FOOTE said he was not going to make any remarks in particular in reference to the Education vote. For some years the vote had been growing out of all proportion, and the country would not long be able to stand it. The House would have to retrace its steps at some future date, and remodel the system of education. Therefore it was not his intention to offer any remarks on the vote now. By-and-by the whole question would have to be dealt with in a proper and tangible manner in the interests of the country. In reference to the racecourse matter, he, too, had some knowledge on the subject. The school was within a few hundred yards of his electorate, and he believed a great proportion of the scholars were children of his constituents. Many of the committee also resided in his electorate. The hon. member for Stanley had evidently got hold of the wrong end of the information when he said the members for the district threatened to resign. He (Mr. Foote) did not believe that such a thing ever occurred, but he did know that the members of the committee threatened to resign, and the hon. member had made a mistake in attributing that to the members for Ipswich. So near were the members of the committee to resigning, that a meeting was called for that purpose. They were to carry out certain business and then tender their resignations. He (Mr. Foote) saw some of the committee on the matter and advised them not to resign but to hold to their position. He also advised them to call a meeting of the inhabitants or parents of the children attending the school, and they did so. At that meeting the inhabitants confirmed the action the committee had taken in reference to the piece of land taken for the racecourse. The committee were very hardly treated by the Minister for Education. When that hon. gentleman went there to survey the ground, as he (Mr. Foote) understood, rightly or wrongly, he did so without giving them any notice. He invited none of the committee to join him in his inspection. He only invited certain interested parties in Ipswich to attend—men known for their horse-racing proclivities. He was not saying whether racing was right or wrong, and was making no attempt to condemn it. He only wanted to state that the committee thought the Minister, when he had one side with him at the inspection, should have invited the Committee to attend as well, so that they might have had the opportunity of offering their opinion at the same time as the other gentlemen. The committee considered that they had been overridden in every act they had attempted to do in connection with the matter. They thought they were the proper parties to consult on the question, and should not have been overridden in their position without some reasonable grounds being stated. Had the Minister wanted to give the land for the racecourse, and had he intended at the same time to remove the school to some better or more suitable place, in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, no objection would have been raised. The department, however, had not the

slightest right to take away the ground without the consent of the committee. The hon. member for Stanley cast a reflection on the school committee, and spoke about some "snuffy" or "snufflebuster" meetings; and he complained of the inability of the committee to deal with the question. He also spoke of their lack of common sense, and said any right-minded person would have been agreeable to the proposition of the Minister for Education, whilst, of course, any other person who held an opinion opposed to that proposition did not possess any common sense. Now, he (Mr. Foote) could tell the hon. member for Stanley that the school committee was composed of some very respectable men, who were quite as capable of making their own way in life as the hon. member himself, and that though he might be sharp in practice, or even cunning, he would have to travel very far before he could outwit them to any great extent. As for common sense in school matters, he would find as much amongst them as to make them able to combat with him. He believed the matter in dispute could be amicably settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, and if the Minister went about it in a right way he could bring about a very peaceable solution of the difficulty. The great complaint was that the racecourse had been brought into too close proximity to the school. When the racecourse was used, a holiday would no doubt be proclaimed in the district, consequently the children would not be at school, and, therefore, not particularly affected by the races. At other times, however, when the horses would be training on the course, the children would be at school, and their attention would be attracted by the horses in training to such a degree that they would be tempted to leave their lessons and the teacher could not be reasonably expected to do much good under such circumstances. If the racecourse, instead of being brought close to the school, was put at the other end—at what was known as Stafford's side, where there was ample room for it—then it would be sufficiently removed from the school, and all objection would very likely be withdrawn and the matter amicably settled. Thus both parties interested in the matter might be equally satisfied. In reference to the value of the land, the hon. member for Stanley only drew a picture of what its value was many years ago. It was different now. He (Mr. Foote) certainly did not put the value on it that the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, did. That hon. member might be a better judge of the land than he was, but he (Mr. Foote) believed that its value would not be below £60 per acre. The Minister for Lands would be a better judge, as the Government had sold land during the present year on the other side of the creek, and the prices it fetched bore out his (Mr. Foote's) statement as to its bringing £60 per acre. It should not be forgotten that one of the finest racecourses in the colony was granted before Separation to the racing club at Ipswich; so it was scarcely fair that they should ask the Government to give them another. Certainly, they got deeply into debt, and mortgaged that racecourse, and it was sold, he presumed, in the interests of the mortgagee. That very racecourse was to-day worth many thousands of pounds. Taking all those things together, the hon. member for Stanley must acknowledge that the objections raised by the hon. members for Ipswich were proper objections, and were very justly brought forward. If both parties were to examine the place, no doubt they would arrive at an amicable solution of the difficulty.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was a pity that the Committee had drifted away from an interesting discussion on the merits of the education system into a purely local discussion of the merits

or demerits of a certain racecourse. The hon. member for Stanley deserved to have a vote of censure passed upon him for having stirred up a nest of hornets or—what was the other word?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: "Snufflebusters."

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Hornets or "snufflebusters" who would very likely talk the whole evening about whether the racecourse should be near the school or not. That was a matter not for the Committee, but for the department, to decide. He hoped the discussion would now be allowed to revert to the really important question of the education system of the colony. There was no doubt—as so many hon. members seemed to think—that that system was being carried too far; they were trying to do too much; the expense was becoming great. It was time the attention of the Minister for Education was called, and forcibly called, to the necessity of restricting his operations and cutting down his expenditure next year. He had protested against that extravagant system of State aid years and years ago, but with no effect. Hitherto the general feeling was in favour of gratuitous education; the people wanted to get their children educated up to the highest pitch "free gratis and for nothing." But at length a better feeling was springing up, and now, he believed, people would be willing to pay some fees by way of acknowledging the responsibility due from them to their children. They would appreciate the blessings of education more if they had to pay a trifle towards it. He believed that State education was tending in a wrong direction. The education given to girls tended to disqualify them for their future lot. They were taught music and dancing—

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Not dancing.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: They were taught music and singing, and it would be far better if they were taught sewing and cooking.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: So they are.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the education they received made them averse to marrying working men—men who expected their wives to cook their dinners for them and keep their homes tidy. Those girls got a sort of semi-superficial high-class education, and after leaving school, instead of going into domestic service, where they would finish their education in the matters of cooking and sewing, they preferred getting into milliners' shops, where they had the day to work and the night to themselves, when they were not looked after by any mistress—a state of things which sometimes did not lead to desirable results so far as the girls were concerned. The opinion he had expressed on the education system was spreading, and he looked forward with some hope to see a possible retrenchment effected in the vote next year. Five years ago people had not become thoroughly alive to the embarrassment which the constantly growing expenditure on State education was likely to cause to the country. It was still increasing, and unless checked would soon become too burdensome to be borne, especially with hard times and a probably deficient revenue before them. The expression of opinion he had heard that night was a very welcome one to him, at all events, and he should be very glad to go still further when the vote came forward next year.

