

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 1886**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Thursday, 2 September, 1886.*

Petitions. — Amended Return. — Question. — Printing Committee. — Motion for Adjournment. — The Case of Gardner. — Formal Motions. — Customs Duties Bill — third reading. — Succession Duties Bill — third reading. — Land-grant System of Immigration — resumption of Debate. — Message from the Legislative Council. — Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Bill. — Separation of Northern Queensland — resumption of Debate. — Message from the Legislative Council. — Elections Tribunal Bill. — Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Bill — consideration of Legislative Council's amendments. — Order of Business. — Separation of Northern Queensland — resumption of Debate. — Message from the Legislative Council. — Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Bill.

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

## PETITIONS.

Mr. SMYTH presented a petition from the congregation of the Wesleyan Church, Gympie, praying for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act; and moved that it be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of Mr. SMYTH, the petition was received.

Mr. FRASER presented a petition from the members of the Presbyterian Church, South Brisbane, praying for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act; and moved that it be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of Mr. FRASER, the petition was received.

Mr. FRASER also presented a petition from the members of the Presbyterian Church, Bundaberg, praying for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act; and moved that it be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of Mr. FRASER, the petition was received.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN presented a petition from the members of the session of the Presbyterian Church of Townsville, praying for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act; and moved that the petition be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of the HON. J. M. MACROSSAN, the petition was received.

## AMENDED RETURN.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said : Mr. Speaker,—Last Thursday I laid upon the table of the House a copy of certain correspondence respecting the Ocean Mail Service. I have since found that an important letter was omitted, and I now beg to lay upon the table a corrected copy of the correspondence.

## QUESTION.

Mr. HAMILTON asked the Minister for Works—

1. If plans and specifications of the third section of the Cooktown and Maytown Railway will be placed on the table of the House this session?

2. Which route is it intended to take—the one *via* Palmerville, or direct to Maytown?

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

1. The Government have at present under consideration the several lines which they propose to submit for the approval of Parliament during the present session, and until a decision is arrived at I am unable to say when plans of the third section of the Cooktown Railway will be placed on the table of the House.

2. The route recommended by the Chief Engineer.

I desire to state, for the information of hon. members, that, so soon as some progress is made with the Estimates, it is the intention of the Government to bring down the whole of the plans they intend to submit for the approval of Parliament this session.

## PRINTING COMMITTEE.

Mr. FRASER said : Mr. Speaker,—On behalf of yourself, sir, as chairman, I beg to present the third report of the Printing Committee, and move that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

## THE CASE OF GARDNER.

Mr. KATES said : Mr. Speaker,—I rise to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to a very sad case that was brought before the City Police Court this morning. It appears that a man named Gardner was brought up on a charge of vagrancy, and it was ascertained from Dr. Bancroft that the man was totally blind. To bring a man afflicted with such a misfortune before a police court charged with vagrancy is indeed a very sad thing. It seems that Gardner was discharged from the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, and had applied for re-admission, but received a letter from the Under Colonial Secretary refusing the request, although no reason was given for the refusal. I thought it would be but right that some hon. member should bring the matter under the notice of the Colonial Secretary, as, if any Dunwich men are to be discharged, certainly those afflicted with total blindness should be the last. By bringing this under the notice of the Government I thought something might be done to relieve this unfortunate man, who has been remanded for a week; as if nobody takes up his case he will very likely be committed to gaol for three months or six months. I move the adjournment of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton) said : Mr. Speaker,—I do not quite remember the circumstances of the case to which the hon. member refers. I believe the man was discharged from Dunwich on account of insubordination and refusing to conform to the rules of the institution. I was not informed that he was totally blind, as the hon. member says; I understood he was only partially so; but I will make further inquiries into the matter to-morrow morning.

Mr. KATES, in reply, said : I hope that the Colonial Secretary, now that he has found that the man is totally blind, will do something for him, and not allow him to go to gaol on a charge of vagrancy.

The PREMIER said : Mr. Speaker,—I will take the opportunity of saying that in any institution under the care of the Government there must be certain order maintained, and if any man will not obey the rules of an institution he cannot be kept there whether he happens to be blind or not. If the fact is that this man was excluded from Dunwich through insubordination he has no right to claim to go back there. If a home is open to him at Dunwich, upon the reasonable condition that he should behave himself and obey the ordinary and reasonable rules of the institution, and he declines to accept that home upon those conditions, I do not think he is entitled to it upon any other conditions.

## FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to :—

By Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Salkeld)—

That there be laid upon the table of the House all correspondence and papers referring to the dismissal of fitters Halliwell, Watson, and Wood from the Locomotive Department, Southern and Western Railway, on 22nd July last.

By Mr. NORTON—

That there be laid upon the table of the House all letters and other documents relating to the dismissal of Mr. James Pink, late head gardener to the Brisbane Botanic Gardens.

By the PREMIER—

That this House will, on Tuesday next, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Health Act of 1884.

## CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

## SUCCESSION DUTIES BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

## LAND-GRANT SYSTEM OF IMMIGRATION—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Jordan's motion—

"That in order to save a large part of the present immense cost of immigration, and to encourage the influx of capital and the settlement of the colony under the Land Act of 1884 by a farming class, it is expedient and desirable to bring in an Immigration Bill offering free grants of land, or a remission of rent, to persons paying their own full passages from Europe direct to Queensland, with proper safeguards against the abuse of the system"—

The PREMIER said : Mr. Speaker,—Last year the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, brought forward a motion in the same terms, I think, as the one now before the House; and then, as on this occasion, he supported it by a very eloquent and very earnest speech. He gave us the benefit of his own large experience of the advantages of a system of land-orders in inducing persons to come to the colony in the early years of our history, a system with which he had more to do than anybody else; and he very earnestly impressed on the House the importance of resuming that system. Last year, after a somewhat full debate, the question was agreed

to without division, and I think only one or two of the members who spoke expressed any disagreement with the principle. On that occasion I pointed out that it was too late in the session to give practical effect to the resolution, and moreover, that it would be convenient to allow the Land Act of 1884 to be a little longer in operation before a step of that kind was taken. I have never myself concealed my sympathy with the system the hon. member desires to see introduced. In 1882, when the Immigration Bill was before the House, I endeavoured to introduce a similar scheme, and I am still very much of the same opinion. Our immigration system does not, nor is it intended to, provide for the payment by the Government of the passages of people who can afford to pay their own passages. It is not intended to pay the passages of what the hon. gentleman called the farming class—people who are prepared at once when they come here to enter into occupation of the land and cultivate it, because they bring with them sufficient capital for the purpose—persons who would not care to accept free passages from the Government. I do not think the system is as necessary now as it was some years ago, on account of the extremely liberal nature of the land law; but at the same time I am still of opinion that it would be an advantage even now to introduce a system of that kind, not because I think it would to any great extent diminish the present cost of immigration, but because I believe it would encourage the introduction of small capitalists if such a system were well conceived, carefully considered, and thoroughly made known in Great Britain. At the present time the efforts we are making in Great Britain are almost entirely confined to bringing out people to work upon the land; no particular effort has been made to address ourselves to small capitalists. But the necessities of the time in Great Britain are leading people to look away from there; farming is not particularly profitable in that part of the world just now, and they are looking round to see where they can get a chance to utilise what capital they have left—much of it in many cases is gone, owing to the bad seasons. I am sorry to say that I do not feel able to agree altogether with the hon. member for South Brisbane in his estimate of the number of people who may be settled on the lands of this colony in the short time he seems to anticipate. Although we have the large area he has spoken of, it is not all of the quality he seems to imagine. Some of it is certainly not fit to be settled except in large blocks; small areas would not be sufficient to maintain families in comfort. But there is still a great deal of land in the colony—not very much about here, I am sorry to say—a great deal of land in the hands of the Government still available, which will shortly be surveyed, and I believe we can absorb a very large number of immigrants of the class the hon. member desires to introduce. The difficulty of the land-order system has always been its liability to abuse. First of all we had transferable and then non-transferable land-orders, and we know the way they were abused. Nearly all the best lands on the Darling Downs were acquired by non-transferable land-orders, and frauds of all kinds were resorted to in order to evade the attempts of the Legislature to restrict the traffic in them. Then we tried non-transferable land-orders which were only allowed to be used in payment of the rent of lands on which the immigrants were themselves living. That system also failed, as the areas were too small for men to make a living upon, and we had to pass a Relief Act for buying up the land-orders at a reduced price. Then Parliament got disgusted with the system, and in 1875 it was summarily repealed without debate. I think less than half-an-hour elapsed between the motion for the

second reading of the Repeal Bill and its being reported from the Committee. Since then no serious attempt has been made to reintroduce the system, except on that occasion in 1882 when I moved an amendment in the Immigration Bill, which was not accepted. I believe, however, it is worth while to try again; and I shall, therefore, offer no opposition to the hon. gentleman's motion. The difficulty is in respect to the necessary safeguards. Now, the form in which I believe it would be best to introduce the system, if it is introduced at all, is to give persons who pay their own passages land-order warrants in England, no matter by what route they come, if they intimate before they leave England that they are coming here; and to give them on their arrival land-orders which would be available in payment of the rent of the farms which they themselves occupy. Of course, the head of the family would get land-orders in respect of the members of his family. The land-orders would be non-transferable, and if he chose to sell his farm and go away—as he might do—he would lose the benefit of his land-orders. I believe that would be a beneficial arrangement, and it would not cost so very much after all. Suppose, for instance, you were to give land-orders of the value of £20 per head, that would be exactly equivalent to making the immigrant a present of a 160-acre selection free; because if a selector takes up 160 acres and lives on it five years, all he has to pay for it is 2s. 6d. an acre—£20. If, then, the immigrant got a land-order for £20, the result would be that he could take up a 160-acre selection, live on it five years rent-free, and then get a free grant of it. That is very much the same in effect as the system of homestead grants in force in the United States for many years. I believe a system of that kind would be attractive, and tend to introduce many desirable people. It would be easily understood, and, I think, not easily evaded. Of course, we may expect at some future time to have persons who do not take advantage of the orders, wanting to sell them to the country. I hope, if the system is introduced, any attempt of that sort will be discountenanced by all sides of the Legislature. As to giving practical effect to the hon. member's motion, I pointed out, on the second reading of the Immigration Bill on Tuesday, that that was not the proper place to deal with it; the proper place would be in a Bill dealing with the land question. Now, as it is likely the Government will have to deal with the land question during the present session, I think this question may conveniently be dealt with then. I am in hopes that before the close of the session the Government will be able to bring in a Bill to amend the Land Act of 1884, in some particulars, and embodying provisions to give effect, in such form as consideration may show to be most convenient, to the proposition contained in the hon. member's motion.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—Now that we know that we are to have a Bill amending the Land Act introduced this session, in which will be embodied the proposal embodied in this motion, I do not think it is necessary for hon. members to waste the time of the House in discussing the question on the present occasion. There are some very important questions to be discussed this evening, and I, for my part, will forego any discussion on this proposal until we have the new Land Bill introduced. At the same time I am rather surprised that when the Government intended to introduce another amending Land Bill they had not the courtesy to mention the matter to the House earlier in the session, seeing that the Land Act of 1884 was the very foundation of their policy. I think we might have justly expected that when an amendment

was to be proposed in that Act notice of it should have been given to hon. members in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. BLACK said : Mr. Speaker,—I was very glad to hear the announcement made by the Premier that we are to have a new Land Bill, and, I take it, an immigration policy, introduced to this House. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that when it was intended to introduce so very important a measure it should have been notified to hon. members in the Governor's Speech. We have now been in session nearly two months, and beyond passing a few very insignificant Bills we have done no business. We have on the notice-paper some important measures, two containing over 200 clauses each. I think the Premier, if he wishes to get through them and the Estimates in a reasonable period, should lose no time in introducing this new or amended Land Bill, which I am sure will be looked forward to with very great interest by all classes of the community. I am very glad the Government have seen the necessity of doing something to retrieve the errors of the past, and I hope that no time will be lost in bringing forward what is really the most important measure the Government have announced to the House this session.

The PREMIER : Not by any means.

Mr. MACFARLANE said : Mr. Speaker,—After the very favourable way in which the Premier has met the proposal of the hon. member for South Brisbane, it is scarcely needful for any member to take up the time of the House in making any remarks on the question. I had intended to say something on the subject, but I shall now content myself with stating that I approve of the motion, and that I believe the plan suggested by the Premier is the best that could be adopted for carrying it out in a practical form. It is a system which persons who desire to come to the country can have no difficulty in understanding, as the terms will be clear and simple. I think the present Land Act is one of the best we have had, and that it will go a long way to settle the right class of people on the lands. No doubt, under the arrangement proposed in the resolution, small capitalists will be still further induced to come here and settle amongst us, and I shall therefore give it my support.

Mr. JORDAN said : Mr. Speaker,—It is quite unnecessary for me to take up the time of the House with a speech in reply. It was with the greatest satisfaction that I listened to the remarks of the Premier on this very important question. For a long time the system now proposed has been under the attention of the House, and I believe that, with proper safeguards, it will prove very successful. I think the only defect in the Land Act of 1884, or at least the chief defect—for of course there are things in the Act of which we do not all approve—was the omission of this very important part. The Premier says the proper place for the introduction of a system of this kind is in the Land Act; and the hon. gentleman stated last session that the subject had been under the consideration of the Government, and that they had considered whether it would be desirable to introduce it in the Land Act of 1884. It was, however, then thought that the Land Act itself would be sufficient to attract people from the old country. If it had been sufficient this motion would have been unnecessary. But I will not further occupy the time of hon. members. With these remarks, I now leave the matter in the hands of the House.

Mr. BROWN said : Mr. Speaker,—I want to say just a word or two on this resolution before it is put to the House, because if I allowed the matter to pass without expressing any opinion at all the inference would be, or might be, that I

am in favour of it. I am not in favour of it. I am sorry I cannot support the motion, because I have the greatest respect for the hon. gentleman who introduced it. I know he means well, and that he introduced it with a good motive. He sees there is a general depression in the colony, that the revenue is falling off, and that taxation is increasing, and this, in his opinion, is one of the remedies which should be applied. So far as the falling-off in revenue, the depression, and the increased taxation are concerned, he has judged the case pretty accurately. But I do not believe in the remedy he proposes. I merely wish to say this now, so that when the matter comes before the House again I may be in a position to offer a reasonable and fair opposition to the proposal.

Mr. KATES said : Mr. Speaker,—I cannot agree with the hon. member who has just sat down. I believe the country is deeply indebted to the hon. member for South Brisbane for introducing this motion. We have been hitherto spending large sums of money in cash to bring immigrants to this colony, whilst our land was lying idle, and I think it would be a better plan to give people the land than to pay the cash for their passages from the old country to the colony. My attention has been called to an interesting article in a paper this afternoon showing what the Canadian Government are doing to induce people to settle in Canada. In that article it is stated that—

"In our Land Act we offer to homestead selectors the following privileges:—We say to them, 'You can go and select a homestead of 160 acres. If you reside on it for seven years, and improve it and pay 3d. per acre per annum, and at the end of seven years pay up the balance, equal to 2s. 6d. per acre, you shall have the title deed.'"

That is the kind of thing I would like to see introduced in this colony. At the same time, as I pointed out a few days ago, we require an Agricultural Department, with someone appointed to take care of the people when they come out, to guide them and advise them, to show them where to go, and to give them all possible information on the subject. I hope the Premier will take notice of that when he brings his scheme before the House.

Mr. SCOTT said : Mr. Speaker,—After what has fallen from the Chief Secretary that this subject should be dealt with in a Land Bill, and not in an Immigration Bill, I would suggest to the hon. member for South Brisbane that he should amend his motion by making it read "a Land Bill" instead of "an Immigration Bill."

Mr. ISAMBERT said : Mr. Speaker,—I am afraid hon. members are expecting more from a measure of this kind than we can possibly obtain. Times have changed greatly since the hon. member for South Brisbane presided over the Immigration Department of the colony. At that period—I believe it was in 1862—a Bill was passed permitting the introduction of Indian coolies. Fortunately that hon. member administered our immigration policy so successfully that a large influx of immigrants took place—more, indeed, than the colony could well absorb at the time—with the result that the Act permitting the introduction of Indian coolies became a dead-letter. But the circumstances of the colony have changed so considerably that in my own district there are hundreds of young people ready to settle on the land—to get married and settle down for life—and they are at a loss where to get the land. When those born in the colony find it difficult to get land, how much more difficult will it be for new arrivals to do so, who do not know our colonial ways? I should be sorry for any man who went on the land immediately after his arrival, without any colonial experience. Such men would have a bitter experience, and it

would do the colony more harm than good. But hon. members seem to think that a land-order system will do good to the colony. I shall vote for the hon. gentleman's motion, although I am certain that if the Government bring in these land-order immigrants on a large scale they will have such a "kettle of fish" that they will not know what to do with it. I do not believe it will be successful, especially as we have already hundreds of young people in the colony anxious to settle upon the land if only the opportunity is given them to do so. Only make our land laws sufficiently attractive and we shall get the best class of selectors; better than new arrivals, because they are already in the colony. Every impediment seems put in their way now. I was told of land in the Stanley electorate which was valued by the department at £6 an acre. I went over that land myself last Saturday and inspected three-fourths of the selections thrown open, and with the exception of about 100 acres of really good land, it is very inferior, and I should be sorry to pay 10s. an acre for it. I am positive that the majority of the unfortunate selectors who go there will have to go away, after having spent a few years of hard labour and all their money. If the Lands Department would be more careful in selecting land for agricultural settlement, and employ men who know a little more than those who valued that land at £6 an acre, they would not lead people into a trap, and would get more and better settlers; and there would be no necessity to have recourse to measures like this to make the land laws attractive. If the land-grant system is to be introduced, preference should certainly be given to persons born in the colony. They certainly have the greatest claim upon the Government; and if it is denied them I have no doubt they will stand up and protest against the wrong done by making them secondary to new chums, who are to have the land free.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to point out a fact which may be of importance, perhaps, to the Chief Secretary in drafting the Bill which he says he intends to introduce. He has made reference to the American system, and said that in his opinion something analogous to that system should be introduced here. I quite agree with him in that respect; but he must not forget that the American system does not apply only to immigrants from Europe. Anybody, native-born or other, who wishes it can take up the 160 acres. According to what the hon. gentleman has indicated this evening he means to make it apply only to people coming from Europe. In that respect he will make a mistake. I do not see why immigrants from Europe should have any preference over the native-born. Let the system be equally open to all who wish to settle on the land. I hope the hon. gentleman will not forget that in drafting his Bill. There is another thing which he might also remember. He talks of giving a man 160 acres of land, or a land-order of the value of £20. If such a man pays his own passage out and that of his wife and two or three children, will the hon. gentleman give him land-orders equivalent to the number of the family?

The PREMIER: I said so.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Then the same rule ought to be applied to a native-born Australian and his family. If a native-born Australian wishes to take up land for himself, his wife, and his family, he should be allowed the same privilege. No preference should be given to Europeans, and the native-born has certainly far more experience in working Australian land.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—Just one word with reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Townsville. I think this proposal of the Chief Secretary will place immigrants coming here simply upon the same footing as a native of Australia or any person already here. We shall simply give him land in exchange for the money he has paid for his passage. It would place him on the same ground as anyone applying for land under our homestead clauses. It is simply inducing people to come and giving them land in lieu of their passage money.

Question put and passed.

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

### ELECTIONS ACT OF 1885 AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he had received a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that they had agreed to the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Bill, with an amendment in which they requested the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the message was ordered to be taken into consideration at a later hour of the evening.

