

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 1885**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Thursday, 5 November, 1885.*

Message from the Governor—Licensing Bill.—Federal Council (Adopting) Bill (Queensland).—Licensing Bill.—Motion for Adjournment.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Supplementary Estimates No. 2, 1884-5.—Licensing Bill.—Adjournment.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR—  
LICENSING BILL.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received the following message from His Excellency the Governor :—

“A. MUSGRAVE,  
Governor.

Message No. 23.

“A Bill intituled ‘A Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors by Retail, and for other purposes connected therewith,’ as passed by the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, having been presented to the Governor for the Royal assent, the Governor, in pursuance of the authority in him vested, herewith returns the said Bill to the Legislative Assembly, and recommends the following amendments therein :—

“Clause 4, page 3, line 8—

“Omit ‘ratepayers’ and insert ‘voters.’

“Clause 7, page 4, line 16—

“After ‘bagatelle,’ insert ‘or in respect of which an application is made for a license under this Act.’

“Clause 117, 1st line—

“Omit ‘ratepayers’ and insert ‘voters.’

“Clause 121—

“Omit the words ‘next ensuing,’ and insert ‘in the year following that in which the notice requiring the poll to be taken was given.’

“Government House, Brisbane,  
5th November, 1885.”

FEDERAL COUNCIL (ADOPTING) BILL  
(QUEENSLAND).

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from His Excellency the Governor intimating that His Excellency had, on behalf of Her Majesty, assented to the Federal Council (Adopting) Bill (Queensland).

## LICENSING BILL.

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 message of His Excellency the Governor in reference to this Bill.

The PREMIER said that the amendments recommended by His Excellency the Governor were, in accordance with the 248th Standing Order, considered in the same manner as amendments proposed by the Legislative Council. The first amendment was in clause 4, page 3, line 8. The term "ratepayers' roll" was used in the Bill. As a matter of fact, under the Local Government Act the proper term was "voters' roll." It was necessary that the proper term should be used, and he therefore moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said the next amendment was in clause 7. There was a singular omission in that clause, and it was strange that it had escaped the notice of everybody. Clause 7 was intended to provide that any person who was interested as owner or mortgagee of a licensed house, or of a house for which a license was applied for, should be ineligible to sit as a licensing justice. But subsection (b) dealt only with the owners, landlords, and mortgagees of houses for which licenses had already been granted, and not with the case of houses for which a license was applied for. He wondered that that had escaped their notice. The amendment proposed to insert the same words in that subsection as appeared in subsection (f), namely—"or in respect of which an application is made for a license under this Act." He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said the amendment in clause 117 was the same as that recommended in clause 4, namely—the substitution of the word "voters" for the word "ratepayers'." He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said there was one other amendment in clause 121, which provided that when the first resolution for prohibiting the sale of liquor was adopted it should come into operation on the 30th June next ensuing. By clause 115 notice of a poll was to be given not later than November 1, the intention being that the poll should not be later than December, or at least six months before the resolution came into operation. That was quite fair; but, owing to a slip in the clause, there was nothing to prevent a poll being taken on the last day of June, in which case there would only be two or three days' notice. The amendment recommended by His Excellency was that, instead of saying after the 30th June "next ensuing," it should read "the 30th June in the year following that in which the notice requiring the poll to be taken was given." He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the amendments recommended by His Excellency the Governor, and the report was adopted.

The PREMIER moved that a message be forwarded to the Legislative Council, informing them of the recommendations of His Excellency the Governor, and inviting them to agree to the amendments.

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to bring before the House a case which I consider one of great hardship, and I shall conclude with the usual motion. Some months since a man named Smith, when travelling in the North looking for work, happened in the course of his journeyings to look in at Norman-

ton, and while there he was summoned to give evidence for the Crown in a case of forgery, and was bound over to appear at the district court in October last. Failing to find work at Normanton he travelled on to Brisbane, and after he and his wife had got over a tedious illness, caused by their travelling in the North, and he left the hospital, he succeeded at last in getting work here. In fact, he had made an arrangement to get a billiard table in a very good site in Brisbane, and the engagement promised to be a permanent and a lucrative one. Just then the time came round for his appearance at Normanton. He went to the Attorney-General's office, and asked if his presence at Normanton was absolutely necessary, and was told that it was; whereupon he stated that he was perfectly penniless, and would require to have his passage paid. He had his passage paid in the steamer, which cost £7, and he had his passage paid back, which was another £7. Then, he received £20 in addition to that, or about £35 in all. I am informed that, according to some regulations, a witness is allowed 10d. per mile; and as it is 2,000 miles to Normanton, therefore he should have received about £80. I believe that a policeman even is allowed 6d. per mile, while still drawing his pay; and if that is true this appears to be a case of very great hardship. The man is actually not allowed that which he is entitled to, and I therefore wish to bring the matter under the notice of the Attorney-General. I get to move the adjournment of the House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—I know something about this case. It appears that in the month of April last the man the hon. gentleman referred to, Smith, was at Normanton, and while there—I understood he was a resident there—he was called as a witness in a case that was heard by the police magistrate, and which resulted in the defendant being committed for trial at the sittings of the district court following, at Normanton. Some time after the defendant was committed for trial—I must state that the man Smith was bound over to attend as a witness at the district court—he came down to Brisbane and remained here, until one day, some time during the early part of the month of October, he put in an appearance at the Crown Law Office, just one hour before the time the steamer was appointed to leave for Normanton, which was to convey him there, if he was to appear at the hearing of the case at Normanton at all. He showed the document which bound him over to appear at Normanton to the Secretary of the Crown Law Offices, and asked what he was to do, as he was a poor man, had no money, and the steamer was to start within an hour? He was informed by the secretary that it was his duty to appear at Normanton, and that if he had no money he would take care that his passage was paid, and therefore he went to the A.S.N. Company's office, and actually guaranteed the cost of the man's passage to Normanton, Smith remained a very short time at Normanton, only during the time the steamer stayed, and he came back in the same vessel. Before leaving Normanton, however, his expenses to Brisbane were paid by the registrar of the district court there; so that the Crown law authorities paid his passage to Normanton and back. Some fortnight or so after he returned to Brisbane his solicitor, Mr. Hamilton, called upon me in reference to a voucher that had been presented, claiming the sum of £83 for Smith's expenses to Normanton—2,000 miles at 10d. per mile. I asked Mr. Hamilton about the man, and ascertained that he was a cook employed in Brisbane, and was earning wages at something between £2 and £2 10s. per week. It transpired that although the man had had to leave his employment in

order to attend the sittings of the district court at Normanton, and was for a little while out of work after he came back, yet at the time that his solicitor came to see me he was actually in employment; so that allowing that the man was in receipt of £2 or £2 10s. a week, he was in this position: His passage to and from Normanton was paid by the Crown, and in addition to that he was given £20, which would represent his earnings for the whole month he was away and for the time until he succeeded in getting employment. If he received the £83 he wanted he would be as well off as if he had never gone to Normanton and had not done a stroke of work for about a quarter of a year. I felt that this was a case of attempted extortion. There is no law on the subject; it is an Executive minute, under which witnesses receive 10d. a mile. I considered that in this case the man would be benefiting himself pecuniarily to a very large extent at the expense of the country. Hon. members are continually complaining of the very large expenditure for witnesses' expenses, and this is one of the ways in which, if the cases are not well watched, witnesses may be able to benefit themselves at the expense of the country. I told the hon. member before that it was my intention to recommend a different scale of payment for witnesses. Those who have to travel long distances by land are underpaid at 10d. a mile, while those who travel by sea can make a very fine thing out of it. Under those circumstances I felt that I could not, in justice to the country, pay this man the difference between the £14 passage money and the £83 he claimed; I therefore brought the matter before the Cabinet, and was sustained by the decision of my colleagues in the conclusion at which I had arrived.

Mr. HAMILTON: Do policemen get 6d. a mile in addition to their wages?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Policemen do not get 6d. a mile under these circumstances. This man came at the last moment, when it was too late to telegraph to the Crown Prosecutor to know whether his services were necessary or not. He put it out of our power to make any inquiries, and in this way he sought to get a pleasure trip to Normanton at the Government expense. His wages were paid for all the time he was away, and the time that elapsed before he succeeded in getting work. I believe he is now out of work, but when his solicitor came to me to press this claim he was in work.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—This matter introduces a question of much larger importance than the individual matter itself, and that is this: whether the country has a right to demand that a person shall at his own expense or loss give evidence in cases where the law is to be administered. It is a matter that has been discussed very often, but it has never yet received a satisfactory solution. In this case I may mention that the man came to me and made a statement to this effect: He was not resident in Normanton; he was leaving with his wife when he was subpoenaed to give evidence, and was then bound over to appear and give evidence at the trial. He left Normanton and came to Brisbane. Whether he was right in staying away to the last moment I submit does not touch the question. I do not know how long a time elapsed between the commitment of the accused person and the time fixed for the trial?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: From April to October.

Mr. CHUBB: Then the Crown Prosecutor had plenty of time to make up his mind whether he would file a bill or not. I believe I am correct in saying that a bill was not filed?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not know.

Mr. CHUBB: I believe, as a matter of fact, that when the witness got to Normanton he found that there was no bill against the prisoner, and he came back again. I want to know what the Crown Prosecutor was doing all those months in not making up his mind to file a bill or not? If he had done so the witness would have got notice, and the Crown would have been saved the expense and the witness the trouble of the trip to Normanton. This man informed me that he had to leave his situation when he went away from Brisbane, and had not been able to get one since, and that his wife was lying ill. Of course those are collateral circumstances that do not affect the case. The real question is this: By an Executive minute 10d. a mile is fixed as the remuneration of witnesses. In some cases that has been paid; in other cases the steamer fare has been paid, and something over. I believe that where long journeys have to be taken by water it is too much; where they have to be taken by land it is too little. The point is, what is a fair thing to allow? If this man has had a fair thing he has no right to complain; if he has not had a fair thing he has a right to complain. Of that matter the Attorney-General is the best judge. He has inquired into all the circumstances and has come to the conclusion that the money paid to the man is sufficient. The other matter—that it is the duty of the Crown Prosecutor to decide as quickly as possible whether a prisoner is to be tried or not—is a matter that should not be lost sight of. The country should be saved the expense of paying witnesses to go long journeys for nothing, and the witnesses themselves should be saved the trouble and inconvenience of having to take the journey.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears that this is a very curious arrangement. This 10d. a mile, in some cases, pays witnesses very well, and in other cases very badly. In the case mentioned by the hon. member for Cook the witness seems to have been paid fairly, but in many other cases the 10d. a mile would not pay the expenses of a witness. Is the House to understand that when the expenses are greater the Attorney-General is prepared to make up the amount? In this case he has docked a man of a certain amount to which he is entitled under an Executive minute. I want to know if he makes up the sum to other witnesses who have to travel long distances and spend more than 10d. a mile? It is worth while ascertaining whether the law officers could determine the amount to be paid to witnesses, and give a fair amount under all circumstances?

Mr. HAMILTON, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—The Attorney-General refuses to give this man that which he is entitled to under the regulations, for reasons which would be insufficient if they existed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Will the hon. member permit me to explain? At the time the regulations were made Normanton was not a place for holding a court.

Mr. HAMILTON: The Attorney-General refuses to give this man what he is entitled to under the regulations which exist at present, and the reasons he alleges for this action do not exist. One reason the hon. member gave was that this man was, he believed, a resident of Normanton. I know, however, from himself and from his solicitor, that he was not a resident of Normanton, but was simply travelling in search of work, and was just as unsuccessful at Normanton as any other place, and was coming down here. The hon. gentleman also gives as another

reason that this man was a cook and was only receiving £2 10s. a week; but the man and his wife had been sick, and he was glad to get any work he could. The Attorney-General also conveyed the impression that the man wanted to go up north on a pleasure trip—in fact, those are the words the hon. gentleman used; and he said that because the man came to the Crown Law Offices only an hour before the steamer was to start. Is it likely that a man, whose wife was lying ill in Brisbane, should wish to go north on a pleasure trip in the steerage of a steamer? It is absurd to suppose such a thing. The hon. gentleman also said that this man got back in a week or so, but, as a matter of fact, he did not get back for a month. The Attorney-General also attempted to show that the man did not lose anything by the amount he received; but, though the employment which he generally followed was that of a cook, through having to go to the North he lost a very lucrative situation. He had leased a billiard table, a little below the *Telegraph* office—a first-class stand and which promised to give him permanent employment, and we all know it would be lucrative employment. He lost that through having to go to Normanton to give evidence on behalf of the Crown. I cannot see how it is a case of extortion at all, because all this man wants is what he is entitled to by the regulations—namely, 10d. a mile. If the Crown acts in this manner by taking points of witnesses and refusing to give them what they are entitled to, it will be the means of frustrating justice by causing witnesses to fail to see offences when they know well how they were committed.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. I notice five or six hon. members reading newspapers. That is against the Standing Orders. I will mention the leader of the Opposition as being one of those who are contravening the Standing Orders.

The SPEAKER: It is, of course, contrary to the Standing Orders for any hon. member to read a newspaper in the House.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: Did you think I was reading a newspaper, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER: I thought so.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: I thought you had quoted me, sir, as reading a newspaper. I was not reading it, but only folding it; but I am going to read it now.

The SPEAKER: I did not quote the hon. member.

Question put and negatived.

#### SUPPLY—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

Question—That there be granted out of Special Supplementary Appropriation a sum not exceeding £50,000 for "Loans in aid of Establishment of Central Sugar-mills"—put.

Mr. ARCHER said he did not speak upon the subject last night, and if he thought the vote would in any way assist the sugar industry in Queensland he would not vote against it; but he was perfectly satisfied that it was entirely opposed to what would be called rude judgment for a merchant. It was, besides, entirely outside the functions of a Government. There were, besides, a number of industries quite as much in need of support as the sugar industry. He said that, not because he did not wish to see

the sugar industry flourishing, for he believed he had a far greater wish to see those employed in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar successful, than the Premier, who had placed that vote on the Estimates. He could not believe it would lead to success, but he believed its effect would be disastrous, so far as the Government and the country were concerned. He said there were other industries which were equally deserving of support with the sugar industry, and which it would be an advantage to the whole of Queensland could they be carried on successfully. Take, for example, the industry for the preservation and exportation of meat. That industry had been established at Queensland down the river. He understood there had been some £60,000 or £70,000 put into that establishment, and though they had the advantage of the employment of highly experienced labour they were not able to continue the work. The establishment was, in fact, moribund. The gentlemen connected with it were, he believed, wealthy, and could bear the expense, but they had lost the use of that labour, skilled and highly paid, while the work was going on. Another industry which was as deserving of Government assistance as the sugar industry was that of meat-preserving. The Central Queensland Meat Export Company employed from 150 to 200 men, some of them skilled mechanics, and some of them earning £4 a week; but they had not been able to make it pay. Now, there was an industry which, in the interests of the whole colony, ought not to be allowed to drop. If the Government would lend the company £50,000 or £60,000 they would give the Government a mortgage over their property and pay interest on the money lent. He undertook to say that there was not an industry in the country that would eventually lead to greater general prosperity than the meat preserving industry if it was once thoroughly established in Queensland. But he did not expect for a moment that the Government would accede to his request. They would say that it was not their intention or function to promote the meat export industry or to add to the profits of those who commenced it. Yet for hundreds of miles above Rockhampton there were stockmen and others, and from 150 to 200 skilled labourers, who were dependent on the works of the company for their livelihood, and who had to sit down in idleness because there was not money enough to carry the works on. Would the Government assist them? He did not expect that they would. But if they were to pass the proposed vote for the purpose of establishing the sugar industry—no matter on what principle—they must be prepared to do the same thing for other industries which were not successful at present. They talked about the money being paid back. That, of course, was in the far distance, and indeed might never happen. He wanted to say distinctly that he opposed the vote, not because he wanted to oppose in any way the establishment of the sugar industry, but simply because it was not a matter the Government ought to have anything to do with at all. If the Government did undertake the work they would create a sink for money in Queensland, which they would not see the last of for several years unless some Government proved bold enough to wipe off the first loss and finish the whole concern. He believed it would all end in disaster, and that the scheme was entirely outside the province of the Government. He would oppose the vote as much as he could.

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Blackall spoke about the lending of money for the establishing of central sugar-mills for the assistance of yeomen farmers as being similar to giving aid for the purpose of making meat

preserving profitable. He (the Premier) was unable to see any analogy whatever. He could see some analogy in lending money to miners to sink their shafts deeper, because that would be assisting in doing work for which capitalists would not advance their money, the risk being too great. The amount of interest required by capitalists, too, was too large, and the Government could lend at a cheaper rate without loss. In such cases, the difference in the rate of interest might mean the difference between success and failure. He did not propose to go into a general discussion of the question. It had been already pointed out that it was recognised in many countries that it was properly the function of the State to give aid to agriculture in the way proposed. They saw before them the possibility, by the proposed experiment, of revolutionising the history of the colony, of securing an advantage that would be enormous with respect to the northern and some of the southern parts of the colony, and the Government thought they were justified in asking that a moderate sum should be allowed to be expended for that end. If the hon. member for Blackall thought the money should not be expended, then that would be a very good reason why he should vote against the proposal. He (the Premier) would not complain at all of that hon. member or any other member voting against the motion.

The Hon. Sir T. McILLWRAITH: Only of speaking against it.

The PREMIER said that when the hon. member for Blackall spoke he generally did so to add to the debate. But it must not be lost sight of that there were a great many people who did not intend that the experiment should be tried if they could help it. He meant the experiment of small farmers growing sugar on their own land. Of that he (the Premier) was convinced, and although he knew that a great deal of the opposition to the scheme was based on the ground that it was not sound in principle, he feared a great deal more of the opposition was based on the desire he had referred to. The one desire underlying all the actions of a certain party was to prove by all means possible that nothing but black labour could be employed in sugar-growing. It was their fixed determination to try that one experiment only. He spoke warmly because he had very strong feelings on the subject.

Mr. ARCHER said he denied most distinctly that he opposed the vote for the reasons last referred to by the Premier. He would be exceedingly glad to see sugar plantations established in the northern parts of the colony. Nothing would give him greater pleasure than to see not only sugar plantations but yeomen farmers established successfully there. He opposed the vote simply because he believed it would end in disaster—in the loss of money and in a bad system. He believed the whole matter would be so disastrous that it was the duty of those who did not hold the same views as the Premier to oppose it to the utmost.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier was apparently insistent on going on with the vote, but the hon. gentleman did not seem to have fully considered some of the objections raised on the previous night. One of those objections was, to the taxpayers of the colony being asked to give the Government £50,000 in order that they might be placed in the position of mortgagees. After the elaborate description the Premier gave of his scheme, as he (Mr. Morehead) said last night, he ought to bring in a Bill dealing with the matter. No one knew better than the Premier that if the experiment was made, and if it did not succeed, it would result in the loss of £50,000 of the people's money.