The PREMIER said some of the observations that had been made about the general increase in the vote, required that he should say a few words upon it. There was apparently a very large increase in the vote, but it was assignable almost entirely to additional teachers, additions to the salaries of teachers, and an additional amount for school buildings. There were, for instance, 143

new teachers required this year, in addition to the 915 provided for last year; and that alone must account for a very large increase in the vote. The salaries of the teachers were fixed by the regulations. Nobody had said that the salaries were too large, or that there were too many teachers to do the work. Indeed, schools were rather under-staffed than over-staffed, and in many of them the complaint was that there were not enough teachers to do the work properly. With respect to the increase for school buildings, the present system was that the inhabitants of a district must subscribe one-fifth of the cost of a new school. That was a pretty good indication that a school was wanted, and on the fact being settled to the satisfaction of the Government they contributed the other four-fifths. Wherever the population increased largely it was necessary that school accommodation should also be increased; but that was an indication not of extravagance in the administration of the department, but of the increasing prosperity and populousness of the different parts of the colony. It was merely a sign of that. Those two increases—for school buildings, which no one could say were extravagant of their kind, and for the increased number of teachers—were indications of prosperity, not of extravagance. Those were the only substantial increases. There were others of a minor character—he would not speak of the increase in the charge for orphanages as a sign of an increase of prosperity—but those were the only increases worthy of serious attention. It had been the custom every year since the Education Act was passed, now ten years ago, for hon. members to say that the increasing burden of taxation for the purposes of education would in time become unbearable. That was very easy to say, but it must be borne in mind that the cost of education would be none the less to the community—if the education given was as good as it was at present, and surely no one wished it to be worse—the cost of education would not be less whether it was borne by the State or by private persons. In either case the cost would be an equal burden upon the community. The only question then was one of policy—whether the cost—which could not be reduced, but which would probably be increased—should be cast upon individual persons—whether it should be left to their option to spend money in the education of their children or not—whether, in fact, the cost should fall upon parents, or upon parents and persons who were not parents, alike? That was a question of policy which they had disposed of; and those hon. members who fancied they could see a general desire to reduce the cost of public instruction did not see that they were fighting against the spirit of the age. The spirit of the age had been recognised in this colony many years ago. That spirit was being recognised, and was making itself felt in nearly every civilised country in the world. It was continually increasing, and he believed that before many years it would be recognised in Great Britain. Conservative as that country was, the principle was becoming recognised there that it was the duty of the State to undertake the education of the people, as it was already recognised in many Continental countries, and before long, he believed, would be in all. Of course if they were to discuss the whole question of education his hon. colleague would not get his estimates through that night, nor to-morrow, nor the next night. It was no use attempting to discuss the whole question on a vote of the kind before them; but he thought it was just as well to recall hon. members' attention to the real position of the matter—to the real nature of the increases, and the circumstances which had necessitated them. So long as the colony increased in prosperity, so

long would they have increases in the Education Department. As soon as there was a decrease in prosperity, or when population became stationary, then there would be a reduction in the Education vote; and so long as the increase in expenditure was not disproportionate to the increase of population they had nothing to be alarmed about, but much upon which they might congratulate themselves.

Mr. HAMILTON said one of the most important functions of the Chairman, in order that he should possess the respect of the Committee, was that he should act impartially. He (Mr. Hamilton) had risen on two occasions, and other members were called before him. He had said nothing then, but merely mentioned the fact to the Chairman. But when he last got up the Chairman actually called him by name, and after he had done so the Premier rose, and then he was called. That was not according to the rules of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN said he wished to put himself right with the hon. member. He did not see him on the former occasions; but on the last, when he called a Minister, he believed he was following the universally recognised principle that, when a Minister of the Crown and another member stood up together, preference should be given to the Minister before a private member.

Mr. HAMILTON said he quite agreed that preference should be given to a Minister if he stood up at the same time as another member; but once the Chairman called a member by name that member had the right to address the Committee. The Chairman called him by his name distinctly, and afterwards the Premier got up, and then he called that hon. member by name. He simply wished to make a few remarks regarding what was stated by the hon. member for Stanley in connection with the racecourse exchange. In the first place he would point out that they were to have something thoroughly new in regard to elections. They had frequently heard of "Bulcocking" the elections, and now it appeared they were going one better, and that the elections were going to be "Macfarlaned." When an election was to be "Bulcocked" it was generally a matter of surmise; but when it was "Macfarlaned" it was to be a question of certainty. The hon. gentleman had distinctly stated that the hon. member for Stanley—who probably had come under the ban of his displeasure—was not to sit in that House any more. He (Mr. Hamilton) would like to know which hon. members on the Opposition side of the Committee the hon. member intended to allow to be returned during the next election. The hon. member took exception to the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley, who stated that the majority of the residents around his district had attached their names to a certain petition in favour of the exchange, on the ground that it was signed in a public-house. He (Mr. Hamilton) contended that it did not matter where a petition was signed, even if the petitioners had to crawl up a tree to do it, so long as the signatures were *bona fide* and represented a majority of the residents; and that had not been denied. The only objection to the exchange referred to was that the school committee thought it was better that such an exchange should not take place. But it had been stated by the hon. member for Stanley that that committee did not represent the opinions of the people; and, with regard to the question whether the exchange should take place, there was the fact that the Government had promised it, and as a matter of course they were bound in honour to fulfil their promise.

Mr. SALKELD said he wished to put himself right with regard to the remarks of the hon.

member who had made some disparaging observations in reference to his hon. colleague and himself—in fact, he went out of his way in order to make them.

Mr. KELLETT : You started it first.