### SEPARATION OF NORTHERN QUEENSLAND—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of the Hon. J. M. Macrossan—

"That in consequence of the increase of population, the difficulty of administration, and other circumstances, in the northern portion of the colony, this House is of opinion that the time has arrived which was contemplated by His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, in his despatches of the 18th August, 1859, and 14th December, 1861, and therefore resolves that an humble address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen, praying that she may be graciously pleased to cause the northern portion of the colony to be erected into a separate and independent colony endowed with representative institutions"—

Mr. W. BROOKES said: I never rose to speak in this House, Mr. Speaker, with a greater sense of inability than I now feel to do justice to the matter before us. It is not every session that we have a debate in this House which implies the partition of a colony, and I feel that in what I am about to say I am not so much speaking to you, sir, or to hon. members, or to all the people of the colony—certainly these do not comprise the whole of my audience—I feel that the most important part of that audience is in the Colonial Office, for whatever we may decide upon here our decision will not be final; but whatever we say will be well scrutinised in that office by gentlemen of trained experience, and of an amount of information which none of us can pretend to possess. At the outset, Mr. Speaker, I shall have to deviate somewhat from the usual plan of debate, and I shall have to trespass, I am sure, upon the forbearance of the House a good deal by what I shall have to read. I feel, however, that I need not be very much afraid that hon. members will be reluctant or unwilling to grant that. Now, with reference to this proposed separation, it is a matter which has given me real pleasure to see the apparent facility with which gentlemen who favour separation made out their case for separation fiscally. If I may judge from what has been said, and said very well by hon. gentlemen opposite, the prospects of the new colony are very good so far as money is concerned. There appears to be no likelihood that the new colony will be in want of funds, and so far it is well. But, Mr. Speaker, money is not the sole requisite in the matter of starting a new

colony any more than it is to a young man entering upon business. There is a parallel between the two which it may be well to bear in mind. In fact, it is generally considered somewhat dangerous for a young man beginning business to have too much money—that it is far better for him to have less money and more experience. It may be said on the other side that as soon as the new colony is established the right men will show themselves—that there will be no deficiency of persons wise and discreet and quite able to keep the new colony from off the rocks. But there is another side to that, Mr. Speaker. The very want that is created by these circumstances for good men and true will also give an opening to syndicators, rogues, and plunderers; and it may possibly be that they will be much more ready to come to the front in the new colony than are the more desirable and absolutely necessary kind of men. I have observed, Mr. Speaker, that throughout all the speeches there has been a disposition to cover as with a veil, and in some instances to avoid all mention of, one feature of the case, which to my mind is most important. I allude to coloured labour. Now, if coloured labour could be regarded as a dead question, never to be revived, my objections to separation would almost entirely disappear. I can see many reasons—good reasons—why the northern part of this colony might be separated from the south. On geographical grounds, and on the ground of giving the people there the right to manage their own affairs, and for many other reasons, separation might be justified; but, sir, this question of coloured labour makes it absolutely impossible for me to consent to this separation. I would withhold my consent until the time has arrived—I think it will come—when this coloured labour question will be heard no more of in the colony. A great deal has been said about the opinion of the North. In looking into the small beginning of this wish for separation, I find that it began with the employers of coloured labour. I find that the employers of coloured labour, long before they gave voice to their wishes, were very dissatisfied with the Southern Government on account of its constantly interfering with their wish to employ this coloured labour, and nothing that the Government in this House could do would please them; and I may add, in parenthesis, that nothing that their proposed Government can do in the direction of coloured labour will please them either. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is all very well to talk about the gold-miners and the general population of the North; it is simply ridiculous; and I do not think it can be contradicted that this wish for separation began with the employers of coloured labour, and that the employers of coloured labour are now the persons who most earnestly wish it. I believe that if there is any wish for separation on the part of the gold-miners or the general population of the North it is simply because they have been induced to follow where others have led, and they would just as willingly turn aside from that wish as they were led into it. I think this: that if the proposition sketched out by the Premier is possible for the bringing closer home to the North the means and appliances of Government—namely, a measure for decentralisation—everybody in the North would be satisfied except the employers of coloured labour, who never will be satisfied, for the reason that they have abandoned all hope of having their wishes met by the southern colony, and, consequently, they turn to a Parliament of their own, in the hope, though they do not say so, that a Parliament sitting at Townsville will grant what they want. I may say that the hon. member for Mackay made use of a very significant expres-

sion. He speaks for the employers of coloured labour, and in his speech makes the following remark:—

“For political purposes, one of the best industries of the colony—I mean the agricultural industry—has been sacrificed by the present Government.”

Note the phrase, Mr. Speaker, “the agricultural industry.” We know what that means. It means simply the sugar industry, as if that were the only agricultural industry we can possibly have in the North. Then he said:—

“How then can we expect to get an unbiased Parliament to deal with the affairs of the North? How can we ever expect to get fair play for that most important industry?”

That is the expression I wish to call attention to—

“How can we expect to get fair play for that most important industry of the colony so long as we have got this huge preponderance of Southern representation in Parliament?”

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, what I think “fair play,” in the opinion of the employers of coloured labour, means. It is this: that they shall have just entirely their own way—

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROOKES: And that nobody else shall have a voice in anything. I know perfectly well what I am saying. I point hon. members of this House and the public of this colony to the history of coloured labour all over the world. You may take it anywhere you find it—in Jamaica, Demerara, and in the Mauritius. Take Jamaica. We know very well, and I will just say this in anticipation, that the continual, unceasing wish of the planters in the Jamaica Assembly was to have fair play. We know very well the insurrection that was brought about in which Governor Eyre was concerned, and what became of it. What did the employers of coloured labour do? I especially call the attention of the hon. member for Mackay to this. They were so frightened at that insurrection that they positively laid down their legislative rights, and placed them at the feet of the Governor—figuratively speaking, they cut their own legislative throats, and that was the end of representative institutions in Jamaica; simply arising from the fact that the demands for fair play on the part of the employers of coloured labour were continually increasing until they became absolutely intolerable, unsatisfiable, and then there was an end of it. Now, I have said that the employers of coloured labour are at the bottom of the demand for separation, and I propose to read to the House some papers—I think I should apologise to you, sir, and to hon. members for reading them, but this is my reason for doing it. I wish to have these papers incorporated with *Hansard*, and reported in the debate. What I am about to read are buried in a very large volume of “Votes and Proceedings”; but they are all documents that hon. members of this House have heard of before, and I am going to have them put afresh before the public; and I want the report of the debate that goes before the public to be a complete record, so far as it can be made so, of the point of view I am endeavouring to speak upon. Here is a letter dated from London, January 14th, 1883, written by a number of persons, and signed by Messrs. Davidson and Lawes, for themselves and others interested. The letter commences:—

“MY LORD,

“We, as investors of a large amount of capital in the north-eastern seaboard of Queensland, are desirous of expressing our sympathy with the present movement for the separation of the northern or tropical from the southern or temperate portion of the colony, and of placing before you some of the principal reasons which appear to us to make such a separation desirable and beneficial to all who either reside or are interested in Northern Queensland.

"Queensland has an area of 669,000 square miles, which it is proposed to divide by a line running west from Cape Palmerston, on the east coast, in latitude 21 degrees 30 minutes, to the eastern boundary of South Australia, separating the waters flowing north into the Burdekin and Gulf of Carpentaria from the waters flowing south.

"The tropical portion to the north of this dividing line has an area of 249,000 square miles (more than double the area of the United Kingdom), contains 50,000 inhabitants, and produces an annual revenue of £500,000.

"When Queensland was first constituted in 1859 her population was 25,000, and her revenue £173,539. The proposed new colony has, therefore, double the population and treble the income of Queensland at the time of her separation from New South Wales.

"The principal reasons in favour of separation are—

- (1.) The great area of the country causes difficulties in the administration of government from the capital of the colony, situated in the extreme south-east corner of a territory 1,500 miles in length and 1,000 in breadth; adequate representation in the Legislative Assembly of the more distant districts cannot be obtained; while the most necessary public works are neglected in consequence of the distance from the seat of government.
- (2.) The public loans obtained on the security of the whole of the colony, amounting at present to £16,000,000, have been unjustly distributed owing to the preponderance of Southern interests; over £14,000,000 has been spent to the south of Cape Palmerston and only £2,000,000 to the north, while the revenue of the North, £500,000, has been applied to paying interest on the whole debt. This unjust appropriation of the revenue and distribution of the loans is a long-standing grievance and is a matter of great injustice to the taxpayers in Northern Queensland.
- (3.) There is an absolute diversity of interests between the inhabitants of tropical and temperate Queensland on the subject of coloured labour.

"There are millions of acres of rich land along the north-east sea-coast covered with tropical jungle of no use for pastoral purposes, and which can only be utilised for tropical production by means of coloured labour.

"This coloured labour, which is absolutely necessary for tropical agriculture, is denied to the inhabitants of the North by the representatives of the South or temperate portions of the colony, and the development of one of the main sources of prosperity in the colony is thereby completely stopped. The inhabitants of Northern Queensland are anxious to obtain coolies from India under proper regulations and supervision, and so put an end entirely to the Polynesian labour traffic, which is a fertile source of *omnes* troubles and complication. This is refused by the South, who last year repealed the Indian Coolie Act, which up to that time existed.

"On the ground, therefore—

- (1.) Of the enormous territory and want of adequate supervision;
- (2.) Of the unjust dealings with loans and revenue;
- (3.) Of the great difference of policy as regards coloured labour; and
- (4.) Of the precedent afforded by the separation of Queensland from New South Wales in 1859,

we sincerely trust that Her Majesty's Government will see their way to dividing tropical from temperate Queensland, equitably apportioning the public debt, and giving relief to the inhabitants of, and those interested in, Northern Queensland."

This letter is signed by J. Ewen Davidson and J. B. Lawes "for ourselves and others interested." With reference to this letter, I will just begin by saying that it is just like the audacity of the employers of coloured labour to write this letter and send it to the Colonial Office at all. This letter ought to have been sent to our Governor or to our Parliament, but Mr. Davidson goes, as he thinks, the straightest way to accomplish what he wants. Of course the Colonial Office paid no attention to this letter. This letter was sent by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to His Excellency our Governor, and our Governor sent it to the Premier of Queensland, who replied to this letter in a letter to His Excellency the Governor of Queensland. Now we have got it into proper shape, and this is where I must again ask the forbearance of the

House while I read the Premier's letter. It is dated "1st April, 1885," and the Premier writes:—

"SIR,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt from your Excellency of Lord Derby's Despatch, No. 6, of 28th January last, transmitting a copy of a letter addressed to the Secretary of State, by Messrs. J. E. Davidson and J. B. Lawes, in which they state the reasons that in their opinion render it desirable that the northern portion of Queensland should be erected into a separate colony, and inviting an expression of the views of this Government on the subject.

"2. The question of the division of the colony of Queensland into two colonies has been previously raised on more than one occasion, but the agitations, which have been usually confined to a small portion of that part of the colony which for the time being was most remote from the seat of government, have never resulted in any general and persistent expression of opinion in favour of separation.

"3. About two years ago an agitation of this kind was initiated in Townsville, which, for a time, appeared to have some little vitality, but which had entirely ceased to exist before the date of the last general election, which took place in the latter end of the year 1883. At that election the question of separation was not seriously raised in any of the Northern electorates.

"4. The present movement for the separation of the northern portion of Queensland referred to in Messrs. Davidson and Lawes's letter originated, so far as I have been able to discover, a few months ago in the district of Mackay, which, as your Excellency is aware, is an agricultural district in which the cultivation of sugar is prosecuted to a considerable extent. Since that time meetings have been held in other towns in the North of the colony and addressed by gentlemen in favour of the movement—principally by Mr. Hume Black, who represents Mackay in the Legislative Assembly.

"5. I have attentively observed the reports of the various meetings that have taken place, and of the action of the promoters of the movement in various places, and so far as I can judge, with a tolerably intimate acquaintance with that part of the colony and its inhabitants, a considerable majority of the people are by no means in favour of the separation proposed. At the mining towns, which represent a very large proportion of the resources and population of the North, no attempt has been made by the promoters of separation to obtain any expression of opinion in its favour. It is well known, indeed, that such an attempt would be entirely unsuccessful. It is easy to form an erroneous conclusion on such matters, but I think I am safe in saying that, with the exception of Mackay and Townsville and the small town of Bowen (which has always favoured the separation of the northern part of Queensland, and claimed that Bowen itself should be the seat of government of a new colony), none of the Northern centres of population contain a majority, or even a considerable minority, in favour of the movement.

"6. I understand that a petition to Her Majesty in favour of separation is now in course of preparation, which will probably state more elaborately than is attempted by Messrs. Davidson and Lawes the arguments on which the advocates of a division of the colony rely. I anticipate, however, that it will not put forward the desire of the Northern colonists for coolie or other coloured labour as a ground for adopting such action. This Government will, no doubt, have an opportunity of dealing with the statements in the petition in detail when (if ever) it is presented to Her Majesty. In the meantime I propose to make some observations upon the statements of fact contained in Messrs. Davidson and Lawes's letter, particularly with respect to the question of coloured labour, which I infer to be the main ground of their action in the matter. I suppose, indeed, that there are few persons in the colony who have not been aware from the first that the present agitation originated with the planters at Mackay, who have been disappointed in their desire to secure the introduction of coolies from India. Much care has, however, been taken to conceal this aspect of the question, for there can be little doubt that if it were put forward openly as the ground for advocating separation, the movement would almost immediately collapse, or, more probably, meet with strong antagonism from a great majority of the people of the North.

"7. The first reason advanced by Messrs. Davidson and Lawes in favour of territorial separation is the great area of the colony, which they say causes difficulties in the administration of government, and they add that adequate representation in the legislature of the more distant districts cannot be obtained, while the most necessary public works are neglected in conse-

quence of the distance from the seat of government? So far as difficulties in administration occasioned by distance from the seat of government are concerned, anyone acquainted with the actual facts is aware that every place of any importance in the North is connected with the capital by telegraph, by means of which it is the practice to conduct all matters of administration requiring early action. This argument may be used with respect to any country of more than very moderate area, and in most cases with more force than in Queensland, where it has been the anxious desire of successive administrations to surmount these difficulties to the utmost possible extent, in which effort they have, I think, so far succeeded that any other centre of administration would be practically as far removed in point of time from the remotest parts of the colony as Brisbane now is. Similar observations are applicable to the complaint as to difficulty in obtaining suitable representation in the legislature. In any large country where the internal means of communication are not easy, members of the legislature coming from distant parts must necessarily be absent for a considerable time from their homes to attend Parliament, and an extra two days' journey is of little consequence. The statement that public works are neglected I can only attribute to inaccurate information on the part of the writers. In fact, no such neglect exists, or can be seriously asserted to exist."

"8. The second reason put forward by the writers is that the public loans obtained on the security of the whole of the colony have been unjustly distributed, owing to the preponderance of Southern interests, and it is alleged that a very large and apparently undue proportion has been spent south of the proposed line of division, while the revenue of the North has been applied to paying interest on the whole debt. 'This unjust appropriation of the revenue and distribution of the loans is,' it is said, 'a long standing grievance, and is a matter of great injustice to Northern Queensland.' This statement would have been more in accordance with facts, if it had been said that the alleged unjust appropriation was at one time a grievance. Some years ago schemes for what was called 'Financial Separation' were frequently brought under the consideration of Parliament, having for their object the relief of the supposed grievance by keeping separate accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the various portions of the colony and expending the revenue of each portion within its own limits.

"That there was at one time some apparent cause of complaint may be admitted. Indeed, it could hardly have been otherwise. The development of some of the northern parts of the colony was of extreme rapidity, and was accompanied by correspondingly large contributions to the revenue. The population was, however, too sparse to justify the construction of railways or other public works such as were carried out in the more thickly settled districts. But as the population has grown these requirements have been supplied, and now few men knowing the facts would venture to say that the share of loan money allotted for public works in the North is unfair to that part of the colony. It is scarcely necessary to add that the revenue of £500,000, referred to in the letter under review, has not long stood at that amount. Perhaps the best proof of the fairness of the present distribution is the fact that the idea of 'Financial Separation' has for many years been dropped.

"9. The third ground put forward, and I venture to think the real ground relied upon, by Messrs. Davidson and Lawes (who are interested in sugar plantations at Mackay) is the alleged absolute diversity of interests between the inhabitants of tropical and temperate Queensland on the subject of coloured labour. This proposition is put forward as if it were indisputable and admittedly true, and it is asserted 'that there are millions of acres of rich land along the north-east sea-coast which can be only utilised for tropical productions by means of coloured labour'—'that the coloured labour which is absolutely necessary for tropical agriculture is denied to the inhabitants of the North by the representatives of the South'—'that the inhabitants of Northern Queensland are anxious to obtain coolies from India under proper restrictions'—and 'that this is refused by the South, who last year repealed the Indian Coolie Act, which up to that time existed.'

"Passing by the inaccuracy of the last statement—the Bill to repeal the Indian Coolie Act having failed to pass the Legislative Council—I venture to dispute the correctness of each of these assertions. And, as there is evidently a great misconception both as to the nature of the soil and climate of Northern Queensland, and of the reasons for the action of the Queensland Legislature with respect to coloured labour, I propose to take this opportunity of placing on record my opinion, which I have good reason to believe is shared by a majority of

the inhabitants of both Southern and Northern Queensland, as to the question, both in its physical and political or social aspects. I have myself visited Northern Queensland on several occasions at various times of the year, but principally in the hottest season, and I have had the opportunity of hearing the opinions of colonists who have lived there for many years.

"10. The character and resources of the various parts of Northern or Tropical Queensland differ almost as widely from each other as those of the extreme southern and northern portions of the colony. It is quite erroneous to suppose that the whole of this territory is to be considered as subject to the ordinary incidents of tropical countries as commonly understood. The rich lands fit for tropical agriculture are confined to narrow and not continuous strips on the coast, rarely extending more than twenty miles inland, and forming a very small and inconsiderable portion of the whole territory, so far as area is concerned. The area of mineral lands already known is of much greater extent. Gold, silver, tin, copper, and other minerals are known to exist in large quantities, and in deposits of great richness. But by far the greatest area consists of pastoral lands, differing in no important particular from the rest of the pastoral lands of Australia—a fact which is to a large extent accounted for by the comparatively high elevation of the table-lands dividing the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria from the Southern waters. Moreover, in some parts of this territory—notably, in the Herberton district, in latitude 17 degrees to 18 degrees—the ordinary products of temperate regions can be grown with success.

"11. I unhesitatingly affirm that the demand for coloured labour is almost exclusively confined to persons interested directly or indirectly in the agricultural lands on the coast, while the town and mining populations and persons interested in pastoral pursuits, except some of the run-owners, are almost unanimously opposed to it.

"12. The advocates for this labour are in the habit of asserting that the climate of this part of Queensland is such that white men cannot work in the open air. If this were so, a strong reason would undoubtedly exist for the admission of Asiatic labour, without which apparently the land would necessarily lie idle. Upon this point there are no doubt great differences of opinion amongst those best qualified to judge; but it is a fact that for many years white men have been engaged in the lumber business in these same jungles—a work much more arduous and quite as injurious to health as the cultivation of sugar—and these men almost unanimously ridicule the notion that white men cannot do any kind of outdoor work in North Queensland. Their own health, when they have not injured it by excesses, is the best proof of the correctness of this view.

"The supposed unhealthiness of the Queensland coast, and its unfitness as a home for white men, have long been a subject of discussion in this part of Australia. At one time the supposed limit for Europeans was put somewhere south of Brisbane, and Moreton Bay was said to be too hot for white men. The imaginary limit has, however, for many years been steadily advancing northward. But wherever it may ultimately be fixed, I think that it has not yet been reached by the progress of settlement.

"13. I do not wish it to be supposed that I think that Europeans will be found to work on plantations under the same conditions as the coloured races. But I believe that the land can be cultivated by Europeans, and that it will be so cultivated, but under different conditions, unless that result is prevented by the introduction of Asiatic labourers in large numbers. And this leads me to the consideration of the social and political aspect of the labour question. But I desire to observe, before passing to this subject, that I am unable to recognise that the system of cultivation now principally prevailing and desired to be perpetuated by the advocates of coloured labour—that is, in large estates owned for the most part by absentee proprietors represented by managers or agents, and worked by large gangs of men of an inferior race—is an unmixed or even a considerable advantage to the colony. A large number of owners themselves resident on the land would, I think, conduce much more to its lasting welfare and prosperity.

"14. The advocates of coloured labour for Queensland do not always urge the same arguments. Sometimes they admit that Europeans can do the work, but assert that they will not do it, or that they are not reliable, and that they might combine for higher wages at inconvenient times. This argument has, no doubt, a foundation of truth. White labourers are more in the habit of resisting ill-usage, and of asserting their rights, than men of races accustomed for generations to a servile or inferior position. But it will at once be seen that in a colony whose institutions are founded on a basis of popular

representation this contention raises a grave political and social question. Is it desirable, regarding Queensland, or the northern portion of it, as a country which is to be civilised and governed on the model adopted in the rest of the Australian colonies, that a servile race should be introduced who can never be admitted to a share of political power, and whose interests will need protection by a paternal Government? On this point I do not expect that the persons, of whom Messrs. Davidson and Lawes are the spokesmen, will feel any sympathy with the arguments which, nevertheless, force themselves upon the attention of men who are charged with the responsibility of administering the affairs of a British self-governing community, and which I think demand the best consideration of Her Majesty's servants both here and in Great Britain.

"15. There is, I believe, no country in which Asiatic and European labourers are found working side by side on terms of equality. Where the Asiatic labourers predominate or are admitted in considerable numbers, it is invariably found that they, being able to save money out of a pittance on which Europeans would decline to attempt to support life, by degrees monopolise all branches of industry. The function of manual labour is regarded as degrading, and if any numbers of the white races continue to be engaged in it they degenerate in social estimation, and are looked down upon as 'mean whites.'

"It is scarcely necessary to examine the reasons for this result, or to speculate whether it is a note of the superiority or inferiority of the white races. The fact is apparent, and is the key, I think, to the fierce objection that is made in the democratic communities of America and Australia to the introduction of large numbers of Chinese.