It would also lead to all those unpleasantnesses which existed under the present land laws. He would again ask the Premier whether he would foreclose upon any unfortunate small sugarcrover to whom the State had lent money? The Government dared not do anything of the sort. Why should the sugarcrover be put in a different position from any other producer in the colony? For that was what was proposed to be done by that vote. There were many parts of the colony where wheat could be more profitably grown by small selectors—notably in the vicinity of St. George, and many other places in that part of the colony—if they could get a mill to make their wheat into a marketable commodity. Why should not those men petition the House for relief, and ask that a central mill should be erected in that district at the expense of the State? That would be just as reasonable as the proposition brought before the Committee by the Premier. Why should an exceptional advantage be given to the man who grew sugar as against the man who grew wheat? Then, he might take the case of selectors in a sheep country, whose holdings were very small, and yet, in the aggregate, there might be a large number of sheep in the district. Why should they not apply to have a central woolshed erected for them at the expense of the State, in order to take the fleece off their sheep? It would not be denied that wool was one of the chief products of the colony, and the producers of it, therefore, should receive equal consideration with the producers of sugar. Then he might instance the miners. He could understand a large number of men working in a very valuable field, who were not in a position to put up a crushing machine or mill. Why should they not have one put up at the expense of the State, on the same lines as the central mill was to be put up for the sugarcrover? If the thin end of the wedge were now introduced there would be no limit to requisitions of that kind. But the real secret of the vote being moved was that the Premier had at length seen that, by his legislation and course of action during the last two years, he had materially injured the sugar industry; and he thought a vote of that kind might tend to repair some of the damage he had done. Such a scheme would not benefit the sugar-planters, and it would open the door to an immense number of other industries, with equal rights, claiming equal consideration at the hands of the House. The sugar-planter was no better *per se* than the member of any other individual class of the community, and there was no reason why an exceptional advantage should be given to him as was proposed. The pastoral industry had suffered tremendously during the past three years, but they had borne it—and grinned if they could—without asking the State to help them. The sugar industry had also gone through a period of depression, and it at once complained to the Premier, and asked the Committee to compel every individual in the colony to contribute something out of his own pocket towards its relief. Even the £50,000 voted last night to prevent the invasion of rabbits was exposed to the same objection; and he said so at the time. Still, with regard to the rabbit vote, they knew it was for a fixed quantity, and they knew exactly how, and for what the money was to be spent. But what they were now asked to vote was an unknown quantity, and no one knew how far it might go. It was a loan society inaugurated by the Government to lend money for the construction of sugar-mills; and the Committee was quite in the dark as to what was the security to be given by those men who were to be supported, or semi-supported, by the State. He hoped hon. members would reject the vote,

at least for the present, in order to give the Government an opportunity next session, if they were still of the same mind that the sugar industry should be coddled in that direction, of bringing down a Bill showing how those advances were to be made. If they did that, the scheme, he was certain, would receive full and fair consideration at the hands of the House. But he objected to any vote being put into the hands of the Government on the lines laid down by that special supplementary appropriation. He supposed his next amendment would be to give the Government threepence. The Premier must see clearly that the objection raised to the motion was a tangible one, and one which required his serious consideration. It certainly could not be said that there was any desire on the part of any hon. member on that side to hamper the sugar-producer; but there was an indisposition on the part of every hon. member to permit the introduction of a system which might lead—God knew where!

Mr. BROOKES said he admitted at once that there were objections to the scheme, but he had never yet seen any scheme presented to the House to which objections could not be urged. The hon. member who had just sat down had spoken his mind fairly on the matter. He (Mr. Brookes) differed from him in many important particulars. The hon. member talked about wheat-millers, the miners, and even thought that the squatters might be entitled to some assistance of that kind. So they might; but that was not the question before the Committee, and he thought the hon. member was not alone in losing sight of the chief reason why the proposition had been brought forward. It was a very serious proposition, and one which he thought should be entertained by hon. members and fairly considered. The proposition was this: Seeing that the question of white or coloured labour in the North had been a matter of agitation for a long time, the present proposition was intended to help to settle that question. He did not know for certain that it would settle the question. If it did not settle it his objection to the employment of coloured labour in the North would not be removed. He stood on the same principle that he had always maintained—that he would rather see no sugar in the North than have black labour; and he regarded the establishment of central mills as being an experiment which would probably aid very considerably in settling the question, that white labour could cultivate sugar in the North, and therefore the proposition had his hearty support. He did not think he should be acting true to himself or his convictions if he opposed it. Some of the objections made on the other side seemed to him to have a very narrow basis. There seemed to be a fear—quite proper—he had nothing to say against it, only he thought it was unfounded—that the Government were entering into a kind of business which was alleged to be beyond the functions of Government; but he did not think so. He considered that it fairly came within the functions of the Government to assist in settling the question of small proprietary sugar estates in the North. They knew very well that in other parts of the world the cultivation and production of sugar was carried on just in the way that it would be by the central mills. He believed he was right in stating that all the beetroot on the Continent was grown on a somewhat similar system. A central mill was established in a district, and the beet grown by the farmers all round about was sold to the mill; and he might further say that the cultivation and manufacturing of beetroot had been a means of spreading an amount of prosperity greater than any other manufacture he had heard of in France, Germany, and

Austria. And when he remembered the large tracts of land he had seen in the North, between Rockhampton and Cooktown, he should hail with pleasure any proposition that would be likely to settle down on those beautiful lands a population growing sugar or coffee, or other tropical produce. He need not say that, from the very beginning, he did not believe in the large estates. He did not believe that they contributed anything to the safety of Queensland, by whatever labour they were worked; but, with black labour, he did regard those estates as a centre of political danger that was increasing every day, and a danger that might some time or other involve the colony in a great catastrophe. He held that it was possible for white people to cultivate sugar in the North on small plots of ground, by which he meant areas of from 50 to 100 acres; and in illustration of it he had a case in his mind which came under his notice some years ago, which would help hon. gentlemen to look at the matter justly. Two brothers took up a piece of land on the Herbert River—he thought, 100 acres—in the vicinity of a mill belonging to the proprietor of a large estate. Those brothers did all the work themselves; they did not employ any Chinamen, or coolies, or kanakas. They had 50 acres out of the 100 under cane, and it was crushed by the mill in the vicinity; and they would have continued to grow cane until now, but the second year the owner of the mill refused to crush their cane. They had not the capital to put up a mill of their own, and the consequence hon. members would have already anticipated. They had to sell their land to the owner of the large estate and leave the district. If there had been a central mill or any mill in the neighbourhood where they could have got the cane crushed, they could have continued their operations. It was four or five years since he had heard of that case, and it showed him the feeling that large proprietors entertained in regard to those small proprietors; but he gathered from what had fallen from the hon. member for Mackay that the large sugar-planters in the North held more liberal views with regard to small holders, and he (Mr. Brookes) was satisfied that they would be greatly assisted in those views by the acceptance of the proposition now before the Committee, because, in the first place, he saw no commercial difficulty so far as the cultivation of cane was concerned. As a matter of fact, it was attended only with such risks as were incident to all agriculture—bad seasons, and perhaps insects which destroyed the cane; but really and truly he did not regard it as more uncertain, or as uncertain, as the cultivation of wheat on the Downs. The establishment of a central mill here and there would be a great advantage to the cultivators of the cane, and a mill could be established at a great deal less expense than had been stated by some hon. members. If the scheme was put into a practical shape he believed £50,000 would go a very long way in establishing mills, and it would help greatly to settle the question as to the manner in which sugar should be grown in the North. It was an immense question, and he wished it to be settled and done with. He did not like the animosity that existed between North and South. It had pained him every time he had stood up in that House and had to speak of the selfishness of the holders of those large estates in the North, and he wanted that put an end to. He regarded with anything but regret the want of success of those large estates. But now the planters had got the idea themselves that they could do better with their estates than manage them as they had been doing—that those mills being employed simply to crush the cane from all around grown by other

people, they would have no responsibility. When he was at Bundaberg he saw another case which seemed to him to illustrate the working of the Premier's proposition. He saw a sugar plantation there and a mill, and the farmers belonging to it had mortgaged all that they possessed to get that mill, and had a fair prospect of being successful in getting out of their troubles. He could not but think, then, that if they had a central mill to which to send their cane they would have been saved a great deal of responsibility and anxiety. As it was, all their money was spent in the construction of the mill; and there were many other places where the establishment of a central mill would greatly excite and promote the cultivation of sugar by small men. He wished there had not been introduced into the debate the question of German labour, in the way it had been. He thought it was not right, and it did not contribute to good temper to have any talk about German coolie labour. He did not like the term; it was very unjust to Germans, and would only result in mischief. A great deal had been said about the failure of German immigration. When German immigration was first mentioned in that Committee, he did not say anything, but he knew it must be a failure from this cause: He was perfectly sure that the German Government would never allow people to leave that country—German labourers—if they had to make agreements in Germany which would be held valid in Queensland. There was a trap there, and this was the trap: Simple German peasants from a long way inland, who had never seen the sea, or a ship, except in pictures, would listen to the representations of the agents, and would gladly consent to an agreement which proposed to give them wages far in excess of what they had ever dreamed of getting in Germany. So far so good. But when they landed in Maryborough, or Bundaberg, or Rockhampton, or Mackay, before they had been there three months they would find that, liberal as the terms were to their comprehension in Germany, they were greatly below the current wages in Queensland, and he thought it would be nothing but unjust for them to sanction an arrangement which would treat those men unfairly—that was, that all the advantage should be on one side. He did not think it was just for the Government to punish those Germans for working at a lower rate than other labour, and he was glad to find it was as he had expected—the German Government were far too wily to allow their men to be trapped in that way. He believed that the idea of central sugar-mills would spread, if the proposition of the Government were entertained and acted upon, and it would have a great measure of success. Its success would be so assured that other lands now held by nobody would be sought for and occupied by Germans. Germans were a very peculiar people, and it was only the ignorance of hon. gentlemen that made them run them down. They succeeded more than any other people in the United States; they were the best agriculturists in Queensland, and they ought to be glad to get them. With regard to central mills, he thought that, the problem once solved by the proof as to their profitableness, they would spread everywhere in the North, and would exactly suit the Germans, who would have nothing to do but to attend to their horses and cows and the cultivation of their ground. It seemed to him to be a scheme which could hardly fail to be successful, and so far from blaming the Government for entertaining such a scheme and submitting it to the Committee, it was about time that hon. gentleman should extend their views. He did not know that the hon. member for Rosewood was far wrong when he said that the

only groove into which the Government had run was borrowing money and spending it on railways and for other purposes. He had heard no objection to artesian wells or diamond drills, but the moment the Government went beyond that, and said that they were willing to teach the whole colony a lesson in political economy, some hon. members were all in arms against them. The present proposition was in accordance with the soundest principles of advanced political economy. In the second place he believed it offered a fair prospect of being profitable, and in the third, and by no means the least important, it would considerably assist in settling the question as to the kind of labour which should grow sugar in the North. He would admit that the third consideration was the one that prevailed with him; even if it did not offer any prospect of success, and was more objectionable than it was to his mind, yet, as the solution of a question which, if not settled, would always trouble the colony, he would gladly accept it, and he trusted the Committee would vote for the proposal.

Mr. NORTON said he purposely avoided speaking last night, because he thought there was no chance of a decision being come to, but he would take advantage of the present opportunity to make the few remarks that he had to make. He should vote most decidedly against the measure. He did not agree with the hon. gentleman who had just sat down, as he looked upon it as one of those speculative ideas of the Premier's that were bound to come to grief. What was the history of the sugar question as regarded from the Premier's point of view? It was only four or five years ago that the hon. gentleman was ready to encourage the Colonial Sugar Company to come to the colony and buy land which could not legally be sold, and he assisted in passing a Bill to enable the selectors to sell, all for the sake of inducing that company to settle here and spend a large sum of money in the colony in establishing mills. But the hon. gentleman had changed his opinion, and there could be no doubt as to what his opinions were at that time, because they were recorded in *Hansard*. He supported that Bill on the second reading for the purpose of encouraging the expenditure of money in the colony. Then a substitute was found for coloured labour, and the Immigration Act was amended to provide a panacea for the difficulties the planters suffered under. The hon. member who had just sat down seemed to be rather glad that the Germans were not allowed by their Government to come out to aid the sugar-planters; but that gentleman was one of the strongest supporters of the Bill. That Bill had ended where it began, and now there was another scheme brought forward—to encourage the settlement of people on the land by the establishment of central mills. Four or five years ago capitalists were to be encouraged to establish central mills, and now it was proposed that the Government should compete with them. Were they always to be chopping and changing, first to one thing and then to another, and never know what they were going to do from one year's end to another? Was a different system to be introduced every year? The arguments used against the vote were absolutely unanswerable. Reference had been made to the Allora lands, where the Government did not dare to dispossess the selectors, although they had not paid their rents for years; and it would be exactly the same in the present case. The men for whose benefit the mills were to be erected would be allowed to do just as the Allora selectors—pay up when they liked, or not pay at all. The Premier said he was prepared to make it a test question, as to the possibility of successfully cultivating and manufacturing sugar with



white labour alone; and he (Mr. Norton) would be satisfied to vote against it and let the Government take the responsibility of the failure. He did not for one moment believe the scheme would have the result the Government professed to anticipate, and he would make a point of voting against the motion.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that when he heard the speeches of the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Mackay yesterday evening he hoped the question was going to be debated on its merits, and that no party feeling would be imported into it.

Mr. NORTON: The Premier introduced that.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the leader of the Opposition opposed the motion, but in his arguments he was fair, and the hon. member for Mackay really ably defended it. No doubt there was a difficulty in defending the scheme under consideration. The argument that if the sugar industry was assisted the meat-preserving industry and others had just as good a claim to assistance, was an appropriate and in the abstract an unanswerable argument. But the real question was only a degree of privilege. The country was committed to privilege that industry, and the question was whether they could substitute a privilege with less danger of fatal consequence for the country—or, as he took it, with more beneficial results. The sugar industry had been the recipient of innumerable favours in the way of exceptional legislation. Hardly any other industry had caused so much trouble to the Government of the day or required so much restrictive legislation to prevent abuses. The sugar industry had been favoured with the employment of cheap coloured labour—a privilege which it had been found necessary to restrict solely to the sugar industry. That was a piece of class legislation against which the £50,000 faded into insignificance. It was a test question at the general election that the colony did not want Indian coolies and that sugar could be produced with white labour. The members of the Liberal party were, with a few exceptions, elected to a very great extent on those points, and the Government was in duty bound to give expression to that will of the people. At first they endeavoured to solve the difficulty by immigration from the Continent; and if the sugar-planters had been wise in their generation they would have made that scheme a success. They would have given the immigrants land to cultivate, and would have bought the cane from them, saying that till harvest-time came the beggarly wages they offered would simply be an advance on account to keep them going. Every successful German farmer would have written home to his friends to come out as there was a good thing on. That was the way in which the Government intended to replace coolies by German immigrants, but the planters thought to get German immigrants to occupy exactly the place of the kanaka, and that was a physical impossibility. He took the trouble when in Mackay to look about him, and he was on different farms where the farmers cultivated cane in small lots of from five to ten acres, and on which not a single kanaka was employed. All those farmers said the labour and agricultural expenditure on the cultivation of sugar-cane was not more than, if as much as, on an ordinary crop of maize, and the labour was not any harder. He had spoken to a lady, the wife of a German farmer there, who had no children except a couple of daughters; and she told him that she went out with her daughters to labour at the sugar-cane trashing, and found they could do it quite as cheaply as any kanaka, and further, that it was not hard

work. She said she was not used to hard work, but could do that, and her daughters could do it better than herself because they were more nimble. He therefore fully believed that sugar could be profitably cultivated by the independent white labour of the free farmer on his own land. They all told him that their difficulty was in selling the cane, and that if they could make sure of being able to sell their cane at 10s. per ton it would be the best crop to grow and far more profitable than maize. That had been proved by the hon. member for Oxley, who had been growing cane successfully for years with white labour only. On the Logan, where the farmers found the planters unwilling to buy their cane except at a ruinous price, they clubbed together and erected mills of their own and were very successful until last year, when the price of sugars fell so much. One of the farmers of that company had told him that the only difficulty they had was because they had no refining plant that would enable them to produce a class of sugar that would realise a higher price. He had heard exactly the same thing from Mr. Grimes, the hon. member for Oxley. That hon. member had cane at Oxley, where he had no refinery, and it did not pay to crush it; but on his new plantation, where he had erected good machinery and could make a high-class sugar, it paid very well, even with white labour; so that it had actually been proved that cane could be grown by free white labour. It had been said that sugar-growing was not such a profitable business in the hands of capitalists holding large estates, but he challenged any hon. member in that Committee to mention any agricultural produce on the known earth that it would pay to grow on those large estates without compulsory cheap labour, and sugar was not an exception. They would not be able to cultivate maize with advantage under such circumstances, but if their farmers were able to cultivate maize with advantage on a small scale by their own labour, and maintain their families—forming the basis of a civilised community on which their whole good government and society was based—why should sugar not afford greater facilities for profitable employment by the independent farmer? In the abstract, the vote of £50,000 could not be defended; but it might be sufficient to prove that sugar could be grown profitably by small farmers if they afforded farmers, in the present depressed times, an opportunity for sending their cane to the central mills. The vote would not, as was said, commit the Government to an unknown quantity of liabilities and advances, because, when it was proved that sugar could be grown profitably by independent farmers, there would be any number of capitalists ready to come forward and assist the farmers in the establishment of central mills. There was the instance of Barbadoes, where they had enjoyed legislation exclusively for the benefit and advantage of sugar cultivation on a large scale. In that island many large fortunes had been made, but when the late fall in the sugar prices took place the whole sugar industry in that island was paralysed; and when he was in Mackay he saw an article in one of the Mackay papers, copied from other papers, stating that the sugar-planters of that island had held a meeting and proposed that there was no other remedy to resuscitate the sugar industry again except central mills and the cultivation of cane by small farmers. To accomplish that, they proposed to borrow £750,000, but as their population included nine-tenths of coloured people who were not very taxable, and could not therefore borrow on their own account, they petitioned the Imperial Government to guarantee a loan for the establishment

of central mills to crush the cane grown by the free coloured inhabitants and cultivators of the soil. The proposal of the Government now before them could not in the abstract be defended, but it was a question of policy, and Parliament was bound to carry it out. Mere negative measures like restricting the Chinese, forbidding the importation of kanakas, and not allowing the importation of coolies, were not sufficient. The present proposal was the first positive measure submitted by the Government, and if members would only show their goodwill it would be carried out. He thought the Opposition should, for the sake of solving the difficulty, assist the Government and not make the proposition a party question. What was the result of introducing cheap labour to America? Why, if in the early days they had abolished slavery and paid a million of money as compensation to the planters, it would have been cheaper than subsequent losses of money and many lives in a big war, to remedy the mistake. And still America suffered from having in its territory a large number of people who could never compare with the other classes of the population. The proposal of the Government would solve the difficulty thoroughly, for he had not the slightest doubt of its success. The German Government had often largely assisted industries which were languishing or moribund, by advancing money or giving guarantees, and always with success. When Germany threw off the last remnants of feudal times the Government gave guarantees, by means of which the peasants were able to buy their farms; and now, in place of the old landlord system, they had a yeomanry of prosperous farmers. That had been brought about by direct Government aid, similar to what was now under the consideration of the Committee. The more he looked into the Government scheme the more reason he saw for giving it his support.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he saw that the vote was not going to pass through in a hurry. There were one or two objections which he therefore wished to put on record. It might be thought that he was assisting to prolong the talk, but he had no desire to do that, being perfectly ready to go to a division at once. He, at the same time, however, knew the disposition of some hon. members on the Opposition side, and knew that the matter would not come to a vote. The question at issue was one that had created a good deal of interest throughout the country, and more especially in the district he represented. It was, therefore, well that a full expression of opinion should be made on the subject. There was one part of the Premier's remarks which he desired to take exception to, and that was the statement that the large men objected to see the little men trying to grow sugar. He was perfectly certain that there was no objection of that kind at all in his own mind. There was plenty of room for large men and little men in the district he represented. In that district there were hundreds of thousands of acres of rich lands lying absolutely idle, and he would be very glad to see big and little men going on to them. He did not see any necessity for setting the big men in opposition to the little men, as there was plenty of room for all. The hon. member for North Brisbane dreaded large estates. He (Mr. Lumley Hill) had no dread of them whatever, in this country. A man could not take his large estate with him when he died, and there was no law of primogeniture or entail here. At a man's death here, however large his estate might be, it was divided amongst his family or nearest of kin. And where did the dividing line run between small and large estates? How were they to limit a

man's industry or the fruits of his toil? When was a man to stop adding to his estate? The man whose first care was to provide an independence for his old age, and to keep himself out of Dunwich or any other charitable institution, was a better colonist, at all events, than the man who spent his best years qualifying himself for one of those institutions and for becoming a burden on his fellow-colonists. And was, then, the man who went on accumulating to be held up as an object of scorn? It was owing to an idea of that kind having gone abroad in the country that the people kept off the land. If a man acquired means to insure himself for his old age or to provide for those who came after him, what, as a rule, did he do? Instead of going on to the broad acres of the country and improving them he invested his money in town lands. The cry of the Liberal party had always been, "Get the people on to the lands," but at the same time every obstacle had been placed in the way of their acquiring land, and the only solid security they could obtain was in town properties. Hence the rather fictitious prosperity of the towns, the people of which were very often not able to see beyond their noses, and did not know how to turn to the best advantage the very valuable property they had in the hundreds of thousands of acres of country lands. The reason he opposed the vote was because it went outside the proper lines of political economy. He maintained that all other industries would be equally entitled to be subsidised, and he would add another to those already mentioned—a scheme of deep-sea fishing. Brisbane was very badly supplied with fish—why should not the Government subsidise a deep-sea fishing company? But the difficulty arose out of the fact that the Government were attempting to alter an economic law which was beyond the reach of any Act of Parliament. The small farmers had got their land, and could grow cane upon it; but they could not get anyone to put up a mill to crush their cane for them, because labour was not available for the purpose. The hon. member for Brisbane was perfectly candid in saying that rather than see black or alien labour employed he would let the sugar industry perish. That was a tangible position, and one which, from the hon. member's point of view, was unassailable. He (Mr. Hill) had not the slightest doubt that if, in the district he represented, cheap and reliable labour was taken away, the sugar industry would be snuffed out. He was expressing the opinion of his constituents when he said that, although they objected to the introduction of coolies because they might interfere with them in other callings, yet even the most ardent Liberals among them were satisfied to allow the sugar-planters to employ kanakas, from whose interference in other branches of industry there was no danger. When he was in the Cook electorate, two years ago, no one knew the abuses that had crept into the South Sea Island labour trade; they did not know the wickedness and villainy that was going on, but since that they had heartily endorsed the firm stand the Premier had taken in putting a stop to the evils that then existed. In consequence of those abuses—to call them by the very mildest name—there was now such a difficulty in obtaining labour that on that account alone the sugar industry in the North seemed doomed. If he thought that the grant of £50,000 was in the least likely to be a solution of the difficulty he would heartily support it; but he could not see that it afforded the slightest glimmer of hope.