Mr. SALKELD said he did not. He thought that when the Minister for Education gave a statement of what took place he should make it correctly. The facts were simply these : The school reserve was set apart for school buildings long before it was ever thought of having a racecourse there. The old residents in the district knew the locality well—knew it in wet weather as well as in dry—and pointed out the place where the reserve was at present as being the driest land on the flat. The reserve was granted, surveyed, and partly fenced in. The racing community in and about Ipswich had had a racecourse granted to them, which they mortgaged and managed to lose, and they applied to the Government for another racecourse at Bundanba; in fact, a public-house was built not far from the place in the anticipation that it would be granted. The Minister for Education went to Ipswich, met some of the racing community there, and the hon. member for Stanley and others who took a prominent part in racing took him out and showed him the place; but none of the school committee, with the exception of one who lived in the neighbourhood, were present. The first intimation the school committee received on the subject was that the department intended to make an exchange, showing the land along the creek as the portion they were going to give for school purposes in place of the part that was wanted for a racecourse. The five members of the school committee unanimously sent down an objection to the exchange, and they received a reply stating that one part between the school and the creek and another part on the opposite side from the creek were intended to be granted. When they received that information two of the members of the committee waited on him and his colleague representing that they and the residents of the district were opposed to the exchange; and he and his colleague made their representation known to the Minister for Education. The next thing he heard was that certain racing men of Ipswich went round with a petition to the Minister for Education, and they said, amongst other things, that the Minister for Education told them that if they got up a petition on the subject it would strengthen his hands. The Minister for Education would be able to tell the Committee whether that was correct or not. He knew of persons who were asked to sign the petition, but refused. At last it was taken to the public-house near the racecourse, and left there for several days for everybody who came along to sign. One party remarked to him that everyone who signed it got a "nip," but he did not know whether that was true or not. With regard to the remarks made by the hon. member for Stanley about the school committee, he might say that they were five respectable men who had raised themselves to good positions, and if the hon. member for Stanley had started life as they had he would have been at the bottom of the ladder now. One of them was a coal-mine proprietor, another the owner of quarries, while a third was the owner of a sawmill, and the other two were farmers; and none of them deserved the remarks made by the hon. member for Stanley. They were not horse-jockeys, grooms, or stable-boys, and he supposed that was the reason the hon. member thought they were nobodies. The committee called a meeting of the residents, to which he was invited. They tendered their resignations, but the meeting

approved of the action they had taken and were unanimous in the opinion that they should retain their positions. The hon. member for Stanley stated that nine-tenths of the people were in favour of the racecourse, but Bundanba embraced a large district. They might travel ten or twelve miles from the school and still be in Bundanba. In fact, there was a school at Upper Bundanba besides the school in question. The school committee were unanimously opposed to the exchange, and he supposed they represented the wishes of the parents; if so, he did not think it was right that the Minister should act against those wishes. If the residents in the locality and the school committee were willing to make the exchange he had nothing more to say. Another of the hon. member for Stanley's correct facts was that the ground proposed to be given for the racecourse was lower than the other. That was untrue. If there was any rising ground in the place that was the highest of the lot. It was as plain as A B C to anyone who saw the place that towards the creek it was lower ground. On the other side from the creek it was not as dry, and he did not think it was quite as high. With reference to the general question, a good deal had been said about the Education vote increasing year by year; and certainly £35,000 in one year seemed a very large increase, but there was no money voted on the Estimates that was better spent than the Education vote. He believed the department was one of the lowest paid in the Public Service, and he did not see how the vote could be curtailed, on account of the extension of buildings and the increase in the number of teachers. Though he hoped the Minister for Education would economise where possible, he was of opinion that there were other departments in which economy was far more required. It was necessary that the State should, in its own protection, educate the rising generation, seeing that numbers of parents took no interest whatever in the moral, intellectual, or material welfare of their children.

Mr. KELLETT said the hon. member, in his usual polite language, referred to a statement made by the Minister for Education as being untrue.

Mr. SALKELD : No; that is incorrect.

Mr. KELLETT said no doubt that was the polite language used by the people with whom the hon. gentleman associated, but he would find before long that it was not appreciated by hon. members. When the hon. gentleman referred to a statement made by the Minister for Education as being untrue or incorrect, he need hardly draw attention to the matter when the hon. member said that some of his (Mr. Kellett's) statements also were untrue. He also would ask the Minister for Education whether what he had stated was untrue, and the reply would show that the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Salkeld, was wrong in what he had said. Then the hon. gentleman said that the land he (Mr. Kellett) stated to be inferior was the best; but it was well known to be simply a melon-hole flat where the water lay after every shower of rain. He would ask the Minister for Education whether that was not true? The fact was that the hon. members for Ipswich had got hold of the wrong end of the stick to start with. The racecourse had been granted and gazetted some four years ago, and to hear the hon. gentlemen talking one might fancy that it was only just proposed to be put there. It was not likely that anyone would attempt to remove it at any time. The exchange that was asked for would make it more useful, and would be better for the school. He would ask the Minister for Education which land he considered the better?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he certainly thought that the upper portion of the land along the road was the best. The other portion was low; but it had a frontage to the creek and was valuable on account of the water.

Mr. SALKELD said the hon. member for Stanley was quite wrong in what he had said. He did not use the word "untrue" in regard to the Minister's remarks. He said the hon. gentleman might have been more correct and given the whole of what he had said. He did not say that his statements were untrue, but that he did not give the whole of the facts. He had seen that land in wet weather, which was more than the hon. Minister for Education had, so that that gentleman could not say where the water lay. The school committee had seen the land and had selected it, so that the hon. gentleman's statement was completely at variance with the experience of the residents there. It was selected because it was the driest on the flat, although it was hard to say which was the highest or the lowest; still, he admitted that the land along the road was more level. If the racecourse were there he could not interfere with it. The hon. gentleman had taken a wrong view altogether. He (Mr. Salkeld) had never interfered with the racecourse, although he had been threatened by a member of the racing club for the action he took in connection with the school committee. If they liked to set on a lot of bullies to threaten him they could; but that would not affect him in any way. He should do what was necessary to carry out his duties.