"The fact is, indeed, so far recognised that the advocates of the introduction of Indian labourers into Queensland have always ostensibly claimed that it should be under 'proper safeguards'—*i.e.*, that the Asiatics should be prevented by law from coming into competition with Europeans in industries which it is not disputed that the latter can successfully prosecute in this climate.

"16. The party which are at present in power in this colony are opposed to their introduction, not because they are not fully sensible of the apparent temporary advantages which would follow from a large and immediate supply of labour, but because they consider that any such 'safeguards' would be futile. When it was proposed some two years ago to introduce labourers from India, it was provided by the draft regulations, submitted by the then Queensland Government for the approval of the Governor-General in Council, that Indian coolies should not be allowed to engage in any occupation but that of tropical or semi-tropical agriculture, and that, on the expiration of their terms of agreement, they should be compelled at once either to re-engage for similar service or to leave the colony, under a penalty of imprisonment. The Indian Government naturally refused to assent to any such conditions, but were willing to agree to a regulation that other persons should be liable to a penalty for employing them in any other occupation.

"17. It appears to me, however, that any regulations of this kind would, in the nature of things, be entirely inoperative, even if the Government which was charged with their administration were permanent and influenced by a continuity or identity of policy—a condition which cannot be expected in a constitutional colony in this part of the Empire.

"Suppose, for instance, that, such a condition being the law of the land, two farmers occupied adjoining farms, one engaged in the cultivation of sugar, and the other in that of maize or potatoes—products which, in fact, grow side by side in Northern as well as Southern Queensland. If the sugar-grower's coolies being idle, and the maize-grower's workmen having left him, the former were to be employed in the cultivation of the maize, an offence would be committed against the written law, but the unreasonableness of punishing the maize-grower would be so apparent that the law could not practically be enforced. Why, it would be said, should a man on one side of a fence growing maize be prohibited from employing labour which to a man on the other side of the fence growing sugar is allowed? I confess I see no answer to the question which would stand the test of even a very short practical experience.

"If, instead of the kind of cultivation being adopted as the test, an arbitrary geographical line within the colony were adopted, equal difficulties would arise. Why, for instance, should a sugar-grower at Brisbane or Maryborough or Bundaberg not be allowed to employ coolies when they may be employed at Mackay or the Burdekin where the conditions are almost identical? Nor, I think, in the interests of humanity, could any penal law be permanently enforced which

prohibited the employment of any considerable part of the population in any industry in which they were willing and competent to engage.

"18. The conclusion which I draw from these considerations is, that if coolies or any other inferior coloured races are introduced into a country in large numbers they will within a measurable time overflow the whole country and enter into competition with the European workmen, whom they will ultimately displace. I need not point out in detail the difference between the European civilisation, such as we are now endeavouring to establish in Queensland, and the Asiatic civilisation such as is found in places like Mauritius, but I think I have indicated with sufficient clearness the nature of the danger which is apprehended by a large number of the people of this colony.

"I think that if, notwithstanding these considerations, it should be determined to introduce Asiatic labour to the colony, the only way to prevent the consequences which I have pointed out, and which appear to me to be absolutely certain and not merely speculative or contingent, is to set apart separate localities into which coolies may be admitted, but with the full understanding that as to them the hope of civilisation on the European model is abandoned.

"19. So far I have considered the matter principally from the point of view of the European colonist. The interests of the coolies themselves ought not, however, to be lost sight of. I will suppose that a new colony is established on a constitutional basis, and that the introduction of coloured labour on a large scale is sanctioned by its legislature. It is not to be expected that the same party will always be predominant. I doubt, indeed, whether any legislature that would be elected in Northern Queensland would sanction the introduction of coolies at all, but it is quite certain that if they did it would only be under the so-called 'proper safeguards.'

"20. The point of view from which the party, which I may call the 'planters' party,' and which would certainly be strong in such a colony, would regard their coloured servants may be inferred from the manner in which that party have treated the regulations made by this Government in April of last year for the conduct of the Polynesian labour trade, and which few men would say go beyond what is indicated by the plainest dictates of common humanity. Yet ever since those regulations were promulgated they have been denounced as 'Cast-iron Regulations,' and the Government which introduced them have been accused of 'harassing' and 'strangling' the sugar industry, and this by the very men who now ask for self-government in Northern Queensland, that they may have the opportunity of introducing another kind of coloured labour under conditions to be fixed by themselves.

"If, however, the opposite party, unfavourable to coloured labour, obtained, as would sometimes happen, the reins of power, it would probably be found that restrictions would be imposed upon the employment of Asiatics, which, from different points of view, might be described as harassing to the employer or the employee.

"21. I am strongly impressed with the view that a representative Government, in which the influence of employers predominates, is not fit to be trusted with the control of inferior races; and I entertain a scarcely less strong opinion that a constitutional Government, in which the whole white population are represented, is not the best to control the destinies of an inferior race entering daily into competition with them in various forms of industry.

"22. If, therefore, it is seriously intended that any part of Australia should be thrown open to Asiatic immigration, it seems to me that only those parts should be selected which are considered clearly unfit for European settlement, and that they should be constituted a separate territory and governed as a Crown colony by Imperial officers who will act with impartial justice between the inferior and superior races.

"23. The difficulty of separating in Queensland the parts of the colony which it is said requires Asiatic labour from the rest which admittedly do not require it would, from geographical considerations, be very great; but this difficulty would be nothing in comparison with the social and political troubles which seem to me to be the inevitable result of any attempt to unite the Asiatic and European civilisations in a constitutional colony. For reasons already given, however, I do not think that there is any sufficient reason for supposing that either experiment is necessary.

"24. The permanent advantages that would result to Australia and the Empire at large from preserving Queensland as a future field for European settlement appear to me so greatly to outweigh the present gain that would ensue to a few persons—of much enterprise no doubt, but who have no intention of making Queens-

land their home, regarding it rather as a field for exploitation—that until the experiment of European settlement has been fairly tried and has failed, I hold that it would be a most fatal mistake to adopt the opposite policy, the consequences of which would be probably irreparable.

"In any event I feel confident that Her Majesty's Government will give their careful consideration to the arguments which I have brought under Your Excellency's notice, and which, although very familiar to the people of this colony, have, I believe, never before been officially formulated in their present form.

"I have, etc.,

"S. W. GRIFFITH."

That is our Premier's letter; and I submit, Mr. Speaker, that a more full, a more exhaustive, a more convincing, a more telling synopsis of the whole of the separation question could not have been put on paper. It is because I hold that view that I was anxious, even at some risk of wearying the House, to have it put into *Hansard* to-morrow morning; and I can assure you, sir, and hon. members, that I am very grateful for the indulgence that has been shown to me. I will not detain the House much longer. This letter was sent enclosed in a letter of his own by His Excellency the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. His letter is dated the 13th April, 1885, and in it His Excellency writes:—

"MY LORD,

"I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's Despatch No. 6, of the 28th January, transmitting to me a copy of a letter addressed to your Lordship by Messrs. J. E. Davidson and J. B. Lawes, setting forth the reasons which, in their opinion, render it desirable that the northern portion of Queensland should be erected into a separate colony, in which despatch your Lordship stated that you would be glad to have my observations upon the statements and arguments contained in this letter, and would be happy to receive any expression of the views of my Ministers upon the subject which they may be disposed to place before you.

"2. In reply, I now have the honour to submit to your Lordship copy of a letter from Mr. Griffith, Colonial Secretary and leader of the Government, which furnishes a clear, temperate, and able exposition of the views of the Ministry; with which for the most part I agree.

"3. I do not, however, share the opinion of Mr. Griffith, that it will eventually be found possible to successfully prosecute the cultivation of the sugar-cane in the tropics by means of white labour. I believe this to be physically impossible from my knowledge of the history and experience of cane cultivation elsewhere. But I am aware that a very large number of the supporters of the present Administration entertain this opinion whether erroneous or not.

"4. This salient question respecting the necessity or otherwise for introducing coloured labour for the working of sugar plantations has been carefully excluded from notice in the present agitation for separation, which has already resulted in the formation of a league, and communications from that body will soon formally reach your Lordship. Yet there can be little doubt that the movement for separation has originated with the sugar-planters, who, I think vainly, hope that they will be able after separation to carry their point and be allowed to introduce coolie immigrants.

"5. If a decided majority of the inhabitants of North Queensland should be found for any reasons to desire separation, a fair case for consideration would be submitted for the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and it would scarcely be just to refuse their petition. But I greatly doubt that, as yet at all events, any large or influential section of the population of the North do really wish for separation; and, even if separation were effected, it is by no means clear that a majority of the white working men in the North would then be convinced of the expediency of coolie immigration. The mining population, and a large proportion of others not at all, or very indirectly, connected with sugar cultivation, form, I believe, a majority of the electorate who would still view with dislike the introduction of any 'coloured labour.'

"6. For your Lordship's information, I enclose a copy, taken from a local paper, of a draft memorial to the Queen, and of a letter to your Lordship in which it is to be transmitted, which, I learn, has been adopted with very slight alteration by the convention now sitting at Townsville. I add to these the report of the address of

the president of the conference, and copy of the telegram sent to me acquainting me with the constitution of the convention, and that I shall be informed of all its proceedings.

"7. I shall, therefore, shortly have occasion to communicate further with your Lordship upon this subject. Meanwhile I enclose, as complementary to the other papers above mentioned, copy of a leading article taken from the *Brisbane Courier* of 11th instant, which, I believe, fairly sets forth the present state of the case. The *Courier* newspaper does not in general support the existing Administration, and may be considered usually as the organ of the sugar-planters.

"8. There is one point to which I think it desirable to direct attention and consideration. It seems to be assumed that power resides in the Crown, without reference to the Imperial or local Parliaments, to divide the territory now forming the colony of Queensland, and the Imperial statute 24 and 25 Vic., chap. 44, is relied upon as giving authority for this purpose.

"9. I venture to submit that it is at least open to doubt whether the powers given by 18 and 19 Vic., c. 24, as amended by 24 and 25 Vic., c. 44, have not been already exhausted by the separation of Queensland from New South Wales, to which latter colony alone, by name, the Act was distinctly applied.

"I have, etc.,

"A. MUSGRAVE."

There is a postscript to this letter, dated the day after, in which His Excellency says:—

"Since the foregoing despatch was written and copied, the leading article which I annex was published in the *Courier* newspaper of this morning.

"I have not touched upon any suggestion of the possibility of establishing the Government of a Crown colony in North Queensland, because I believe this to be practically out of the question.

"If a majority of the population desired separation they would not tolerate any but representative institutions, such as those to which they are already accustomed.—A.M."

Now, as to that, Mr. Speaker, I shall simply say this: that there are some points upon which I am sorry to be obliged to differ from His Excellency. I think he might have put the case clearer; and, Mr. Speaker, I make bold to say that as Governor of Queensland it was his duty to put it clearer. He has had large experience of coloured labour. He knows as well as, far better than, any gentleman in this colony—that where there are representative institutions coloured labour and white men never did work never will work, and never can work together; that it is utterly impossible to reconcile the two—to make them live in harmony and peace together. And yet he does not say so in this despatch. On the contrary, he leaves it to be inferred that there will be some sort of representative institutions in the proposed new colony in the North. If there should be, sir, I feel sure they will be of a very ramshackle sort—a broken-down, crippled kind of representative institutions—that they will get worse every year, until at last they will have to become either a Crown colony or come back, like the prodigal son to his father, to the sheltering arms of the colony they left. Now, sir, I do not know whether it is correct to say that the *Courier* is considered the organ of the sugar-planters. That may or may not be, but this I know: that it is the leading paper in Brisbane, and last Saturday, in an article on the speech of the hon. member for Mackay, I find this extraordinary sentence, to which I ask the especial attention of Northern members. Now, let no one say that this sentence is qualified by the context, for if I were to read the whole article it would not alter it in the slightest degree, as hon. members can find out for themselves. The sentence I am about to read stands on its own ground, perfectly complete in itself from beginning to end. This is it:—

"The fact that the introduction of coloured labour in a purely tropical colony, politically separated from the bulk of the white population of Queensland, is fraught with social dangers, is not the concern of the Northern planters."

"Not the concern of the Northern planters" ! Mr. Speaker, I am at a loss to find language in which to express my contempt for such a vile, abominable doctrine as that. I never in all my life heard anything worse. Here we have the Northern planters deliberately placed before us in the position that when a serious problem in which the welfare of the whole colony is at stake is being considered they are not supposed to take the slightest interest in it. That is the teaching that the readers of the *Courier* are everywhere asked to believe in as sound teaching. I need not dwell upon that. It is the policy of the Northern planters ; it is the policy of the employers of coloured labour all over the world. Can anyone point to a place where the employers of coloured labour take any interest in the social concerns of the people they live amongst—even the social concerns of their own coloured labourers ? It is a terrible state of affairs, and to find the *Courier* propounding such a damnable doctrine is utterly astounding. Mr. Davidson writes another letter, but that letter I will not read. I will not trespass too far. He writes it from Mackay, and again in total violation of all rules of courtesy, he passes by our Governor, and Premier, and Parliament, and sends it straight away to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was evidently feared that one letter would not be sufficient, and a second was considered necessary. Why, sir, it shows that these employers of coloured labour would go through blood and bones and every obstacle to reach their selfish ends. Of course, if they do not regard the social concerns of the people they live amongst, they are not likely to be very polite to us or to anybody. That letter, of course, came back ; there also came a short letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to our Governor, and it contains this :—

"I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of a letter from Mr. J. E. Davidson, respecting the question of the separation of the northern from the southern portion of Queensland.

"I request that you will cause Mr. Davidson to be informed that his letter has been received, and that it will be convenient, if he has occasion to address the Secretary of State again from the colony, that he should follow the regulation which requires that such letters should be forwarded through the Governor."

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the short letter which I propose to read now from the Mackay planters will be regarded by the House as the cream of the lot.

The PREMIER : I don't believe they read it.

Mr. BROOKES : At any rate, I will read it.

The PREMIER : Read their names.

Mr. BROOKES : It is dated Mackay, 13th May, 1885, and is addressed to His Excellency the Governor :—

"MAY I PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, the undersigned sugar-planters, resident in Mackay, have observed with surprise that Mr. Griffith, Premier of this colony, has, in a letter dated 1st April, 1885, addressed to Your Excellency for transmission to the Earl of Derby, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and published in the *Brisbane Queenslander* of April 18th, insinuated that the present movements for the territorial separation of Queensland originated with what he is pleased to call the 'planting party.'

"The charge so insinuated by Mr. Griffith we emphatically deny."

They would deny anything, Mr. Speaker.

"This is not the first time that Mr. Griffith has taken advantage of his position as Minister of the Crown to malign the Queensland planters, but this is the first time he has committed himself in writing, his previous utterances having been always accounted for as misreported."

The PREMIER : That is absolutely untrue. We know very well who wrote that letter.

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Mr. BROOKES : I am very pleased to see hon. members opposite so amused. They get very little fun in this world.

"We are well aware that the Queensland planters, while Mr. Griffith remains in power, are under a political ban, as clearly evinced by his public utterances and official acts, but we decline on this or any other ground to allow ourselves to be made political stalking-horses from which to attack the movement for separation, believing as we do, that the movement rests on other and more substantial grounds than those on which Mr. Griffith would make it appear to do."

I like that ; it is very dignified.

"The chief cause of the desire for separation, if honestly sought, may be found in the deep-seated conviction that ever since the creation of the colony its Government has been rapidly deteriorating."

This is simply awful.

"It is a gross error to assert that the majority of its inhabitants enjoy the benefits of representative government, the great political inequality now existing in Queensland more resembling the state of things that might be expected in an effete and worn-out political community than in a young and vigorous State of British nationality.

"The evidence of this is plainly visible in—

1st. The gross political frauds perpetrated at elections, which there appears no attempt made to check, except for party purposes."

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : "Bulcocking."

Mr. BROOKES :

"2nd. The unscrupulous use made by leading politicians, for mere party purposes, of questions most vital to the interests of the colony, such as immigration, coloured labour, and the great public works necessary for the development of the material success of the colony ; and

3rd. The desecration, for party purposes, of the very fountain of justice, illustrated by the elevation to the magisterial bench and other high offices, as rewards for political services, of disreputable persons whose characters will not bear scrutiny.

"To illustrate still further what we mean, and to point out that the colony, as at present constituted, is merely a prey to political parties, instead of a free self-governing community, we assert that a great majority of the present House of Assembly have been, since their election, merely dummies, voting as they are ordered by the leader of their party, or the caucus which manages it, and in no way carrying out either the theory or the spirit of our constitutional government. This was well shown by their voting away the sum of seven millions in one sitting without discussion.

"The inhabitants of the North have serious misgivings about the safety of entrusting the immense sums now proposed to be borrowed into the hands of such a body as the present Legislative Assembly, in which they are practically unrepresented ; and they think that if money is to be borrowed for the construction of railways, and other public works, they are far more likely to obtain their fair share of it by borrowing as a new colony than they would be if they once pledged their credit and then allowed the funds to be placed in the Brisbane Treasury.

"No redistribution of seats will remedy this state of affairs, as the seat of government being situated at so remote a distance from the northern portions of the colony, it is well nigh impossible to get our best local men to represent us in Parliament, consequently we are a prey to a regular staff of political adventurers sent up from Brisbane to contest the Northern elections, and misrepresent the Northern constituencies."

Do I look like a villain ?

Mr. STEVENSON : We cannot hear you. We are losing all the fun on this side.

Mr. BROOKES :

"It is felt that separation would remedy this evil to a very great extent, if not entirely.

"With regard to the financial separation movement mentioned by Mr. Griffith as having been initiated some time ago and 'dropped,' we may state that the desire for it continues as great as ever, but this is included in territorial separation, as the greater includes the less.

"We may state with regard to coloured labour, that we neither desire nor expect in the new colony any action to be taken which will not be for the

welfare of all classes of the community; but we do expect that any such action will be, after proper consideration, taken honestly and straightforwardly in the interests of the whole State, and not for party purposes only; or, worse still, for the fraudulent purpose of entrapping capitalists into investments with the intention of eventually destroying their securities, as has been done by the Government of Queensland to those who have invested in its sugar industry.

"We have the honour to request that, should your Excellency forward a copy of Mr. Griffith's letter to the Earl of Derby, you will kindly forward to him a copy of this."

That is not all.

The PREMIER: Read the names.

Mr. STEVENSON: You are under instructions now, evidently.

Mr. BROOKES:

"We have, &c.,

EDWARD M. LONG, Habana	EDWARD MOCKRIDGE
A. R. MACKENZIE, Marion	R. E. DONALDSON, Palms
W. STEEDMAN, Pleystowe	JOHN MACLAREN, Marion
W. INVERARITY, Elaklong	CHAS. C. RAWSON, N. Q.
DUNCAN MCINNIS, Elaklong	Sugar Estate Company, Limited
FRANK R. ROBINSON, Goodwin Paddock	JAMES DONALDSON, Cassada
CHAS. J. WILLOCK, Rosemount	M. R. MACRAE, Pioneer and Ashburton
ARCHIBALD MCINNIS, Elaklong	HENRY J. JANE, Glendaragh
ALFRED SMITH, Victoria Mill	WM. H. HYNNE, Meadowlands
THOMAS BALLEs	W. T. PAGET, Nindaroo
	A. H. LLOYD, Drumbleton."