Mr. CHUBB said the hon. member for Cook stated that hon. members on that side did not intend to let the vote pass. That might or might not be so, but as far as he and a good

many other hon. members on that side were concerned he knew that they were simply desirous to have the question fully discussed. He spoke last night for ten minutes, and he did not see how he could be accused of obstruction simply for that reason. The hon. member for Rosewood actually had the sweet simplicity to say that the Opposition had made it a party question. He denied that *in toto*; no one on that side had ever attempted to make it a party question. It was a question that involved the welfare of the sugar industry, and one which ought to be considered fairly. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee needlessly, but he had two or three words more to say on the subject. He admitted that it was a right principle to lend money to assist farmers on the principle that had been laid down at home. It was acknowledged that it was right to assist the cultivation of the land, but not any individual class. The Government should not pick out one particular class or one particular locality alone. If the Government proposed to give assistance by way of loans to the sugar-planters or the agriculturists of the colony, he could not object to it because it would be fair to all. But the present proposition was to give a loan of £50,000 to one district to try an experiment. He was not going to discuss the experiment. The solution of the problem whether sugar could be successfully grown with white labour or not was beside the question. The Premier said the vote was introduced to demonstrate that sugar could be grown without coloured labour. The hon. member for Rosewood said that had been demonstrated long ago. If the proposed central mill would yield such a large profit as that hon. member anticipated, why had it not been taken up by private speculators long ago? Money was always forthcoming for a good speculation; why had it held back from a central mill at Mackay? The scheme was also said to be one to assist the small planters; but there was nothing in the documents before hon. members to limit the extent of the farms—they might consist of 10 acres or 50 acres or 500 acres. As he read the articles, the mill might be run in the interests of ten or twenty large growers with 500 acres each. But surely it was not intended to assist capitalists or quasi-capitalists! The scheme was deficient in that respect. It was of course intended to assist the small man, but it did not say so. With regard to the question as to whether that was going to be the great panacea for the evils under which the industry had suffered, and to make Queensland an enormous sugar-producing country, he would read a few statistics that he had come across within the last day or two. Sugar had been cultivated in the colony for the last eighteen years. Last year 32,000 tons of sugar were produced, and the year before 36,000 tons. In the island of Java—an island not far from Queensland, about 50,000 square miles in extent, and with a population of more than 20,000,000—there were about a hundred sugar-mills. Last season's crop, the largest for many years, was 374,389 tons. In 1881 the production was 210,551 tons; being an increase of 80 per cent. in five years. The article went on to say:—

"Java is one of the most important of the producers of cane sugar, and the area of land suitable for the cultivation of the sugar-cane, not now under tillage, is said to be very large. There are about 100 sugar mills in Java at the present time."

That was the sugar industry in Java now, and what would it be in a few years' time? The scheme proposed might be a *bond fide* honest attempt; but it appeared to him very much like Mrs. Partington's attempt to stem the tide of the Atlantic with a broom. If the money were lent he did not believe the Government would ever see it again. He would point out that the sugar

plantations were not confined to the North. There were 170 mills in the colony; of those 25 were in the Brisbane district, 40 in the Logan, 31 in the Maryborough district, 30 at Bundaberg, 25 at Mackay, and 19 in different places north of Mackay. As soon as the proposed system was initiated the sugar-growers of the Logan and in the vicinity of Brisbane would come forward for assistance; farmers in every part of the country would be asking for loans for sugar-mills, and they would have a right to get them. The sugar-growers at Mackay had no more right to loans than the growers about Brisbane; and if the Committee voted the money they would be opening the door to expenditure the end of which they could not see. They ought to know the details of the scheme before they voted the money, and he was more than ever convinced that it was premature. He hoped the money would not be voted until a carefully prepared measure was brought down; a measure providing for a system of lending State funds to farmers, agriculturists, or any class of persons on an intelligent basis, and without any invidious distinction.

Mr. HORWITZ said that previous to the question before the Committee coming on for discussion he had not the slightest idea that there were more than two mills in Mackay. All he could say was, that if the money were voted he hoped that the farmers of the Darling Downs would receive the same consideration. There were two flour-mills at Warwick and one at Allora, but the farmers were anxious to have one of their own. The wheat-growers considered they were ill-treated by the millers, and, though he was one of the latter himself he was prepared to speak against his own interests. If the Premier would promise to favour Warwick with the loan of £10,000 on the same conditions as those on which he proposed to grant a loan of £50,000 to the Mackay people, perhaps he would alter his mind and vote in favour of the question before the Committee, and as soon as he got an answer from the Premier on that point he would state what were his intentions. He knew of another locality of which the same thing might be said. The farmers about St. George could grow as good wheat as the farmers about Warwick, and he should like to know what assistance those farmers were to get. They were entitled to £10,000, and, if he could get £10,000 for them and £10,000 for Warwick, he would be only too glad to support the question before the Committee. He might as well say now that, at present, it was his intention to oppose the question. He was sorry that the sum of £50,000 was voted last night for a rabbit-proof fence, because he looked upon that vote as nothing but a waste of money; and now it was proposed to spend £50,000, which would be a total loss; altogether, the sum of £100,000 would be wasted. It would be as well to remind the Committee that Queensland had not been very prosperous for the last five years. Cattle and sheep were dying in the West, and he did not know where the increased taxation was to come from. It seemed that the Colonial Treasurer was being driven into a corner without knowing it. In order to raise the money voted, the ratepayers of the colony were taxed, and they were not in a position to pay the heavy taxation which would be necessary. It was not very long ago since the Treasurer brought down a scheme for new taxation; of course he carried it, and the very people who were taxed then were now called upon to pay extra taxation, in order that £100,000 might be squandered on central sugar-mills and a rabbit-proof fence. He was sent there to protect the Treasury. He voted last night against what he considered was a waste of public money, and he intended to do the same now.

Mr. BLACK said he was astonished to hear the hon. gentleman say that he was of opinion that there were only two sugar-mills at Mackay. He thought that point had been thrashed out pretty well before. The hon. gentleman and others who spoke in opposition to the vote appeared to take a wrong view of the question. No one doubted that wheat could be grown on the Downs, or that flour could be made there. No further experiment was necessary to prove that. They all knew that meat-preserving could be carried on successfully under certain conditions of seasons; there was nothing further to be proved as far as that was concerned. Then, as to crushing-mills for miners—that was an assured success, assuming that the ore was of sufficiently good quality; and they did not want to make an experiment to prove that sugar could be grown. That was always an ascertained fact, but they wanted now to try a new political departure. They knew that under certain conditions sugar had been and undoubtedly could be grown in the northern portions of the colony, but under conditions which were unfavourably received by a very large number of people in the colony—that was in regard to the labour that was necessary for producing it. Hon. members on the other side, in fact on both sides of the Committee, had over and over again insisted that for the welfare of the colony it should be grown under conditions different from those which had prevailed hitherto. That proposal was an experiment—that was, that instead of employing a large quantity of coloured labour, it would be beneficial to the colony if European labour alone could be employed, and that instead of having estates from 500 up to 1,000 acres, each with a private mill, it would be better for the general welfare of the community if they had a number of yeomen farmers who would grow a small patch of cane, each utilising his own labour, and having at his command a central mill to crush his cane. He was not prepared to say which was the correct thing, but he thought for the general welfare of the colony it would be well to have the question really tested. He had noticed a day or two ago a leading article in one of the Brisbane papers, in which the subject was argued in this way: "Here is £50,000, which will put up three central mills; each mill will only be able to accommodate thirty farmers; therefore three mills will only accommodate ninety farmers—is it worth while spending £50,000 for the benefit of ninety farmers?" That was a preposterous way of looking at the question. It was not merely a matter of ninety farmers being benefited. It was a most important political question that was going to be settled, and those were really the grounds upon which he supported the vote. He wanted to see the very vexed question regarding the labour to be employed in the North, which had existed for the last ten or twelve years, tested by practical experience. Judging from the speeches he had heard from hon. members last night, and again that day, they would lead him to believe that if it was in his power to introduce a Coolie Bill they would all vote for it. He did not know, but that was the impression he had arrived at.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why don't you try it?

Mr. BLACK: The Government were supported by a large majority who held certain views; he did not entirely endorse those views, but he might be wrong. The lines he had adopted in connection with the sugar industry possibly might be wrong, and he wished to see the proposed experiment tried in order to settle the question. They had in the North farmers in possession of farms actually under cultivation,

who had a great deal of land, growing cane, and they said to the Government, "We will make the experiment if you meet us half-way." Those were the grounds on which the vote was asked. Some hon. members seemed to think it necessary that if the vote were agreed to the Government would be bound to assist wheat-mills on the Darling Downs; and one suggested brick-making machinery; but those were industries the success of which was already assured, of which there could be no doubt. Everybody knew how they could be carried on; but with regard to tropical agriculture, the benefit that would be derived in the event of this new departure proving successful would be of such enormous magnitude to the future prosperity of the country that the Committee ought seriously to entertain the advisability of putting the scheme to the test of practical experience. Those were, as he had always stated, the grounds upon which he advocated the vote.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he joined issue altogether with the hon. member for Mackay, who appeared to be almost like a drowning man grasping at a straw. He was willing, apparently, to accept anything from the Government; but, as he (Mr. Morehead) had said before, every representative in that Committee had to consider somewhat beyond the individuals, or the individual interest that was prominent in the district he represented. He submitted that the points that had been raised by himself, the hon. member for Warwick, and other hon. members, were deserving of attention. It was the thin end of the wedge that was being introduced, and if the vote were carried he would ask hon. members to consider where it would end? Were they going to legislate for the sugar industry or for the colony in general? He hoped they would legislate for the colony in general. If they analysed the whole history of the sugar industry he did not know that it had very much to complain of. It had been assisted in every possible way by every Government since the beginning—even by the present Government, who proposed to import cheap foreign labour for them, although it had not come off. He thought it was very unfair to other interests, which were as much entitled to be termed vested interests as the sugar industry, that they should not receive similar consideration at the hands of the Government and of that House. He did not think anyone could say he was asking too much in asking that. It was only on that ground that he objected to the vote, as he would have objected to any other vote which proposed to deal with any other industry in a similar way. With regard to the rabbit fence he had already stated more than once that the interest on that expenditure should be met in a different way from that proposed by the Government; and he was quite prepared to assent to the advance now proposed being given to the sugar-planters on such conditions as were agreed to by that Committee; but he was not prepared to give £50,000 to the Government to play ducks and drakes with, and use as they pleased. They had been told that some of the money, at all events, was to be expended, probably in the Mackay district. Well, he believed as a matter of fact that a large number of mills there could be bought up very cheaply, and no doubt the same state of affairs existed throughout the colony; but he did not see why the general taxpayer should be called upon to contribute a large amount of money to support—or, as he said last night in somewhat rougher words, to bolster up—an industry which ought to be able, like every other tub, to stand on its own bottom. If it could not do that, better let it go. Better let it wait until happier times came; let it stand as it was

until the colony was in such a state that the sugar-planter would be able to make his way. He (Mr. Morehead) would apply the same remarks to any other industry in the colony; and he contended that unless they were going to give protection all round, every member of the Committee ought to oppose the vote. Why should they specially support an industry which was already specially protected? As everybody knew, there had never been any excise duty levied on sugar. The sugar-planter had had the advantage of cheaper labour than others had had the privilege of enjoying; he had had land on certainly the most favourable terms, and everything a man could wish for, until lately, and now what had befallen him was not exceptional in that particular avocation. The same fall in the value of produce had occurred in other industries besides the sugar industry. If hon. gentlemen would take the trouble to read Mr. Giffen's report, which was noticed in the *Spectator* and afterwards published in the *Brisbane Courier*, they would find that since the year 1873 there had been a decline in the value of all products with the exception of one—coffee—of nearly 50 per cent. If the Government were prepared to assist the sugar industry because of the depreciation in the value of that product, they should be prepared to deal with other industries in the same manner. Surely the sauce which was served out to the goose should be served out to the gander! Copper had fallen in price 50 per cent., iron had fallen 50 per cent., and wool also had fallen in value nearly one-half. Copper affected the colony very little and iron not at all. If hon. gentlemen had come down and asked for some exceptional advantage to be given to the producers of wool, would not the idea have been scouted at once? Supposing £50,000 had been proposed to be voted for the importation of particularly good rams or ewes, or whatever it might be which might improve the value of flocks in this colony, would not that idea have been laughed at? Would it have been listened to? Yet they were asked to do the same thing, at the expense of every individual taxpayer in the colony, for the sugar industry. It appeared that notwithstanding the great advantages the sugar industry had had in the past they were now asked to go in for something to help it in future. He would ask whether any hon. gentleman would be justified in voting for such a thing. What had the industry done to deserve it? If it were done in one case it must be done with regard to many other industries that might be started in the colony; the same bonus must be given to them. Therefore, holding those views, he intended, so far as he could, to prevent opening the door to such things. It was like the springing of a small leak, which afterwards might be the means of causing the ship to founder. He moved that the amount be reduced by the sum of £49,999 19s. 9d.

Mr. HAMILTON said he thought the present scheme proposed by the Government for developing the sugar industry was about as unsatisfactory as their scheme for the introduction of cheap Continental labour. With regard to the latter scheme, it appeared that the Premier had made a mistake ruinous to his reputation as a statesman. He introduced that scheme and carried out all the details without first having taken any precautions to ascertain whether or not the law which had existed for many years in Germany would prevent the scheme from being carried out. The action of the Premier in passing a Bill for indentured labourers showed that he did not believe that sugar could be grown at a profit, except by cheap white or black labour. The sugar-growers of the colony had to compete with other sugar-growers who produced their sugar by cheap labour, and therefore, as a matter of course, it was perfectly impossible that sugar-

growers in this quarter of the world could successfully compete in the open market with their rivals. Some time since he met a gentleman who told him that in Borneo, incredible as it might appear, Chinese could be obtained there in any quantity at four dollars a month and find themselves, and that magnificent sugar lands could be obtained for a mere song. In cases of that kind, how could dear white labour, no matter what it was, compete with sugar produced in that way? He would like to see a realisation of the picture drawn by the Premier yesterday evening, of yeomen dotted all over the colony on their own homesteads, and if he imagined there was any possibility of the vote causing such a thing to occur he would certainly support it; but he did not see how it could. Those men would have to compete with planters who now had kanakas and various kinds of cheap labour—Javanese, for instance, who were coming in in large numbers, and there were no regulations to prevent them. It was also stated that it was desirable to spend this sum upon an experiment. He noticed that those who most strongly advocated the vote upon that ground had actually admitted that the experiment had already been made, and that it had been successful. The Premier stated that it had been successful in the South, and the hon. member for Mackay had stated that it had had a most marked effect. Since it had been proved so successful, what necessity was there to make the experiment again? It was stated that the sum was only sufficient to build a couple of mills, and the Premier had intimated, by his speech in *Hansard*, that he had interviewed the planters on the Burdekin and at Mackay. From that they might gather that he actually proposed putting one of those mills in the very quarter where the sugar industry had already been tried and proved a marked success. He wondered if the Mackay election, which would probably take place after there was a redistribution of electorates, had anything to do with the vote? Sugar-planting had been carried on long enough to enable investors to find out whether it was a safe speculation. If it were safe those who wanted mills could easily obtain them, and if it were unsafe—and it had been already tried—it would be absurd for them to throw away money upon it. He did not see why miners should not have the same right to an expenditure of money for crushing machines. He objected to the principle of taxing all industries for the purpose of fostering one, and making an experiment which the proposers had admitted had been a great success already.

Mr. STEVENSON said he was very sorry to see so little interest taken in that very important matter, that a delay of ten minutes had taken place since the adjournment for tea. However, he hoped that the Government would think of what they were doing, because if they really fancied that they were going to pass that sum of £50,000 they were very much mistaken. He did not think there had been a single argument brought forward up to that time to justify the vote being passed. In fact he thought every argument was against it; even those of the hon. member for Mackay were not worthy of consideration, although his arguments, as a rule, were worthy of consideration. They had been told over and over again by the Premier, by other members of the Government, and by many members on the Government side of the Committee, that sugar could be grown by white labour in the North just as well as in the South. He wanted to ask whether the special advantage proposed should be granted to the North any more than to the South, or why any special advantage should be granted to one industry more than to

another? But to talk of the sugar industry alone—why should the North be bolstered up any more than the South? They knew perfectly well that sugar-cane could be grown quite as well in the South of Queensland as in the North. He had seen sugar-cane grown within half-a-mile of Brisbane, at Rosewood, and at other places in the South. Why, then, should any special advantage be given to the planters in the North. The Premier and other members of the Government, as well as the followers of the Government, had insisted that sugar could be grown by white labour at a profit in the North as well as in the South. Then why was a proposal like that made by the Government? He could not see why that industry should be bolstered up any more than any other industry—such, for instance, as squatting and meat-preserving, and so he might go on *ad infinitum*. He could not bring himself to support that vote in any way, or even to let it pass by a division. The proposal was perfectly monstrous, and he hoped that hon. members who had taken a stand against it would stick to the position they had taken up. He would like to know from what fund that £50,000 was to be paid? Was it to be paid out of Loan?

Mr. CHUBB: From Surplus Revenue.

Mr. STEVENSON: From Surplus Revenue? When were they going to have a surplus revenue?