Mr. MIDGLEY said there seemed to be a great danger that the question of that racecourse would split the Ipswich bunch, at any rate; it might even ruin the Government. He had nothing to say on the subject. He was not one of the Ipswich bunch, and he did not think that the opinion of the hon. senior member for Ipswich or the hon. member for Stanley would affect his prospects. He rose chiefly to express his gratitude, if he might so call it, for the speech delivered by the Premier on the matter of education in the colony. He considered that they had an institution in their midst of which any British colony might be inordinately proud—an educational system which they had battled for, and which had been established on a firm and, he trusted, permanent basis, and which hon. gentlemen on his side of the Committee should think over a great deal, and reflect upon a great deal, before they began to attack it and bring discredit upon it. It was not unlike the criticism they had heard upon the Land Act—a measure which they individually assisted to pass, and which had had no opportunity as yet of proving a success or not. But here was an institution which had been established and which had succeeded admirably, and yet they were disposed to talk of it in the same way. Whether an institution was a success or failure, it seemed liable to be attacked by those who brought it into existence. If the vote was larger this year than last year it was something they ought to expect, and they ought to be prepared for it year after year. So long as they expected to see the population of the colony increase, and so long as they thought it was a desirable thing that the country districts should be taken up, settled, and cultivated, and their resources developed, so long must they expect that the vote for education would increase year after year. People living in towns were only too apt to overlook the peculiar circumstances of the country in which they lived. If there were not a system of education such as they had, education in many

of the country districts would be altogether and unnecessarily neglected. In the small and scattered communities there were in the bush, it would be impossible for people to maintain an educational system of their own, apart from any central or national organised system such as they had. They expected, year after year, that the demands of many divisional boards would increase; and they should also expect, as the country became settled and population increased, that the educational vote would be greater year after year. It seemed to be the only rational and equitable way of educating the young people of the colony. Education was a national benefit, and it seemed to be extreme folly to ignore the right of one individual more than another; and if it was a benefit to the colony at large, all people ought to contribute, whether husbands and fathers or not. They shared in the benefits of the system, and it was the only way in which they could get at the bachelors and spinsters and wealthy men who had neither child nor chick of their own. They should pay something towards training up those who would help to make the land beautiful and musical. He would like to ask the Minister for Education one question with regard to the vote. There was an amount put down for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institution, which was considerably increased this year—a thing he was sure no one would regret, except the cause that necessitated it. Was it in contemplation by the Government to establish an institution of that kind in Queensland? It might be done in conjunction with some other institution, and the money be spent in the colony. He supposed the instructor of the blind was the gentleman of whom they had heard so much in his favour. The time had come when they should discontinue making a grant to an institution in a neighbouring colony, and establish an institution of that character in their midst. He would like the Minister to tell the Committee, if he had the information, what number of children, deaf, dumb, or blind, were sent from this colony to, or were at present inmates of, the institution in New South Wales?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that if the hon. member would wait till they came to that vote he would give him the information.

Mr. KELLETT said he wished to apologise to the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Salkeld, his reason being that he now pitied the hon. member as he would pity any man who had a defective memory. He happened to take down the words used by the hon. member, and if he read *Hansard* to-morrow he would find that they were completely true. When he (Mr. Kellett) found a man's memory was so defective that he could not remember what he said for two minutes he took no notice of him, because he evidently did not know what he was talking about.

Question put and passed

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that there be granted the sum of £5,300 for Inspection and Contingencies.

Mr. ARCHER said he was afraid the discussion on the last vote was more about a racecourse than the Estimates. He would call the Minister's attention to the fact that while the incomes of officers in other departments were given in the schedule to the Estimates there was no notice whatever taken of those in the Department of Public Instruction. He thought it would be well in future to include the officers of that department in the schedule. With regard to the vote that was now before hon. members there was no increase in the salaries of the inspectors, and he knew that the amount set down for travelling expenses was necessary as the inspectors had to travel long

distances. He hoped, however, that next year the Minister would have the salaries of those officers inserted in the schedule.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said the salaries that appeared in the schedule were the salaries of Civil servants who held more than one office. The officers in the Department for Public Instruction had only the one office, and all they got appeared on the Estimates. In the case of teachers, the amounts they received in addition to their classification salary were given in the printed list published annually.

Mr. ARCHER: Those should appear in the schedule.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the schedule did not pretend to be a complete list of all the officers in the Civil Service. It was simply a list of those who held more than one office, or received an allowance in addition to the salaries voted on the Estimates-in-Chief.

Mr. ARCHER said that was what he stated; all the teachers got more than was set down in the Estimates.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes; but a special list of those teachers was printed so that they would not require to insert the information in the schedule.

Mr. PALMER said he wished to call attention to a complaint made to him in reference to the state of the school and teacher's residence at Hughenden. There were nine inspectors in the department, and he would like to know the reason why that school had not been taken over by the department. He had seen himself that the school was uninhabitable. The flooring boards were not nailed down, the roof leaked, and there was a tremendous lot of contractor's lumber about. He supposed the school was not taken over by the inspector, as he believed it was necessary that all schools should be taken over by an inspector before they were occupied. A few weeks ago he called for a return, which was laid on the table of the House on the 7th October, relative to the flooring space allowed to children in the State schools. That return had not been circulated—perhaps it had not been printed. The reason he moved for it was to discover what was the attendance in the State schools of the colony, and also the amount of flooring space available for each pupil. He had read in the report of a commission in America that no less than 25 square feet for each child was necessary for the health of the children attending the schools, and that anything below that was very detrimental. Touching upon that point, he had read in a report in reference to the schools of New South Wales, that the flooring space there was only 6½ square feet to each child; so that there was a great discrepancy in that colony between what was necessary for health and the actual facts. In the ninth report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for Queensland, at page 47, it was stated that many of the sheds and verandahs at schools were used as flooring space for teaching the children, and as the paragraph was a very short one he might as well read it to the Committee. Mr. District Inspector Platt said:—

"In consequence of the crowded state of some of the town schools, the practice of teaching on verandahs and in play-sheds is on the increase. Amongst the evils attending it are headaches, neuralgia, cramps, sore eyes, tan, freckles, dust, and discomfort. Habits of inattention, of partial attention, of disorder, and of lax discipline are generally established by it. Verandahs and play-sheds are for shelter and recreation; it is a mistake to regard them as available floor space for teaching."

That was the reason he called for the return. He was surprised that it had not been circulated among hon. members, seeing it had been laid on the table seven days ago.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that there be granted a sum of £200 for Drawing Instructors.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he thought that was a quite unnecessary item. He considered the only duty the State owed to the children was to see them through the elementary stages of their education—the three R's for example—reading, writing, and arithmetic. In that he was borne out by the testimony of one of the greatest Liberals in England and in the whole world—John Bright—who had expressed his opinion very forcibly on the matter. It was not at all incumbent on the State to provide the higher grades of education for the masses.

