

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 1 OCTOBER 1886

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 1 October, 1886.

Settled Land Bill.—Royal assent.—Petitions.—The Census
—Question.—Formal Motions.—Repeal of the Con-
tagious Diseases Act.—Order of Business.—Building
Societies Bill.—Adjournment.

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

SETTLED LAND BILL.

ROYAL ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from His Excellency the Administrator of the Government conveying the Royal assent to a Bill for facilitating sales, leases, and other dispositions of settled land, and for promoting the execution of improvements thereon.

PETITIONS.

Mr. FRASER presented a petition from the minister, office-bearers, and members of the United Methodist Free Church, Wellington road, 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. W. BROOKES presented a petition, signed by 4,817 of the women of Queensland, 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.

Mr. BROOKES moved that the petition be received.

Mr. PATTISON said: Mr. Speaker,—It may be a somewhat unusual course to pursue, but, although I am one of those who sympathise deeply with these petitions for the repeal of this Act, at the same time I think matters have been pushed a little too far. I am very much surprised to see a petition of the character of that presented to the House this afternoon—from the women of Queensland. I think this is one of the most delicate matters that can come before us, and one that the ladies—the females of the land—might very well have left alone—have left the male part of the population to have lifted up their voices, and agitated, as they so generally have done, for the repeal of the Act. Petition after petition on the subject have been received, and I say that this House should really consider whether this petition should be received or not. I rather blush that such a petition should be presented on behalf of the ladies of the colony. No doubt they have a very able champion in the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. W. Brookes), who will be able to give sufficient reasons for it; but I fail to see the reason why such a petition as that should be presented from ladies. It is a delicate matter, one that we suppose they know very little about. Let us rest content in the belief that it is a subject they understand very little about—

The SPEAKER: I must call the hon. gentleman to order. It is contrary to the practice of Parliament for any debate to take place upon the presentation of a petition. The only question that the House has to decide upon the presentation of a petition is whether it shall be received or rejected. No debate can take place upon the presentation of a petition.

Mr. PATTISON: To place myself in order, I shall be prepared to accept the responsibility of moving that the petition be not received. I know very well that I shall not meet with very much sympathy, but, at the same time, it gives me the opportunity of making the few remarks I have made.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must pardon me. He cannot propose to negative a motion, nor can he propose that the petition be not received. If the hon. member wishes to object to the reception of the petition he must give his voice with the "Noes," and he may call for a division; but it is quite contrary to the practice of Parliament to speak upon the presentation of a petition.

Mr. PATTISON: The object I had in view is attained by my having expressed my opinion on the matter.

Mr. W. BROOKES: I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The SPEAKER: There is a question already before the House. The question is that the petition be received.

Mr. W. BROOKES: I only wished to say a few words in reply to the foolish remarks of the hon. member for Blackall.

Question put and passed.

Mr. JORDAN presented a petition from the pastor and congregation of the Fortescue-street Baptist Church, 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. JORDAN, the petition was received.

THE CENSUS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton), in laying upon the table of the House a preliminary statement of the Census for 1886, taken on the 1st of May, being the seventh census of the colony, said: I may inform the House that there is a book containing fifty-eight maps, in connection with the census, placed in the reading-room so that hon. members may see it at any time they wish.

QUESTION.

Mr. HAMILTON asked the Minister for Works—

1. When does he expect working plans and sections of the third section of the Cooktown Railway to be ready?

2. When does he purpose inviting tenders for the third section of the railway from Cooktown to Maytown?

3. Does he intend to submit plans of the third section of the Cairns Railway for the approval of Parliament this session?

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

1 and 2. It is impossible to say when working plans and sections of the third section of the Cooktown Railway will be ready, or when tenders for the construction of that section will be invited, as action cannot be taken to prepare the working plans until the parliamentary plans are approved by this House.

3. The intention of the Government will be made known to the House in regard to the extension of this and other railways, at the proper time.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to:—

By Mr. ALAND—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a copy of the Chief Engineer's estimate of cost of the duplication of the Brisbane and Ipswich line, upon which the loan vote passed by this House in 1884 was based.

By the PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith)—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors by wholesale and to amend the Licensing Act of 1895.

REPEAL OF THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT.