Mr. JESSOP said he could not let the vote go without expressing his opinion upon it, and he would be very brief in doing so. He had heard many speeches on the subject, but not a single argument had been brought forward to induce him to change his opinion on the matter. The more he heard the more he was inclined to vote against the proposal. Ever since the present Government had been in office hon. members had had to listen to continual harangues about sugar-growing by white and black labour. Members of the Government, and their supporters also, had told them that the sugar-growers were in a very good position and could help themselves. Now the Government placed a sum of £50,000 on the Estimates to save an industry which hon. members on the Opposition side of the Committee believed had been injured by the action of the Government. He had heard some hon. members say that the sooner the sugar industry was wiped out the better. Did it seem reasonable that members who made that statement should now vote £50,000 out of the public revenue to assist the planters? It was said on the previous evening that the "lion was lying down with the lamb," and he thought it was true in a great measure. He thought the Government had found out that they had made a very great mistake—that they had, by their action with reference to black labour, almost ruined an industry that was prospering, and now they wanted the taxpayers of the country to support the persons engaged in the industry by giving them machinery. That was an unjust thing—unjust to all the taxpayers in the colony, except the few planters who would benefit by the vote. He maintained that private persons should erect those mills. Private capitalists had erected quartz-crushing machines on goldfields, and the Government had never built washpools or woolsheds for selectors. In his opinion that vote was the thin end of the wedge of protection. He was not going to keep the Committee in any suspense. He objected to any kind of obstruction or stonewalling; but he did think it was unjust to tax the whole of the people of the colony for the particular object under discussion, which ought to be carried out by private enterprise. If the benefit would be general, spread over the whole of the colony, he would support it. If that money were spent in

making railways or providing water supply where it was needed, it would do some good for the colony generally.

Mr. PALMER said it was his belief that the Government were travelling beyond the proper functions of government when they put a vote of that kind on the Estimates and endeavoured to carry it. The functions of government, he took it, were to maintain law and order in the country, and give every opportunity and every facility for private enterprise to develop the industries of the colony, without taking upon its shoulders the extra burden of nursing any particular industry, he did not care which it was. In any case, it was opposed to every principle of government that they should endeavour, at the expense of the general community, to foster any particular industry in the colony. A proposal of that kind had been rejected several times in that House. Some time ago the hon. member for Wide Bay brought forward a motion to subsidise a mine of graphite or blacklead in the Wide Bay district. The House decided that such a motion did not come within the proper functions of the Government, and there was not much difference between that motion and the present one. In looking at the principle upon which the Government proposed to establish those mills, they had the articles of association to go by, and anything more difficult to understand, he believed, was never put on paper. He had got a wrench in his neck trying to get at the foundation of it. In the first place, the objection raised by the hon. member for Fassifern had not been referred to—the security to be given on the land. What security would the farmers be able to give to the Government? Under the new Act they would have no proper tenure or freehold right in the land to offer. He would advise any hon. member who had a taste for mathematics to study those articles of association. The hon. member for Rosewood, who usually supported the Government, confessed that, in the abstract, he could not support that motion—he was going to vote for it, but he did not believe in it—and many other members on that side were in the same position. He (Mr. Palmer) did not see the comparison between sugar-mills and woolsheds and things of that sort; they were not on the same level. The sugar-mills were supposed to establish the principle that sugar could be grown in the northern parts of the colony with white labour. A petition had been presented to the House from certain selectors and freeholders residing in the district of Mackay, praying that the House would take into consideration the desirability of rendering them relief and assistance in the manner and for the reason set forth therein. One reason was that—

"In the most advantageous conditions the mill-owners' profits are great on the bought cane, thereby lowering the farmers' returns."

If the profits were so great, what hindrance was there to private enterprise carrying out the business, as it had done in all other parts of the colony?

"They are also of the opinion that farmers can grow and cultivate at a profit small areas of cane without coloured labour of any kind, and larger areas by the aid of white labour, such as you are trying to bring into the colony. This latter view is not held by capitalists, and the impossibility of their obtaining unlimited supplies of coloured labour is one of the causes of the present depression."

If the adoption of that scheme would solve the question, then he thought the motion should be carried, but no one had shown that it was going to do so. There was no doubt that the first person to demand assistance would be the man whom they were now asked to assist. The articles of association provided that for every

share in the association he was to plant ten acres annually of fresh land, and his demand for labour would increase in proportion to the area under cultivation. He would be compelled to look for some kind of labour to assist him in carrying on the industry.

Mr. CAMPBELL said he wished the Government could see their way to withdraw the motion, as the other side were plainly determined to block it, and justly so, he thought. He did not think they were justified in subsidising any particular industry, and that was a subsidy to the sugar-growers. No doubt, sooner or later, they would collapse, and no Government ever formed in the colony would dare to foreclose upon that number of people. He was sure that when they discovered that there was a clause in their mortgage preventing the employment of black labour it would bring about a failure, and then they would appeal to the Government to grant them black labour, as otherwise they would be heavily handicapped compared with others who did employ it. If that sort of thing was to go on there were fifty industries languishing in the country which required subsidising. The pastoral industry was in a worse condition than the sugar industry, and the agricultural industry in the South was suffering from drought, and why should that not be subsidised? He was pleased to see the hon. member for Warwick taking such an interest in protecting the public purse, particularly when it did not affect Warwick. That hon. gentleman stated that if the subsidy were to be given to the sugar-planters of the North it was only right to erect and subsidise a mill for the people of Warwick. It would be well enough to do that if the people there could agree; but they were somewhat like the Kilkenny cats—they fought and exterminated each other. Two co-operative mills were erected there; but the people could not agree, and the mills had to be sold for what they would fetch. He hoped that when the plans and sections for the *via recta* to Warwick were laid on the table the hon. member would show the same spirit, and not allow a million of money to be squandered in that direction. If he were as zealous in the protection of the Treasury when that came on he would have the applause of the House.

Mr. HORWITZ said it was strange the hon. member should take so lively an interest in Warwick. He (Mr. Horwitz) was no party to the *via recta*. The Minister for Works had taken that responsibility upon his own shoulders, and had made a promise that he would carry out that railway. The hon. member should have looked at the reckless expenditure that had taken place in Toowoomba, and should have given assistance to stop it. That would have been wise.

Mr. LISSNER said he had a few words to say before the matter went to a division. £50,000 was a large amount to pay away for a speculation. When he came into the House yesterday he was inclined to vote against the vote of £100,000 for the extermination of rabbits, but after hearing the speeches of hon. members who supported that scheme he accepted it as a scheme to avert what would be a national calamity; and they should do their best to prevent the devastation of the colonial possessions, whether of squatters or anyone else, so long as it was for the benefit of the colony. As the representative of a mining district he had no particular interest in trying to keep the rabbits out. The hon. member for Cook frightened him when he said that if they allowed the rabbits to get in they would undermine the miner. He had been thinking over the speech since, and though it was very effective at the time he considered now that the miner need have no fear

of being undermined by the rabbits. The miner could dig deeper than the rabbits and they would do him no harm, though he might be able to get rabbit-pie, and if he got an abundance of rabbit-pie he could reduce his consumption of beef and mutton. He was glad that the vote had been reduced to £50,000, as he thought that would be sufficient to enable the Government to try the experiment. But the scheme before them now was a very different thing. The Government proposed to formulate themselves into a syndicate to crush sugar. He thought they were an anti-syndicate Government when they came into power. There was hardly an hon. member going for the Government side of the Committee who had not run down syndicates and everyone connected with a syndicate. They now proposed, however, to form a syndicate by taking from the taxpayers £50,000. He did not consider the matter as a party question, but purely as a matter of business he was opposed to it. The sugar-planters might have been injured by the policy of the present Government and they might not; he did not know anything about that, nor did he care. He said, let the sugar-planters go on with their work the best way they could for themselves. If sugar-growing was not a self-supporting industry, let it rip, and let the people engaged in it find something else that was better. Although he was a Northern member, and it was perhaps his duty to vote for any money they could get to spend out of the £10,000,000, in the North, he was not looking at it in that way, because he did not care where the £50,000 was spent, if it would be for the benefit of the colony. Hon. members had said that the mining industry was very largely subsidised by the Government. He would like to know, since the present Government had been in power, in what way the miners had been subsidised, so far as North Kennedy was concerned. The £10,000 on the Estimates he considered merely a blind so far as they were concerned. He believed there were two deep shafts sunk in Gympie, and he believed also that they were waiting all ready for that money there; but, so far as North Kennedy was concerned, he did not think they had any chance of applying for any of that subsidy, and he hoped they were not dependent upon any subsidy they would get from the present or from any other Government. If they needed assistance he hoped they would get it in a better form. He had not much more to say, nor was he inclined to help to obstruct the vote. He did not care to have to sit there till 1 o'clock, and he considered his time more valuable to him than to have to stay there and listen to insipid speeches. He hoped the debate would take a more amicable turn from that out, and that they would come to some conclusion. He would certainly vote against the proposition.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had a few words to say before they went to a division. He had listened very carefully to all the speeches made by the hon. gentlemen in favour of adopting that scheme of the Government; and he had been able to extract no real argument which would convince any man who had no opinion upon the matter—further than that the scheme was opposed to political economy—that it was right. Had anybody entered the Committee with blank convictions he did not think that anything that had been said on the Government side of the Committee in favour of the scheme would convince him that it was a right scheme to adopt. It was opposed to all commercial principles; it was opposed to political economy; and he thought further, that it was opposed to the proper and judicious administration of the public funds.



He thought that in voting that money they would be actually throwing it away. It was a far worse vote in his estimation than the vote they passed last night—£50,000 for the destruction of rabbits—although that was bad enough. It might be said that they had already in some cases violated the principles of political economy. So they had; but he did not think they had gained anything by doing so. For instance, they made their own railways, and did not encourage the making of railways by private enterprise—it might possibly have been better for Queensland had they done so. That was one instance in which they had gone against the principles of political economy, and there were several others which would no doubt strike hon. members themselves. The Premier said last night that the scheme had been adopted by other countries, and he instanced India and Brazil. He knew nothing of what the Indian Government had done, but he did not think that their example was one which they should follow in Queensland. The Indian Government was a pure despotism, administered by a few intelligent Englishmen in the interests, or the supposed interests, of about 250,000,000 Hindoos. Surely an example of that kind was not one that should be quoted in that Committee, or one that they should be asked to follow. The hon. member also mentioned Brazil, and he was unfortunate in doing so. The Government of Brazil was said to be a constitutional Government; but in reality it was not so. A very few people in the empire of Brazil ruled the country, because although an Act was passed emancipating slaves yet the people were practically slaves. He had not told them of the experience of that country, but he (Hon. Mr. Macrossan), as far as he had heard hitherto, knew that it had not been a success, but had been a very expensive experiment. Several hundreds of thousands of pounds had been expended. He thought two mills had been erected, and so expensive was the experiment that he believed the £50,000 now proposed would not erect one mill on a similar system to what had been adopted in that country. It had been said by several members on that side, and also by several on the Government side, who were prepared to vote for the £50,000 being spent, and notably the member for Rosewood and the junior member for North Brisbane, that there were very many serious objections to the passing of the vote, and that the scheme was outside the legitimate limits of Government administration; and so it was. That was the contention of his side, and he believed that that was a very proper contention to hold. Now, the only thing that might be said in favour of the scheme was, that it was an experiment of a very novel kind. He might say that, as far as miners were concerned, they had a right to expect equal assistance from the Government. In fact, he had been obliged himself to combat the opinion of miners on that very subject. He had known places where there was no crushing mill, and, of course, a crushing mill was as much required on a quartz field as a sugar-mill in a sugar-growing district. Well, he had known places where there was no likelihood of a crushing plant being established, and where there was every probability of a couple of hundred miners being able to obtain a very good livelihood if one was established, and they had asked why the Government would not establish a crushing plant. But when the matter was placed before them in the light in which it had been placed that night, and which hon. members opposite would not understand, the miners saw it at once. They saw it would be a mistake and they waited until a combination of capitalists erected a crushing mill. The same thing ought to be done with the sugar-growers

who, the Premier said, wished to have the mills established. But if the speculation was a paying one, capital would come out and establish central mills by private enterprise. The scheme now proposed seemed to be the outcome of the failure of the Premier to find a substitute for black labour. That was all he could see in it. He promised a long time ago that he would find a substitute. He had failed to do so, and now he was compelled by the promise he had made to make an attempt to prove that there was no substitute required further than the labour at present in the colony. Now, that was the only thing that could be said in favour of the scheme; that it was an attempt to prove that coloured labour was not required to successfully grow and manufacture sugar. Every argument could be used in favour of the scheme but that, and everything else that had been advanced was as nothing compared with that. A number of gentlemen on the other side of the Committee believed, or professed to believe, that sugar could be grown and manufactured profitably and successfully without the assistance of inferior, cheap, or coloured labour of any kind, and they had determined to carry their ideas into effect, if possible, at the expense of the country. But he did not think that that was right. There were a sufficient number of capitalists among the Liberal party, who, if they thought the scheme was a good one, could subscribe sufficient capital amongst themselves to provide for the cost of one mill, and try with that one mill, instead of trying at the expense of the State; but they knew better. They knew very well that for every £1 spent 15s. at least would be lost, and the remaining 5s. would represent probably a quantity of machinery which would not realise 5s. in the £1. But it became a question whether or not the obstruction against the vote should be carried on; his own opinion was that it should not. He thought himself that men on his side of the Committee, who were so entirely opposed to the carrying of the vote, had done their duty so far by showing to the country the wrongful intention of the Government to enter into a commercial speculation, and he thought, if they carried obstruction any further, they would be playing into the hands of the Premier of the colony. When there was such a large majority in that Committee who were willing to allow the Government to try the scheme, then let the scheme be tried, so long as the expenditure was confined to £50,000; it might be a very good expenditure. Their obstruction would have this effect, at any rate, that, if they did not pass the vote, the Premier would be able to say, immediately the House was out of session, to those gentlemen all over the colony who did not believe in kanaka labour, "I would have produced a scheme that would have solved the question at once but for the action of the gentlemen opposed to me on the other side of the House." And the great cry of black labour *versus* white would still be left in the hands of the Premier to work it as he pleased during the recess. He thought it was unwise to carry the obstruction too far. He believed that, having done their duty, by dividing against—in opposing the motion by dividing against it—they should throw the whole of the onus of responsibility of failure upon the Government, that was to say—admitting that they were confined to the expenditure of £50,000 only. Then, if the scheme was a failure, it would be the failure of the Government, and the triumph would be for the Opposition. On the other hand, if the scheme was a success, it would be a grand thing for the colony, no doubt, and the £50,000 would be well expended in that event; but, as he said before, if there was a failure, it would rest upon the Government. If it was a failure, the odium



would fall upon the Government, but if it was a success, then let them have all the credit and the colony all the benefit. Now, that was the light in which he looked at it. He was just as much opposed to the motion as any other member of the Committee. He regarded it as a blunder; but, regarding it as a blunder, he was prepared to go to a division upon it and let the Government spend the money.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he could not see the conclusion logically that the hon. member had arrived at after the first part of his speech. The hon. member had stated that he did not at all believe in the vote, but that they ought to let it go now if there was a majority in favour of it, because, although he believed firmly that it would not be a success, yet the failure would rest on the shoulders of the Government. Now, he held that if the scheme was to be a failure, and result in disaster to the colony, as he believed it would, the Opposition ought to do all they could to prevent such a disaster falling upon the colony. Every member of the Opposition should do what he could to prevent the vote from passing. The sugar industry was not the only one in the colony that was in a depressed condition. The Committee had been told over and over again that there was no special reason, except one he would refer to afterwards, why the sugar industry should be put in a different position to any other in the colony. They all knew that the pastoral industry was at present in a depressed condition, but if the squatters came to the House and asked for a vote of money for their assistance, and other industries did the same, what would the result be? Why, that the revenue of the colony could not stand it. He could not see why the sugar industry should be so particularly patted on the back. It was a dangerous pat he admitted that it received—the soft pat that the cat gave to a mouse before striking its claws into it. The Premier knew as well as he did—and that was knowing a good deal—that his object in trying to get the vote passed was to burk the labour question. Did anyone believe that the vote was put on the Estimates, as husbands were said to treat their wives—out of pure love and affection? He did not believe the Premier had ever any love or affection for the sugar industry, and the vote was simply a bait to catch the votes of those people who might say to the Premier, “Your Government has done all it could to destroy the sugar industry,” and so that he might reply—“What! We have done all we could to destroy the sugar industry! Why, look what I did! I put £50,000 on the Estimates for the establishment of central sugar-mills.” And, at the same time, the Premier knew that he could get a dozen sugar-mills at Mackay, unused at the present time. To make the matter even worse he proposed to erect the first central sugar-mill at Mackay. Why Mackay? He (Mr. Morehead) did not know, unless the people there had made themselves obnoxious to the Premier. Why was not Rosewood selected instead? And why had not the hon. member for Rosewood spoken on that subject? He (Mr. Morehead) could not understand why Mackay had been chosen, unless it was for the reason that the member for that district had made himself so obnoxious that he must be bought with a bribe. It almost looked like that. Again, why did not the Premier insist the other night on rejecting the Council’s amendment against what he would term the baser sugar-planters being prevented from adjudicating on any case connected with the Polynesian labour? Hon. members could put these things together and draw their own conclusions. He did not know what might have passed between the hon. member for Mackay and the Premier, 1885—4 x

but he did know that he was not prepared to vote £50,000 to be used at the beck and call of the Ministry—to be served out in loans in any way the Ministry might choose, without being controlled by any Act of Parliament. He objected to any such power being given to the Government. The Premier told them last night that the money was to be given to the Government to deal with as they chose—to lend it out in loans in extraordinary ways, never, apparently, to be recovered again. As he asked them to pass the vote without any guarantee whatever as to the mode of its expenditure, he (Mr. Morehead) would do all he knew and could to prevent it from passing. If the money was granted there would be no end to similar votes being placed on the Estimates. Why should they not have a vote for the establishment of woollen manufactories as well? And were there not hundreds of other industries which could be mentioned in the same way? To that question no answer had been yet given by the Premier, although it had been asked over and over again. The reason probably that the Premier had given no answer to it yet was that he had no answer to give. The hon. gentleman was doing all he could to destroy self-reliance in the units that composed the community. There was no doubt about that. He was a man who, in order to keep power, endeavoured to make friends with everyone, no matter at what cost to the State. And so the people were now to be taxed to assist an industry which was apparently tottering. That industry was to be propped up by the people who were in no way directly interested in it. The day might come when there would be a Government in power who might be anxious to support the squatting industry, and that Government might say, “Wool is very low, the price of fat stock is very unsatisfactory, the squatting industry is in a very depressed state,” and, following the example set by the Premier, they would devise some scheme by which a sum of money would be voted to buttress up the squatting industry. And where would that sort of thing end? It might be applied to every industry in the colony. If an industry could not be kept up by itself—if it could not live unless fed by the State—better let it die. He was inclined to think that a child which could not be nursed naturally by its mother and had to be fed by other people had better die. The Chinese, who were a wise people, had, he believed, adopted that system. He believed also that in the mining localities of the North of England—he would appeal to the hon. member for Stanley to have this statement confirmed or otherwise—that the people in those parts of England, in the olden days, when the roofs of the houses were composed of tiles, were accustomed to throw a child as soon as it was born on to the roof, and if it hung on and did not fall it was called a “clagger,” and was allowed to live, while, on the other hand, if it fell down it was allowed to perish. By its energy in clinging on to the tiles a child was regarded as having shown that it intended to stick to the world. Unless the sugar industry was a “clagger” it had better go. He most distinctly objected, on the part of himself and his constituents, to be taxed to support an industry which could not support itself, and he should do all he could and all he knew to prevent the vote being passed.

Question—That the sum of 3d. only be granted—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 13.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Macrossan, Norton, Jessop, Govett, Horwitz, Kates, Palmer, Annear, Morehead, Lissner, Nelson, and Chubb.

NOES, 29.