The PREMIER: It is for teaching the teachers.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was giving education at the expense of the State. It was not incumbent on the State to educate teachers. Plenty of teachers could be found who had received their education from other sources if other channels of education were not completely shut out by the State monopolising the whole of the education. It was not fair to the taxpayers that the State should go beyond primary education. Plenty of men and women, instead of being apprenticed to trades and made engineers or mechanics, were forced into a sort of genteel life; they were brought up as pupil-teachers, and then they aspired to get into the Public Service. A lot of money was thrown away in educating them, and the consequence was that the clerical billets were overstocked with people who were worse paid than bricklayers, tradesmen, or anything of that kind. It would be much better to apprentice the young men of the colony to trades than to drag them up as pupil-teachers at the expense of the State, and then disseminate them through the community as clerks and that sort of thing. It was the superior branches of education he objected to, and not the primary branches. He fully admitted that a man who could not afford to pay should have his child educated up to the three R's, at all events, at the expense of the State; but he did not see the necessity for educating pupil-teachers with the idea of drawing or music, or any other thing of that sort.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he would point out that the drawing instructors were for the teachers. In Brisbane there were 131 teachers taught, in Ipswich 22, and in Rockhampton 28. There were only 3 teachers; the one in Brisbane drew £100, the one in Ipswich £30, the one in Rockhampton £30, and the remainder of the vote was to pay another teacher when necessary.

Mr. ANNEN said he thought that was one of the best votes on the estimate, and he was very much surprised at the smallness of it. He quite agreed with the junior member for Cook that boys ought to be apprenticed to a trade, but drawing was part of the education any boy should have before he was apprenticed. They had to educate the teachers up to such a standard that they would be able to educate the scholars. It might be that every boy about Brisbane wanted to get into the Public Service, but he knew that in Maryborough there were fifty or sixty boys apprenticed to a trade in one factory—a factory for making doors and sashes. When he (Mr. Annen) was apprenticed to a trade, what an advantage it would have been to him had he been able to do a bit of drafting! But in the West of England, when he was a boy, it was not known. It was the best education that could be given to a boy—to teach him a little drawing before he was apprenticed to a trade. He would very gladly support the

motion, and he thought that, considering the very small amount of the vote, no money on the Education Estimates could be better expended.

Mr. BLACK said that to some extent he agreed with the hon. gentleman, but if the benefit of drawing instruction were as great as the hon. gentleman maintained the vote was altogether insufficient. £200 to educate the teachers of the colony!—he thought the most economical members of the Committee would admit that it was utterly inadequate to carry out the ideas of the hon. member. They were told that certain teachers in Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Ipswich were receiving instruction in drawing to the extent of £200 a year. That was entirely inadequate. He would like to ask the Minister for Education how the musical portion of the instruction was carried on; he did not see any vote for it. However much musical instruction, properly imparted, might be a source of enjoyment to the people of the colony, inadequate instruction in music was rather the reverse. In the report of the Education Department was a page of music which was supposed to be put as an examination paper, before candidates were qualified for admission as pupil-teachers even.

The PREMIER: It is vocal music.

Mr. BLACK: How are they to get the necessary instruction?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is taught in the school by the teachers.

Mr. BLACK: How do the teachers learn?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is taught as part of the school curriculum.

Mr. BLACK said he was very glad to see that there was no vote on the Estimates for music, and he was perfectly certain that the teachers did not as a rule teach music in the school. That subject was entirely beyond their province. If, however, it required £200 a year to educate a pupil-teacher in drawing, surely it would require something to educate one in music. Or was it that children were supposed to be born with a talent for music, and required no musical education? If hon. members would read the subjects in which pupil-teachers had to pass they would find the following in page 82 of the Education Report:—

“Make a diagram to represent a diatonic scale (major mode). Let the lowest line represent the note *Do*, and write the sol-fa names of the notes represented by the other lines. Indicate the tonic, dominant, and subdominant. Bracket each of the tetrachords.”

Did any hon. member know what that meant?

The PREMIER: That only proves their ignorance.

Mr. BLACK said that what he had quoted was not primary education. He would like to know if the Premier himself could answer those questions?

The PREMIER said he could not.

Mr. BLACK said the Premier was none the worse for not being able to answer them, and there was not a man in the community who could reflect on his intelligence.

The PREMIER: It is a matter of ignorance, not of intelligence.

Mr. BLACK said they professed to teach the rising generation only elementary branches of education, but here they were launching out into branches which they knew were utterly useless. They were thus departing from the principles on which the education system was first of all established.

Mr. ALAND said the hon. member for Mackay knew as well as anyone why there was no “music vote,” because he was one of the hon. members who successfully blocked it two or three sessions ago. He (Mr. Aland) much regretted that the Minister for Education had not seen his way to put that vote on the Estimates again. Music was one of the best things they could teach in the schools. He knew of nothing that tended to make a home more happy than having in it a lot of singing children. The fact was that all children when taught young could sing, and everybody was better by being able to sing.

The PREMIER said it was nearly ten years since he was first Minister for Education. Since then whenever he had an opportunity of visiting a State school he did so, and he always found that he could tell approximately what the general tone of a school was by hearing the children sing. Although he was no singer himself he always made it a point to hear the children sing, and when they sang well together and in harmony he could tell that the school had a good tone. That was his own personal experience.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £115,900 be voted for Schools—salaries and contingencies. He had already referred to the increase in that vote. If there were any items hon. members desired further explanation about he would be glad to give them.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £37,055 be voted for Buildings and Supervision.

Mr. ARCHER said that it had been stated by the Premier, as well as the Minister for Education, when their attention was called to the increase in the Education vote, that a good part of it arose in connection with buildings. A great many hon. members were quite prepared to vote all that was necessary for keeping the educational system of the colony up to its present standard, but he might say—although the vote was passed—that he did not agree with a great deal that had fallen from the hon. member for Mackay. He considered that drawing was an admirable thing for the young people to be taught. There was, however, a way of carrying out the Act with more economy, which he would suggest. He would ask the Minister for Education whether he invariably saw that the people of a district which had its schools enlarged or repaired contributed a fifth of the cost, as they had to do in the case of a new school being erected. He knew the Premier did not agree with him on that point, but it was one worthy of attention from those hon. members who wished to see at least some sort of economy introduced into the Education Department. According to the Act the people had to contribute one-fifth towards the cost of a new building, and it was perfectly justifiable that they should likewise contribute one-fifth towards the cost of repairs and extensions. Why should the people of a district be able to say, “We cannot get a new school without contributing, but we can get a new wing to it without subscribing anything”? He would ask if the very great increase in the vote did not arise from the fact that repairs and additions to schools were carried out without calling on the people interested to contribute any part of the money?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said the custom under the regulations was to get subscriptions from the people of a district, amounting to one-fifth, towards the erection of new schools in their district;

whilst additions and repairs were paid for by the department, without calling for any local subscriptions.