Mr. JORDAN, in moving—

That the Act entitled "An Act for the Prevention of Contagious Diseases," passed in 1868, ought to be repealed—

said: Mr. Speaker,—It will be within the recollection of most hon. members of this House that in the last session but one I moved a resolution which was carried by your casting vote, and which was as follows:—"That this House disapproves of the compulsory examination of women under the Contagious Diseases Act." The House of Commons, in 1866, passed an Act providing for the compulsory examination of women, and in 1869 an amending Act was passed providing for the extension of the operations of the original Act to a greater number of districts. The compulsory Act of 1866 was hurriedly passed in a thin House, at a late hour of the night. It was introduced at the instance of gentlemen in the House of Commons, who were supposed to represent the army and navy, and they thought that as most of the soldiers and sailors were unmarried, and many of them contracted disease, there should be special legislation to protect them against the unpleasant physical consequences of illicit sexual intercourse. Many medical men had expressed a confident opinion that by the adoption of the French machinery—police espionage, compulsory examination of women, and prison hospitals—they should

be able to stamp out the disease, or make it very nearly to disappear. The nation at large, however, considered the legislation proposed as insulting to women, as cowardly on the part of men to the weaker sex, as alien to the British love of freedom and justice, and as in itself immoral, tending to the practice of vice. Referring to the hurried way in which this legislation was, to use his own expression, "smuggled through the House," Mr. Stansfeld, the member for Halifax, puts no less a person in the witness-box than Mr. Gladstone himself, and this is what Mr. Gladstone says :—

"Most unfortunately, though from the very best motives—from the desire to prevent public discussion on a subject not fit for public discussion—these Acts were passed almost without the knowledge of anyone. I was a member of the Government at the time they were passed, but I do not know how they were passed or by whom they were carried through the House."

Then a question was put as to the accuracy of that recollection, and the right hon. gentleman added these words :—

"There was, at any rate, no discussion in the House, and no collective resolution of the Cabinet on the question, nor was there any opportunity to inform the public mind as to the nature of the subject."

On the 18th August, 1883, the member for Devonport, Mr. Puleston, made some remarks in the course of the debate, to which the right hon. gentleman replied :—

"I said that these Acts were passed in general obscurity, and that they were never brought before the Cabinet of which I was a member."

It is unfortunate, I think, Mr. Speaker, that it was the Liberal party who were in power at the time those Acts were allowed to slip through, as it gave people an opportunity to say that the Liberal Government betrayed the Liberal cause and compromised their own principles as the price they were willing to pay for the army and navy support in the House of Commons. I do not think so, but I think it still more unfortunate that after the Acts had slipped through, and after the Ministers were caught napping in that way, some of them deliberately joined in the vain attempt to persuade the nation that those Acts were not so bad after all—that they were rather beneficial than otherwise to the country. But, sir, what is bad in itself cannot be beneficial either to individuals or to communities. In the meantime the national feeling against those Acts was growing in volume and intensity until it reached a pitch that would have very soon swept away any Government that would have attempted to resist it. On the 20th April, 1883, Mr. Stansfeld, the member for Halifax, moved in the House of Commons, "That this House disapproves of the compulsory examination of women under the Contagious Diseases Act." That was carried by a majority of seventy, and the Government of the day—the Gladstone Government—immediately proceeded to give effect to it, and brought in a Bill to repeal the Acts. This, being imperfect was opposed, and this caused some delay. But in the latter part of the session of 1885 the question came up for discussion, I think, in connection with the Estimates. It was then agreed on both sides of the House that the question was ripe for solution, but that it would be convenient to allow it to remain until the assembling of the new Parliament. Accordingly, on March 16th of this year, Mr. Stansfeld moved that the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1866 and 1869 ought to be repealed. An amendment was proposed by Sir John Kennaway, member for Devonshire, who, while approving of the repeal, wished to retain the lock hospitals. This was lost by 114 on division, and then Mr. Stansfeld's motion was carried without division. Ten days afterwards Mr. Stansfeld moved

the second reading of the Bill, providing for immediate and unconditional repeal, and this was carried without division in the House. On the 15th April the Speaker reported to the House the Royal assent. Thus was this most un-English Act swept away by what may be considered, I think, the unanimous verdict of the whole country. Never perhaps in the history of England, not for centuries at least, has an Act been passed which has so outraged the moral sense, the religious principle, and the British love of freedom and justice, as this Act of 1866. I venture to express the belief that Her Majesty the Queen never put her signature to a measure with greater gratification to herself than she did when she signed this Bill for repealing the Contagious Diseases Act. The Secretary of State for War, Mr. Campbell Bannerman, during the debate said that the country had pronounced against State interference in this matter, and the hope was strongly expressed during the debate that this system would be swept away in all the British dependencies. Such an Act was repealed some years ago in the British colony of Cape of Good Hope. In the dominion of Canada a similar Act was passed at the instance, I believe, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but the Executive Government of Canada never ventured to put it in force. In the presidencies of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras this system is doomed to speedy extinction. Queensland is the only one of the Australian colonies where this Act has ever been in force.

Mr. NORTON: No.