Messrs. Griffith, Miles, Dickson, Black, Sheridan, Dutton, Moreton, Midgley, Brookes, Jordan, Rutledge, Isambert, Pooto, White, Backland, Wakefield, Bailey, Bulcock, Smyth, Lumley Hill, Ferguson, McMaster, Higson, Foxton, Macfarlane, Aland, Salkeid, Beattie, and Grimes.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that as it was quite evident that a certain section of the Committee preferred their comfort to their principles, and did not seem at all inclined to back up their opinions, it was not his intention to continue what became, under such circumstances, pure obstruction, or be any party to it. At the same time, he thought they might fairly deal with the vote as the vote for a rabbit-proof fence was dealt with on the previous night, and reduce it by one-half. £25,000 was quite enough to give as a loan in aid of the establishment of central sugar-mills, which even the Government admitted were only an experiment. He was the more induced to move an amendment to that effect because the Government, for reasons which must be obvious to hon. members, would be only too pleased to see obstruction, as it would prevent discussion on a matter which was yet to come before the House; and he did not want to assist them in that direction. He moved, by way of amendment, that the vote be reduced by £25,000.

The PREMIER said it was stated by the hon. member for Balonne that the Government were anxious to delay the vote, but it was scarcely worth while to answer that. He could assure the Committee that the Government were very anxious to dispose of the matter to which the hon. gentleman referred.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Perhaps the hon. gentleman will tell me what I referred to.

The PREMIER: If the hon. gentlemen did not know, he must admit that he made a mistake, but he gave the hon. member credit for meaning something. The Government asked for the sum of £50,000 because it was not desirable to confine the experiment to one place in the colony. He was aware of the difficulty and responsibility of selecting places where the experiment should be tried, but the Government were prepared to take that responsibility, believing that it would be in the interests of the country. He did not think the vote was in any sense a vote on account; he believed it was quite sufficient for the purpose for which it was intended, and there was no intention on the part of the Government to ask for any further sum.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman evidently thought he saw to what he (Mr. Morehead) had alluded, but he never said what it was, and it was uncertain whether he or the Premier was right. However, the hon. gentleman, no doubt, had a guilty conscience, and there were so many things he was afraid might be raked up that he thought it might be one of many. Therefore he wished the hon. gentleman to particularise which special crime he thought was likely to be dealt with. He did not agree with the Premier with regard to the sum of £50,000 not being a vote on account. If it meant anything it meant an advance on account or else foreclosing on those to whom the money was advanced. If the country was going in for loans on account they had better walk before they ran; and he therefore hoped the Committee would consent to voting only £25,000 to begin with. If they gave the Government for their experimental pawnbroking a sum of £25,000 to play with, that would be quite enough to advance at the present time. He believed that the principle on which the vote was based was a wrong principle, and even if it

were a right principle the present was not the time, having regard to the financial position of the country, when such an experiment should be tried. He took it that even the Colonial Treasurer would not have the hardihood to assert, in his usual bland tones and well-rounded sentences, that the colony was in a flourishing condition. The present was no time to play at skittles with the money of the taxpayers—at least, that was his opinion, though the Government appeared to think differently—or when the members of that Committee, who were the representatives of the various constituencies, should be asked and forced by the Government to vote money for that special purpose—at a time when every shilling would be wanted—to support an industry which seemed to be languishing, appeared to him not only a blunder but a crime.

Mr. BLACK said he was necessitated again to give his support to the Premier. Without recapitulating the many arguments brought forward in support of the vote, he might say that if the experiment was to be tried at all it should be tried on a proper scale, which halving the vote would not allow. Mackay had been frequently referred to, but he did not know why, unless it was on account of the fact that the member for that place took a great interest in the question. It was open, however, to any part of the tropics to make the experiment, and he considered that the experiment would be as valuable, if not more so, if tried on the Johnstone, the Herbert, and other places further north, which were even better adapted for the growth of sugar than Mackay. For those reasons, among others, he thought it was advisable to try the experiment in different localities. The views held by the planters of Mackay might not be held by the planters further north, and there were many reasons why the experiment should be tried in more places than one. He hoped, however, that the Government would not be led away by the visionary schemes of speculators, who might try to foist different kinds of machinery on them. It had been said that a number of the mills at Mackay were idle. He was not aware of that, though he knew as much about the mills at Mackay as anyone, but he could say that even if some mills were idle now they would be able to work as soon as conditions were sufficiently favourable. He was sorry the member for Balonne had left the Chamber, but he would say that he had always fought loyally side by side with that hon. gentleman in any cause so long as he believed that cause was an honest one; and he thought it came with a very bad grace from that hon. gentleman to suggest that he (Mr. Black) had in any way been bought by the Premier. Perhaps it was said in a jocular sort of way, and not intended to be interpreted exactly as it was expressed, but he thought hon. gentlemen would credit him with acting independently and according to his convictions. The action he had felt compelled to take in opposition to the Premier on another question during the last ten days ought to have shown that he was not being bought. He supported the vote on grounds he had already given. He believed it was a step in the right direction, and one which would prove the means of solving one of the most difficult political problems at present creating an intense feeling between the different parts of the colony—between the North and the South.

Mr. LISSNER said that, in the absence of his friend, the hon. member for Balonne, he might state, for the satisfaction of the hon. member for Mackay, that that hon. member did not mean what he said. He thought that hon. member had made a very

fair proposition to the Government to get matters settled. The Government and their supporters accepted 10s. in the £1 on the rabbit question, and they might, very fairly, do the same thing with regard to the little affair now before the Committee. He, for one, should support his hon. friend the member for Balonne in voting for £25,000, or 10s. in the £1.

Mr. KATES said he was just as much opposed to the vote as the hon. member for Balonne, but he was not going to be a party to obstruction. He had stated on the previous day that, on behalf of his constituents, he protested against £50,000 being voted for those sugar-mills, but he thought they should submit to the majority. They were generally ruled by the majority, who had as much right to say "Yes" as the minority had to say "No." He was glad to see that the hon. member for Balonne had modified his obstruction, and had no doubt that in a very short time the Government would be able to carry the vote, and that the Committee would be able to get on with business.

Question—That £25,000 only be granted—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 14.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Chubb, Lissner, Macrossan, Smyth, Annear, Horwitz, Palmer, Govett, Morehead, Nelson, Jessop, Norton, and Kates.

NOES, 27.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Dickson, Moreton, Griffith, Dutton, Sheridan, Ferguson, Black, Jordan, White, Isambert, Footo, Brookes, Wakefield, McMaster, Bulcock, Buckland, Aland, Midgley, Higson, Lumley Hill, Bailey, Macfarlane, Salkeld, Beattie, and Grimes.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question put.

Mr. ANNEAR said he had tried very hard on the previous evening to get information which was denied then, but which they had got from the Premier that evening. He had asked where that sum of £50,000 was to be expended—whether the expenditure was to be in one place; and he was very glad to hear the Premier say that it was not the intention of the Government to expend it in that favoured place where they all thoroughly believed—or had been led to believe—it would be spent—that was Mackay. If that debate had done no other good, it had done that much—they having got an admission from the hon. gentleman a few minutes ago that it would not be spent there. He hoped that in this case he (Mr. Annear) would prove to be a false prophet; but he felt as confident as he knew that he was present in that Chamber that evening, that the expenditure of that money—wherever it might be expended—would end in utter failure. The hon. member for Mackay had said that all the mills at Port Mackay were in full working order—that there were no mills idle there; but he (Mr. Annear) had different information from that. He believed that there were very efficient sugar-mills there, and that the latest improvements for making the best of sugar were to be found in the factories there. He believed that some of those factories could now be obtained for 50 per cent. less than their first cost. Such being the case, he thought that the Government need not go out of the colony for machinery at all. If plant like that could be obtained for a small sum of money, he hoped the Government would take that into their serious consideration when they commenced the expenditure of the vote. He did sincerely hope that things would not turn out as he anticipated; but, as he stated last night, so he now stated again, that it was a great injustice that any sum of money should be spent to foster or attempt to bolster up any industry, whether it was the sugar industry, the maize industry, or

any other. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Balonne. Why did they not go up to the Rosewood, and spend some of that money there? Simply because it was not required in that locality; the people there were quite able to look after themselves. They took up the land and could get a living out of it, and that could be done anywhere, without their being fostered by the State. As he stated the other night, it would create a department. There would have to be a chief, and a second under him, and a third and a fourth. He supposed they would wear a livery or go about in uniform. There were too many hangers-on already. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, that the majority should rule. He always bowed to the decision of the majority; but he had given his vote, fully believing that he gave it in the right direction.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said, now that the Committee seemed to have determined to pass the amount of money that the Government asked for trying that experiment, there was one point upon which he would like to have some light thrown by the Premier. If hon. gentlemen turned to the scheme before them, they would find that the sugar-mills were to be worked entirely with the capital that was furnished by the Government. That capital was furnished on loan, and the Government took as security for it the lands of the people who were going to transact business with the mill. As a matter of fact, therefore, so far as the memorandum of association and articles went, all those "B" shares referred to were paid-up shares.

The PREMIER: Unpaid shares.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said they were actually paid up by the Government and not by the men. The men gave security for repayment to the Government; but the Government were to pay up the full amount of the shares, otherwise where was the money to come from? The Government found the money for the purpose of paying for the shares, and they took as security all the property of the actual holders of the shares. If they turned to the memorandum of association they found, amongst other powers, that the directors had the power to lend the money of the company upon such security as they thought fit. They might endorse, accept, and make any bill of exchange or promissory note. In fact, they were allowed a very wide scope. They could enter into the ordinary business of a merchant and undertake the whole of the ordinary risks of a merchant. Of course, in undertaking those risks it was possible that they might be called upon to provide for losses. But what was the security that any of the creditors of the company had, in doing business? The shares were all paid up, and the Government had the whole of the security from the real shareholder. Were the Government at all responsible for the liabilities the company were empowered to make?

The PREMIER said he would have thought that a man of the hon. gentleman's experience would have understood the position. The shares of the company would not be paid up at all; that was the proposition, but the shareholders would be liable to the full amount of their shares, which liability would be secured by mortgage. As to the wide powers given under the memorandum of association, it must be borne in mind that it was anticipated that the whole amount would be paid off in a few years. The Government representatives would disappear from the company and it would be eventually an ordinary central mill working with its own capital. The hon. gentleman must

be aware that a memorandum of association could not be altered except by Act of Parliament, when it was once registered; so that it was necessary that there should be some general powers to carry on the business in that way. So long as they were working on the capital found by the Government, they would not be allowed to enter into any speculation, or any business other than that for which the money was advanced.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the hon. member talked about the unpaid capital of the Government. Where was the capital to come from that was to make those sugar-mills? Clause 5 of the articles of association said that the capital should consist of 2,000 shares of £10 each, called B shares. The Premier said the mill was to cost £25,000, so that all the capital would be called up, and would be paid by the Government. Then the Government would hold the security of the land for the repayment of that money. How then could the directors of the company—the Government having the whole security that they could offer—get credit? They would get no credit. The hon. gentleman had not taken into consideration at all where the capital came from. The Government advanced the capital; it was advanced on loan, and they were actually advancing it to the full amount of the shares. The mill was to cost £25,000, and the Government were going to advance £25,000 and take security. Then the company had to transact all the ordinary mercantile business connected with the sugar-mill, and, in addition to that, the merchants' risks. There was nothing behind those risks to fall back upon. The hon. member talked about uncalled capital—there would be none there—the whole of the capital would be raised by advances from the Government. The holders of the property had to give their security to the Government for the repayment of the money advanced on their shares, and there was no new capital so far as the general creditors of the company were concerned.

The PREMIER said surely the hon. gentleman understood the constitution of a joint-stock company?

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I should think so.

The PREMIER said there were a certain number of shares of a certain amount. The persons who took those shares were bound to contribute that amount to the company in cash. It was not proposed that they should contribute anything to the company in cash at first. They would, therefore, owe the whole amount. The company would be a corporate body, and a loan would be made to that company. The shareholders would owe the company the whole amount of their shares. If the company had £10,000 nominal capital and nothing paid up, and £20,000 upon loan, the shares would still not be paid up. The hon. member must know that. The full amount would be unpaid. It might, however, be desirable that the shareholders should pay up some of the money, and in one case a proposition was made to the Government that the shareholders should pay up about two-fifths of the necessary capital. The hon. gentleman could distinguish between the Government lending a company enough money to put up a mill and the shareholders paying up the capital. The Government security would be threefold. First, the property of the company—the mill and the land; secondly, the mortgages on the property of the shareholders; and thirdly, the individual responsibility of the shareholders to the full amount of their shares.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the security of the Government did not trouble him at all. What he wanted to know was what security would the creditors of company have?

The PREMIER: The unpaid capital; that is all.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that all the money required for the mill would be advanced by the Government, and they took as security the whole of the property of the people who did business with it, and then the company were empowered to do business with their creditors, while the Government would have the whole security; so that if the creditors foreclosed and came down upon the company, there was no property to attach. They had not the slightest security. The hon. gentleman said there was the unpaid capital of the shareholders of the company, but he quite forgot that the Government had advanced money and taken all the security; so that there was no other security left, and the company would be allowed to do business with the outside world without being able to give any security for their liabilities.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was very glad indeed to find that the leader of the Opposition had seen the immense difficulties which surrounded the voting of that sum of money. If anyone took the trouble to read what fell from the Premier on the previous night—though possibly many persons might not take that trouble—they would see what enormous power the scheme would place in the hands of the Government. It was surrounded with so many difficulties, both to the borrower and the lender, that he believed the money would never be properly spent unless the proposal made by himself and others was adopted—namely, that an Act of Parliament, defining the way in which the money should be dealt with, was passed before the money was voted on the Estimates. Probably no hon. member had read what the Premier had said on the previous night, but if they would only read, as he had done for the sixth time that evening, the formalities which would have to be gone through, and the conditions by which the scheme was surrounded, both with regard to the borrower and the State, they must come to the conclusion that there was either a bogus sum of money to be voted or one which could only be made available at enormous cost to the borrower. The Premier had shifted his ground a good deal with reference to the vote. He told them, in the first instance, on the previous evening, that the money was to be expended at Mackay. Just now he gave as a reason why £50,000 should be voted instead of £25,000, that the experiment should be tried in more than one place. The Committee had also been told by the hon. member for Mackay that there was so much cane in the Mackay district that the mills were not able to crush it. He (Mr. Morehead) thought that was a good and sufficient reason why there was no necessity for making an experiment in that district, and they might, therefore, put on one side the amount required for Mackay. Of course the hon. member pleaded, and properly so, to have some of the plunder—for it was only that—expended in his district. He (Mr. Morehead) hoped that if the money was voted the programme laid down by the Premier on the previous night and repeated that evening would be carried out, because he was perfectly certain that if it was honestly carried out, with reference to the method of lending money and so forth, no money would ever be borrowed or lent, and the State would not suffer at all. He hoped, however, that the Premier would withdraw the vote; but he did not think the hon. gentleman would, as he was too anxious to get a little more bribery money; in fact, he could only hold together his adhesive tail by gumming them together in that way with golden ointment.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that as that money was about to be expended in making the experiment to show whether sugar could be successfully grown by white labour only, in the districts of Mackay, the Herbert, and the Johnstone, he wished to know from the Premier positively, how, as the articles of association contained nothing about coloured or white labour, he was going to arrange and enforce upon the growers of cane and the workers of the mills the condition that white labour only was to be employed? That was a matter of importance, and the admission was only drawn from the Premier the previous evening, after some considerable screwing by the leader of the Opposition. They were asked to vote that money, depending on the good faith and good intentions of the Government, and he would like to know how the condition he referred to was to be enforced; it was a condition which he and other hon. members looked upon as a necessary one.

The PREMIER said he did not know what the hon. member called some considerable screwing. If he meant his having at once admitted the error when his attention was called to it, then that was the considerable screwing. He (the Premier) stated then that he would rectify it at once, and pointed out that it could be done by making it a condition of the mortgage. That was the only way it could be done. If hon. members would look at the scheme they would see that, although it might be imperfect in many particulars, it had the advantage of being practicable. It gave the Government complete control. The matter referred to had not entirely escaped his observation. He intended that the Government should have a controlling power in the company, but it was far better that the conditions should be put into the agreement, which was the foundation of the company. The Government would not, of course, advance any money to any company unless it was formed on a basis which they approved.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he did not think the hon. member for Townsville used too strong language when he said the admission was screwed out of the Premier on the previous evening, that it was an experiment for trying whether sugar-growing could be carried on without coloured labour of any kind. It was a curious fact that in introducing the vote the hon. gentleman did not make the slightest allusion to that matter; he never said one word as to the experiment being for that purpose, or as to any necessity for making such an experiment. And when they referred to the articles of association they would find that there was not one word there about the matter. The Premier was not correct in saying that the condition could only be placed in the mortgage. If a condition of that sort was to be inserted in the mortgage it would be perfectly worthless. The scope and object of a company was always expressed in the articles of association, as they stated the object for which the company was formed, the business they intended to do, and the manner in which it was intended to do that business. In the draft articles of association in the hands of hon. members there was not one single word about white or coloured labour. It would be very easy to make it one of the conditions of the agreement that no coloured labour of any description should be employed, either in cultivating the cane or making the sugar; and that was the place where the condition ought to be inserted. To talk about putting it in the mortgage was simply absurd; the proper place for it was in the memorandum of association. The business the company intended to carry on, so far as the Government had stated, was to grow and make sugar by means of white labour. That should be declared.

The PREMIER said that if the hon. gentleman would refer to the papers he would see that the mortgage was part of the articles of association. It would be useless to put a condition of that kind in the articles of association without providing any consequence for the breach of it. As to the statement that he (the Premier) had not made any mention of white labour, the only answer he could give was to refer to his speech as reported in *Hansard*, the whole burden of which was the substitution of white labour in the shape of small farmers for coloured labour.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, as the money was not loan money, but money saved by the former Government—

The PREMIER: Indeed!

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman knows it is so.

The PREMIER: That was spent long ago. These are our own savings.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that as it was not loan money there could be no reasonable excuse for going to England for any machinery that was necessary. If the hon. member could not buy machinery which was said to be lying idle in the Northern district, he hoped he would have it made in the colony. If it were loan revenue, it would be only a *quid pro quo* to get the machinery from the country from which the money was borrowed. He believed several foundries in Queensland were making sugar machinery of a good quality—quite good enough, at any rate, for the central mills. Would the hon. gentleman give the preference to those foundries, or would he go outside to England, or even to Melbourne?

The PREMIER said that, other things being equal, or anything like equal, the Government would always give the preference to the local manufacturer, as they always had done. He could not promise definitely, because he did not know what kind of machinery it would be best to erect; it might be something that could not be got here. He did not think the question of loan money or revenue made any difference in that respect, and he thought the Government in every case should give preference to the local manufacture.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if the company would have anything to say in the matter? or would the Government have the whole say?

The PREMIER said the matter would have to be definitely settled to the satisfaction of the Government before the money was advanced. The Government, of course, would not advance £50,000 until it was known what the company proposed to do.

Question put and passed.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES No. 2, 1884-5.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £1,442 7s. 11d. be granted to defray the further expenses of the Executive and Legislative Departments for the year 1884-5.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH asked what had caused the addition to the vote for the Refreshment Room?

The PREMIER said it was accounted for by the extreme length of the session last year, which lasted nearly six months.

Mr. GRIMES said he saw an item for repairs to furniture. He would take the opportunity of calling the attention of those who had charge of the matter to the necessity for increased accommodation for members. They were becoming so

thick on the Government benches that it was getting uncomfortably hot. There was great necessity for another bench at least. If they had to meet in the summer-time it would be positively unbearable.

Mr. BLACK said he did not think the hon. member need be alarmed, as, from certain signs he observed on the Government side, he imagined a considerable number of hon. gentlemen would take their seats next session on the Opposition benches, where there was plenty of room for them.

Mr. GRIMES said he did not think that was very likely. Hon. members on the Government side were very select in the company they kept.