Mr. ARCHER said the regulations were certainly made under a clause of the Act, but they were, after all, made by the Governor in Council, and could be altered on the recommendation of the Secretary for Public Instruction. Here, then, was an opportunity for checking the exceedingly rapid growth of the Education vote, and hon. members who were anxious for economy now had a chance of giving a strong expression of opinion that something should be contributed locally by those who wanted additions or repairs to their schools. That would considerably reduce the estimates of the department, and would reduce them by a much more substantial sum than if the items for drawing and music were knocked off. That the people should in all cases subscribe one-fifth was a matter which he considered ought to be insisted upon. They had, of course, come to the determination that the State should provide teaching for the community as a whole; but they had not come to the decision that education should be entirely free. They had decided that those who wanted schools should contribute one-fifth of the cost; and in what way, and on what principle, building a wing to a school could be separated from building the school itself he did not know. What did the present system lead to? In the first place, it led to this: People, in a district, subscribed £100; £400 was added to that, and a school was put up to contain 200 or 300 children at a cost of £500. The consequence was that miserable rubbishy buildings were put up, chiefly built of pine, which in a year or so were riddled with white ants. That system, he was happy to say, was a thing of the past. He had instituted a new system when in office, and he knew that when he left the department schools were put up of the very best material and in the best possible way; so that the inhabitants of a district could not get a school to accommodate a large number of children without contributing a sum which would put up a good building. As things were at present, people said, "We cannot have a very big school because the department insists upon good buildings being put up; so we will build a small school to contain say 50 children, then we will put 100 children into it, and the Government will be obliged to make an addition." The Secretary for Public Instruction had told them that only a few weeks ago a school had been opened, and already it required an addition to be made to it. The cost of that addition came upon the Government. Now, he had pointed out a legitimate way of trying to reduce those estimates. He could not assist the hon. member for Cook in reducing the estimates in the way he proposed, but he would assist him in reducing them in the way he (Mr. Archer) suggested. He would like to hear an expression of opinion from the Committee, as to whether the regulations should not be amended in the way in which he had suggested—in such a way that people would be compelled to subscribe one-fifth of the money required for additions and repairs to school buildings. That system, once initiated, would save hundreds of pounds to the State, and make the parents of children feel that they had some duties to perform, and that the State was not going to take everything out of their hands. He hoped the Committee would see that that was a legitimate manner in which to save, perhaps a few thousand pounds a year to the State.

The PREMIER said the hon. member had not moved any reduction in the vote, and he did not know whether he intended to do so. That

question had been raised a great many times in the House and debated thoroughly every year. He had frequently spoken upon it; but in order to refresh the minds of hon. members he would say briefly what he had said on many former occasions. The object of requiring that one-fifth of the cost of a school should be contributed by the inhabitants of a district before the school was established was not so much to compel the parents of the children always to pay one-fifth of the cost of the building as to insist upon the *bona fides* of the demand for a new school, and to show that the people were willing to pay a fair share of the original cost of establishment. When the school was erected the building belonged to the State, and the principle that was first introduced when the Act came into operation—the principle which had been previously adopted by the Board of Education, and the principle adopted in all communities where a system of free public education was in operation—was that it was the duty of the State to keep its own property in repair. Suppose there was a necessity for repairing or painting a school, and the Government were to wait until the inhabitants subscribed one-fifth of the cost. Why, the proposition was preposterous! The result would be that in a poor season or difficult times, while the people were going about to collect the money, the place would have gone so much to ruin that the repairs would be useless, or would cost five or six times as much as if they had been done at once. As far as repairs were concerned, therefore it was quite impossible to carry out the principle of insisting upon one-fifth being subscribed; but when they came to the question of additions perhaps some arguments might be used in favour of the hon. member's proposal. He spoke now because he had had very long experience in the department, having been in charge of it for more than four years—both before and after the system was initiated which required the inhabitants to subscribe a share of the cost of additions. Suppose a school to contain insufficient accommodation, the children's health suffered and the education was diminished in efficiency thereby. A request was made to enlarge a school, and the answer of the department was—"No; you must subscribe one-fifth of the necessary cost." The inhabitants might not be able to do that, and perhaps the thing would hang on for year after year, or at all events for a considerable time—say six months. During that time the children's health continued to suffer, their education continued to be inefficient, and what was gained? Perhaps in the course of time £50 was subscribed, but he ventured to say that during the time it took to collect that £50, £250 worth of health and efficiency would be lost to the school. That would be the result. The hon. member said that in the first instance, in many cases, the inhabitants subscribed just sufficient money to get the smallest possible school erected, and that they did that with the deliberate purpose of getting the school enlarged at the cost of the Government afterwards. That was not his experience. During the time he was at the head of the Education Department that was not so. In every case the school was originally erected for the number of pupils estimated by the officers of the department as likely to attend. If after that, as frequently occurred, the population of the district increased, and there was a demand that the school should be enlarged, the State undertook the duty. The *bona fides* of the people having been proved in the first instance, the State undertook itself all further cost. That was the principle that was intended to be operated upon in 1875, when Parliament passed the Education Act. It was the principle introduced by the first regulations. It was

carried out for three years, and afterwards discontinued, and they had now reverted to the previous system. He believed the change, if effected, would represent an extremely meagre saving to the department, perhaps £1,000 a year or perhaps £1,500, but it would also represent a large diminution in the efficiency of the teaching and the children's health.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for Blackall suggested that he should move a reduction in the amount. He quite agreed with what the hon. member had said. He quite believed that, if the State bore four-fifths of the whole cost of the school, the least the people could do, if they got their children educated for nothing, was to keep the building in repair. As to the additions which had been referred to by that hon. member, the Minister for Education had pointed out in the most ingenious manner how people could get a good big school put up pretty cheaply if they built the smallest possible school which would be allowed by the Government—a school which would cost about, say £200, and which would eventually become the wing of the building, and then they would go in next year, and, at the cost of the Government, get what they called an addition put up, which would really constitute the main building.