Mr. JORDAN: It was passed in Victoria, but they never dared to put it in force. I think I am correct also in stating that Queensland was the first of the British dependencies to follow England's example in passing such an Act, and I sincerely hope we shall not be the very last of the British dependencies to follow the English example in repealing that Act. I will now, sir, say a few words as to the reasons why we, who are in favour of repeal, wish to see this system done away with—in the first place, because it has failed in the fulfilment of its promise of stamping out, or almost doing away with, the disease of syphilis; because it is tyrannical and opposed to the most cherished principle of the English Constitution; because it is cruel and inhuman in its operation; because it is cowardly—this tyranny and cruelty being directed exclusively against the weaker sex; because it is immoral, and opposed to the divine law of chastity. We wish to see this Act repealed because it has signally failed in its promise of stamping out the constitutional disease of syphilis. The great argument which has always been relied upon by those who are in favour of the continuance of the Act is that this disease is a constitutional disease; that it passes from the parents to the offspring; and that it is entailed on innocent children to the third and fourth generation; and, Mr. Speaker, it is important I think, this afternoon, to bear in mind that this is the argument—that this inquiry has to do, as far as statistics are concerned at all events, with the constitutional disease of syphilis, and with that only. It has nothing whatever to do with those other disorders which are also induced by irregularity of life, which are not constitutional, which are not dangerous, but wholly and solely with the constitutional disease of syphilis. Dreadful pictures have been presented to us of the nature, the prevalence, and the fatality of the disease of syphilis. The evil nature of the disease can hardly be exaggerated; the prevalence and fatality of it may be, have been, and are continually and greatly exaggerated. Whenever the system is

attacked I always notice that its defenders take fortress in two or three gratuitous assumptions. First, they assume that this is the most fatal disease almost in the world, which it is not. Secondly, they assume that this Contagious Diseases Act has been largely successful in doing away with the disease of syphilis, which it has not. Thirdly, they assume that if this system has not been successful, there is no other system in the world which can be or has been successful, which is contrary to the facts of the case, as I shall presently endeavour to show. The vital statistics of almost all countries at the present day show us precisely the number of deaths occurring immediately from the disease of syphilis. Take, for instance, our own statistics. The medical men of Queensland have been and are generally conscientiously careful to supply the Registrar-General, in their certificates of death, with the means of ascertaining the causes of death in the colony; and when there is no medical attendant, these statistics are obtained from other reliable sources. To show, Mr. Speaker, how carefully this is done in this colony of Queensland, I will now refer to a table—page 13 of the appendix to the Registrar-General's Report on Vital Statistics for the years 1878 and 1879. Any other two years would have answered the purpose equally well, for aught I know; I just take these at random. In the year 1878 there was a very great mortality. There were 4,220 deaths, and out of these there were only 84 cases in which the cause of death was not specified. In the following year, when the mortality was normal, there were 3,207 deaths, and there were only 44 in which the causes were not specified. The table to which I am now referring, Mr. Speaker, is Table XI. of the Vital Statistics of 1879. This table exhibits the causes of death in the order of their degree of fatality. We might have supposed, from what we have been told about the great fatality of syphilis, that it would be found at the top of this list, or somewhere near the top; but it is found a long way down the list, No. 59, and there were ten deaths only from syphilis that year. I will take the nine years from 1874 to 1882, because in those nine years I prepared with my own hand the analysis of the tables prepared by the Deputy Registrar-General. In the year 1874, the place on the list was 50, in the order of degree of fatality, and the number of deaths was 10; in 1875, the place was 77, and the number of deaths 5; in 1876 the place was 56, and the number of deaths, 9; in 1877 the place was 52, the number of deaths 12; in 1878 the place was 52, the number of deaths 13; in 1879 the place was 59, the number of deaths 10; in 1880 the place was 43, the number of deaths 14; in 1881 the place was 34, the number of deaths 22; and in 1882 the place was 34, and the number of deaths 30. During those nine years, Mr. Speaker, the total number of deaths in the colony was 31,583, and the total number of deaths from syphilis during those years was 123, giving an average of 14 deaths for each year from syphilis. I will now, for the sake of comparison, refer to the percentage of deaths from all enthetic diseases under Dr. Farr's system of nosology. In the three years before the passing of the Contagious Diseases Act in Queensland in 1863, the percentage of deaths from these, to the whole number of deaths—that is during 1865, 1866, and 1867—was 0·31, or a little less than a third of 1 per cent. During the three years after the passing of the Act, instead of improving, we find that the percentage was 0·46, or more than half as much again. Taking the sixteen years since the passing of the Act—from 1869 to 1884 inclusive—the percentage of deaths from enthetic diseases, which include syphilis,