Who wrote that letter, I would like to know? For all we know, it was written by a gentleman not twenty-five miles away from this House. But, although I have said nearly all I have to say, I feel bound by my conscience to say this: that if we consent, in ever so trifling a way, to the establishment on our northern coast of a Mauritius, or a Demerara, or even a Natal, we shall be violating our plain duty. Coloured labour means ruin—ruin body and soul as a British colony—ruin to our trade. It means an entire suppression—placing in a subordinate position all our morals, our religion, our civil liberty, and our constitutional liberties. And what for, Mr. Speaker—why? Is it possible that such a loss can be compensated for? Is it money that will compensate for these things? Are we to be tempted to hand over our liberties and our honour as British colonists to people, merely that they may make a lot of money in sugar in North Queensland, and live as absentees—grinding down everything in their neighbourhood, and then going away? I ask hon. members to look at this view of the question. According to the ideas of the planters, if there is a prosperous place in the world it should be Mauritius. But let hon. members read any popular book about Mauritius, and they will find that there is not a store in all Mauritius like D. L. Brown and Co.'s in this city. The best houses are large three-story buildings which are let to coloured people in flats. There is not a draper's shop in all Mauritius, anywhere except at Port Louis, the capital, to compare with Finney, Isles, and Co.'s. There are no foundries, and no work for any white man; the houses are built by coloured people, and shoes and everything else are made by coloured people. The rich people—the planters—never buy anything in Mauritius, but they send home their sugar, and get from home their wines, their champagne, and everything else they want. As to the value of land, there is very little town or suburban land that has any value according to our consideration of the value of property, and a divisional board would be treated there as a farce. Shall we bring Northern Queensland to such a level as that? I ask the question in all seriousness. I ask hon. members to dismiss the appeal for separation and have nothing to do with it,

and never at any time have anything to do with it until it can be considered a thousand miles apart from the question of coloured labour.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—The cry which comes from Northern Queensland for separation is only what might be expected. It is merely a repetition of a movement which has already resulted in the erection of five separate colonies from the mother-colony of New South Wales—namely, Tasmania, Queensland, New Zealand, Victoria, and South Australia. And in every instance the partition has resulted in immense benefit to the portion of territory which obtained separation. At the same time, in no previous case has the revenue or population been equal to the revenue or population now possessed by Northern Queensland. The present colony of Queensland, when separation from New South Wales was obtained, numbered 30,000 souls—not one-half of the population possessed by the portion of Queensland which now asks for separation; and the revenue was even far less than half. Tasmania, which is considered a prosperous colony, has now been separated for sixty-two years, and I notice, by the telegraphic intelligence published in yesterday's *Courier*, that the financial statement of the Treasurer of Tasmania shows that the revenue of that colony for the past year was £600,000, while the population in 1884 was 130,000. This shows that that prosperous colony, which has been separated for sixty-two years, does not even now possess within £50,000 of the revenue which our Treasurer has himself admitted is obtained from Northern Queensland, although Tasmania has more than twice the population of Northern Queensland. Our revenue, resources, and population prove our capacity to go into business on our own account. I regret that the arguments used by various Northern members in favour of separation have not been met fairly; it would have been more to the purpose to have done so than to attribute improper motives. I will refer to some of those imputations. One Minister of the Crown asserted that separation was really a planters' movement, alleging in proof of his statement that it was led by Mr. Black, the member for Mackay; further asserting the hon. member for Mackay was only ostensibly withdrawn from the leadership, and Mr. Macrossan, the hon. member for Townsville, put forward simply because it would look bad to have Mr. Black as leader because of his connection with the question of coloured labour. That statement Northern members know to be untrue, because they without one dissentient voice elected Mr. Macrossan as their leader on account of his experience and ability. It is also stated as an objection to separation that Townsville will be the Northern capital. Every Northern member has said that it would be undesirable to have Townsville as the capital. But supposing it were the capital, how could that be an objection to the people of the southern portion of the colony, or an argument against separation? If in the opinion of the northern portion of Queensland Townsville is bound to be the capital, it shows how strongly the feeling for separation in the North is rooted, because we all know that in Bowen, Cairns, and Cooktown there is a strong objection to Townsville being the capital, if therefore, in spite of that, they are all strongly in favour of separation, it shows that their desire for it must override the fear of Townsville being the capital. The poor old dead coolie has been trotted out again. That bogey has been held up by the Premier on this as on every other occasion. It is stated that this movement has been organised by the planters for the purpose of obtaining coolie labour. Every individual in this House knows that that is not

the case, and the country knows that it is not the case. That statement is meant for the ears of the people at a distance, because we all know perfectly well now that the planters can get as many coolies from Java as they wish, and at a lower rate than they could have got them from British India, the only difference being that they are actually getting them now under no restrictions whatever—that they can remain in the colony as long as they wish, and can compete with white men after the term of their engagement is up. That is known by every member in this House, and therefore I say it is very dishonest to put that forward as an argument, and make that statement to the authorities at home relying upon their ignorance. Hon. members who make that assertion know perfectly well that the facts are as I have stated them. I challenge anyone to deny it. I know that many of the supporters of the present Griffith Ministry who were deluded years ago into the idea that he really did object to coolie labour are now actually against him on account of his present action, which they say is far worse, as regards the introduction of coolies, than the course proposed to be taken by the last party in power. That party proposed to introduce coolies, but to restrict their employment to one industry and to send them back directly their engagements were up. Instead of that they see now that coolies are coming in as large numbers as the planters require and without any restrictions whatever. I have no doubt that on the eve of the general election, if separation does not take place before then, the Premier will introduce another motion to stop the Javanese, but I know that until that time comes and the necessity arises from a political point of view nothing will be done. Then, again, the Premier stated as an argument against separation that the northern portion of Queensland would be governed by a party in favour of the introduction of aliens. Look at the history of the present leader of the Government in connection with aliens! We know very well that the influx of Chinese which we suffered from occurred through the refusal of the leader of the present Government to accept the proposals of the leader of the present Northern party, Mr. Macrossan, to prevent the introduction of Chinese. We know that Mr. Macrossan proposed a vote of want of confidence against the party of which the present Premier is the leader, because he refused to take any action to prevent the influx of Chinese. We know also that Sir Thomas McIlwraith and Mr. Macrossan, many years ago, promised to assist the Premier in putting a stop to the introduction of kanakas into the colony, if he chose to attempt it, but the offer was not accepted. We know that many years ago, when Mr. O'Sullivan proposed a poll-tax on kanakas, Sir Samuel Griffith, who was then in opposition, voted for that tax, knowing it would not be carried, for the sake of gaining popularity. That is evident from the fact that when I subsequently proposed the same tax, in exactly the same words as Mr. O'Sullivan's motion, Mr. Griffith, being then Premier, voted against it, because he knew that by supporting it, it would be carried. The hon. member said on one occasion:—

"It may be said possibly that the colony would be divided into two parts. Well, it may be, but I do not look forward to that. I do not think that is a material element in the consideration of the question. I do not think the people of the North who want black labour would get much better treatment from the electors around them than from the electors of the colony at large."

That is not the opinion he expresses now. This statement made by him goes to prove that he is perfectly satisfied that if the North gets separation the electors of the new colony would soon

turn to the right-about any members who attempt to introduce black labour. I shall mention another interesting fact; the separation movement in Townsville was initiated only four years ago by a partner of Sir Samuel Griffith—Mr. Sachs—who offered £500 towards the movement provided the people of Townsville supplemented it with a similar sum. I have mentioned the objections to separation, and now I will refer to the reasons for it. I shall not discuss the question as to the conditions under which the Imperial Parliament have power to divide the colony, because I feel perfectly satisfied that if the reasons furnished convince them that separation is desirable it will be attained. Now, the reasons given by the North for separation are—first, that we desire it; secondly, that on account of our population, our resources, and our revenue, we are justified in our demand; and thirdly, that on account of the majority of representatives in this House having Southern interests and sympathies, we have not our fair share of revenue or expenditure. Of course these statements are combated by the opponents of separation. The Minister for Works has endeavoured to throw cold water on the petition by stating that it has been examined, and that only 3,500 of the 10,000 names which appear on it are those of electors. Now, admitting that statement to be correct—which, by the way, I do not admit—that is no proof that the petition is not genuine. There is the fact that reliable persons have said that the names are not forgeries, and that out of a population of 62,000 men, women, and children, 10,000 adult males have attached their signatures to a petition for separation. It was never said that those 10,000 were all electors. There is another very significant fact—that every Northern member, with one exception, has pronounced in favour of separation; and in no instance have I heard that the action of a Northern man, in doing so, has been received with disfavour by his constituents. I conscientiously believe that I represent the feelings of the majority of my constituents in supporting the separation movement; and every other Northern man has expressed himself to the same effect. There is also the fact that to that petition are attached the names of the clergy, the merchant, the principal men, and nearly every, if not every, mayor who held that position at the time the separation petition went round. When we look at the members and the constituencies they represent, and the portions of those constituencies that are in favour of separation, it is evident that the allegation that the black labour movement is at the bottom of it is simply moonshine. At Bowen now there are not many planters among the electors, and Bowen is strongly in favour of separation. The member for Charters Towers, Mr. Lissner, has told us that the majority of the diggers on the Towers and at Ravenswood are in favour of separation, and certainly no class of people is more antagonistic to black labour than are the miners. The majority of people on the Herberton, Watsonville, Palmer, and the various goldfields in the Cook district are in favour of separation. Now, the Colonial Treasurer and the Premier during their late Northern trip assured the people that they had been receiving more consideration than they were entitled to, and endeavoured to prove it by showing that they had received more than their share of the expenditure out of the ten-million loan. Certainly there is a large expenditure for the northern portion of the colonies—on paper—and unfortunately it remains there. The Minister for Works said the other night that all that the North ever got in the shape of public works was due to the Liberal party. Now, I have observed efforts on the

other side to make this a party question; and, although I have no desire to do that, still I wish to correct a statement which is not founded in fact. Even admitting that all they have got came from the Liberal party, that is no argument against the assertion of the residents of the North—that they have not received justice. The statement, however, is not correct.

The SPEAKER said: In accordance with the Sessional Order, the business under discussion at 6 o'clock stands adjourned until after the consideration of Government business.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

##### ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL BILL.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from the Legislative Council returning the Elections Tribunal Bill, and intimating that they did not insist on their amendment in clause 7, and agreed to the amendment on their amendments in clause 9.

#### ELECTIONS ACT OF 1885 AMENDMENT BILL—CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

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

The PREMIER said that the Legislative Council had inserted a new clause in the Bill dealing with one of the provisions of the principal Act. It stated:—

"The sum of five shillings required by the twenty-first section of the principal Act to accompany a notice of objection must be paid to the electoral registrar with the notice given or transmitted to him. No sum need accompany the notice given or transmitted to the person objected to."

The reference evidently was to the 20th section of the principal Act, which provided:—

"Any person named in any electoral roll for the time being in force in any district objecting to any other person as not entitled to have his name retained on any electoral list for such district, may, on or before the first day of October in every year, in the case of an annual list, and on or before the twenty-fifth day of October in the case of a supplementary list, give or transmit by post to the electoral registrar, and to the person objected to at his address as inserted in the list, a notice in writing."

And it went on to say—

"Such notice shall be accompanied by the sum of five shillings sterling for each objection, which sum shall be returned or otherwise dealt with as hereinafter provided."

That clause did not state whether the sum of 5s. was to be paid to the registrar or to the person objected to, which was a strange omission, and had not been noticed until the previous day. Of course it would be very absurd to give the 5s. to the person objected to, and there was no doubt the amendment was a proper one. He therefore would move that the proposed new clause be agreed to, but that it be amended by the omission of the words "twenty-first," with a view of inserting the word "twenty," as it referred to the 20th section of the principal Act.

Mr. NORTON said the Premier had stated that it was a clerical error, but he would not believe it until he had referred to the principal Act, after he (Mr. Norton) had pointed it out. He mentioned the matter because he believed that that amendment required all the legal talent of the Government to make, and he thought a Government with three lawyers in it might avoid clerical errors of that kind. They came to an arrangement with the Premier on Tuesday evening that they would allow those Bills to pass the second reading, be considered in

committee, and go through all the forms last night, in order that the motion of the hon. member for Townsville might be disposed of this evening. He did not think that if the amendment in the Bill now before the Committee had come up prior to the second reading of those Bills it would have been allowed to pass without the objection which had been taken on that side of the House being insisted upon. The fact that the Government had already to amend a Bill which they passed last session, and that since that amending Bill had passed that Committee they had to send a further amendment to the Upper House to get it inserted there, showed that however careful the Government were they could not help making mistakes; and he did not think members should allow Bills to pass with as little scrutiny as they were sometimes disposed to do.

The PREMIER said that if the leader of the Opposition thought it worth while to make a speech about a clerical error he was welcome to do so. He maintained that no one was free from liability to error, and there was nothing to be ashamed of in making mistakes, except making egregious ones. He did not feel the least ashamed of a mistake of that sort. It might occur anywhere, and he did not think it was worth while talking about it. It was not the practice to talk about such things elsewhere.

Mr. NORTON said he was sorry to put the hon. gentleman out, but really he would not believe it was a clerical error. The hon. gentleman thought it was right until he (Mr. Norton) handed him the Bill, showing him that it was the 20th instead of the 21st clause.

The PREMIER: I said, "Is it really?"

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

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported to the House that the Committee had agreed to the Legislative Council's amendment with an amendment.

The report was adopted.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council with a message inviting their concurrence in the amendment on their amendment.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the next Order of the Day is called, I wish to make a motion to give effect to a promise made a few days ago to give precedence to the motion on the separation question. I therefore move that the consideration of Government business be postponed until after the conclusion of Order of the Day No. 2, general business.

Question put and passed.

#### SEPARATION OF NORTHERN QUEENSLAND—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—As a matter of fact, nearly all the money that has been received for public works in the North during the term of this Government has been from surplus revenue saved by the previous Government, and actually put on the Estimates by them for expenditure in the North. The Estimates were certainly modified by their successors when they took office, certainly not in favour of the North; but nevertheless the money was provided by the previous Administration. Of the ten-million loan not one penny has been spent on railway construction in my district. In fact, nearly all the Northern railway expenditure has come out of money which was voted by the last Government. The Premier has challenged

anyone to point out where neglect has been shown to the North. It is very easy to give instances where that has occurred, I will mention the Herberton Railway. That has been wearily dragging its slow length along for four years, and until a few months since not one mile of railway construction had been initiated in that district. And I very much doubt whether that paltry contract for eight miles would have been given when it was had it not been for political purposes on the eve of an election. We have been promised from time to time for the last year that tenders would be invited for the construction of the first section of twenty-four miles. I recollect that in June, 1885, the Commissioner for Railways stated in his annual report that "It is expected that the working plans and specifications of this line will be ready for inviting tenders as soon as Parliamentary approval of the line is obtained." The plans and sections were passed on the 15th September. The engineer doubtless got a hint that there was no particular necessity to trouble about getting the permanent survey ready. A year has passed, and still we are put off time after time with promises. The last promise is that in October next tenders will be invited. But I do not think that promise will be kept either. When I was up north lately, I understood from the engineer that this clearing, which the Minister informed us lately would not be finished till December next, had to be made for the purpose of enabling the railway surveyors to get their instruments on this line to make certain alterations before the working plans can be got ready, and tenders cannot be invited until this is done. If the Government had sufficient interest in the development of the northern portion of the colony how differently they would have acted in the case of the Herberton line! The Chief Engineer, in reporting on this railway, says there are 4,000,000,000 feet of cedar along the line, estimated by him to weigh 5,000,000 tons, which would take 100 years to carry, at twenty loads per week, with fifty tons to the load. We also know that this line would open up an immense quantity of magnificent country, and would develop the rich mineral resources which abound in that district. The Cooktown and Maytown Railway has been treated in a similar manner. These are the things which cause dissatisfaction in the North. At Cairns, for three years we have asked for a dredge. We are unable even to get a definite answer. The last information I got from the Colonial Treasurer, a few days since, was that we may, under favourable circumstances, get a dredge for that port in the December after next. There are rivers there—I know of two—where the settlers are paying £1,000 a year rent for their land. For several years they have asked for the expenditure of £400 or £500 to dredge those rivers, which are their only roads, and all they have got are promises. We realise that our revenue is in excess of our expenditure, and we consider that our expenditure should be regulated by our revenue, and not by the necessities of the southern portion of the colony. We see how expenditure is going on in the South, while the North has to be satisfied with promises. Look at the Ipswich deviation: £85,000 was put on the loan vote for the work, and now we are told by the Minister for Works that an additional £60,000 will be required for it. Some railways will suffer for it, as the extra sum will have to be taken from some of the unexpended votes, and no doubt it will be the Northern railways, where no expenditure is now going on. We know that settlement on the land is retarded there, and that there is practically one land law for the North, and another law for the South, as has been conclusively proved several

times in this Chamber. We know that by reason of oppressive taxation a blow has been struck at one of our most valued industries in the North. With regard to representation, although the representation in this House is not equal to our population, in the Upper House there is a still greater disproportion, the proportion there being one in thirty-eight. We do not expect justice from either party, but we consider we are fairly entitled to what we ask by virtue of our present position, which is financially and numerically a far better position than Queensland was in when it obtained from New South Wales that which it refuses to us.

Mr. ALAND said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not intend to go into this question generally, because it has been already very fully, very ably, and with great good temper, discussed by hon. members on both sides of the House. But I do not like to let all the remarks of the hon. member who has just sat down pass by without some observations upon them. If any member has tried to raise an angry feeling it is that hon. member.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He is a pugilist.

Mr. HAMILTON: So are you, I think.

Mr. ALAND: He has referred to a subject which he seems never tired of mentioning—fastening all the evils connected with the Chinese agony, the introduction of kanakas and other coloured people, upon the head of our present Chief Secretary.

Mr. HAMILTON: And you are trying to fasten them upon our heads.

Mr. ALAND: I rose merely for the purpose of trying to fasten a little of the blame upon hon. members sitting on the other side—notably the hon. member for Townsville, to whom the senior member for Cook is always ready to give such a very good character—with reference to this coloured labour question. I am free to admit that that hon. member has done all he possibly could to keep the colony free from the Chinese; but I think that when he occupied a seat in the late Cabinet he might have done something to have prevented the introduction of Polynesians into the inland parts of the colony. He had an opportunity, on one occasion at least, of trying to prevent it, but there is no record to show that he really did do so; and I do not know that either in this House or anywhere else he stated that he had done so. But he did what I am about to refer to. There was a regulation, signed, I think, by the present Minister for Works, restricting the employment of kanakas to tropical agricultural work on the seaboard of the colony. That regulation was acted upon by the then Ministry; but what did the next Ministry do—a Ministry of which the hon. member for Townsville was a member? They did this, Mr. Speaker: They set it at nought, and the then Colonial Secretary, Sir Arthur Palmer, allowed kanakas to go to work on several stations in the interior of the colony. I do not exactly know where those stations are situated, but I believe one was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Charters Towers, and another was a station belonging to the hon. member for Normanby. And the place, if I am not mistaken, was in the neighbourhood of Goondiwindi, and it is a matter of history that these poor kanakas were very badly treated, and great mortality was the consequence of the treatment they got. I would not have called attention to this matter had not others referred to it. We do not make ourselves white by trying to make our opponents black; and what is the good, time after time, of getting up in this House and recounting the sins

that we have previously committed? I do hope that the hon. senior member for Cook will let this Chinese question drop. There is not the shadow of truth in what he has said. Why, sir, the whole colony knows that no one has tried to do more to prevent Chinese and coloured men of any kind coming into the country than the present leader of the Government.

Mr. BLACK: Say something about separation.

Mr. ALAND: There was precious little about separation in the last speech we heard, and I am going to say very little about it. If hon. members opposite will raise other issues they must expect hon. members on this side to do the same. I am perfectly satisfied as to this separation question as far as it has gone, and only wish that it would come to a vote at once. I am quite sure of this: that no matter how many speeches are made they will throw no more light on the subject, and I am certain they will not influence a single vote. The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Brown, when speaking last week referred to the credit balances which from time to time accrued to the Treasury, and which he said, very likely with a great deal of truth, were owing to the large amount of revenue derived from the North. He complained that, although those balances appeared from time to time, yet none of the money was returned for expenditure in the North. Now, I wish to show hon. members that that statement is certainly without foundation; and I shall refer first of all to the "Votes and Proceedings of 1874," page 822, where there is a statement of proposed expenditure to be defrayed from surplus revenue. The first item is "Immigration, £75,000." Well, the North certainly had its share of that expenditure.

Mr. BLACK: No.

Mr. ALAND: The immigration expenditure is general expenditure, and the North, at all events, shared in it. I am not going to say—because I have not the figures before me—that they have received a fair share of that particular vote.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: You said so now.

Mr. ALAND: No; I said a share, I think.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: A full share.

Mr. ALAND: I did not intend to say a full share, but a share of the expenditure. Then we have the item "Pioneer River—extension of embankment, £5,000; groin, £1,800;" total, £6,800. That went up north.

Mr. BLACK: Never spent.

Mr. ALAND: "Cleveland Bay, improvement of port, £4,000." Has that never been spent?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. ALAND: "Endeavour River—wharves and receiving shed, £2,500." That was never spent, I suppose? Then we have coast lights. "Light-house, North Reef, £8,000,"

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: That's Rockhampton.

Mr. ALAND: Yes; I see it is. However, here is "Torres Straits." That is up north, is it not? £11,000 spent in Torres Straits.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: For what purposes?

Mr. ALAND: Light-vessels and beacons.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: General purposes.

Mr. ALAND: Surely the hon. gentleman knows that everything spent for general purposes is for the benefit of the whole colony—that

the whole colony gets the advantage of it. Then there is "Telegraph extension—Burdekin to Ravenswood—£600," only a small amount. Then "New works—Ravenswood to Millchester—£3,500; Junction Creek to the Palmer, survey of line, £350; the Palmer to Cooktown, ditto, £150." That is the first lot—in 1874.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What is the total?

Mr. ALAND: I did not add up the total.

Mr. BLACK: Not much.