The PREMIER: They do not do so.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it seemed it was quite open to an ingenious school board to do so if they liked. The question with him was one of principle. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee unnecessarily, or to obstruct the Estimates in any way. His object was to elicit an expression of opinion from hon. members as to how far they were prepared to go in the matter of State education—to what extent the country was prepared to burden itself without allowing the parents and guardians of children to have a share in the burden. It would be well also if the outside public would look at the matter in its proper light; and if the estimate went through without any discussion they would never become alive to the necessity which he saw of some alteration being made in the future. The Education vote would overwhelm the colony some day.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he entirely agreed with the Premier on that point, for it was a work connected with primary education. If the inhabitants had to contribute every time an addition was wanted to a public school the country would be in a chronic state of contributions. He did not share in the alarm that had been expressed by the hon. members for Port Curtis and Cook. It had been shown by the Premier that those increases would only cease when there was no longer any increase in the population. Any increases of that kind ought to be looked upon with satisfaction as far as the colony was concerned. It should also be remembered that there was no department in the Public Service so economically managed as the Education Department. The teachers compared very favourably in acquirements with any members of the Civil Service, and they received the lowest pay for the arduous duties they had to perform. Another point was that every penny spent on education was spent in the colony. If the Education vote was twice as heavy it would not weigh heavily on the country, because the money did not leave the colony.

Mr. FERGUSON said that if the Government were to take the building of schools entirely into their own hands they would save a great deal of money. When people had to contribute one-fifth the cost of a school they would naturally want the building erected in the cheapest manner and of the lowest class. If the building of

schools was left entirely to the department they would erect them of such a size as to be ahead of the time, sufficient to meet the requirements caused by increase of population for the next ten years. No expenditure would be required for additions; the first cost was all that would be required. The great fault of all the public buildings in the colony was that they had been erected for the day, and now they were all being pulled down and rebuilt on a larger scale. Had those who originally built them looked only a few years ahead hundreds of thousands of pounds would have been saved to the country. If a single sixpence was not required from the people for the erection of schools the State would save a lot of money.

Mr. BLACK said he agreed with the theory of the Premier, but he would show the Committee what the practice of the department was when any additions to school buildings became necessary. He would refer to the school at Mackay, which was not a small school put up to try afterwards to compel the Government to erect a very much larger one. On page 18 of the report it was shown that the annual enrolment of the Mackay school was 408 boys and 364 girls, or a total of 772 children. When a school containing so large a number of children required additional accommodation, the district was certainly entitled to have it. But when application was made for additional accommodation the people were told that until they subscribed one-fifth of the money necessary for that additional accommodation they could not get it.

The PREMIER: That was under the late Government.

Mr. BLACK: It was immaterial to him what Government it was.

The PREMIER: Since that the regulation has been altered.

Mr. BLACK said then he hoped the hon. gentleman would carry out his theory and not enforce the payment of the guarantee he had got from the people there.

The PREMIER: Have they paid up?

Mr. BLACK: No; we have not.

The PREMIER: You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

Mr. BLACK said he wanted to point out the difference between the theory and the practice.

The PREMIER: It is a different system.

Mr. BLACK said it became necessary to erect additional buildings, the school being overcrowded, and the health of the children suffering in consequence; but before the additional accommodation was granted the people had to subscribe £500 in cash, and give a guarantee, which the Government held, for £250 more. Of course they could hardly expect the Treasurer to send back the £500, which, according to the theory of the Premier, was undoubtedly obtained under false pretences; but he would impress upon the Minister for Education the justice of not enforcing the guarantee for the £250.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he believed that both the theory and practice, as stated by the Premier, were perfectly right. The hon. member for Mackay had been speaking of the past, and he (Mr. Macfarlane) might say that the same state of affairs existed with regard to Ipswich some two years ago. They then had to pay for all improvements, but during the last twelve months all additions and improvements that had been made had been paid for by the Government.

Mr. BLACK: This case was within the last twelve months.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he knew it was understood, after the discussion last year, that in future all improvements should be paid for by the Government; and he thought that was only fair. If the people of a district were willing to build a new school and subscribed one-fifth of the amount that was necessary, and after a short time they found that the building was too small, in order to get further subscriptions they must go back to the very men who had subscribed towards it only twelve months before, and ask them to subscribe again. He thought it was only fair in such cases that the State should pay for additions and improvements. He did not think that any district would be likely to build a small school merely for the purpose of getting money from the Government afterwards. He therefore believed it would be better that the State should pay for all improvements.

Mr. NORTON said the effect of the hon. gentleman's argument was this: If a district was poor the residents in that district would be called upon to pay one-fifth of the sum required to put up a small school, and if the district became more populous—and the Premier regarded population as a sign of prosperity—if it became more populous, according to that theory, it would not be called upon to contribute anything whatever towards the additional school accommodation required. He was not aware until that night that the Government had any intention of paying the whole cost of additions to schools. They had had some discussion on the matter last session, and it was then understood that all repairs were to be done by the Government, but, for his own part, he had never understood until now that additions as well as repairs to schools were to be carried out entirely at the cost of the Government. He began to agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Rockhampton, that it would be much better for the Government to undertake the whole cost of those buildings from the first; then they would know what they were doing. The hon. the Premier, a short time ago, had argued, not only that an increased expenditure in connection with schools was a sign of additional prosperity, but he went so far as to say, and said truly, that, whether the money which was voted under the Public Schools Act was paid by the State or by the people themselves, still it would have to be expended, and in every case the expenditure would come from the taxpayers themselves. No doubt that was true, and if it was to be accepted as a good argument for spending public money to the extent they now did it was an equally good argument for spending a greater sum of money in additional buildings and taking the whole of the cost off the residents in the district. That was a very good principle up to a certain point, but the objection was this: that if that was done, men who were in the position of being able to pay the cost of the education of their children, and who would not feel the outlay, would derive the full benefit of the public expenditure, and for this reason: that rich men, or men who or were moderately well off, would insist upon their children remaining at school the whole time they were intended to be educated, and therefore they would derive the fullest benefit which could be derived from the public expenditure; but men, such as farmers on the Darling Downs, as had been pointed out by the hon. member, Mr. Aland, were obliged frequently, especially during harvest time, to take their children away from school in order to assist in working their farms. That was how the hon. member tried to account for the smallness of the attendance of children in comparison with the number on the roll. If the system was carried out, as suggested by the Premier, then the men who could least afford

to pay for the education of their children would derive only half the amount of benefit from the money voted that would be derived by others who could well afford to pay. That was one of the greatest evils of the system, and one of the greatest objections that could be raised against carrying it into effect. With regard to the claims for school buildings, he certainly did think that if people were to be encouraged to put up small schools in order that additions might be made afterwards at the expense of the Government, they ought to build the whole of the schools at the cost of the State, so that the expenses would fall upon the taxpayers generally.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £12,650 be granted for Provisional Schools.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £3,302 be granted for Grammar Schools.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £600 be granted for the Brisbane School of Arts. The vote was in aid of technical education.