Mr. SHERIDAN said it was far more probable that the hon. member for Mackay would cross to the Government side. That was the way the wind lay now.

Mr. NORTON said allusion had been made to the furniture. He would like to know how the furniture was supplied to the Library last recess. There was no Library Committee sitting, but he noticed that the furniture was all re-covered with some sort of material that now looked as old as if it had been in use ten years. It was the worst covering he ever saw put on furniture.

The PREMIER said it was done on the recommendation of the President of the Council and the Speaker of the Assembly.

Mr. NORTON said it was exceedingly bad material. The chairs near the window were spoilt.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the sum of £53,052 18s. be granted to further defray the expenses of the Colonial Secretary's Department.

The PREMIER said it was proper that he should give some information on some of those items. The first three items he did not think required explanation. There were two items for acting clerks of petty sessions at Rockhampton and Bowen. The officers at those towns received leave of absence after being for a good many years in the same place, and it was necessary to appoint someone to act in their absence. The item for extra salary for the police magistrate at Townsville arose from the fact that that officer had been transferred from Clermont at the same salary he had at Clermont. The items for the Police Department were under different heads, and explained themselves. The increase of salary for the Government Resident at Thursday Island was accounted for by the difference between the salary paid to the previous resident police magistrate and that voted for the Government Resident on the Estimates-in-Chief—£700 a year. There was a large amount for the Government Printer. The extraordinary number of papers laid before Parliament last year, and the unusual amount of legislation done, accounted for a good deal of that. He was informed that the printing of the necessary forms under the Act passed last year, requiring the different public officers to pay their fees into the Treasury, amounted to over £2,000. That was, of course, the first cost. The item was increased also by the printing of the forms under the Insanity Act and the Land Act. There was an amount of £1,200 for the printing of Mr. Justice Harding's book on the Supreme Court. That was a work prepared by Mr. Justice Harding, and was a very valuable book, which would give great assistance to all persons having legal business in the colony. The work was compiled by Mr. Justice Harding, entirely voluntarily. He gave the whole value of the book to the

Government; the Government bore the cost of printing and received the returns from the sale of the book, which it was expected would more than recoup the outlay upon the printing. There was some increase in the Colonial Stores Department, and there was a salary for the Acting Agent-General who took charge until Mr. Garrick arrived at home. The amount for the Colonial Stores Department was spread over a large number of items, which he could give if the Committee thought necessary. The item of blankets for the blacks last year amounted to £5,640. Under the heading of the Defence Force, there was also a considerable sum. The camp of instruction had cost a little more than was expected. There was the item for the "Gayundah," which explained itself, and the cost of the camp and works at Lytton, including the cost of the fortifications at the stockade, which was now an extremely strong defensive position, amounted to £3,054. The amount for horses was £1,259, but of course the horses were now in the possession of the Government. There was an amount of £464 in connection with the artillery camp formed at Bowen Park for the training of horses. There was an amount set down for the "Advance" while stationed as guard-boat at Thursday Island, of £1,273; and there were expenses in connection with the "Jemima" coal hulk, and a small amount for the "Pippo." There was also an amount set down for coal-sheds at Eagle Farm. It was found absolutely necessary that there should be some coal stores here, and an application was made by the admiral commanding the station to the Government to provide storage for coal. He thought the amount put down for the work was very moderate. The sheds at Eagle Farm were capable of storing 2,000 tons of coal, and the amount included the cost of a wharf there which would accommodate any war-vessel of ordinary size. There was an extra amount down also for charitable allowances in connection with hospitals. There was an amount down for a medical officer, whose services were necessitated at Lytton during the smallpox epidemic in Sydney. The item for Contingencies, Central Board of Health, consisted almost entirely of fees paid to Dr. Bancroft for attending the Sanitary Conference held in Sydney. Grants in aid of public institutions were, of course, made on the basis of pound for pound subscription. Under the heading of "Miscellaneous Services," £5,952 was the expense of the Royal Commission and the cost in connection with the return of the New Guinea islanders. £700 was expended in purchase of land at Warwick. Those were the principal items that required explanation, but he would give any further explanation if required.

Mr. CHUBB said a very voluminous report from Dr. Taylor was laid on the table of the House. Was that work done gratuitously? He assumed not.

The PREMIER said he was not in a position to say what the report cost. He had not read it yet, but he knew that the Agent-General was instructed to pay Dr. Taylor's travelling expenses while in England.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to know if the Printing Office earned any money, and whether its earnings were put under the head of revenues? It ought to earn a great deal of money.

The PREMIER said the Printing Office did earn a great deal of money, which had been put down in the quarterly returns, under miscellaneous receipts. He did not know what the earnings were, but they were considerable.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if it would not be advisable, when there was a pressure

of work in the Printing Office, to give some of it out to private printers, so that the office might be relieved of pressure?

The PREMIER said he did not know that that could be conveniently done, as much of the work done at the office had to bear the imprimatur of the office, and be authenticated. Some work had been done in the office that might fairly be left to private persons, but the greater part of it had to be done by the office. The return last year from the Government Printing Office was £2,689, and that was placed under the heading of "Miscellaneous Receipts," in the quarterly returns.

Mr. NORTON said a large sum was expended last year for blankets for the blacks. What was the contract price?

The PREMIER said he did not know what the contract price was. A number of requisitions had come in from police magistrates and others, who said that the previous supply was too small, and the Government felt bound to act upon those recommendations.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked if the hon. gentleman had seen the blankets, and seen if they were of good quality? He had seen blankets that he could spit through, and which would scarcely hold together.

The PREMIER said he had not seen the blankets, but that was one of the matters that he should be glad to pay attention to if he had time.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked if the £5,600 expended in blankets was additional expenditure?

The PREMIER said it was not. He could give the hon. member particulars if he wished.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he did not want to know the particulars, but was £5,600 the whole amount required?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. NORTON said there was an item for the purchase of land at Mackay for police purposes. What land was that?

The PREMIER said the land adjoined the present court-house site. There had been a great deal of difficulty about getting the land, but the site was considered the most suitable one available. £1,000 was originally asked for it, but £800 was ultimately accepted.

Mr. BLACK asked what the area of the land was?

The PREMIER said it was an allotment at the corner of a street.

Mr. BLACK: It is not a corner allotment?

The PREMIER said he did not know anything about that, but he knew there was a lot of delay before the site could be purchased, as a title could not be obtained for it. From information received from the Commissioner for Police and the police magistrate for Mackay, he believed the most suitable site had been purchased. He thought the area must be more than a quarter of an acre, because it made a very considerable addition to the ground upon which the police barracks stood.

Mr. BLACK: From whom was the land purchased?

The PREMIER said he did not know who the legal owner was, but the person with whom the negotiations were made was Mr. Michael Ready. If that was what the hon. member wanted to know he could have told him at once. The land was purchased on the recommendation of the hon. member for Mackay.

Mr. BLACK said he could not allow that statement to pass unchallenged. He approved

of the purchase, as the site was a most valuable one, but the purchase was not made upon his recommendation, and he thought the price was a very good one indeed.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said if the transaction was a proper one he did not see why the Premier should be anxious to throw the responsibility of it on the hon. member for Mackay.

The PREMIER: I believe it was a very good purchase.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked why the hon. gentleman then tried to make the hon. member for Mackay father the purchase? He would like to have some information with reference to the item of £1,924 8s.—expenditure on the Royal Commission. He believed that £1,000 was paid as fees to the members of the Commission, and he wanted to know how the balance of £924 was expended.

The PREMIER said he had no desire to father the purchase of the land that had been referred to on the hon. member for Mackay, but the hon. member apparently wished to make some point about the person from whom the land was purchased. As to the £1,924 8s. for the New Guinea Islanders' Royal Commission, £1,000 was for the Commissioners' fees, £84 7s. 7d. for the Secretary, £706 7s. 5d. for personal expenses, and £133 13s. for passages.

Mr. BUCKLAND said there was an item of £253 7s. 6d. for repairs to the schooner "Mavis." Was that amount incurred before she was wrecked?

The PREMIER: Of course it was.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Committee had received no information from the Premier yet as to who was responsible for the alterations in the "Lucinda." Had the hon. gentleman found out yet who was really responsible for those alterations?

The PREMIER said he had laid on the table of the House all the information possessed by the Government on the subject. That was all the information the Government had.

Mr. NORTON: You ought to know.

The PREMIER said the Government might be expected to know everything, but they were only human beings after all. All the correspondence on the subject to be found in the Colonial Secretary's office had been laid on the table, and the only information relating to the alterations which that correspondence contained was with respect to reducing the length, speed, and cargo capacity of the vessel.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked how much she was reduced in length?

The PREMIER said he thought she was reduced ten feet.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that instructions were sent home that the vessel was to be made on certain lines, to carry a certain amount of cargo, and to do a certain amount of work. She came out, however, all passenger accommodation and with no cargo accommodation at all. In fact, that was the reason why they had to buy an additional vessel. Now, who was responsible for the alterations and the extra money expended? That was a case similar to one they discussed the other night, in which a Government engineer attempted to make a railway other than the one Parliament and the Government had authorised.

The PREMIER said the present Government knew nothing of the matter beyond the information contained in the correspondence, and that correspondence took place immediately after the

present Government came into office. Whatever other instructions were given must have been given before the present Government came into office. Certainly the present Government or any officer under their control were not responsible for the alterations.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that could not be so. The late Government ordered a vessel with a certain speed, a certain length, and able to do certain work. That order was altered months after the present Government came into office, and somebody must be responsible for the alterations.

The PREMIER said the alterations must have been made by order before the present Government came into office. The late Government sent home instructions to call tenders for a vessel of a certain speed, length, etc., and the first the present Government heard of it was that the lowest tender was £23,000. Of course, they could not accept that tender. Then correspondence ensued by telegraph about reducing the length and speed, and those were the only matters referred to. The only changes the present Government made were in the length and speed of the vessel, and the negotiations as to the reduced price consequent on those alterations were the only further information they had on the subject.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that before dealing with the "Lucinda" they might, perhaps, better discuss the Royal Commission on the New Guinea islanders. He would ask the Premier whether tenders were called for by him from members of the House for the position of chairman of that Commission, and if so whether the lowest tender was accepted?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would then like to know why Mr. Buckland was selected. Had that hon. member any particular knowledge in regard to the islanders, or was he likely to bring up a report to suit the Ministry, or was he hard-up and required feeding with Government fees? He would really like to know why Mr. Buckland was selected from amongst all the supporters of the Government for the privilege. He did not know that that hon. member had any special qualification for the position. He was a very estimable man no doubt, but when they had to vote a sum of money for a member of that Committee they had a perfect right to criticise the item. He wanted to know what the hon. member did for his money? He had been told that the hon. member brought up a report which had been upset both by the Supreme Court and by a select committee of the House. It was a little too much to pay £450 for an absolute failure. However, no doubt the Premier would explain it, and also the hon. member whose position on that Commission he was alluding to.

Mr. BUCKLAND: No; he will not.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Perhaps for the best of all reasons, that he could not; and probably the Premier was in the same position. The matter was one well worth discussing.

The PREMIER said he had already explained the reason why Mr. Buckland was appointed—namely, because he was considered to be specially competent to perform the duty. He did not know that any better reason could be given.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that was an answer that might satisfy the Premier, but it was not one which would satisfy the public. He had been informed that the hon. member for Bulimba, when asked to give evidence before a select committee appointed by the House, refused to do so on the ground that he had been a member of the Royal Commission. He

objected to that money being voted to a member of Parliament, and he should move, if nobody else did, that it be struck out.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: It has been paid.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not care whether it had been paid or not. Let the Government sue the individual who had improperly got possession of the money. It should never have been paid. None of the commissioners should have been paid until the House approved of what they had done. He also objected to Mr. Milman being paid £100. That man was one of the few who, when he was a squatter, never paid his kanakas—whose kanakas had to be sent back at the expense of the State. Mr. Milman was one of the few defaulters. The Premier—who was hiding his face behind a paper, no doubt in shame—knew as well as he did that Mr. Milman, the police magistrate at Cooktown, was one of the few men who did not carry out his liabilities as regarded his hired Polynesian servants, and yet that was the man who had been selected by the Government to inquire into a matter of that kind! If that was not true, he would withdraw what he had said; and if it was true, he hoped the Premier would admit that he made an error in appointing such a man a Royal Commissioner. With regard to the other commissioner, Mr. Rose, he had nothing to say. He supposed the appointment was a very good one; at any rate, he was not in a position to criticise his conduct, either in the colony, or before he came here, or on the Commission.

Mr. BUCKLAND said the hon. member had accused him of refusing to give evidence before a select committee of the House. His reply to that was simply that he had never been summoned to give evidence before that committee. Had the hon. gentleman forgotten that he himself, on one occasion, when summoned to give evidence before a select committee, refused to answer the questions put to him?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he remembered the occasion very well, and he gave his reasons for refusing to answer the questions. But he had not got £450 out of the State.

Mr. BUCKLAND: The hon. member has done pretty well out of the State.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he believed he had done very good service for the State when serving it as Postmaster-General.

Mr. MIDGLY asked whether the amount included all the expenses connected with the Royal Commission, and whether Mr. Rose received the same emoluments as the hon. member for Bulimba?

The PREMIER said that if the hon. member had been present just now he would have heard him give all the information he asked for. Besides, it had all been printed in reports laid on the table months ago.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he should like to have some particulars with regard to the item of £289 10s. 8d. for trade, for friends of deceased islanders. How were those friends or relatives found out?

The PREMIER said that if the hon. member would read the report of the voyage of the "Victoria" he would see how it was disposed of. Unfortunately a large number of the islanders from New Guinea died in the colony and when the ship went back some explanation of their absence had to be given. It was understood that according to their tribal customs something ought to be sent as a token, a recompense, or as payment for services done while in the colony—it did not matter much what it was called—to their relatives. It was considered



that a great amount of ill-feeling would arise, which would result in danger to the lives of those who afterwards visited the islands, unless those who did not return were in some way represented; and the Government, following the best advice they could get, provided a small package, of about the same value as would have been earned, to be sent back to the relatives of each deceased islander. He believed that in every case that was done.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the attention of the Committee should be directed to the money paid to the commissioners, secretary, inspector, and interpreter, in connection with the voyage of the "Victoria." The story was that numerous gentlemen in Brisbane went in the "Victoria" on a free pleasure trip.

The PREMIER said the commissioners' expenses and their travelling expenses had nothing to do with the voyage of the "Victoria." The commissioners were the members of the Royal Commission that held the inquiry. As to numerous passengers being on board the "Victoria," they must have gone in some mysterious way; they were not on the passenger list, and must have got on board without anybody knowing anything about it. He only knew of one passenger, and that one paid his passage money. Of course the Government did not object to the A.S.N. Company taking a passenger when the Government did not pay for his passage or his food. All the other passengers went under the original charter made by the Government.

Mr. NORTON said he was sorry the Colonial Secretary could not tell them more about the "Lucinda."

The PREMIER said that although whatever had been done since the present Government came into office was done when he was in Sydney, the correspondence in connection with the alteration was carried on by him by telegraph. The real change was that a deck cabin was specified, to be only in the after part of the ship. To have put the deck cabin in the after part of the ship only would have entirely spoilt the appearance, and he understood that the builders, without charging anything extra, carried the deck cabin forward as well as aft, and fitted the vessel up as it was now. He believed that was the only alteration.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH asked whether there was any provision in the original specification for cargo?

The PREMIER said he did not think so.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he knew there was, and it could be seen in the correspondence published last year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it appeared to him that the Premier had, either inadvertently or purposely, got the services of items under discussion very much mixed. If the hon. gentleman would look at the previous page they would find—the schooner "Mavis" repairs, etc., £253 7s. 6d., and smuggled away under "Miscellaneous Services" they would find the "Lucinda," £4,953 16s. 11d. Surely, if it was desirable that the schooner "Mavis" should be exposed to criticism, the amount asked on account of the "Lucinda" should not have been put with the Miscellaneous Services, especially as it was more than one-third of the whole vote. He thought the Premier should give some explanation as to why that difference was made between the two cases.

The PREMIER said the items in the Supplementary Estimates were put down as nearly as possible under the same heads as they appeared in the Estimates-in-Chief. Items which appeared under a special heading in the Estimates-in-

Chief were treated in the same way in the Supplementary Estimates, and items such as those referred to had always been placed under "Miscellaneous Services," as the hon. member would find on referring to the Estimates for previous years. That had always been the practice.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier, of course, sheltered himself under previous practice—what had happened before. That appeared to be the only explanation he could give of the extraordinary position of affairs that he (Mr. Morehead) referred to. He thought the hon. gentleman should give an explanation of the matter without having it dragged out of him. He (Mr. Morehead) did not intend to oppose the vote. The money was owing and would have to be paid; but he thought that was a very improper way of dealing with large sums of money.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said when the matter of the "Lucinda" was before the House the other day it was explained that originally she had two holds, but it appeared from the specifications that they had been departed from entirely.

The PREMIER: Where can I find that?

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: In the papers laid on the table the other day.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He is annoyed that you have found it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: The specifications said: "Before saloon to be the after hold, the hatch being as far forward as possible so as not to interfere with the clear upper deck space more than necessary; to reach from side to side and to be ten feet in length from the after bulkhead of engine-room."

The PREMIER: It is seven feet instead of ten.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: That is gone completely.

The PREMIER: No; it is fitted up as a sleeping-room.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: It is part of the cabin.

The PREMIER: No; there are two holds, seven feet each.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Then it was provided: "Before engine-room to be fore-hold about twelve feet in length." That part of the specification was gone altogether.

The PREMIER said both holds were there, only instead of being twelve feet and ten feet, they were seven feet; they might be more than that; he knew they were not less.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he had never examined the "Lucinda," but took the information the hon. gentleman had given as correct—that the hold in front of the fore-cabin was completely gone, and looking at the vessel from the outside he should think it was so.

The PREMIER said the hold referred to was there, but when it was not wanted for cargo—as it was not continually—it was utilised as a sleeping apartment for the crew.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the other day the hon. gentleman took about half-an-hour to explain that it was perfectly impossible to carry cargo by the "Lucinda"—even stores—down to the different establishments in the Bay, and now he turned round, forgetting the whole of the previous debate and the whole of the information he had given, and told the Committee that she had all the accommodation required, although previously he found fault with her and said she had none, but admitted that she was splendid as a yacht.

The PREMIER said it was the hon. member's memory that was at fault and not his. He did not remember making any speech extending over half an hour on the subject, nor would the hon. gentleman find that he had done so. Probably in the course of the debate referred to the word "stores" was used, but what they were talking about—at any rate what he was talking about—was live stock. There was plenty of room to carry all the heavy goods that were required to be taken down the Bay, but there was very little deck accommodation.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought the matter in dispute might be settled by the intervention of the hon. member for Cook. The leader of the Opposition had stated that he had only seen the "Lucinda" from the outside: the Premier had seen her, both inside and out, and if the hon. gentlemen's politics were so much at variance that it was necessary to refer the matter to arbitration, he should like to refer it to the arbitration of the hon. junior member for Cook, who had seen both the inside and outside of the "Lucinda," as he had also seen both the inside and outside of political parties in that House. He knew that the hon. gentleman was anxious to express his opinion on the subject, and he (Mr. Morehead) was also anxious to comment upon it.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he was not at all unwilling to give his opinion upon the matter. It seemed to him to be a regular case of "sour grapes." Certain members on the Opposition side of the House ordered the "Lucinda" when they were in office, and now when they found that they had not got the use of her and that somebody else had, they appeared to begrudge the expense the colony had gone to in connection with her. He would suggest to the Premier that he should give a little picnic to the Opposition on board the "Lucinda" and then they would learn to appreciate her. Speaking seriously, he believed that it was a very good investment for the colony. Anything that would induce His Excellency the Governor or the Ministry and members of Parliament to travel along the seaboard and see the country that they had to govern would be a benefit to the colony and should have his most hearty support. He did not see the slightest objection to the item.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the speech just made by the junior member for Cook was one of the pleasantest he had ever heard in that House. He was perfectly certain that any Government that hon. member supported must fail. Why he (Mr. Morehead) expatiated with regard to the hon. member's knowledge of the "Lucinda" from the inside, and also from the outside, was with the deliberate intention of getting the hon. member to make a speech, and in that he had succeeded.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman even now cheered him for having induced him to give the Committee and the colony—as the country went to the expense of putting his speech in *Hansard*—his opinion with regard to the great "Lucinda" question. No doubt the steamer had been very costly, and a much more useful boat might have been ordered. However, there she was, and they must do the best they could with—he would not say a bad bargain, but a bargain that was thought very good, but would turn out very bad. The remarks made by the hon. member for Cook about the leader of the Opposition and other hon. gentlemen were unworthy of a member of that Committee. He had never been on board the "Lucinda," but if he wished to,

he only had to ask the Premier to allow him to see her, and he was certain that the permission would be granted. He would only be too glad if it were refused. He thought the original squatting milk of the hon. member for Cook had gone sour on him. He was a Queen-street man now, and occupied his spare time—and he had a good deal of it—in maligning that section of the community which made him a Queen-street man.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Which section is that?