Mr. ALAND: I did not think it worth while adding it up. The next special appropriation was in 1882: "Wharf and shed, Dungeness, £2,000; lightship, Proudfoot Shoal, £5,500; lighthouse, Pine Islets, Northumberland Group, £6,000; buildings, Charters Towers Hospital, £6,000; Mackay Post and Telegraph Office, to complete, £5,000; Post and Telegraph Offices, Dungeness, Eton, Herberton, Tinaroo, Walkers-town, Boulia, and Cloncurry, £7,000; roads and bridges—goldfields roads—Cook district, £13,000; and only £1,000 for Gatton Bridge, sir. "Defences of the colony—two gunboats, £60,000."

Mr. BLACK: Is that for the North?

Mr. ALAND: It is as much for the North as for the South. Is not one of those gunboats up there just now? These are figures, Mr. Speaker, and they cannot go astray. In the year 1884 there was—Immigration again, £150,000; two new dredges, £60,000.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They were not for the North—for Brisbane.

Mr. ALAND: Do hon. members mean to say that dredges have not been doing work in the North?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: One.

Mr. ALAND: I know that there was a dredge working at Cooktown when I was there.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: That is the one.

Mr. ALAND: Then we have "Buildings—Charters Towers Court-house, £4,000; Bridges, Annan River, Endeavour River, and Ross Creek, £30,000; Divisional Boards, grant in aid of bridges, £15,000." The North received a share of that, Mr. Speaker. Then, again, there was a special appropriation last year, in which there was £50,000 for the North—for the sugar-mills.

Mr. BLACK: Where is it?

Mr. ALAND: You will get it all in good time. The money is there, and there is no doubt about getting it. Then the rabbit-proof fencing, Mr. Speaker.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. ALAND: It is all very well for hon. members to laugh, but I maintain that as long as the colony remains united as it is that is a matter of as much importance to the North as the South. It was argued in this House that it was a national work for the protection of the revenue of the colony—that the rents of the colony might not fall off. That being the case, the North is as much interested in the question as we are ourselves. I think I have disposed of the objections of the hon. member for Townsville, but not to his satisfaction.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: No.

Mr. ALAND: At all events, I think I have shown that they have received a share of the surplus from time to time. The hon. member for Cook (Mr. Hamilton) seemed to make light of the fact when it was pointed out that so small a number of persons signing the petition were electors. Now, sir, viewing it in the light of

what has taken place, it is not at all a small matter by any means, because we know that Dr. Ahearn, who is the representative of the separationist party at home, wrote to one of the London papers stating that 9,000 of the persons who signed the petition were electors of the northern part of the colony. I believe that that letter drew forth a rejoinder from Mr. Garrick, who could hardly believe that such was the case, and he asked that judgment should be suspended until inquiries had been made into the matter. Inquiries were made, and it was found that whilst the petition sent home had 10,500 signatures, only some 3,400 of those signatures were those of persons who were really electors of the colony.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: How do you know that?

Mr. ALAND: The petition has been compared with the electoral rolls of the North.

Mr. BLACK: By whom?

Mr. ALAND: I am not going to be catechised like this. How do hon. gentlemen opposite know many things that they put forth as facts? We have to take a very great deal of what they tell us upon trust, and they must take some of my remarks upon trust, and if they do not choose to do so implicitly, I cannot help it. But out of those 10,500 names only 3,400 were electors, and that being the case, I do not think it is a fair number to gain the boon they ask for. There are, I think, between 12,000 and 13,000 electors in the North, and I do not, therefore, believe that 3,400 out of that number are sufficient to induce the Home Government to grant the prayer of the petition. I am of opinion, as I have been all along, that this matter was born in Mackay, and that it was born of the planters, who hope to get a supply of coolie labour for their plantations. It is no use any hon. members trying to deny it. They might as well admit it at once. For my own part, I do not think it has very much to do with the point at issue. They may as well admit it at once, because we know that the hon. member for Mackay, first of all, in this House uttered what was almost a threat. He gave the House clearly to understand that if the demands of the sugar-planters were not listened to there would be, before long, an agitation for separation. That agitation commenced almost immediately afterwards, and, if I mistake not, it was during the recess that the hon. member for Mackay went upon his separation tour. But he had his eyes opened when upon that tour. When he left Mackay he thought that the whole of the North were in favour of coloured labour; but on his travels that impression, at all events, was set at rest so far as he was concerned, and when he returned he honestly told the Mackay people that if there was to be separation that separation would have to take place without coloured labour.

Mr. BLACK: Hear, hear!

Mr. ALAND: He told them that there was a strong feeling against coloured labour in the North, and that the planters might make up their minds that if separation were granted it would be without coloured labour. I think that that shows that the agitation was started at Mackay, in the hope of getting coloured labour. That hope has been dispelled; but as sure as I am standing here, if they get separation, they will move heaven and earth, and will try their utmost—and they can do a great deal—to get the kind of labour that they want.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—We have had a long catalogue of Northern grievances brought before us during this debate, but I cannot help thinking that the real grievance—the one that

prompted the originators of this movement—has been kept in the background. It has been repressed and almost repudiated; but it still shows to the front, and, as the hon. member who has just sat down said, it is no use their trying to deny it. They may deny it as much as they choose; but if it is shown that the coolie question has nothing to do with it, I must say that they have been most unfortunate in the gentleman they chose to stump the North in the interests of separation. They chose the champion of the planters, and the apostle of coolies, and I think by doing so they damaged their chances of getting separation for a long time to come. Some hon. members have claimed that the people of the North have a right to set up housekeeping for themselves, and I would have no objection to their doing so, provided that they carry on their housekeeping in a decent and in a regular manner, and do not disgrace us as next-door neighbours, and do not allow their dirty dish-water and soapsuds to run into our premises. But that is exactly what I fear, and I would be prepared to vote for the resolution if there were no danger of this sort. But from what we have learned in the past there is danger in that direction. Some time ago the planters indentured a lot of Cingalese, and brought them out to the colony. Where, Mr. Speaker, are those Cingalese now? More than three parts of them are wandering about the metropolis—wandering about almost as vagabonds, seeking charity, and going about as pedlars, and, I believe, without a license. They contribute nothing to the revenue of the colony whatever, and there is little doubt that eventually they will find their way into our hospitals, and, very likely, into our gaols or lunatic asylums, or into Dunwich, and it is because I fear that, that I set my face against this resolution. It will be useless for me to go over the ground trodden by speakers before me, but I must say that many extravagant statements have been made during the debate. If we believed the statements of hon. members opposite, we should have to admit that they have got everything in the North. All the gold is there, and everything of value or profit to the colony is there, according to those hon. members. The hon. member for Mackay even claims that almost the whole of the agriculture of the colony is in the North. He said that the agriculture in the South, as compared with that in the North, is little or nothing. It would damage us considerably to allow a statement to go forth that, if the North was separated from the South, we would have no agricultural interest. What are the real facts of the case? If hon. members will look at the agricultural returns for the year 1885 they will find that the total area under cultivation in the colony was 209,130 acres. Well, what have they north of Cape Palmerston, the point at which they think it desirable the line should be drawn? The whole of the cultivation north of Cape Palmerston is 45,351 acres. What is the value of such statements as have been made to those who have an opportunity of looking at our official returns? No value at all. But those statements may go forth to the old country, and the people there have no opportunity of bringing the statements to book, and seeing whether they are truthful or not. I think we should not allow it to go forth that the whole of the agricultural interest of Queensland is in the north of the colony. Again, I may say that one-half of the agriculture that is in the North is around Mackay and in the Mackay district, where there are 21,392 acres under cultivation. I have had an opportunity of seeing that land, and I have no hesitation in saying that no matter what number of coolies they introduce into the North it will not add very much to the acreage of agriculture in the Mackay district. I believe that one-third of the land

there put down as under cultivation will never be turned over with a plough. I made a remark about this before, and I say that at least one-third of it is nothing more than stony ridges, and when the weeds and couch-grass overrun it, it will have to be given up. I daresay it is contemplated to throw some portion of it out of cultivation at the present time. It was mainly to correct the hon. gentleman in this matter that I rose, and it will be seen from what I have said that their boasted amount of agriculture in the North simply amounts to about one-fourth of the agriculture of the whole colony.

Mr. FRASER said: Mr. Speaker,—It is with some degree of hesitation I venture to offer a few remarks upon this important question before it is decided. Important I think it will be admitted on all hands to be. I was somewhat surprised at the remarks with which the leader of the Opposition opened his speech the other evening. He somewhat severely animadverted upon the course and style adopted by members of the Ministry in opposing this resolution. I listened very carefully, and heard nothing emanating from any members of the Ministry but what was respectful and courteous to the leaders of this movement. In proof of that I may quote the remarks with which the Premier brought his speech to a close. He said:—

“Under these circumstances, I hope the motion will not be carried. I do not suppose it will be, nevertheless it ought to be fully and fairly discussed, as the matter is an important one. If a majority of the people in the North desired to separate, I am sure I reciprocate the wishes of the hon. gentleman in saying that we should separate amicably; at the same time, I believe, in the interests of Australia generally, that it is not desirable that there should be separation at the present time.” I do not know that anything more courteous could be addressed to the leaders of the movement.

Mr. NORTON: I did not say he was discourteous.

Mr. FRASER: I do not know that the hon. member used the very words, but he implied quite as much. It must be admitted, and I think the leader of this movement will admit, that it is the bounden duty of the Ministry of the day, whoever they may be, to oppose a motion of this kind as far as possible. They are bound to serve the interests of the colony at large, without any reference or respect to one part more than another. I think it would be a dereliction of duty if they shirked that. We were frequently referred by the hon. member for Townsville and others to the time and circumstances of the separation of Moreton Bay from New South Wales. I do not see any analogy between the two excepting one thing, and that is the cry for separation. There is no comparison between the two cases. I am told by persons who were resident here at that time, and long before that time, that there was no communication between this and Sydney excepting once a fortnight, and that very irregularly. Besides that, I am led to understand that, notwithstanding the lands sold in Brisbane and elsewhere, and the money drawn from Moreton Bay, not more than about £5,000 in the making of roads and other conveniences in the Moreton district was ever spent by the Sydney Government. Therefore, I say there is no analogy whatever between the two cases. The North may have imaginary grievances; but I venture to say that there is not a community anywhere that has not some grievances. I could get up grievances in my own constituency, and make out a good case against either the present or the last Government; but I do not wish for separation, nor do I think that is the way to remedy the grievances. With respect to the opinion advanced by the Duke of Newcastle five-and-twenty years ago, when he must have known

very little about this part of Australia, it is not entitled to much importance. I venture to say, if anyone had the temerity to predict to the Duke of Newcastle that in five-and-twenty years we should have in this colony a capital with over 50,000 inhabitants, and 1,400 miles of railway, and, in addition to all that, a debt of £26,000,000, I fancy the Duke would have treated it with the same incredulity as was shown by the late Lord Derby when he declared he would eat the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic. I think the opinions of the Duke of Newcastle, enunciated so far back as that, have very little weight indeed; for the circumstances have completely changed since he gave utterance to them. A good deal has been attempted to be made out of the petition of which we have heard so much. Well, I am free to admit that a petition from any section of the community should receive just and due deference. We are told that 10,000 persons signed it. Is that any wonder? The wonder to me is that every man, woman, and child has not signed it. It has taken two years to get up; there is a splendid organisation to promote it; that organisation has a secretary of wide and varied experience; he is a man very well known for his remarkable diligence; add to that the glowing eloquence of the hon. member for Mackay, and the effect he must produce by holding up before the communities of the North that alarming effigy of cheap European labour; and I am astonished that the number of signatures to the petition is so meagre as 10,000. Allusion has also been made to the coolie question and the Polynesian question. Well, I do not care to enlarge much upon that; I have my own opinion about it. There is one remarkable thing which seemed to have escaped the attention of the hon. member, Mr. Aland, when he was speaking; he might have pointed out that at the time when the late Government had almost stopped European labour they admitted coolie labour freely. But there is another matter to which I wish to call attention. We have heard it repeated over and over again here, that it would be a far safer thing for the colony to admit coolie labour under regulations than to admit Javanese and others without any regulations at all. Now, sir, what are those regulations worth? If regulations are to be of any service whatever, they should protect the ordinary labourers of this colony against the coolies. Well, I admit that one or two of the regulations sent by the late Government for the acceptance of the Indian Government did impose restrictions of that kind; but what were the regulations ultimately accepted by the Indian Government? It is well that our memory should be refreshed on these matters; let facts speak for themselves. It was proposed that if coolies were introduced into the colony they should be strictly confined to the pursuit of tropical agriculture, and not only that, but that as soon as their term of service was over they should be compelled to be re-engaged or returned home. The Indian Government repudiated that altogether. Here are the salient points bearing on this question. Clause 69 of the regulations read thus:—

“It shall be the duty of the protector to ascertain during his visits of inspection what immigrants have become entitled to a free return passage, and he shall deliver to every immigrant so entitled a certificate stating that his contract has terminated, and that his claim to a free return passage has been established.” So far so good. Then comes this, to which I wish to call the attention of hon. members:—

“It shall be optional with any immigrant holding a certificate from a protector under section 69 to make a declaration to the chief protector, either in person or in writing, within twelve months from the date of that certificate.”—

Mark that—within twelve months of the time he gets this certificate. What is he to do within the twelve months? He is at liberty to do anything he likes; go where he likes, and no one can interfere with him. But that is not all—“to the effect that he has elected to stay in the colony.”

Mark that—“Elected to stay in the colony”—

“and surrenders his right to a free return passage. The chief protector shall on receiving such a declaration, and after due inquiry, cause to be paid to the immigrant making the declaration a sum equal to one half the amount received by him under section 70 for the return passage of such immigrant.”

So that not only was he to be permitted to remain in the colony, but he was absolutely to have given him as a bonus half the amount of his return passage money. It is true a penalty was to be imposed on anyone who should employ a coolie in any other occupation than tropical agriculture; but from the best information we can get most of these coolies are competent to engage in other pursuits—mechanics of all kinds. They could engage in anything of that kind without let or hindrance, precisely as they have done in Natal, where at the present day there is scarcely a single occupation in the hands of Europeans; the coolies are mechanics, clerks, agents, and they fill every variety of occupation. Now, sir, I should not have alluded to this but for the statement that has been iterated and reiterated in this House, that it would be better for us to have the coolies under regulations than to have the kanakas or Javanese. I want to show that so far as protection to the industrial classes of the colony is concerned, the so-called regulations are not worth the paper they are written on. We have heard, too, of another grievance—the matter of representation; and here we have the old fallacy harped upon—a theory, I venture to say, that has never been heard within any Chamber where constitutional government is found except in Queensland—that is that the adult male population should be the true basis of representation. The thing was never heard of, and if it did exist it is an exploded theory. Even in an old Tory country like England, during the late redistribution agitation nothing of this kind was attempted to be advanced. Representation and taxation, we are to understand, go hand-in-hand. We were told the other night that the population of the North paid a far heavier tax than the population of the South. I think it was the hon. member for Musgrave who made that statement, and I must take this opportunity of complimenting that gentleman upon his maiden speech in the House the other evening, and I am quite sure that others will do the same. Well, now, let us see, sir, about this matter. The hon. member tells us that this House has not granted the franchise to women, and therefore they are not entitled to any consideration in the matter, and it is very true they are not. But have they no rights? Will they not contribute to the Customs or to the taxation of the colony? The hon. member for Northern Downs wished to prove the other night that a working man, with his wife and an ordinary family, contributed something like £28 a year to the revenue of the colony. Well, sir, I maintain, and I care not what may be said to the contrary, that without any reference to the adult population the population of the whole is the proper and only correct basis upon which to rest the representation. How does it stand? According to the census we have 50,000 people in the North—62,000 including 12,000 Polynesians, Chinese, and others—and 260,000 in the South; and that brings the present representation in this House to a fair and correct bearing. I am not going to follow this matter any further, for of course other members will speak upon the subject after me;

but I wish to point out that, as far as representation is concerned, the contention that it is not fair is a fallacy.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER of the Opposition: What about the Council?

MR. FRASER: The Council is not a representative body; at least, I do not think so. Now, sir, we come to immigration, and I shall be very brief on that point. The same hon. member, the other evening, pointed out to us that up till 1877 there had been 2,880 immigrants landed in the North, and since then 17,290, making a total of 20,170. That, at his own calculation of £20 a head, would be £403,400. He objects to the Treasurer's statement assigning as the portion of the North towards immigration the sum of £350,000, although his own calculation really makes it much more. Then he goes on to say that from various sources there has been expended upon immigration £3,614,000. One item in this is land-orders, representing £753,000, and everyone knows that that does not come out of the Treasury—or out of loan or out of revenue. That is still in the colony, and a great part of it at the present time is contributing largely to the resources of the colony, and it does not show that the North is supporting the South. This is just the very motive of my hon. colleague in endeavouring to reintroduce the land-order system, so that it may save the Treasury and the taxpayer. According to the hon. member's figures, which I am quite willing to take, the object evidently is to show that only 20,170 immigrants have been landed in the North, and that consequently the North should be saddled with no more of the immigration vote than what would pay for them. Now, as I said before, the population of the North is 50,000, and taking 20,170 from that, 29,830 are left still occupying the North; and how did they get there? Did they spring from the earth, like Roderick Dhu's followers—

“As if the yawning earth to Heaven  
A subterranean host had given?”—

or where? We can only point to the hon. member himself and the hon. junior member for Townsville. They both went from the South, and a great many more went from the South to the North. The hon. gentleman says that 181,530 people have been introduced into the whole of the colony by immigration, and that, out of something like 331,000, is about 55 per cent. of the whole population. I think I am pursuing a fair course when I say that 55 per cent. of the population of the North has been introduced through immigration, and 55 per cent. of 50,000 is 28,600; and 28,600, at the hon. member's own calculation of £20, is £572,000, that the North has benefited from immigration. That is not my statement. I am taking my data from the basis of revenue, so that instead of £233,000 which the hon. member, for some reason or other, makes out the immigration of the North has cost, it is, according to his own figures, £572,000. I simply state this to show the use that can be made of figures, and how—perhaps insensibly and unintentionally—one may come to a conclusion upon figures like those to help to carry out and further the object he has in view. I have not very much more to say, but I would like, just before I sit down, to point out another benefit the North has received, and which cannot be denied, and that is the mail service. How does this matter stand? We will just take it as in a fair proportion. We will admit that the fair proportion of the North to the South is about one-fifth. The South, then, has to bear five-sixths of the cost, and the North, taking the population as the basis, has only to bear one-sixth. The benefit, on the other hand, is about five-sixths to the North, and one-sixth to the South.

It is a matter of perfect indifference to the southern part of the colony whether we have that service or not; and I believe we have a prospect of by-and-by getting a much better and quicker service to the South than ever this has proved. I do not deny that that service has not been a benefit to the colony at large, but it shows that we in the South can get up a grievance if we like, because the service has been carried on mainly at our expense, and we have received but the smallest portion of the advantage from it. Then there is the question of defence. It must be admitted that the colony, as a whole, is in a far better condition for defence than it would be if separated. But are the grievances of the North real—are they of such a very serious nature that we cannot rectify them without having recourse to this extreme measure? I think they may be rectified, and every member of the House, wherever he may hail from, ought to set before himself a much nobler aim than to carry out an object of this kind. Can there be a nobler aim for any member than to do all he can to maintain the integrity of this splendid colony in its entirety? I am not very imaginative, but I can conceive the time—and I hope it is not very far distant—when Queensland, if she holds together, will be an object of envy to all her neighbours, and a country of which its inhabitants, native or other, may be justly proud. But I venture to say that if we pursue the course now being aimed at, and split it up into two or three portions, she will never attain what she is now calculated to attain. We ought not to lose sight of the fact that we are doing all we can to bring about the federation of the colonies. I may be told that separation will not injure that in the least; but I maintain that the more members you have to do with the more difficult will it be to reconcile them and to mould them into a substantial whole. Perhaps it is a misfortune that the capital is in one corner of the country, but I do not think, with the advantages we have now, that that need prevent us from having a fair and equitable Government for the whole of the colony. We are told that Washington was in a central position. So it was at one time; but it is now at one end of the country, with California at the other; and California does not go in for separation that I am aware of, although, no doubt, she has many grievances to complain of. I have occupied much longer time than I intended. I am sorry if I have trespassed too long upon the patience of the House; and all that remains for me to say is, that if it should come to separation I hope we shall separate amicably and without jealousy, and that if there should be any rivalry between us it will be a rivalry to aid and promote the best interests of both communities.