Mr. NORTON asked whether any conditions were attached to the expenditure?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No.

Mr. NORTON said there ought to be, because, however good the intentions of the committee of the school of arts might be, the money might be spent on objects to which it was not intended to be devoted unless the conditions were attached; and the vote instead of being a popular one would soon become most unpopular.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said there was a report sent in every year by the committee of the school of arts, containing a statement showing how the money was spent, what lectures were given, and how many people attended. Classes were held for teaching freehand drawing, mechanical drawing, chemistry, mathematics, shorthand, Latin, French, German, geology, book-keeping, arithmetic, writing, carpentering, and English grammar. The attendance during last year was 100 for the first quarter, 97 for the second, 120 for the third, and 131 for the fourth; and the actual number enrolled was 242, an increase of 21 per cent. on the previous year. The ages of the pupils were generally within the limits of 15 and 25 years, and the greater number were apprentices, clerks, shopmen, and office-boys. Prizes varying from £1 to £5 in value were offered by the committee for proficiency in the various subjects.

Mr. BLACK said that when the vote was first placed on the Estimates three years ago it was not considered that it would be an annual vote, but that if the money were given the institution would be self-supporting in a year or two. The Committee apprehended at the time, however, that if it once got on the Estimates it would be a difficult matter to get it off again. He was not prepared to cavil at the vote, because the instruction given was likely to be of considerable benefit, but he was not certain that it would not be more candid to put the amount down as a vote to the Brisbane School of Arts, for that was what it was in reality. If they thought that the institution was getting an undue advantage over other schools of art the Committee could either reduce the amount or increase the endowments of other schools of art. There

was no doubt that the vote was on the Estimates under false pretences, because it was really an increased endowment to the Brisbane School of Arts.

Mr. NORTON said he believed the education given under the system carried on was a very good one, and on that ground he should not oppose the vote; at the same time, if it could be shown in other large towns that technical education could be carried out, those towns were equally entitled to a grant for that purpose.

The PREMIER said the committee of the school of arts always made a full report to the Government—a very interesting report it was—on the work they were doing. If that showed they were not doing good work the Government would not be disposed to ask for a continuance of the grant. As to other towns, if the committees of the schools of arts showed that they were prepared to do equally good service the Government would willingly propose that assistance should be given to them also. As a matter of fact the receipts of the institution in question were £400 from other sources, and £600 from the Government.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £16,036 be granted for Orphanages. There was an increase of nearly £3,000 on last year's estimates. The sum of £400 was required to complete the contract for the new building at Townsville. The original estimate was £5,000, but the contract price was £5,400. Besides that a sum of £1,000 was required for fencing and furniture. Additions and repairs to State orphanage buildings would require £1,000. Repairs were wanted at the State Orphanage, Rockhampton.

Mr. ARCHER pointed out that there was an increase in the salary of the inspector.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said there had been a change; £300 had been voted, and £66 was paid out of the Supplementary Estimates for 1884-5 for eight months.

Mr. ARCHER said he would like to hear how the inspector was doing his work.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said the inspector had visited all the orphanages. He had been at Townsville, Mackay, and Rockhampton, and had inspected the Diamantina, Nudgee, and St. Vincent's Orphanages, which were worked very well indeed. His report was in the Education Report; but it was not until after that report came out that he visited the Northern orphanages. He spoke of all of them very favourably indeed as to the way in which they were kept, and was very well satisfied with them.

Mr. NORTON said that the inspector had been paid £300, and had received £66 for eight months in the Supplementary Estimates. For eight months he had been paid at the rate of £400 a year.

The PREMIER said the change had been made after the Estimates went through.

Mr. NORTON said in the next item there was a reduction of £40 for two clerks; £260 was very little for two clerks.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said there had been two clerks, one receiving £200, and the other £100; but the latter had been removed, and the one who had taken his place received only £60.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £630 be granted for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Institution. An increase had been demanded by the institution in Sydney. Formerly they used to pay £14 per annum for each person, and £6 additional after the first year for clothing. Now £30 was demanded, and £6 for clothing, so that each inmate cost £36 after the first year. He found that in New Zealand each patient cost the institution £40.

Mr. NORTON said he thought the Sydney people were justified in charging that amount. If they depended upon them to take charge of their deaf, dumb, and blind, the least they could do was to pay the full cost. It was not fair for Queensland to expect New South Wales to maintain those unfortunate people at a less cost than they paid for their own patients. If the New South Wales Government liked to demand it, this colony might be very fairly expected to make up the loss that had been sustained. He was sorry the amount was so large, because it seemed to indicate that there was an increasing number of unfortunate people who were forced to take advantage of that institution. He would like to know what number of Queensland patients there were now in New South Wales?

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he had a report drawn up which showed that thirty patients had been sent to Sydney since they had been in the habit of sending them there, and there were now on the books down there only fourteen—the rest having been discharged for one reason or another. The parents of some of them had engaged to pay for their keep.

Mr. PALMER said that in the vote there was an item of £80 for a blind instructor. Was that for his own benefit, or for the benefit of the blind throughout the colony? He saw by the second annual report of the Mission for the Blind in Queensland that there were 200 blind persons in the colony, and if that vote represented the relief granted to those persons it amounted to only 8s. each, and it would be very necessary to teach them some means of earning a livelihood.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that amount went to the blind instructor. He had a conversation with him a fortnight or three weeks ago, and he said that he was at the present time travelling about the colony giving instruction to all the blind people with whom he came in contact. He had received a railway pass at Rockhampton, and was going westward along the line. That sum of £80 was paid to the blind instructor, and there was also a private fund for the same object raised by subscription.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that there be granted the sum of £2,798 for the Museum, and said he wished to draw attention to an error in that estimate. The Assistant Curator was to have received £200, but by a mistake only £150 was put down on the estimate. The balance of £50 would be placed on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. NORTON said he understood that the Assistant Curator would get £200.

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes.

Question put and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving that the House do now adjourn, said that, after the formal business to-morrow, it was proposed to take the second reading of the Pacific Island Labourers Act Amendment Bill, and then to proceed with Supply.

The House adjourned at twenty-three minutes past 10 o'clock.