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Queen-street section.

Mr. ALAND: Question!

Mr. MOREHEAD said the teetotaler who represented Toowoomba, and who wore now a voluminous white waistcoat which he did not see decorated as usual with a blue ribbon, had no right to interrupt him. He said the hon. member for Cook passed his spare time in maligning, and, so far as he could, in abusing the party that he before supported. They all knew what would be the result when he became a large landed proprietor in Brisbane. It was always predicted, and it had come to pass. He was very glad of it; he would serve out the hon. gentleman's corn with his own bushel, and he thought that the description that hon. gentleman used to give in the House a few years ago of Queen-street men was perfectly applicable to himself.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that a further sum of £8,707 0s. 1d. be granted for the Administration of Justice.

Mr. MIDGLEY said that part of the Estimates was one that fairly bristled with objectionable features to his mind. He did not understand whether those items had really been paid or not.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. MIDGLEY said that if such were the case it seemed to him that that Committee had no authority whatever in money matters. He could understand that there might be urgent cases in which money might be required to be paid, and the sanction of the Committee obtained afterwards; but where the urgency of giving a gratuity to a public officer could come in, and that urgency should be so great that he could not wait until the item was placed before the representatives of the people—the authorised disbursers of the public funds—he failed to see. It was not the only item of that kind, in connection with that gentleman, that appeared in the Estimates. It was simply treating the Committee with contempt—utterly ignoring it—if items of that kind could be paid without the sanction of that Committee being given. The first item—that to which he referred—on the estimate was a gratuity to R. Little, late Crown Solicitor—£337 10s. It must have been carefully calculated and elaborately gone into, to have it accurate to the extent of 10s. There was a similar item on the Estimates, under the head of the retiring allowances to Civil servants, "R. Little, late Crown Solicitor, £137 10s.," and there was, on the Estimates-in-Chief, page 3, an item "R. Little, late Crown Solicitor, £550." He did not know the gentleman personally, and had no opinion with regard to him individually. He believed that that gentleman obtained a long leave of absence very recently, on full pay. He had been receiving a very large salary; and where the necessity for any gratuity came in he failed to see. It was an utter mystery to him, and there would be a feeling of resentment amongst hon. members against that mode of dealing with public money. There undoubtedly were cases in which it was impossible to get the sanction

of the Committee prior to the expenditure being incurred. The Government must have, in such matters, some degree of discretionary power, but there could be no such valid claim set up in the present case that would satisfy the Committee, when a gratuity was given to a public servant who had previously been well paid and amply provided for in other ways. He would leave the matter to be taken up by other members, and he hoped that there would be a very plain expression of opinion about it, and, if possible, that the item should be struck off the Estimates, unless some very good ground was shown—and the money refunded by those who spent it. That was the first item on the estimate that was open to discussion, and until he received some information about it he would sit down.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that Mr. Little was an old public servant, having been employed by the Government of the colony for over twenty-seven years. He was not paid very well; the greater portion of the time he only received £500 a year and had some private practice. When he was Crown Solicitor he had to perform journeys on circuit with the Crown Prosecutor and Attorney-General at a time when there were no railways.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Was he paid 10d. per mile?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it was not 10d. a mile. In those days the Toowoomba circuit alone would probably occupy three weeks, and when he had to go to Rockhampton on circuit it would probably occupy two months. Those were the days when Mr. Little had to do the work of Crown Solicitor, and the private practice he would have the liberty of enjoying would be very considerably restricted by the numerous and prolonged absences in the performance of his duties. He therefore thought that little weight should be attached to the argument that he was allowed private practice. Mr. Little was twenty-seven years in the Public Service, and only during the last few years was his salary raised by an arrangement of the preceding Government, to the figure at which it stood at the time he retired. Mr. Little's health failed very seriously during the latter part of last year, and although he could have gone on performing his work in a fitful manner, in the intervals of fairly good health, yet he preferred, in the interests of the Public Service, to retire altogether rather than he should be only half doing the work; and the arrangement made with Mr. Little, in consideration of his retiring at once, instead of going on for the whole year, and being entitled on the 1st April to retire on a pension of £550 a year, was that he should receive the difference between the pension of £550 and his salary of £1,000 from the 1st April to the 31st December last year. He (the Attorney-General) did not think that a matter about which there should be serious complaint. The payment was not a gratuity in the sense in which they had heard the word "gratuity" used, and he was sorry to see that it was put down as a gratuity on the Estimates.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Why did you put it down as a gratuity?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not put it down; it was put down in the Treasury Department, and he never saw it until it appeared on the Estimates. There was really a good deal of give as well as take on the part of Mr. Little in the arrangement that was made.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he should like to know if that gratuity—a word for which the Attorney-General was thoroughly responsible as far as he could see, although the hon. gentleman had denied it—had actually been paid to Mr. Little?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes; it has been paid.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he thought there was hardly any necessity for paying it before it had had the sanction of the Committee, and he did not see that that explained the other item of £137 10s. in Schedule B, for the late Crown Solicitor. What was that? Mr. Little seemed to be pretty ubiquitous in those schedules. It was a lawyer's business, and, of course, the Attorney-General, as head of the profession, was bound to defend the proceeding. He (Mr. Lumley Hill) thought Mr. Little was very well paid all his time, and that he had had a very good time of it. He (Mr. Lumley Hill) had been in the colony twenty-one years, and he never knew the time when it took two months to go to Rockhampton, as had been stated by the Attorney-General.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Not to go to Rockhampton. I said the performance of his circuit duties there.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had never heard of it taking two months; it might have taken a fortnight. The Attorney-General could take his word for it that the said Mr. Little had had a very good time of it. What with his position as Crown Solicitor and his right to practice, it was a very good line indeed. It was through him (Mr. Lumley Hill) and others calling attention to the really invidious position which Mr. Little occupied as Crown Solicitor, with the right of private practice, that his position was altered for the last few years of his service. He maintained that the explanation given by the Attorney-General was not satisfactory to the Committee. Mr. Little should have done either one thing or the other—either have drawn his full pay for the year and continued his work, or at once retired on his pension. Did he receive full pay for the first portion of the year before he retired sick?

Mr. MOREHEAD said the name of Mr. Robert Little, late Crown Solicitor, was a household word among all Queenslanders. If any hon. member could say one word against that gentleman, he (Mr. Morehead) would vote against that item. He maintained that Mr. Little was entitled to anything he asked from that Committee, and he was perfectly certain that that gentleman would not be a party to asking anything to which he was not entitled. He (Mr. Morehead) wished they had many in the Public Service as capable and as honourable as Mr. Robert Little; and thought it was to be regretted that any member should have made the remarks that had fallen from the hon. member for Cook, with respect to a gentleman who had served them well and grown grey in the service of the colony.

Mr. MIDGLEY said the speech of the hon. member for Balonne was quite pathetic, and could be uttered in regard to scores of public servants who would never receive any consideration of that kind—certainly, if they were out of the legal profession. But if it could be shown that Mr. Little was entitled to that money there was still the further question as to whether it should have been paid before the consent of the Committee had been obtained, and the Attorney-General had not touched that at all. It was quite evident that Mr. Little had devoted and attached personal friends in the Committee, and very likely deservedly so. To him (Mr. Midgley) he was an utter stranger. He had heard no reason why the agony should be piled on in that way so far as taxpayers were concerned, except that that gentleman had been twenty-seven years in the Public Service. He could not help thinking that Mr. Little, who was a lawyer, was a sensible man, and that if it did not suit him to retain the

position he would not have continued in it, and the country was therefore under no obligation to Mr. Little. Votes of that kind hon. members should set themselves resolutely against.

Mr. JORDAN said he would ask the hon. member for Cook whether he thought that a gentleman occupying the position of Crown Solicitor would have been honestly remunerated at £500 a year if he were not allowed private practice? Mr. Little saved something to the Government by retiring at once, instead of claiming to go on at full salary till the end of the year, as he might reasonably have done. The action of the Government was very just. There was no necessity to come to the House and ask permission to make such an arrangement. Mr. Little was paid what he asked, and it was a very reasonable request. He was very glad of that opportunity to say that he thought the colony was indebted to that gentleman, and was certainly bound to pay him what was due. He had never received a penny beyond what he fairly earned.

Mr. SALKELD said when hon. members criticised amounts which were placed on the Estimates it did not necessarily follow that they reflected on the officers whose names appeared there. He hoped hon. members of the Committee would not allow themselves to be muzzled by anyone, either about items on the Estimates or any other matters that they thought it their duty to discuss. The Attorney-General had made a defence of the item—a very weak one, because to make it good there should be a law on the Statute-book compelling Mr. Little to retain the office of Crown Solicitor. Mr. Little could have retired when he pleased, and it was absurd to talk of his making sacrifices. No public servant accepted a position or continued to hold it unless it suited his purposes, and unless he thought he was sufficiently well paid. The question was not, as the hon. member for South Brisbane seemed to think, whether the Crown Solicitor was sufficiently well paid on £500 a year without private practice. Mr. Little, while receiving £1,000 a year as Crown Solicitor, obtained twelve months' leave of absence on full pay, and then retired. He was put down on the Estimates-in-Chief for a retiring allowance of £550 a year; then on page 3 of the Supplementary Estimates they found him down for £137 10s., and now again for £337 10s. In regard to Mr. Little's retiring when he was not able to attend to his duties properly, he held that when any public officer was prevented by ill health or age from attending to his duties he was in honour bound to retire. The Government were very much to be blamed for paying that money if it had been paid. He believed it had not. There was no necessity for the Government to pay it before they got the consent of Parliament. That kind of thing was going too far altogether, and unless the representatives of the public set their faces firmly against it there was no knowing where it would stop. Nothing would justify the Government in spending the money without the consent of Parliament except some unforeseen contingency of an urgent nature.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he would like to ask the hon. gentleman how the Government could make an arrangement of that kind with Mr. Little? According to that gentleman's own honourable views of duty, his retirement was necessary in April last. Could he have been expected to enter into an arrangement by which he should retire at once, lose all the advantage of the whole year—which he could have put in in a fitful way—and depend upon the House to vote the difference between the pension and the salary he would have received? Surely the hon. gentleman did not suppose that he (the

Attorney-General) could be a party to an arrangement of that kind, or that Mr. Little would have been content to accept it. It would have been taking an unfair advantage of Mr. Little, or any other public servant in similar circumstances, to ask him to retire on a promise that he would get the amount voted by the House—a contingency which might or might not come about. With regard to the two separate sums, he had pointed out that Mr. Little got the difference between the pension of £550, and the salary of £1,000 for the year. At the time he retired there remained only nine months of the year. The £137 10s. represented three months' pension at the rate of £550; and the other item of £337 10s. represented the difference between nine months of the pension at £550, and nine months of the salary at £1,000. He might add that had Mr. Little gone on to the end of the year performing his duties and receiving the full salary of £1,000 a year, he would have been entitled, in perpetuity, to receive nearly £17 a year more as a retiring allowance than he received under existing circumstances.

Mr. WHITE said he was perfectly at a loss to understand the system. It would take a better scholar than he was to understand the system of putting the hand into the public purse for highly paid officers. How was it that those two sums were not put together honestly, fairly, and straight, so that they would have the whole amount before them right away? It would require a perfectly practical man to find those items out when they were written in that way. It surprised him to see the Government conniving, as it were, at such a system.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had to reply to the criticism made by the hon. member for Balonne, and also to the remarks of the hon. member for South Brisbane. The hon. member for South Brisbane asked him if he thought Mr. Little would have been well paid at the rate of £500 a year without private practice? He could tell that hon. gentleman that Mr. Little knew very well what he was about all the time when he was getting £500 a year conjointly with private practice. He (Mr. Hill) took some credit to himself for having put a stop to that pernicious conjunction and dual appearance of the then Crown Solicitor. He thought it was high time when, in 1880, the offices were separated. With regard to the pathetic eulogy which the hon. member for Balonne had just passed upon Mr. Little, he would refer that hon. gentleman to page 1529 of *Hansard* for 1880, volume xxxiii. It would be found there that the hon. member said:—

"If the Government had such love and affection for the Crown Solicitor that they would back up a report which whitewashed him, while it cast a slur upon members upon their own side, all he could say was that he was sorry for them. Certain members, out of strong personal feeling and regard to Mr. Robert Little, had voted as they would not have voted had other things been equal.

"Mr. KELLETT: No.

"Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member could say 'no' until he was black in the face. Mr. Little had written him a letter stating that the evidence contained a statement which was untrue, and now that they had adopted the report, that untruth would remain for all time on the 'Votes and Proceedings.' How had the hon. member for Gregory been treated in that report? His word had been preferred to that of an effete old man. It was true that that man occupied a certain position somewhere else, but was his statement to be taken as against that of the hon. member for Gregory? He had never known the word of the hon. member for Gregory to be doubted, and in this case it had been collaterally confirmed by his own statement. Yet their statements were to be over-riden by the statement of an old man who was well known to be almost fatuous."

That was in 1880. Now, in 1885, that "old man" who was alleged by the hon. member for

Balonne "to be almost fatuous" was transformed into a shining light, and was salved and buttered all over by the hon. member for Balonne, now that the Government had got rid of him—though in a very expensive way, he thought. He did not know whether the hon. gentleman wished to hear any more of it, but he thought that would do for the present, as he did not wish to take up the time of the Committee too long.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought there was more to be said. There were both Mr. Little and Mr. Browne in partnership at that time. He had not such a very high opinion of his own intelligence as to be afraid to apologise for any mistakes he might make. The remarks the hon. gentleman had read were made entirely with reference to Mr. Browne, and he bitterly regretted that he had ever made them. He did not in any way refer to Mr. Little, he referred to Mr. Browne, who, at that time was likely to be mixed up in a lawsuit with the hon. member for Cook, who, was then known as "the common informer." He (Mr. Morehead) also took very considerable interest in that case, probably because he happened to have a legal turn of mind, and it was a case which he was ashamed of also. He had no hesitation in expressing deep regret for having made those remarks about that gentleman. Five years made a great gap in a man's life politically, and he regretted that he should have spoken—not of Mr. Little, for he had never spoken of him in that way—but that he should at times have spoken of Mr. Browne in a way which led to an estrangement for many years, but which, happily, did not now exist. He again repeated that why there should be any question as to voting that sum of money to Mr. Little was to him a complete puzzle. The hon. member for Fassifern and the hon. member for Ipswich said that they did not think that sum should be paid—that they had little of love, affection, or regard for Mr. Little.

Mr. SALKELD: We do not know him.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That was it exactly—another Pharaoh had arisen who "knew not Joseph." That was a bargain made by the State, and the State got a great deal more out of Mr. Little than the salary of £500 with private practice or the salary of £1,000 ever paid him for. The question narrowed itself down to this: The money had been paid, and if hon. gentlemen—and especially the hon. member for Cook, who never forgave, and who was really the personification of vindictiveness, and who was so proud and self-satisfied that he would never admit that he had made a mistake—which, he thought, every member of the Committee and most honourable men would be willing to admit, as he (Mr. Morehead) had done that night; he made a mistake, and he admitted his error, and was sorry for it—if hon. members really considered the merits of the case they would no longer offer any opposition. The hon. member for Cook, he knew, was an intimate personal friend of the gentleman he now set himself up to malign. That, however, was quite part and parcel with the character of the hon. member. The hon. member knew people generally only to betray them; he knew a party only to betray them.

Mr. STEVENSON: Too rough!

Mr. MOREHEAD: How could he possibly be too rough on the junior member for Cook, who went from side to side of the House? He could go further when the time came to disclose more.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Go ahead!

Mr. MOREHEAD: No, no! He always kept a reserve fund, and he found it a very good thing,

both for financial institutions and for debaters in that House, to keep something in reserve which they could bring forward at any time. He hoped—to come back to the subject under discussion—the Committee would not be misled, and would, as he thought they would have done, without comment, unless it were comment of praise, vote that sum of money for Mr. Little.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for Balonne had just treated them to an explanation to lead them to believe that it was "Short" and not "Codlin" he referred to; but the record of the House was too plain, and anyone could see it at page 1529, volume xxxiii., of *Hansard* for 1880. There could be no mistake as to which of those gentlemen—Mr. Little or Mr. Browne—the hon. member for Balonne referred to at that time.

Mr. STEVENSON: It was Mr. Browne he referred to, and you know it.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he did not. It was plain from *Hansard* that it was Mr. Little the hon. member referred to.

Mr. STEVENSON: You know well it was Mr. Browne.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he knew perfectly well it was Mr. Little.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He was misreported, probably.

Mr. STEVENSON: It was misreporting. The hon. member knows it was Mr. Browne.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he knew it was Mr. Little. However, the Committee had been treated to the edifying spectacle that night, of the hon. member for Balonne getting down two trees. The hon. member had got up a stone-walling tree and could not carry on. He broke faith with his own mates and came down. Now he was up another tree, and had to get out of it or crawl out of it the best way he could. Well, he was sorry to see the hon. member in such a humiliating position as he had been in twice before the Committee that night, and he was only too glad to know that he was going home shortly to give his political reputation an airing. As far as the treachery business was concerned, he could give his experience of the matter as well as the hon. member, and he knew who was the vendor and who was sold.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Were you?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I was the party who was sold.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am glad to hear it.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he knew who was sold, and he knew who got the money, and he also knew who got a front handle to his name for a short time, but it was a very ephemeral one. However, he was anxious to spare the hon. member for Balonne. The hon. member was going away shortly, and there was no doubt the House could do without him and he would come back the better for his trip.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not wish to continue a personal wrangle with the hon. member. The hon. member had told him that he had come down a tree, but it seemed to him (Mr. Morehead) that it was very difficult to get over a Hill. With regard to the quotations made from speeches he had made years ago, he had already expressed his regret for what he had said of Mr. Browne. As regarded any personal quarrel between himself and Mr. Little, there had been none; but between himself and Mr. Browne there had been a difference, which he was happy to say was long ago made up. As far as the hon. member himself was concerned, he sincerely trusted he would remain where he was—if he could.

Mr. STEVENSON said he only wished to say one word, and it was this: that he remembered the occasion upon which the speeches which had been quoted by the hon. member for Cook were delivered. He remembered the occasion as if it was yesterday, and he knew perfectly well, as the hon. member for Cook knew, that the speech of the hon. member for Balonne which he had quoted had no reference whatever to Mr. Little.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he must deny that. The hon. gentleman was labouring under a mistake. The head under which the debate appeared was "Crown Solicitor's Office." Now, Mr. Little was the Crown Solicitor, and the whole inquiry was about him, and Mr. Browne's name was not brought in.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he must correct the hon. member in a statement that was so utterly devoid of truth. The inquiry was as to whether the firm of Little and Browne should be allowed to continue as Crown Solicitors, and whether they should be allowed to conduct private business. That was the whole discussion, and the remarks that were made by him were certainly meant to apply to the firm of Little and Browne, who were at that time Crown Solicitors.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he could not allow a flat contradiction like that to pass. Would the hon. member deny the words of *Hansard*?