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Everyone who has listened to this debate must have been pleased with the manifest good temper exhibited on both sides. The question was stated by the hon. member for Townsville calmly, dispassionately, and with his usual ability, and he struck a good key-note for the whole of the discussion that has followed. There is no doubt that the Imperial Parliament can pass a Bill empowering the Imperial Government to divide this colony into two, three, or even half-a-dozen parts, and if they were disposed to act arbitrarily in the matter they need not consult our wishes at all. In that view of the question, it would seem almost superfluous for us to discuss it at all in this House. As far as we are concerned in the South of the colony, there cannot be two opinions on the question. We are naturally and necessarily opposed to separation. We have nothing to gain by it, and we have a very

great deal to lose by it—between 200,000 and 300,000 square miles of territory, from 1,000 to 1,500 miles of seaboard, including the Gulf seaboard, some good harbours, some fine rivers, a great deal of mineral wealth, 50,000 people—not including Chinese and Polynesians, whom I do not value—and I suppose all the interest that Queensland possesses in connection with the protectorate of New Guinea. The question has been asked sometimes, in England, of what use are the colonies to Great Britain? We might almost as well ask, of what use is his right arm to a labouring man? I did not think till very recently that I should live to see this question of the cutting off of the northern part of the colony seriously discussed in this House. I do not think the loss can be reckoned up, if we lose the North, in mere figures. It cannot be measured by miles of territory, or by mines of gold, or any consideration of mere material wealth. The North say, "We can do without you; we are 50,000 people; we have a revenue of £500,000 or £600,000, with plenty of material wealth; and we can do without you." I do not think, from what I have heard, that the argument goes further than that. Probably the North could do without us, but it could do twice as well with us. Two are better than one. A man might do without a wife, but if he had means to support a wife he would be a great fool if he did. At present, the people in the North are partners with us in the full and undivided possession of the whole of this vast colony. We have 669,520 square miles, or nearly 429,000,000 square acres, of country between us—a truly splendid estate. Why should we proceed now to divide and disintegrate it by our own hands? The outcome of this new notion of separation was, I think, very shrewdly pointed out and very plainly set forth by the hon. member for Burke the other day when he talked about a chain of colonies—if I read the paper correctly—on the seaboard and in the interior of this colony. Heaven forbid that it should be so! Whilst we can maintain the unity of this colony her unity and greatness will give to Queensland a place and a power in what will soon be the Federated States of the great Australian dominion. Undivided this colony will exercise very great power and influence in the councils of Federated Australia. It will occupy a first-class position in the British Empire; it will be one of the greatest colonies under the British Crown; but, sir, the day it begins to divide, to break up into separate insignificant parts, its prestige will all depart. It will be gone for ever, and that will be a sorry day in my opinion for Queensland, both North and South. It will be a bad day for both. It will be worse for the North than the South—much worse. At present we have one Government establishment, costing necessarily a great deal of money. One-sixth of that is now charged to the North, but if they get separation, the North will have to pay the whole cost of a separate Government establishment, which for several years will more than drink up all their revenue. Then the North, if they get separation, in the view I am now taking, will lose half of her territory and five-sixths of her population, and will sink into a fourth or fifth rate power amongst the Australian Colonies; and North and South together will be immeasurably weakened. And we do not know where this weakening will end. We warn hon. members representing the North, who have done so so ably and on the whole so fairly, in connection with this matter—we warn them that it will not stop where they are now contemplating that it will stop; we warn them that they are forging

the links of the chain spoken of by the hon. member for Burke—a chain consisting of a number of little good-for-nothing, insignificant, parish vestry States. If they succeed, then farewell to the idea of a great Australian dominion. It is very difficult even now to bring that about, because all the colonies do not think exactly alike. There has been some opposition on the part of the great colonies in the South, and it will be much more difficult—it will be impossible, I believe, then. If we once seriously set ourselves to work to break up this colony into separate insignificant parts, then I say the hope is gone for ever of a great Australian dominion; at least, I think so. We know the part Queensland has played—thanks to the great ability and statesman-like management of our Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith—in this great and important movement. We know all that, and why should we, by a deliberate act of our own, begin to divide the colony into separate parts—why should we take this means of defeating all the grand design? If this were a question of re-establishing, or permanently establishing, black labour in the North I could understand the movement. If it were a question of erecting Townsville into the capital of the new colony I could understand the movement, but, sir, both of these objects are emphatically disclaimed by hon. gentlemen opposite. It is said that the capital of the new colony is to be somewhere in some yet unselected portion of the country, far away from the seaboard, from the shipping ports, from navigable rivers, and remote from the present abodes of men. If I might be permitted to whisper into your ear, Mr. Speaker, my own private opinion, I might say that once the North is separated from the South, Townsville will be the capital of the new colony. This movement may have been born in Mackay; I believe it was; but it almost died out there, and has been revived in Townsville. The present movement had its beginning in Townsville. It has been, as far as I can understand, Townsville first, Townsville last, Townsville at the beginning, Townsville in the middle, Townsville at the end, Townsville at the bottom, Townsville at the top, and if they get separation Townsville will be at the top—the capital of the new colony. That is my private opinion. The clever people of Townsville have, it appears, succeeded in persuading the people of Charters Towers, Normanton, and Cooktown that Townsville does not desire to be the capital; has no intention of being the capital; would not be the capital of the new colony on any account whatever. I daresay the hon. member for Townsville has persuaded himself that that is so, and that Townsville will refuse, under any circumstances, to be the capital; but once let separation be realised, and then the weight and influence and talent and numbers of the people of Townsville will be too many for their eloquent member, and Townsville will be the capital of the colony. Let the people of the North look to it. Our friends in the North have now determined to take this for their motto, “No coolies—no black labour.” So, then, after all, the Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, has not sacrificed the interests of the northern part of the colony by his black labour policy—by keeping out coolies, by regulating Polynesians, by stopping kidnapping, murder, and all the atrocities that have been written upon our history in connection with Polynesian labour for the last twenty years. They have discovered in the North at last that the Premier is the saviour of his country.

Mr. HAMILTON: Coolies are coming in now!

Mr. JORDAN: The saviour of his country, and especially of the North. I saw that it was so, two or three years ago, when we heard the Premier enunciate his policy in this House that it was not to be coolies, and it was not to be black labour. I am very glad of it, sir. Let us take them at their word. Let us have no black labour. I will here just remind them, especially those engaged in the planting interest, of the prescription which I wrote out for them three years ago—15s. a week, as wages to be given to European labourers engaged in England for two years, and a full ration ordinarily given to labourers in the country by pastoral tenants of the Crown. That would be nearly £40 a year—£39 besides rations. They say that they will have no black labour in the new colony; that they will have no cheap European labour—so the hon. member for Mackay told us the other day—and, by the way, I may say that “cheap European labour” is an expression that was never heard from the lips of the Premier, nor any one of his supporters. They never talked of “cheap European labour” or “German coolies.” That, sir, was the language of our opponents who wished to caricature the proposals of the Premier. We contend that European labourers should have fair wages. But that it seems is what they are now determined to do—to give fair wages for European labourers. We have their word for it, and they cannot go back upon it. They have accepted the proposal of the Premier—that they should have European labourers and give them fair wages, such as are generally given to new-comers—about 15s. per week and their full rations. I will remind hon. members of another recommendation of mine, and that was that the planters should give a bonus in land to those people who had fulfilled their two years’ agreements. The planters are rich in land and got it for nearly nothing, some of the finest land in the colony—which did not require much expenditure in clearing; they merely have to put their teams in their ploughs and drive right ahead over thousands of acres. I have never yet had the privilege of visiting that part of the colony, but I mean to do so some day. Those planters might say to those people when they have brought them out, “If you fulfil your agreements, at the end of two years we will make you each a present of five acres of land”; and they might also add that they would sell them twenty acres more of that land at a fair price, and give them three years or four years to pay it in, if they would put it under sugar-cane. Then the planters would be the manufacturers of sugar, and a large number of small proprietary farmers from England, who have served their two years’ apprenticeship to the work, well paid and well kept, would become the farmers of sugar-cane in the North.

Mr. BLACK: Why did you not try that plan?

Mr. JORDAN: We have heard enough from the hon. member himself to know that this plan would answer. I do not believe that sugar-cane cannot be grown by European labour in the North. I do not believe it, because the hon. member for Mackay himself tells us that there has been a considerable settlement in Mackay of small proprietary farmers who have done very well. Why not multiply them? I have had experience in sugar-growing, and I came to the conclusion, after trying it for six years, without trying black labour, that if it would pay at all in the South, which I did not think it would, it would be better that I should be a manufacturer and that the farmer should grow the cane, and I should pay a fair price for it. I firmly believe that sugar-growing will be a great industry in this colony in twenty years. At

present the sugar produced is worth a million of money per year, and if the system that I recommend were carried out, in ten years' time the value of the sugar produced would be five millions instead of one, and the population, instead of being 50,000, would be half-a-million; and what would be better than all, we should have no black labour to disfigure and disgrace this fair portion of Her Majesty's dominions. Why should we not try this together, and continue to be one great homogeneous and progressive English and Australian colony? Why did not America separate—the North from the South? Because if one stone had been removed the whole fabric would have been shaken to its foundations, and at this moment the great republic of the United States of America would have ceased to exist as a great country among the great nations of the world. Why should not Ireland be separated from Great Britain now? All who have read John Bright's speech will be satisfied that Mr. Gladstone, for once in his life, was mistaken. Why? Because union is strength, and separation and division is weakness and discomfiture and decay. Moreton Bay was separated from New South Wales in 1859, and therefore it is said—"Why should not Northern Queensland separate from Southern Queensland?" Because we have grown wiser than we were; we are twenty-six years older, and live in more enlightened times. Besides that, we are going to have Australian federation, and not disintegration. We have grown wiser than we were, and we intend Queensland to be a great power in Federated Australia; we intend that she shall hold her own and keep her place among the nations of the Southern Hemisphere. The cases are not at all parallel. The history of the connection of Moreton Bay, the "Northern Districts," as they were called, with New South Wales is a tale of injury and wrong. Let hon. members read the record of it, and then let them compare it with the strongest case that has been made out against the South by the hon. member for Townsville, or the hon. member for Mackay, or other hon. members on that side. There is no comparison between them whatever. There has been no great injury or wrong done to the North. I admit that hon. members on the other side of the House have ably fulfilled their commission in advocating separation for the North, which they were sent here to do, and which they have ably and courteously done. Surely they will reconsider this great and vital question, and take a broader and grander view of the whole question than the erection of Townsville into the capital of the new colony, and the spending of Government money in erecting a new establishment in the North. The members of this House have been fully informed of the wants of the North by those who have advocated separation, and I admit for myself that I am glad the debate has taken place. I feel that we and the whole colony are indebted to those hon. gentlemen who have so ably stated their case. We must admit that some injustice has been done to the North; I do so freely. I have the Treasurer's own figures, and I say that during the last three years the present Government have done a great deal to repair that injustice; in one year out of the three it appears that £12,000 was spent in the North, over and above its fair share; but during the other two years there was not enough. I think the feeling on this side of the House is that ample justice should be done to the North—that there should be perfect equality. The North should be credited with all the revenue collected there, and after their proportion has been deducted for the Government expenses, the balance should be spent in the North. Some such arrangement as that could be made, and then the North and South

unitedly should have the motto of the French Republic—"Unity, Fraternity, and Equality." Cannot we on these terms together determine to maintain the unity of this great country inviolate? I think we could. I think the Premier is equal to bringing in a Bill providing for decentralisation, for local self-government, and for a generally fair distribution of the revenue of this colony in all the settled parts of it that would be satisfactory even to the North. If the Premier promises to do that, or something like that, I think the North will be satisfied, and I hope the member for Townsville will be willing to withdraw his motion.

Mr. WHITE said: Mr. Speaker,—If the circumstances surrounding this question had been of an ordinary nature I would have had no interest in the matter, but the circumstances are of an extraordinary nature. The hon. member for Burke implored hon. members on this side of the House not to make this a party question. But it is a party question. There are nine members from the North who are separationists, and they are all Conservatives. There is one of them on this side of the House, but he is one with them also on the land question, and that is the test question. The members in favour of separation are all of one party, and I contend this must be a party question. There is no Liberal representative of the North in favour of separation. The North, I believe, has only one Liberal representative, and, of course, he is against separation; so that it is purely a party question. I would like to hear some hon. member contradict me, and show me that I am wrong. I cannot see it in any other light. In view of that, how is the North to be regulated? That party will certainly go into power if separation takes place, and that is rather a serious business to contemplate. How would they divide themselves? What will become of the Liberal party in the North if separation takes place? They will be put down with an iron hand. I have every respect and kindly feeling for all the individual members on that side of the House; but unfortunately the party to which they belong have such proclivities for land-grabbing that I have a great dread of the consequences of letting them have what they are asking for now. That is not all. In the narrow experience I have had in this country, unfortunately, my observation has led me to see these land-stealers. I do not accuse hon. members opposite of that, but unfortunately the land-stealers have come from the ranks of that party. I will explain what I mean by "land-stealers." If they get separation in the North history will probably repeat itself. I will go back twenty years when I had my experience of those land-stealers. I was looking for land in Queensland, and I mentioned one circumstance in the House two years ago that took place there. A Minister of the Crown prostituted his position, or took advantage of his position, to steal an agricultural reserve from the people either for himself or for the squatter who ultimately got it. I refused to give that gentleman's name in the House, and I refuse to give it now, but it was very hard upon me, while the Land Bill was going through the House, to see in another Chamber that very gentleman posing as the working man's friend, and opposing the Land Bill with all the energy he could. I witnessed that gentleman in the two positions, and I had my own feelings on the case. I am going to speak of two agricultural reserves—this was twenty years ago—and I may say there were some good men in this House at that time who did not actually give away all the good land and give the rubbish to the people. They legislated for the people, for the two agricultural

reserves I am speaking about were the best land in the country—I have seen nothing equal to them. That is where the temptation was, not only to the land-grabber, but to the land stealer. The other reserve I speak of was equal to the first, and there were about 2,000 or 3,000 acres in each—between 5,000 and 6,000 acres in the two. It was not a Minister of the Crown this time—I must not be too hard upon hon. members opposite, because I have mentioned one Minister of the Crown belonging to that party—but a squatter this time, a supporter of that party. He worked with the land commissioner, and they positively refused to allow a farmer to take any of it. This squatter went and had dinner with the commissioner on the Sunday, and on the Monday they met in the commissioner's office.

Mr. LISSNER said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. I would like to know what is the question before the House. Is it about this piece of land the hon. member for Stanley is sorry for, or is it the separation question?

The SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member is making use of the incident he is relating as an illustration of what he thinks may possibly take place in the North supposing separation were granted; but I think the hon. member should come to the point he wishes to illustrate.

Mr. WHITE: Yes, sir; history repeats itself, and I expect the same to take place in the North if separation takes place. This squatter succeeded in keeping every farmer off this agricultural reserve, than which no better land could be found in the world. He had it taken up in every fictitious name he could think of. Amongst the names was that of a bank manager at Ipswich, a respected man at the present time in Ipswich, who would not own it; he repudiated it. Of course the land was forfeited; but that suited the squatter exactly; it was put up for auction, and he bought it for ready cash. How did he fulfil the conditions? He put on two men and a team of bullocks, and drew furrows ten yards apart among the trees all over the good lands. That was the condition of cultivation. I can trace some of those furrows there now. The consequence was that the whole of the land went into the squatter's hands, and it has gone out of them now at a large price; he has reaped the benefit of his scheme. Well, sir, during the late Government this Opposition party, this separation party, was in power for, I think, nearly five years, and what did they do with respect to this land-grabbing? Look at the Johnstone River; one firm has laid its grasp there on 60,000 acres. The Burdekin delta is another instance. That is without exception the best grazing land in Australia, with an unlimited supply of permanent water for irrigation. One gentleman, a neighbour of these 20,000 acres belonging to Sir Thomas and his family, who has 2,500 acres there, declared to me—he did not know I would take such notice of what he told me—that it carried a beast to the acre. The quality of it is wonderful, and it was taken up at 5s. an acre. Well, sir, I will not say much about this Hamilton land; I think I will spare hon. members on that subject; but it is all of a piece with that party. Of course, some of them would not do anything they considered wrong; but they believe in land-grabbing, they believe in land monopoly, and they believe in setting up that class that will protect them in that monopoly of land. The consequences will become serious supposing they get separation. Of course, there will soon be a gathering of land-grabbers around them. There will be a whole host of impecunious aristocracy, including Lord Denbigh and the Duke of Manchester, and then, sir, we will see

the truth of the figure in sacred history, that "Where the carcass is, there will the vultures be gathered together."

Mr. DONALDSON said: Mr. Speaker,—It is not my intention to support the resolution before the House, but I must confess I have a great deal of sympathy for it, and that sympathy has certainly been increased considerably to-night by some of the speeches which have been delivered in this House. Now, the hon. member who just sat down has made an attack on members of the Opposition, and some of his statements are certainly not borne out by facts. Can it be wondered at that the people in remote districts—the people of the North and West—feel that there is very little sympathy in this House with their interests? I do not think there is a feeling in favour of separation in the West, but there is a strong feeling that the representation of this colony is not such as gives them a fair share in the distribution of the expenditure. That feeling is widespread over the colony. I do not say that it is altogether justified; I know I do not feel as strongly as many residents of the interior on this subject. I do not feel as strongly as they do in the North about it, because I really believe that within the last two or three years there has been a movement in favour of giving a more fair share of expenditure to the North than was previously the case. But, sir, the advancement of the North demanded that. There has been a very great increase in the population there, and in all the industries of the North. It has been very clearly proved, I think, by the hon. members who have spoken in favour of separation, that they have a very good case. So far I am in sympathy with them, because I believe the people of the North really believe that their interests are not properly taken care of down here—that as they are so remote from the seat of government there is very little sympathy with them. Certainly I share in that opinion, although I hope that in the future they will not have that to complain of. I am not going to make much reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley; but two or three times he has got up in this House and made severe charges against land-grabbers and squatters. Now, as a squatter, I deny that I am a land-grabber. I do not own an acre of land in Queensland, and I do not desire to do so. I am only a lessee of land here. I am quite willing to pay a fair rent for the land I occupy, and I do not propose to get the freehold for the purpose of letting it to other people at a rack rent. That charge has very frequently been made against hon. members on this side of the House. It is very unjust that such charges should be made, and I certainly will not sit still and allow them to pass unnoticed. We have had a great number of figures quoted by members on both sides of the House with regard to the expenditure, and various phases have been placed before us as to their fairness. I have certainly got rather mixed among such a maze of figures, and it is not my intention to unravel them, but it does appear to me that the revenue from the North has been greater than the expenditure. The Premier very clearly showed that no one particular portion of the population could possibly get the exact amount of money expended in their town or district that they contributed to the revenue. But there are large interests in the North which ought to be consulted. The pastoral interest cannot be properly developed until such time as the railways are pushed out into the country; that I believe has been done at a greater rate lately than it was previously. But this is what I wish to refer to as the reason of my sympathy with the North: They have there a very large and important industry—the planting

industry—and the persons engaged in that industry feel that the people of the South have no sympathy whatever with them, notwithstanding that the sum of £6,000,000 has been brought by them into the colony. They feel that they have been induced by certain means to develop that industry, and that legislation is bound to be against them in the future. I sympathise with them there, because if they have that uneasy feeling they must be very uncomfortable. If, however, something is done by way of reciprocity to restore their confidence, that would be to the advantage of the planters and the interests of the whole colony. A notion having that object in view will be brought in later in the session, and I hope it will receive the approval of the Government. Having gone so far in expressing my sympathy with the North, I will now state why it is not my intention to support the resolution. I think that, instead of having the colony cut into two or more portions, it is very desirable that we should have the whole closely bound together. Notwithstanding that a great number of figures and very able arguments have been advanced in favour of separation, it has not been proved to my mind that the colony cannot be governed by uniform laws. I believe we can have laws applicable to the whole colony under which all our resources can be properly developed. If I for a moment entertained the idea that the North could not be governed by the same laws as the South, I would certainly be in favour of that portion being cut off and allowed a Government of its own. But I do not think it has been proved that the laws of the South are not applicable to the North. I am not going into the labour question, which has been brought before this House in season and out of season. Notwithstanding that each member who spoke in favour of separation avoided that question, and assured the House that there was no intention to provide coloured labour for the proposed new colony, nearly every member who spoke against the motion—particularly those members who spoke this evening—have taken the opportunity to make statements against the importation of coolies. This has been done, although it has been denied even by the hon. member for Mackay, who is, I believe, the strongest advocate of coolie labour in this House, that it is the intention of the new colony to have coolie labour.

The PREMIER: No; he was more cautious than that.

Mr. DONALDSON: We have no right to disbelieve their statements, which have been made to us in good faith. We have every right to believe them. We have just as much right to believe that it is not their intention to introduce that kind of labour as we have to believe the contrary; indeed, we have a great deal more right to believe that such is not their intention. The member for South Brisbane, whom I notice smiling in his place, took the opportunity of making a strong speech for his constituents.

Mr. FRASER: Oh, no!

Mr. DONALDSON: I followed the speech of the hon. member while he delivered it. I have a great respect for him, but I could not help smiling when he was delivering the amount of claptrap he gave to the House. He certainly wandered very far from the subject under consideration, and I thought how fortunate we were in having a Chairman who will give us so much liberty when he is in the chair. If he should ever attempt to check me, I shall probably remind him that I have heard him, more than once, wander very far from the subject before the House. He quoted a large number of figures, and gave information which has certainly been very fully given to the House before, but I

give him credit for trying to make a good case for his constituents. We all try to do it occasionally. My chief reason for being opposed to the motion is this: that I think it is a very great pity indeed that the colony should be divided. At the present time the Australian colonies, commercially, are as much separated from each other as the furthest country of the globe. We have not a single privilege in regard to trade. The produce of one colony going into another colony has to pay the same as produce from Europe or Asia. What would it be, then, if the North was separated from the South? In their interest I think separation is undesirable. At the present time we have a market here for their sugar, but if separation takes place that market would be shut to the people of the North, unless we entered into a reciprocity treaty. I regret very much that the whole of the colonies do not enter into some such treaty, in order that their products might be passed free from one to another. That would give a great impetus to the development of the country, would encourage the importation of capital, and do a great deal towards advancing our progress; and I am certain that separation would do nothing of the kind. I heard the Treasurer interject to-night that the only true basis of representation was population. That is not the feeling of the North; it is not the feeling of the West; nor do I think it is the feeling of the general community. If that was to be the case the outside district would have no chance of representation at all. One of the causes of discontent in the North is that they are not sufficiently represented. I do not mean to say that the gentlemen representing Northern constituencies are not men of sufficient ability, because the great ability shown by Northern members must be admitted by all hon. members. In fact, taking the average, the most intelligent members come from the North. But the feeling is that they have not sufficient members to cope fairly with the large number in the South. Brisbane and the constituencies a few miles round are represented by no less than sixteen members, or nearly one-third of the whole number in the House. If representation were based upon population in Victoria, would not Melbourne have over one-third of the total number of members in the Victorian Assembly? And the same remark applies to New South Wales. I am not taking either of those colonies as a pattern, because great evils in connection with representation exist there; but the evil is greater here.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. DONALDSON: I believe it is greater here than in either of the other colonies. I am certain that it is greater here than in either Sydney or Melbourne.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. DONALDSON: The Premier says "No." I know he is generally very correct in the statements he makes, but on this occasion I shall take the liberty of differing from him, because I believe my statement is correct. I was pleased to hear from the Premier, not long since, that the present census is being collected in such a way that at the next distribution of seats it will be quite possible to have them fairly adjusted; but I trust that the population will not be taken as the basis, unless it is divided in two ways, as in Victoria, where the cities get a member for a certain number of the population, and the country districts a member for a smaller number of people. It is not only population that we represent. We must have some regard for interests as well as population.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Square miles.

Mr. DONALDSON: I do not advocate representation according to the number of square miles—not at all. There are certain interests that come in contact with the towns; and I trust that whenever redistribution takes place it will not be of the nature of the present system, and that the inequalities which at present exist will, to a considerable extent, be done away with. I do not intend to detain the House, but I could not give my vote against the motion without explaining that, whilst I sympathise with the North to a certain extent, my sympathy does not go so far as to justify me voting in favour of separation. I believe the motion will do a great deal of good for the North, and that their interests in the future will be better looked after than they have been before. I shall give all the assistance I possibly can in seeing that the North gets a fair distribution of expenditure, and I trust that all our laws may be of such a nature in the future as to satisfy the requirements of that part of the colony as well as the South.

Mr. SHERIDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I promise you that I shall not detain the House long, and that I will confine myself strictly to the question under discussion, and not go into a dissertation on the land laws, or the surrounding circumstances, such as land-sharks and land-grabbers. The reason why I stand up now to occupy any portion of the time of this House is that I am vain enough to wish to leave it on record that I have taken part in the discussion of the most interesting subject ever discussed within the four walls of this Chamber. I was in the colony when separation was granted to Port Phillip, and I was also in the colony when separation was granted to Brisbane. Before separation was granted to Port Phillip it took me eleven weeks to go from Sydney to what is now Melbourne, and I may repeat the words of Sir George Gipps, who was then the Governor, and say that the road was easily discovered, as it was marked by bleached bullock bones and empty bottles. I can verify those words by personal experience. There was no difficulty in pursuing the way, but it was a very long and weary journey. In those days the whole steam fleet of the colony consisted of three vessels—the “Rose,” the “Shamrock,” and the “Thistle”—the largest of them was only 280 tons. There were no telegraph lines communicating between one end of the country and the other, and you may safely say that it was a country at its beginning. However, the late Dr. Lang, whose name I mention with veneration and respect, because I look upon him as the truest patriot that ever stood in Australia, commenced the agitation in favour of the separation of Port Phillip, and did not cease till he had carried his point. It took him eight or nine years to do so, but during those years the people of what is now Victoria were preparing themselves for the coming event, and the granting of separation did not come upon them in any sudden form. Again, the first meeting in favour of the separation of Moreton Bay from the parent colony of New South Wales took place in Brisbane in January, 1851. It took them some eight years to obtain the desired boon; and during that time they were, like the Victorian people before them, preparing themselves for the coming event, so that when it came it was not unexpected. Then what is now called Fortitude Valley was wild forest; and it is named “Fortitude Valley,” I may inform hon. members, because of Dr. Lang having sent out a ship called the “Fortitude” with a lot of perhaps the best immigrants who ever landed in the colony. Recently I had the pleasure of visiting all the coast towns of Queensland, and I avail myself of this opportunity of expressing my gratitude for the kind reception that the

party whom I had the honour to accompany met with in every town. The people put on their holiday clothes, and we were heartily, cordially, and hospitably welcomed everywhere we went. I now express my individual gratitude for the kindness I experienced during the journey. I was agreeably disappointed to find that every town I visited in the North was twice as important as I expected. There seemed to be a greater number of people, and the places seemed to be in an infinitely more forward and thriving condition than I ever expected to find them. As this is the first important debate that has taken place here in regard to the separation question, I think the people of the North can afford to wait a little longer before they start on their own account. Under the auspices of the southern portion of the colony they have thriven so well that they may be allowed to progress a little more before they gain what I feel will be the inevitable result of the present agitation—namely, separation—for they will gain it in the long run. Though we have telegraph lines, and can speak from one end of the colony to the other instantaneously, still the time must come, in my humble opinion, when separation will be granted. But I do hope that in the meantime the people of the North will unanimously agree to keep away from their doors the greatest misfortune that could possibly happen to it—namely, the introduction of coolies. Coolies, wherever they go, carry with them their local diseases and complaints, their cholera and their yellow fevers; and countries that have been comparatively healthy have become positively unhealthy after the introduction of Indian coolies. They are not like the unfortunate kanaka. They are intelligent, clever fellows, who, if they come here, will vie with the white man in every trade, undersell him—they can live on a tithe of what a white man can—and will certainly and inevitably elbow the white man out of work. Therefore, I do hope that in the time which must necessarily elapse before separation is granted to the North, the people of the North will have learned the great disadvantage to themselves which must arise if they allow coolies to be introduced. I shall not detain the House any longer. I have endeavoured to confine myself to the question at issue, and have explained my reasons for the way in which I intend to give my vote.

Mr. BULCOCK said: Mr. Speaker,—I have only a few words to say on this question. All that has been urged in favour of separation on the other side may be stated under three heads—a parallel between the Moreton Bay of 1859 and the North of 1886; difficulty of administration on account of the distance of the capital; and the fact that the North has sufficient revenue to enable it to undertake the expense of a separate Government. With regard to grievances, there is no parallel between Moreton Bay in 1859 and the North in 1886. In 1859 all grievances in Moreton Bay were unredressed. I have it on the authority of persons who took part in the separation movement at that time that, even reckoning salaries paid to Government Residents, Civil servants, and police, there was only an expenditure of about £3,000 a year at Moreton Bay, yet, according to “Votes and Proceedings of 1861,” the Supply granted in that year amounted to £207,753. Supposing that one-half of that was raised as revenue at Moreton Bay before separation, that would be over £100,000; and the difference between an expenditure of £3,000 and a revenue of £100,000 is far greater than that between revenue and expenditure in the North at the present time. Every hon. member will admit that. In 1859 the pastoral lessees, most of whom resided in Sydney, were for a long time trying to flood the colony with cheap labour—convicts, Chinamen, or coolies. This was

objected to by the inhabitants here; certainly there is no parallel between 1859 and 1886 in this respect. The North cannot say that the South of Queensland is trying to flood the northern part of this colony with cheap coloured labour. Then, as to distance from the seat of government, I remember that when I came to the colony in 1865 communication with Sydney occupied sometimes a fortnight or three weeks. The one or two steamers of that period were very slow, and ran very irregularly. Now we have telegraphic communication through the length and breadth of the colony, with coastal steamers nearly every day, and a service by the British-India boats every week. The North may be fairly charged with half the cost of that service. We may conclude that, for at least the last three years during which the present Government have been in office, the North has had a fair expenditure out of the public money and a fair share of the appropriation. With our telegraphic system the distance of the capital can no longer be counted as a grievance, and for all practical purposes Brisbane is just as near the greater part of the North as Townsville itself. There is really no weight at all in that argument. The third argument is that they ought to have separation because they raise sufficient revenue to enable them to pay the expense of a Government of their own. If that alone is sufficient, the same argument may be applied to Rockhampton, the Darling Downs, and West Moreton. Each of them might ask for separation because it could pay the cost of its own Government. The same argument might also be applied to Manchester, Liverpool, and other great cities in England. But such arguments have no weight in cases of this kind, and as unity is strength and disintegration weakness, the best thing for us, as colonists, to do is to remain one homogeneous whole and with one uniform tariff. I am satisfied, from what I have seen of the present Government during the last three years, that the North will in future have very little to complain of.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—In rising to reply to the different arguments which have been used against separation, I must say, on behalf of myself and the Northern members, that we are perfectly satisfied with the progress of the debate; and that as far as argument is concerned, and as far as facts are concerned, we think that we have got the best of it. We ought especially to be satisfied, seeing that the question has been discussed so good-naturedly, and has been raised above that spirit of party which I deprecated in introducing the motion, with exceptions which I shall notice by-and-by. Before answering any of the objections to separation, I must say this on behalf of my colleagues, the new members from the North: that they have shown in debate that the North can at least take care of itself as far as intelligence is concerned. I think every member of the House must admit that the speeches made by my hon. colleague, Mr. Brown, and by the hon. member for Musgrave, Mr. Philp, have excelled the average of maiden speeches made by members in this House. They showed also that they understood the subject which they were debating, that they had taken pains to understand it, and I am quite certain that their constituents will be proud of them when they read their speeches. In speaking in reply I cannot, of course, be expected to answer every objection that has been made against separation. Indeed, many of the objectors answered themselves, and many of the objections were so trifling—and must have been looked upon as such by hon. gentlemen who are opposed to separation—as to be unworthy of notice. One hon. member was opposed to separation because we

would not tell him where the capital was going to be. Well, sir, no one on this side of the House knows where the capital will be, but we have told the House and the country where we think it ought not to be, and I think that ought to be taken as sufficient. The Parliament of the new colony will no doubt be quite able to decide upon the capital. It will be somewhere, I have no doubt, away from the place which is generally indicated in this House as the one where it will be. Before leaving the question of the placing of the capital, I wish to say that I think the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government is greatly mistaken in his notion about a capital in the wilderness, as he calls it—a town in the wilderness. He is under the impression that if we select a town in the wilderness we shall have to pay exorbitant salaries to ministers and civil servants; but such has not been the experience in other parts of the world which have built capitals in the wilderness—in the wilderness, comparatively speaking. At the present day, the Secretaries of State in Washington, who are now receiving much higher salaries than they were fifty years ago, or in the beginning of the present century, receive only £1,600 a year—8,000 dollars. That is not a very exorbitant salary to pay for a Minister who has to assist in the government of 60,000,000 people.

The PREMIER: Very much too small.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman says it is very much too small, but I think we should be prepared to imitate that part of the world instead of many others in regard to salaries. Then, again, he says there will be some difficulty in establishing a Government in the bush. No doubt there will. It was extremely difficult for the American people to establish it at Washington; nevertheless they overcame the difficulty, and are now reaping the benefit. If the hon. gentleman looks over all the States of America he will find that, with one or two exceptions, the capitals are invariably in small towns; and the benefits which accrue to the different States which have adopted that system are such that I have no doubt will induce future new colonies in Australia to imitate their example. Shorter sessions, more attention to business, less pressure from large mobs or crowds, and less of that deputationising which takes place whenever the capital is located in a large city, will be some of the benefits to be derived from it. The same hon. gentleman who wished to know where the capital will be situated was also anxious to know who would form the new Government. He even wanted to know what their policy would be. I suppose he felt rather interested in the matter, being the possessor of such immense properties in the northern part of the colony. We cannot tell who will be the new Government; neither can we tell what their policy will be. But I think we can promise this: that it will be a policy very different from that which has been adopted by the colony of Queensland. I hope, at any rate, that it will be a more economical policy, and one which will not drive the more northern portion of the new colony into separation from the extravagance of the Government. The only private member whom I shall attempt to answer is the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland. He brought a very serious charge against myself with regard to my action when a member of the late Ministry. It is true to a certain extent, but it is one which may be easily explained. I suppose he was rather jealous of the character the hon. member for Cook (Mr. Hamilton) tried to establish for me—that I had been always a strong anti-Chinese man.

Mr. ALAND: No.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What the hon. member for Cook said is perfectly true.

What the hon. member for Toowoomba said is also perfectly true. There was a regulation passed by the previous Government prohibiting Polynesians from going beyond thirty miles into the interior, and it was acted up to, I believe.

The PREMIER: No.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I believe it was acted up to. It was simply a regulation; I am not certain whether it was framed by the Hon. John Douglas or not, but I think it was. At any rate during the first year—I am not certain whether it was the first or second year of the existence of the late Government—the Premier of that Government being in England, Sir Arthur Palmer, acting in the place of the Premier, did give permission for kanakas to go upon two stations. At that particular period I was absent from Brisbane. The hon. gentleman says that I never took occasion to denounce that action on the part of the Government. Well, sir, it would be rather a strange thing for a member of a Cabinet to undertake to denounce the action of his own colleagues. I think when it comes to that it is time for the person who does it to separate. I did not denounce that action. I was a long distance from Brisbane when it took place, but I can say this: that the action of myself and another member of the Cabinet had the effect of preventing that action from being repeated. Therefore, although the hon. member no doubt thought he was making a serious charge against me, I think, from the explanation I have given, that it is much less serious than he wished to make it. Now, Mr. Speaker, when introducing this motion a fortnight ago, as I have already stated, I deprecated importing into the debate any ill-feeling, and expressed a wish to keep out of it, as far as possible, all reference to party. It is a question which I believe is far above party or partisanship of any kind. It is too important a question to be reduced to the level of party, and I believe that the line which I sketched out has been followed generally by members on both sides of the House, with, as I have said, one or two notable exceptions, one of which I have now adverted to on the part of the hon. member for Toowoomba. The other was in a much more elevated sphere—on the part of one of the occupants of the Treasury benches. I refer to the Minister for Works, who began his speech by saying that he did not intend to speak, only that the people in London who were acting on behalf of the separationists of Northern Queensland were making bad use of his name. I presume the bad use he meant was that they were quoting a speech he made in Townsville at the time when he was in opposition and travelling in company with the gentleman who at present leads the Government. I do not know the exact term or nature of the expression he used on that occasion, but I believe it was something in the same direction as the terms that he used in making his speech on this subject the other evening. The term which he used at Townsville, and which is now being quoted against him in London, and to which he takes exception, was this. It was said at a banquet in 1882, given, I believe, to the present Premier, who was then leader of the Opposition:—

“He had not quite caught what Mr. Nicholson had said, and was not very sure whether he had expressed a desire for federation or separation, but he thought at all events we should have separation first and then federation. Now, he would support separation, and he would tell them why. His chief reason was that it was too far for a man to go away from home for the term of the session, if he represented a Northern electorate. It must do injury to his business, whereas if the North were separated from the South there would be shorter distances to cover. He had assisted in the separation

from New South Wales, and he had seen how Queensland and Victoria had flourished; why should he not assist in the separation of the North, and why should that also not benefit by separation?”

That is certainly a very strong expression in favour of separation. It is quite equal to anything that could be said by the separationists on this side of the House; and, as I understand, the hon. gentleman found fault with the people in London for quoting that against him. I think it is quoted chiefly because of the position that the hon. gentleman occupies in this House. I believe that if he were a private member the people who represent the separation movement in London would not have taken the trouble to quote him, and certainly I should not have taken the trouble to answer the statements which he made concerning the late Government, and concerning myself as a member of that Government. He it was who imported, I may say, the strongest resemblance of party feeling that has been shown in the debate throughout. He stated that he was surprised at the course I took, and that I had done more injury to the North than any man, and had prevented the North from obtaining fair play and justice, and that the Government of which I was a member had done nothing for the North, while the present Government had done everything. Those statements are in *Hansard*, and they came from the hon. Minister for Works against one who was Minister for Works in the Ministry which he charges with injustice. I am bound to deny it. I can prove it to be utterly untrue, and I will not take long in doing it. Hon. members who were members of the Parliament which met in 1874 will recollect, I suppose, or know at least, that the survey of the Northern line from Townsville to Charters Towers was begun in 1875, at the instance of Mr. King, who was then Minister for Works. That survey was carried on by two or three different Ministers for Works who followed him in that Ministry, one of whom was the present Minister for Works, Mr. Miles. The late Ministry took office on the 15th January, 1879, when I became Minister for Works, and I found the survey of that particular line of railway, which had been carried on for four years, was in such a backward state that it was impossible for me to call for tenders for it.

The PREMIER: Arrangements had been made for carrying it on by the previous Government.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I was compelled, when I took office, to make fifteen miles of that railway under the small contract system, which had been abolished on the Central line, because we were not able to get the plans ready in less than four months.

The PREMIER: I made all those arrangements myself.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman who is interrupting me was Minister for Works for three months previous to the going out of office of the previous Government. I am dealing now with what is a positive fact. After four years of survey the plans were not ready, and the survey was in a more backward state, even, Mr. Speaker, than the survey from the coast to Herberton, after the same lapse of time, and with less excuse, because the road from Townsville to Charters Towers was certainly not a bad road to survey, and had there been a serious intention on the part of the Government to carry out the vote placed upon the Estimates it could have been done two years sooner. However, when I got into office, £8,000 was the amount which had been spent upon it by the previous Government, and the whole of that line was let to Charters Towers before I left office. The last section was let before I left

office, and the previous sections were opened up to the Burdekin Bridge. So much for that portion of the hon. gentleman's statement.

The PREMIER: Will you give us credit for carrying the line against great opposition?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. member has raised quite another question, which I shall answer. He has given me an opportunity which I did not wish for; but having given it, I shall take advantage of it. He says we must give them credit for having passed the votes under great opposition. I give them credit for having passed the vote under the most corrupt system of voting that ever a vote was passed under in Queensland certainly. There were six railways bunched together, some of which the Government knew would never pass were they taken separately.