Mr. MOREHEAD: I deny nothing.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member had an opportunity of correcting his reports, and there they were in *Hansard*. He was not going to be put down and corrected in the way attempted by the hon. member. The hon. member's words were—

"Mr. Little had written him a letter, stating that the evidence contained a statement which was untrue, and now that they had adopted the report that untruth would remain for all time in the 'Votes and Proceedings.'"

Mr. Little's name was worked in two or three times and Mr. Browne was not mentioned. There was no mistake who was meant and intended to be referred to on that occasion. Of course the hon. member had apologised to Mr. Little and it was all right, he supposed, but he did not see the force of being flatly contradicted when every member who read the records could see that he was right.

Mr. MOREHEAD said perhaps it would be well if the hon. gentleman told the whole story. The only time he ever heard the hon. member quote poetry was when he said—

"The lie that is half a truth is the worst lie of all."

And so it was with the hon. member's lie. It was only half of the truth, and was one of the worst of lies. The hon. member had not stated the whole case fairly or *ab initio*, and had not shown the whole of the evidence.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he did not think the time of the Committee ought to be any further occupied by quarrelsome argument. What he remembered of the circumstances was that the member for Cook brought disgraceful charges against Mr. Little, and had a select committee appointed. He had the appointment of his own committee, who sat and took evidence which was almost exclusively his own, and the result was that the committee concluded their report as follows:—

"In conclusion, your committee are of opinion that none of the charges against the Crown Solicitor have been sustained; nor has it been shown that the interests of the Crown, whose officer he is, have in any way been neglected."

The report was adopted by a majority of 20 to 4. He thought that ought to be quite sufficient, and that the hon. member should not drag up old

charges against the late Crown Solicitor. With regard to what the hon. member for Ipswich had said as to the expenses of the Law Offices of the Crown, he would direct the hon. member's attention to just one thing. When the management of the Law Offices of the Crown was under Mr. Little, in 1880, the expenses of the department were £3,900. That sum had been voted by the House, and now, in five years, with the population not increased so very much, £6,415 was wanted by the same department. That spoke for itself.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It is too much.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: That was what he thought himself; and he was not aware that the work was more efficiently done than when Mr. Little occupied the office.

Mr. MIDGLEY said he would pass over that item now, expressing his regret that his question should have caused anything to be said that might be painful to Mr. Little. He knew nothing about him personally, but he would just say this—that that kind of liberalism was not the liberalism which he had looked for or cared for. He might say to the Attorney-General that there was a larger audience than the Committee outside which was carefully watching what hon. members and the Attorney-General were doing. He (Mr. Midgley) was quite content to leave the matter to the judgment of the people. He desired to ask for information as to an item of £331 8s. 6d.—law costs, in the case *Regina v. "Forest King."* What was that money paid for?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said it was the money paid for the cost of the prosecution in the Vice-Admiralty Court on behalf of the Imperial Government. There were fees to Mr. J. Harrison Byrne, associate to the judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court, for reporting evidence, transferring shorthand notes, correcting report, etc., £80 18s.; the registrar's fees, £12 4s. 6d.; Counsel's fees—Mr. Rutledge, £81 19s.; Mr. Chubb, £90 1s.; and Mr. Real, £66 6s.

Mr. MIDGLEY asked how Mr. J. Keane, late Secretary of the Crown Law Offices, had left the service?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that Mr. Keane had been in bad health for a long time, and it was considered desirable that his office should become vacant in order that some person in good health should be appointed as his successor. Mr. Keane was not under the Civil Service Act, so was not entitled to a retiring allowance; but the gratuity of £125 which was on the Estimates for him would be equivalent to three months' salary, or, rather, three months' additional leave of absence on full pay.

Mr. BLACK said the "Forest King" business was likely to be a rather expensive piece of luxury. He noticed that when the Chief Justice gave his verdict against the Admiralty he gave a verdict of costs and regretted that he was unable to give damages.

The PREMIER: He did nothing of the kind. He had power to give damages, but the circumstances would not justify him in doing so.

Mr. BLACK said he would accept that view of the case. Costs, however, were given against the Admiralty, and he wanted an explanation as to why the colony was saddled with those costs?

The PREMIER said it had been the practice in this colony, when cases of seizure were tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court, to place the services of the Crown law officers at the disposal of the Admiralty. It was a practice which had been followed in the "Forest King" case. It was also the practice that the Government here paid

the expenses of any proceedings of that kind in the first instance. If the ship was condemned they were repaid out of the proceeds. They could, of course, ask for a refund from the Admiralty, and no doubt the Admiralty would pay; but the Government did not think it worth while to ask the Admiralty to refund them.

Mr. BLACK said he thought they need not be so particular with the Home Government in asking what was fairly due to them. If he remembered rightly, the Home Government insisted on the payment by the colonies of £15,000 towards the expenses of the New Guinea annexation, and then, finding that that sum was insufficient, they sent Sir Peter Scratchley out for the purpose of trying to get the sum increased. In doing so they certainly did not show the same consideration towards the colonies that the Premier seemed to have shown to the Admiralty. He failed to see that the Premier had in that matter acted in the interests of the colony. So far as he could see, people who went to the law courts had to pay whether they lost or won, and the only persons who reaped a benefit were the lawyers. There was no reason why when a decision was given against the Admiralty it should not be asked to pay the whole of the costs. Had the demand for payment of the costs been made the Admiralty would have at once paid them, and they would have admitted that the case arose by the action of the commanding officer of the "Swinger."

The PREMIER said the Supreme Court ordered the captain or officer commanding the "Swinger" to pay the defendant's costs. The costs represented by the item in the Estimates were incurred by the officer commanding the "Swinger" in the prosecution.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the Government had been much too punctilious in not asking the Admiralty to pay those costs. There was no reason why the colony should have to pay for them. In giving his judgment, the Chief Justice said:—

"There is fairly satisfactory evidence that the officers of the 'Forest King' acted in good faith, believing the natives fairly recruited, and consenting parties to their removal to Queensland. Nevertheless, the circumstances presented to Captain Marx, on the report of Mr. Milman, were such as to raise a reasonable ground of suspicion, and to justify the seizure and detention. The Imperial officer being justified, it follows in this particular case, without laying down any absolute rule as to damages in future cases, that there can be no damage against the Crown in respect of this act."

What did that mean, unless that the representations made by an officer of the Queensland Government to Captain Marx justified him in being suspicious, and therefore he could give no damages. But was the colony to suffer on that account; ought not Captain Marx to have examined and discriminated for himself? The captain of the "Swinger" was very much to blame for the course he took, and if anybody in the colony had to bear the law costs of the case, it should be Mr. Milman himself, as he gave the false evidence on which the captain of the "Swinger" acted, and thus brought discredit on the present Government as well as on the whole colony. The thing was traceable back to the false evidence given to Captain Marx by Mr. Milman. Why should the colony pay Captain Marx's expenses because he had been taken in by an officer of the Queensland Government? They ought to make that officer pay for his own delinquencies. It was one of the most disgraceful items on the Estimates. However, it could be better discussed when the case of the "Forest King" came up. But he could not help expressing his opinion with regard to that particular

estimate that they need have no modesty whatever in asking the British Government to bear their own legal expenses.

The PREMIER said that he was not going to discuss the "Forest King" case then, but he could not allow an officer of the Government to be accused of giving false information when there was absolutely no foundation whatever for the statement. What Mr. Milman did was what any humane man would have done. Had he not given the information to Captain Marx which he received from Mr. Macfarlane, the missionary, and the interpreters, he would have deserved, what probably he would have received, immediate dismissal from the Government Service. And yet the hon. gentleman called Mr. Milman a knave or a fool. He did exactly what every man of honour and of common humanity would have done under the circumstances. Supposing a man told him (the Premier) that a murder had been committed in the next street, and he saw a policeman, was he not to inform the policeman because it might turn out that a murder had not been committed? When Mr. Milman received information from a man of respectability and knowledge, like Mr. Macfarlane, he would, of course, give it to the person to whom he was bound to communicate it. That could not be called giving false information.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that every word that had fallen from the leader of the Opposition about Mr. Milman was true, and could be proved by evidence. Mr. Milman was either a fool or a knave, or a judicious combination of the two. When the Premier got up and addressed the Committee in that highfalutin style, it was evident that he had got a bad case. Having carefully watched the hon. member for thirteen years, he could say that with confidence. Although Mr. Milman was a friend of his own, when he saw the Premier taking such a stand with regard to him he was inclined to think that a very searching inquiry was necessary. The leader of the Opposition would be the very last man to bring any charge against Mr. Milman unless he was certain it was well founded.

Mr. LISSNER said he could not let the vote pass without calling the attention of the Committee and of the Attorney-General to their honours the judges. It was a very delicate subject to mention, but it was necessary that the Committee and the hon. gentleman should know how things were carried on at a distance. The judges did not seem to have sufficient time to hear the cases that they went on circuit to hear, and clients were consequently put to a great amount of inconvenience. That might be the fault of the time-table, for which he did not know who was responsible. The case to which he wished particularly to refer was one that occurred at Charters Towers, at the last session of the Supreme Court. His Honour Judge Cooper had a very heavy calendar of criminal cases to hear. After they were finished, the case of *Barker versus Livingstone* was brought forward. The case lasted the greater part of the day, and before it was finished the judge said he could not finish it as he had to go to Townsville to hear the criminal cases there. It was quite right that criminal cases should be disposed of as soon as possible; at the same time it was very hard that suitors in civil cases should have them half heard and then adjourned *sine die*. In the case to which he referred the plaintiff went down to Townsville to watch the proceedings of the judge, and he succeeded in getting the judge to return to Charters Towers to finish the case on paying for the special train to take him there, which amounted to £20 10s.

The PREMIER: Are you sure of that?

Mr. LISSNER : Quite sure ; I have the wire in my pocket.

The PREMIER : Read the telegram.

Mr. LISSNER said it seemed to him a very unfair thing that suitors, because they lived in the North, should have to pay the travelling expenses of a judge when it was the bounden duty of the judge to attend the court and hear the cases brought before him. Was it the duty of the judge to satisfy the people, or had the people to satisfy the judge, as far as the Northern territory was concerned ? There were complaints not only about the Supreme Court, but also about the district court. There were many complaints from Cooktown, also, where it appeared the judges came in a hurry, and if the business was not finished by the time they wished to get away it was postponed *sine die*, and suitors were left to settle matters the best way they could. He thought it was about time that state of things was amended, and the sooner the better. It was no wonder that the Northern people were dissatisfied ; any other class of people would be dissatisfied, whether they wanted separation or not, under those circumstances. He did not want to say that the judges got too much salary or too great an allowance for expenses, but if there was too much business for one judge there ought to be two, and if the allowance for expenses was not satisfactory, and if the judge could not pay for his train when he had to go to a certain place, the Government should allow more for expenses. He did not think hon. members would ever say anything about the judges getting too much pay so long as they did their duty.

The PREMIER : Read the telegram.

Mr. LISSNER said the telegram was this :—  
“ Judge Cooper had to leave here in the middle of my action against Livingstone to attend criminal sittings in Townsville. Railway authorities made me pay £21 10s. for a special train required to bring judge back and hear the case. See Rutledge. Have it refunded or bring the matter before House.”

He supposed the Attorney-General had not any money to give him for that gentleman, and he did not know whether the Railway Department had any either. However, he was not anxious to get the money. What he wanted was an improvement, so far as the judges and the people in the North were concerned.

The PREMIER said that such a matter as that brought forward by the hon. member came under the department of the Colonial Secretary. The statement that a judge had allowed a suitor to pay his travelling expenses to an assize to conduct business was almost incredible, and he hesitated to believe it. The statement had been made, and the hon. gentleman had read a telegram stating that it was so ; still he hesitated to believe it. There must be some mistake. He would take care, however, that an inquiry was made. For a suitor to pay the expenses of a judge was perfectly intolerable ; it was unheard of. If such a thing had been done the money would be refunded.

Mr. LISSNER said that so far as the telegram was concerned—it was not like *Hansard*, he thought he could rely upon it. Barker was not going to wire that telegram to him unless it was true ; in fact, he had already asked the Railway Department for a refund.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that perhaps now was the proper time to deal with the question of district court judges ; and he thought the Government should introduce a Bill providing for pensions to district court judges. They could not expect that good men would surrender their position at the bar to become district court judges without

the prospect, after being worn out in the service, of receiving a pension. There was no promotion from the district court bench to the Supreme Court bench, where a pension would be ensured, and he could not see why they should draw such a distinction between district court judge and Supreme Court judge—he did not see why one should receive a pension and the other none. He hoped the Government would consider the matter, and deal with it next session.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he had always held the opinion just expressed by the hon. member for Balonne, and when he was a private member, he endeavoured to give effect to it by introducing, first a resolution on the subject, and afterwards a Bill ; but beyond being complimented by the then Premier for having made out a good case, he got no satisfaction. He was sorry to say that the introduction of that Bill did not evoke a more satisfactory response from the private members than from the members of the Government, but he hoped to see the time when some provision would be made for district court judges. With reference to what fell from the hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Lissner, about district courts, he had resolved to give the matter special consideration before the issue of the next calendar of the sittings of the district court. The calendar issued by the Supreme Court was not subject to the revision of the Attorney-General, but he had received a petition through the hon. member for Cook embodying strong complaints, and so far as they had to do with the conduct of the Supreme Court business he forwarded the substance of the petition, with his recommendation, to the judge of the Northern Supreme Court. As far as it was possible to do away with the difficulties complained of by the hon. member for Kennedy, he would endeavour to see that the same cause of complaint did not exist in future.

Mr. PALMER said the Attorney-General promised before that he would endeavour to put his finger upon the weak point in connection with the administration of justice in the Northern parts of Queensland. If he would put it on the Crown prosecutor the thing would be done at once, because it was well known that it was through his apathy that many of the cases to which he had referred were lost.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said he thought there must be some laxity in the department, looking at the large amount for allowances to witnesses and jurors in addition to the sum voted last year. In the Supreme Court there were additional sums of £2,299—“allowances to witnesses” ; and £1,230—“allowances to jurors” ; and in the district court there was £2,446—“allowance to witnesses and jurors,” making altogether about £6,000. Considering that the sum voted last year was a great deal more than for the previous year, he thought that a further increase of £6,000 in one year showed that there must be some laxity in the matter.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said unfortunately the multiplication of courts—circuit courts as well as district courts—had resulted in a very large increase in the expenses of jurors and witnesses. They had established a number of district courts during the year, and it had been a source of constant care on the part of the department to look after those matters. For instance, a case was brought before the House that afternoon, in which he was complained of by the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hamilton, for having prevented a man from getting £83 for attending as a witness, when the actual cost to him, above and beyond his passage money, was less than £20. The whole matter had been carefully watched ; and, as he had told the



Committee before, it was the intention of the Government to revise the whole system upon which witnesses' expenses were paid, especially as to mileage. It was hoped that in that way, without any injustice being done, it would be possible to decrease the expenses. The multiplication of courts and the increased number of cases of all kinds had brought about the increased expenditure.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would be glad to hear something from the Government with regard to the point he had raised as to giving pensions or retiring allowances to district court judges. He thought it would have a very beneficial effect in connection with the administration of justice in those courts if something of that kind were done, because he was certain that they would get a very much better class of men than they had at the present time. A thousand a year was nothing to any leading barrister in practice, and, as the matter stood now, they must either get indifferent men or very old men. If they extended the same consideration, upon a smaller scale, to the district court judges that they did to the Supreme Court judges, he was satisfied that they would really get a better article at the same price.

Mr. SALKELD said with regard to the item of witnesses' expenses he hoped that whatever action the Attorney-General took he would make it more fair than it was at the present time to persons who were taken away from their homes and business for the purpose of attending on juries. He was sure that there was no room for paring down the fees paid to jurors. He did not see why a man should be called upon to leave his home and business to attend court as a jurymen at a loss to himself any more than they could expect any person in the Civil Service—judges, Crown prosecutors, or attorneys-general—to attend to the affairs of the State without being well paid for it. Under the present system jurors suffered great injustice, and he hoped that whatever reform took place it would be in the direction that when any man was required to serve the State he should be paid for it fairly. At the present time jurors were very much underpaid. They had to leave their business, very often at great inconvenience, and even if they were repaid what they would have actually earned it would scarcely recompense them.

Question put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in moving that a further sum of £27,050 16s. 9d. be granted for the Department of Public Instruction, said he moved the vote so that hon. members might have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said it was perfectly impossible to go on with business at that high pressure, between 11 and 12 o'clock at night, at the end of the week, especially as they had to sit again to-morrow. If the Premier could find some means of suppressing discussion, and adjourn at a reasonable time, he would be perfectly satisfied; but he was not satisfied to sit up until all hours in order to pass Government business.

The PREMIER said the Government had hoped to have got through the Estimates some days ago.

Mr. MOREHEAD: "Hope told a flattering tale."

The PREMIER: Yes, it did; and what had taken place only showed how one member—one wilful member—could make all the other members of both Houses of Parliament await his convenience. However, that was a thing that seldom happened. He now rose particularly to say that, as they had the remainder of the Estimates to get through, and there was the motion

respecting the report of the select committee on the "Forest King" case to be disposed of, a question arose as to which was the most convenient course to adopt—whether to proceed with the Estimates to-morrow and take the other matter fresh on Tuesday or take it to-morrow? As far as the Government were concerned, it was a matter of indifference to them.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he would like to hear the opinion of the hon. member in charge of the motion—the hon. member for Fassifern. He thought it would be better, as many hon. members were going away on Saturday, if they could bring on the "Forest King" case to-morrow.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why not now?

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he was prepared to hear the hon. member for Fassifern for the next hour; but he was not prepared to hear the Minister for Public Instruction.

Mr. MIDGLEY said, so far as he could judge, he thought it would be desirable to get the matter in connection with his motion over as soon as possible, and, considering what the Committee had recommended, he saw no other way of doing it than by taking it to-morrow, because one of the resolutions was to the effect that the House should go into Committee on Tuesday. It would be at very great personal inconvenience that he should be present to-morrow; but it being a public duty, he supposed other matters would have to give way. He should prefer that it should be discussed to-morrow. Might it not be possible to occupy the earlier part of the evening with the Estimates and take his motion after tea? He should be willing to do that if it were practicable.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said that would not suit him at all, nor did he think it would suit hon. gentlemen. If the "Forest King" discussion came on at all, it should come on at once.

The PREMIER said they had better take private business to-morrow in the ordinary course. He was sorry that the motion could not have come on sooner.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said he did not blame the Premier at all that the matter had not come on before. He hoped that if the discussion was not finished on Friday the Premier would so arrange the Government business that it might be continued on Tuesday.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that in the interests of the hon. member for Fassifern he hoped that that agony would be soon passed. The hon. gentleman was getting smaller and smaller every day, and he was absolutely nervous about what might happen to him if he did not get rid of that burden with which he appeared to be laden. He hoped that it would not be a case of the mountain and the mouse, or even the mouse and the mountain; but he trusted that the hon. gentleman would get rid of a load that apparently lay so very near his heart. He should listen to the debate and assist the hon. gentleman if he thought necessary, or even take the other side.

Mr. MIDGLEY said with reference to the hon. gentleman who had just spoken he seemed to grow bigger and bigger every day, and it was a question whether the House would be able to hold him before long. He hoped to survive the whole business, but still he did not like to have the thing hanging over his mind; therefore, he would prefer, personally, to have it discussed to-morrow.

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

LICENSING BILL.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that the Council had agreed to the amendments recommended by His Excellency the Governor in this Bill.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 12 o'clock.