The PREMIER: That was one of them.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: They placed those railways in one bunch, and told their followers, "You must take the whole or none." Those railways were actually crammed down their throats. One of the railways which would not have passed was the one from Bundaberg to Mount Perry, and possibly the Maryborough line would not have passed. I give the hon. gentleman full credit for it, and have always done so. The amount of money placed upon the Estimates on two different occasions when loans were passed in the House was £300,000, £100,000 of which was for a bridge. Does the hon. member remember how that vote was obtained? I shall not remind him; neither shall I remind him of the stratagem which was tried to prevent me from getting a vote for the low-level bridge over the Burdekin. I have no doubt you, Mr. Speaker, remember the circumstances perfectly well, and other members do also. As I stated when I took office, there was only £8,000 expended upon that line; and when I left office it was opened close up to the Burdekin Bridge, and the section into the town was let. So much for the statement that not a shilling of money had been spent by the late Government, and that I also, as Minister for Works, did more to prevent justice being done to the North than any other man in the House. Let me state the amount of loan money which was appropriated by the late Government during the time that they were in office, and let us see really what was the comparison between that amount and the amount which the hon. gentlemen are continually boasting about when they go north. There were three loans floated by the late Government. First, there was one for £3,053,000; the second was in 1881, £1,089,500; and the third one for £2,643,500; making a total of £6,786,000. Against that, debentures were retired to the amount of £707,000, being a loan floated in 1861 or 1862, which fell due about the time that the third loan was appropriated. In addition to that there were deficiencies on previous loans that had to be accounted for, and the money obtained to the amount of £129,000 upon one occasion, and £218,000 on another. The Treasury bills had to be retired to the extent of £262,000. The total, including Treasury bills and loan deficiencies, was £609,000, which, with the debentures to be retired, made a total of £1,317,000, leaving £5,469,000 for works and services in different parts of the colony. Now, sir, at the time these loans were passed the population of the northern portion of the colony, according to the census returns, was between 15 per cent. and 16 per cent., while at present it is 19 per cent. The total amount appropriated for Northern railways was £1,135,000. There was £390,000, Western extension; there were five new railways: the Mackay Railway, the Bowen Railway, the

Herberton to Coast Railway, the Cooktown Railway, and the Ravenswood Railway. The total amount appropriated to the North for railway purposes during the existence of that Government was £1,135,000. Now, sir, the total amount of loan money for railways in the colony was equal to 21 per cent. of the total loan appropriations for all works and services over the whole of the colony. That is for railways alone. I take no note of the amount of loan money appropriated for harbours and rivers in the North, for public buildings and electric telegraphs. I take the railways alone, and they alone are equal to 21 per cent. of the total loan appropriation of works and services. Now compare that with the total loan appropriation for railways all over the colony. The total loan appropriation all over the colony amounted to £3,000,000. Three millions and about five or six hundred thousand pounds. The percentage of Northern railways, therefore, as compared with the whole of the railways of the colony—and we did not stint the Southern railways, because we started seven or eight—the total percentage appropriated for Northern railways alone, against the whole of the railways of the colony during the existence of the late Ministry, was 31½ per cent. at the time the population was 15 or 16 per cent. We did not go about boasting about that. The records are in the "Votes and Proceedings," and yet the hon. gentleman told us we had no material from which to ascertain whether fair play had been given to the North during the existence of the previous Government. He made a very serious mistake there, and the Minister for Works made a greater blunder when he made his assertion, and I have brought the matter forward on account of the misstatements of the Minister for Works. I bring it forward, not because it advances the cause of separation, but because it puts the question fairly before the country as to what the present and what the previous Governments have done for the North. The hon. gentlemen who went north just immediately before the present session—the Premier and Colonial Treasurer—boasted everywhere that the loan appropriations for Northern purposes were quite equal to what they were in the South, because they represented one-sixth of the total loan appropriation of the colony; but I have shown that the loan appropriations of the late Government were more than one-sixth. As to railways, they were one-third, and in railways alone against the whole of the others they were one-fifth at the time when the population was between one-sixth or one-seventh. That does not advance the cause of separation in the least, but it tells us which Government has done the most for the North. The hon. gentleman twitted me with the fact that I had not shown where my equality existed as to the loan appropriation in the North. I will show him. I have shown what I did in my capacity as Minister for Works with my influence with my colleagues. I have shown what I did to try and equalise the want of loan expenditure existing before the previous Government came into office. Without going into a series of figures to prove what I have proved on a previous occasion as to the taxation borne by the people of the North in comparison to the people down here—being one-fourth of the total taxation of the colony—I think I am quite justified in demanding that the loan appropriation should be in proportion to the taxation of the people, and not in proportion to an assumed basis of one-sixth, which does not exist. It is nearly one-fifth. If we take one-fifth we are over one and a-half millions deficient of loan appropriations, and if we take a proper basis we are two and a-half millions deficient of the total appropriation we ought to

have. Having said so much about the Minister for Works let me go to the Treasurer. I must say that the Treasurer generally was very courteous in his statements the other night, but in trying to controvert the figures I produced he made a very serious blunder indeed. Instead of doing what he ought to have done, he tried to shelter himself behind a Civil servant. He brought down a letter to this House purporting to be written by Mr. Cullen, a thing which I have never known a Minister to do before, and which no Minister ought to do. Any Minister who makes a mistake or commits a blunder through himself or his subordinate should be manly enough to take the mistake and its consequences upon his own shoulders, and not shelter himself behind a subordinate. Now, I shall not take Mr. Cullen as being responsible for that letter. I shall take the Treasurer as being responsible. What does the Treasurer say in the letter? In the first paragraph he says:—

“With reference to Mr. Macrossan's remarks on certain alleged discrepancies in the Treasury returns recently laid upon the table of the Legislative Assembly, I desire to point out that the loan accounts of the colony are kept solely on the basis of the respective loan votes, without regard to territorial divisions not recognised by statute, and which do not even appear on any existing map of the colony.”

I am surprised that any Minister, even the Minister for Works, should make such a statement as that, that the territorial division which we have been talking about here does not exist upon any map in the colony. Did the hon. gentleman ever read the report of the Financial Separation Commission? I know he did, because he was Treasurer at the time it was sent into the Government of which he was Treasurer. Let him turn to page 16 of that report, and he will find the territorial separation boundaries given as exactly as the territorial division of the colony is given by statute. The Wide Bay and Burnett, the Central, and Northern divisions are all given—where the boundaries begin and where they end. Let him turn to another page, and he will find that Mr. Tully, the Surveyor-General, actually draws the attention of the Government to the fact that he is sending in a map with the territorial divisions marked according to the suggestions of the Separation Commission, and those maps exist in different public offices throughout the colony, as well as in private residences. Yet he comes down and tells this House, sheltering himself behind a statement that is not correct—that such maps do not exist, and therefore that the accounts cannot be properly kept. He goes on further to say:—

“The distribution of the various deficits to the separate works and services on which the same have accrued has never yet been carried out either by the Treasury or Audit Office, except in the case of general accounts shown on page 2 of the Treasury return of expenditure north and south of Cape Palmerston.”

Now, that statement is on a par with the one I have just exposed. He says the separate works and services in which the deficit has accrued have never yet been carried out either by the Treasury or the Auditor-General, but I think I can show that this Treasury return, which was laid on the table of the House on the 11th August in response to the request of the hon. member for Burke, asking the Treasurer for the figures on which he based his statements up north, is incorrect. I think I shall show that these deficits are kept and appropriated to different works through Treasury returns other than this one, and I shall show by these returns that the Treasurer's statements in this return are extremely incorrect. I have here a copy of the tables connected with the Treasurer's Financial Statement for the year 1886-7, and I find the deficits apportioned here, although he says they are not. So that he actually laid upon the

table of the House returns of which he knew nothing. Let hon. members turn to page 5 of the Treasurer's statement, Table D. They will there find a statement of the loan balances which gives the total amount of the loan votes without the appropriations of the different loan depreciations. Turn to page 15, Table R, and we there find the same loan votes so far as railways are concerned, with the depreciation added; and if hon. gentlemen will take the trouble to go through these depreciations the same as I have done and add them together, they will find that the total of loan depreciations appropriated to railways alone, independent of other public works or services, amounts actually to £455,000 more than the total deficit altogether. The total deficit on all loans is £1,241,000, while the loan depreciation appropriated for railways alone amounts to £1,696,000, and that is, mark you, independent of the £558,000 which the hon. gentleman told us the other night was deficient on immigration votes alone. How can the hon. gentleman expect us to take his figures or that letter which he read, as true statements or as financially controverting the figures I produced in this House, when, by his own tables laid on the table of the House during the Financial Statement, he has shown them to be incorrect? I shall not pursue that subject any further. I do not desire to pile on the agony with figures, but if I believed for a single moment that this question of separation was a question of figures I could go more into figures and show more discrepancies, so far the North is concerned, than I have done. But this is not a question of figures, but is higher, as I have said before, than party and figures put together. Now I will come to a few of the serious objections which have been made by speakers generally on the Government side of the House, and by the Premier himself. Nearly all the hon. members who have spoken have stated that they think the North ought to obtain separation if a majority there can be shown to be in favour of it. The Premier says if a “preponderating proportion” are in favour of it. The Minister for Works said he would gladly give the North separation if we took our portion of the loan debt and drew a boundary line—that is, if he was satisfied that the majority of the people of the North did not desire to go in for black labour. The Premier said something of the sort, as did nearly every hon. member who spoke. How are we to arrive at a knowledge of whether the northern portion of the colony has a majority of people in favour of separation or not? It can only be by polling the heads of the people. We have done that so far as we possibly could, and we are now supplementing that poll, and I think hon. members will find when that supplementary list—which will be sent home as the petition was sent home—is presented, that there are several thousands more in favour of separation. Out of the 19,000 persons of European extraction said to be in the northern portion of the colony, we must take 1,000 who are Civil servants and Government employés, and who did not sign the petition, and were not asked to sign it. There is only one other way of arriving at a conclusion as to what proportion of people in the North are in favour of separation. Look around this Chamber. There are ten members here representing Northern constituencies, nine of whom declare themselves in favour of separation, and the tenth would, I believe, had he not been a member of the Government. At any rate I will leave him out of the reckoning. Now, can it be said that the Northern members here do not represent their constituencies? Have they not a better knowledge of the wishes and desires of their constituents than gentlemen

representing Southern constituencies can possibly have? Are they not in constant touch with their constituents, and in constant communication with them? And have they been told by any of their constituents that they are going wrong by asking for separation? I say we have a most undoubted proof in this House that the people of the North desire separation; and if any further proof is required, the Premier himself must call for a poll of the people.

The PREMIER: One member got a telegram, requesting him to vote against the motion, from a very influential number of his constituents.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Was it from Normanton?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. PALMER: He did not.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: There is a plain denial.

The PREMIER: I have seen a copy of it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman has had a plain denial; but I shall deal with Normanton. The hon. gentleman and his colleague went to Normanton and Burketown and told the people there that if they went in for separation they could never get their railway. He told them that the people of the northern portion of the colony would not be able to make their railway for them.

The PREMIER: No.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman said the North would be too much in debt, and they could not do it.

The PREMIER: No; nothing of the kind was said.

Mr. FOXTON: There is a plain denial.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Always misrepresented!

The PREMIER: That is not reported anywhere.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Did I understand the hon. member for Carnarvon to say that he heard it said?

Mr. FOXTON: No. I repeated what you said. I said, "There is a plain denial."

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I say the hon. gentleman told the people of Normanton that they had no chance of getting their railway if separation took place.

The PREMIER: I never said so, and it is not reported anywhere that I said so.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Now, sir, such a statement is sufficient to turn a great many people in Normanton when they are told that their chance of getting the railway depends upon whether they please the Government by getting their member to oppose separation or not. The same thing might be said of Cairns, though the hon. member did not use the meeting at Cairns as an argument. They had a meeting at Cairns the other day, and they must have been afraid they would not get the second section of the Cairns to Herberton Railway; and the navvies on the first section must have mustered very strongly at that meeting to support those who at that meeting were opposed to separation. The fact remains that there are only two places, and in each place a very small party, opposed to separation, and there is sufficient reason forthcoming why the small parties in those two places are opposed to it. I can tell the people of Normanton that they have a better chance—aye, a far better chance—of getting railways if there is separation than without it. The finances of the

North will better enable them to bear the burden of the interest upon the money borrowed for making railways and public works than the finances of Queensland ever will under the present régime.

Mr. SMYTH: Land-grant railways!

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Even they would be better than none.

The PREMIER: This is a party speech.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Hon. members say this is a party speech. It is a party speech so far as the separation of the North is concerned—not a party speech in this House.

The PREMIER: It is an attack on the Government from beginning to end.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: An attack on the Government! Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member thinks I am attacking the Government he may take it as such. If telling the truth about the people of Normanton is an attack on the Government he can accept it as such. If exposing the Treasurer's misstatements is an attack on the Government, he may take that as such also. If exposing the hon. Minister for Works' statements about the late Government and myself is an attack on the Government he may take it as such. But the truth must be told, whether it is an attack or not. Now, sir, a great deal has been made out of the question of black labour. I think it is about time the bogey of black labour was dead and buried; it takes a long time to kill it; like the ancient cry of witchcraft, it lives a long time, but it will die at last. Now, what is the fact so far as black labour is concerned, and so far as the hon. gentleman's own opinions are concerned? He stated that he believed the planters would not have much chance of getting black labour even if they got separation. The present Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave, says the very same thing, so that we have the two highest gentlemen in the colony saying they believe the planters will not get black labour if they get separation. The planters themselves know it. We have an individual in this House who is called the champion of the planters; we have had him quoted this evening by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, as having told the planters plainly and distinctly that if they get separation they need not expect black labour. Now, sir, we have the Governor, we have the Premier, and we have the champion of the planters all agreeing that black labour will not be obtained through separation. But suppose for a moment that after separation was obtained the majority of the people in the North did believe in black labour, what is it to the people down here?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: A very great deal.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: They seem to concern themselves very much about the northern portion of the colony. I wish they had done so always. I say if the people of the North wish to have black labour, and show it by an absolute majority, they are entitled under representative government to carry out their wishes. I do not for a single moment believe that separation will make one iota of difference to the system of black labour now in the North. At the present moment the planters are getting as much black labour as they choose—as much as they can employ—and what inducement can there be for them to obtain separation if they want no more than they are getting now?

The PREMIER: They say they have been ruined by the Government.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I have nothing more to do with the statement about the planters being ruined by the Government than I

have with that letter written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; neither have the members of this House who advocate separation anything to do with either of those questions. We are not their spokesmen, neither are they the spokesmen of the council of the Separation League. There is no connection between them. Those gentlemen who wrote to the Secretary advocating black labour wrote in their own interests entirely; but I think the course of events has proved to them since that they were mistaken in supposing they could get black labour if separation were obtained.

The PREMIER: They do not think so now.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I believe they do think so now; and they advocate separation even with the prospect of being no better off as far as black labour is concerned. I do not think it is necessary to take up the time of the House by going over statements which have been made already, or dealing with trivial objections against separation. I think most hon. members are really in favour of separation. The Premier I believe is; I am certain the Minister for Works is; I am quite certain of that, and I am quite as certain that some of his other colleagues are also in favour of separation. Naturally, as a Government of the whole colony they express themselves opposed to it; they get out of it by saying—"If a certain number of the people of the North asked for it. If we were certain they would not go in for black labour." These "ifs" are the back door by which men save their consciences; and that is how the hon. gentlemen opposite save their consciences. I believe they admit the justice of our claim for separation, just as much as they admit the justice of the claim of the people of Moreton Bay for separation when they got it—just as much, and I think even still more. The hon. member told us it was impossible to fix upon a point of time when the injustice to the North began. The injustice began when settlement began, but it is not a vanishing point, as the hon. gentleman said. We do not require to go farther back than 1864, when there was a demand for separation; it is quite sufficient to take that as the starting point. From that date to the present time there has never been a contented or satisfied people in Northern Queensland so far as revenue and expenditure is concerned. They have always had reason to be dissatisfied. I have known the people of the North erect their own bridges and make their own roads at a time when there were continual complaints in this House by myself and others that our revenue was being expended in making roads and bridges in East and West Moreton. I know that to be the positive truth. I have gone over the roads and bridges made by the people themselves, and the roads stood for years, and the bridges stood for a few years too. I have known the people on some of the goldfields in the northern part of the colony actually on the brink of starvation from the want of roads, and whilst, as I say, money was being squandered down here in the South—their money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What did you do when you were in office?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: If the hon. gentleman had been in the House half-an-hour ago he would have heard what I did. It would do him good to read what I said, in *Hansard* to-morrow. The hon. member for Toowoomba quoted certain amounts from surplus revenue appropriated for paltry roads and bridges in the North. The total amount he quoted did not amount in both cases for roads and bridges to one year's revenue under the Palmer Bill of 1871 which was misappropriated in this House—£27,000. This is part of what the Premier tried to make a little fun out of the other

evening. He did not understand what he was talking about when he was taking exception to these figures. He wanted to know where the money went to; and he added that the South was robbed of so much. That might have been the case had some power outside both South and North had the appropriation of the money; but as the South itself had the appropriation of it, it took very good care that it got not only its own share, but the Northern and Central shares as well. Then he told us that the £11,000 of the year 1871 was included in the £14,000 of the year 1870; and then he told us also—I suppose he wanted to introduce a new system of mathematics—that the £27,000 was included in the £11,000. Now, I do not see how you can include 27 in 11: I leave that for him to solve. It shows how much at random he was speaking. He asked me where it went, and I told him to ask the Treasurer. My hon. colleague, Mr. Brown, told him to look at the surplus revenue of 1874 to see where a very large amount of revenue derived from the northern portion of the colony went, to be appropriated in the southern portion. But, sir, I shall leave the revenue and expenditure now. It is admitted by the hon. gentleman who heads the Government that the colony is too great to be governed from one place.

The PREMIER: Where do you see that?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. member said it last Friday week; he said it was not through the seat of government being situated where it was, but through the colony being too big.

The PREMIER: No; I said that if the objection existed at all, that was the objection.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: It is not only from the seat of government being in the south-eastern portion of the colony, but it is the magnitude of the colony, and the seat of government being in the wrong place, which is the cause, or chiefly the cause, of the great desire for separation. There can be no efficient system of administration for the North under the present system. The Premier has admitted that a remedy is required—he admitted that up north, and he admitted it again in this House. But what is the remedy he proposes? Is it a remedy a statesman would propose? We are to have a few more Civil servants sent up north—gentlemen occupying the position, say, of under secretaries are to be sent to the different parts of the northern portion of the colony, and they are to become *en rapport* with the people and the Ministers who occasionally go north. We are to have a kind of Eastern despotism tempered with representative institutions administered from Brisbane. I say the remedy is ridiculous and unworthy of the hon. gentleman, and I think if a remedy is possible he could propose a much better one than that. If he cannot, it is time for him to give up proposing a remedy, and to admit that there is no remedy—that the state of affairs is irremediable, and that separation is desirable and should be granted. I believe that it is desirable, that it should and will be granted, and that it is for the best interests of the colony that it should be granted. I am not going to discuss the question of whether the power of the Crown is exhausted or not. I do not think it is exhausted, and I am quite certain of one thing: that whether the power of the Crown is exhausted or not, the power of the people of the North to demand separation is not exhausted. They will not be debarred of territorial separation. Their demand will be ultimately assented to by the Imperial Parliament; and when it is assented to the people in the southern portion of the colony will be better

off. As it is at present, it is impossible to govern the North properly from the South, but with a legislature in the northern portion of the colony its interests will be better attended to; its resources, not only the agricultural but the mineral also, will be better developed; it will be better governed in every way, and it will require no system of immigration, but will get immigrants enough from the southern portion of the colony and from the old country. The Parliament sitting here will be better able to make laws for the southern part of the colony than now; Ministers will be free from the trouble and inconvenience now experienced, and be able to visit the outlying portions of the country. It will be much better for the Central district—if the people of that district do not follow our example—for the government will be administered better than it is now, and their grievances will receive more attention. I am quite sure the North will be better governed than it is now from the South. As to the apportionment of the debt, that will not be any difficulty. The Imperial Government will easily find a solution of that difficulty. The longer separation is delayed the worse will be the difficulties that will arise with regard to the apportionment of the debt. The hon. member for Mulgrave has well pointed out that if the population of the North increases during the next fifteen years, as it has done lately, there will be a preponderance of population in that part of the colony. What will the South do then? It will be far worse for the southern part of the colony if the North, having a greater population than the South, should demand the removal of the seat of government. But leaving that on one side, it is a matter beyond doubt—it is a matter of certainty—that one small portion of the colony can be governed much better by a representative Government of its own than it can be where the administration is so remote. If hon. members will look over the whole of the States of America, they will find that the States there are all small; there is not one, even the largest of them, equal in size to what the northern portion of this colony will be when it is separated, and this shows that the practical people of America have proved through their very practicalness—and by the way that country has advanced and developed its resources—that the best system of government is that which is administered over a small portion of territory. I have no hesitation in saying that I thoroughly believe that there is room in Queensland for more than two colonies, that is when the population increases. As to the question of federation, I am sure hon. gentlemen will never have any reason for saying that separation is antagonistic to federation. I believe it would be much better for federation to have separation. It is not the size of a colony which gives it importance in a Federal Council such as that which was recently held at Hobart. It is the ability of the men who represent it. I ask hon. members in this House whether, if Queensland had been represented by two inferior men instead of, as it was, by two superior men, it would have taken the place it did at that Council? I say no! It is not the size of the colony, but the ability of the men that represent it which gives it importance and influence, and I contend that the federation movement will be pushed forward by the North being separated, as all the Northern people are federationists, and separation will most probably have the effect of advancing federation in the minds of the people of New South Wales and South Australia who are at present lukewarm in the matter. Therefore, looking at the question from all points of view, I think that if the North were separated amicably, with a fair apportionment

of the debt and the two colonies afterwards worked together hand-in-hand, it would be for the benefit of the whole of Australia.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES. 9.

Messrs. Black, Macrossan, Chubb, Lissner, Brown, Philp, Lumley Hill, Palmer, and Hamilton.

NOES. 40.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Norton, Fraser, Dickson, Miles, Rutledge, Moreton, Dutton, Sheridan, Adams, Mellor, Grimes, S. W. Brooks, Bailey, Nelson, Jordan, Buckland, White, Campbell, Wakefield, Kellett, Kates, Isambert, Donaldson, Ferguson, W. Brookes, Jessop, Govett, McMaster, Smyth, Foxton, Stevens, Bulcock, Aland, Annear, Higgsen, Horwitz, Wallace, McWhannell, and Murphy.

Question resolved in the negative.

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

### ELECTIONS ACT OF 1885 AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that the Council had agreed to the amendment of the Assembly on the Council's amendment in this Bill.

The House adjourned at fourteen minutes to 11 o'clock.