gonorrhoea, and some others, was 0·55, or more than three-quarters as many again. I cannot carry the comparison any further as to enthetic diseases, because the arrangement has since been altered. But in 1885 the deaths from syphilis were 0·63. During the seventeen years that have elapsed since the passing of the Act the average has been 0·55—more than three-quarters as much again as it was before that time; and in 1885 the percentage of syphilis was more than double that in the three years before the passing of the Act. It may be said, and it will be said, I have no doubt, that there are many other diseases which are aggravated by the presence of syphilis in the constitution, such as phthisis; and that the number of deaths caused indirectly by syphilis has been much larger than this, and this we must take account of. But this cannot do away with the fact that during the seventeen years after the passing of the Act the deaths from enthetic diseases—nearly all of which were syphilis—were nearly double as many as they were during the three years before the Act was passed at all. It follows that those other diseases, of which phthisis and others were the secondary cause of death, syphilis being the primary, have increased in the same proportion, and that there are double as many now as there were before the passing of the Act. I have said that the deaths from syphilis during the nine years ending in 1882 have averaged fourteen in the year. Compare that with the average number of deaths from miasmatic, or what are called preventable diseases, and we find that the average number of deaths in the colony during those nine years from preventable diseases was 976, as against 14 from enthetic diseases. Though the attention of successive Governments has been called to the frightful loss of human life arising from filthy streets, filthy gutters, dirty backyards, filthy closets, and the want of a proper system of drainage, there is little notice taken of it. We admit, of course, that syphilis is a very foul disease, and that we are bound to do all we can to diminish it, and, if possible, to get rid of it. The professed intention of this Act is to do away with the disease of syphilis. That is very good; but let us look at the means which are put in motion by the Contagious Diseases Act for this very laudable purpose. There is, first, police espionage. Under this Act a certain number of the police are set aside or instructed to act as a kind of morals' police. The duty of these men, as they walk the streets, is to keep their eye upon all women, to scan their faces, to observe their ways, to judge of their conduct, to see where they go and what they do; and if they do anything which these men do not consider right, such as winking with the eyes, "talking with their feet," or in any similar way misbehaving, it is their duty to report that misconduct to a magistrate; and the magistrate has the power, at his discretion, of committing these women at once to the inquisition of the doctor's examining-room. Compulsory medical examination has always, by those in favour of these Acts, been talked of as an infallible test—by which the presence of syphilis can be readily detected by medical men with the use of the speculum. It has been held by high medical authority that the examination of a woman, without her own consent, is an assault, and utterly unjustifiable under any conceivable circumstances. And does not this commend itself to the universal conscience? Is it not a part of that unwritten law, which is inscribed on the heart of every living man, that every woman has a right—a natural, inalienable, and sacred right—to guard the secrets of her own person? But even after this unjustifiable assault has been

committed by the doctors, they are in many cases as wise as they were before. The evidence of a number of medical men given before a select committee of the House of Commons on this subject went to show that this was the case, and one medical officer went so far as to say that in six cases out of twelve doctors could not tell, after the most careful examination. The lives these women lead induce appearances which are very often mistaken for the symptoms of syphilis; and many young women are committed to the hospital without any disease upon them. Others, on the contrary, contrive, by ablation and otherwise, to remove suspicious appearances in the earlier stages of the disease, and they are not treated. To be of any real value these examinations must be made every day. In a single hour after the examination has been made the woman may contract disease, and within twenty-four hours she may have communicated the disease to a score of men. Do not think that that is an extravagant statement. It is borne out by the evidence of Dr. Barr, physician for thirteen years at the Aldershot military camp. If such is the fact, what is the use of these fortnightly examinations? The thing is ridiculous and absurd. However, to show the absurdity of this system and its utter hollowness, I may take the facts connected with mediate contagion. Persons bitten by a snake get inoculated with the virus, and become poison-proof against snake-bites for perhaps many years to come. A woman who has been cured of syphilis becomes what is called syphilised. She does not then readily contract the disease, but she communicates it. Having intercourse with a diseased person—the next comer is the victim, and so on in an unknown quantity. These several considerations are proof incontestable of the utter inadequacy of the much-vaunted compulsory medical examination for ascertaining the existence of disease in these women. The system is misleading in the highest degree. We come next to the professed registration of all prostitutes. Does anybody believe that all prostitutes are registered? Does not everybody—if people would only admit it—know that this is an utter farce? Those women are not so lost to all sense of womanly shame that they do not dread the treatment they will receive at the hands of men under these monstrous Acts; and they take very good care to keep out of the way of the policemen, and the doctor too. Take Brisbane, for instance. In the city of Brisbane, the Premier told us last session but one, that there were 100 women on the register. I remember the statement very well, and we have it in *Hansard*. The same day the Attorney-General told the House that he had made careful inquiry into this matter, and had found that out of these 100 prostitutes there were on an average thirty in gaol and thirty in the lock hospital, leaving only forty effective prostitutes in the streets of Brisbane. Does anybody who has acquainted himself at all with this disagreeable question believe that forty women represent the whole number of prostitutes that disfigure and disgrace the streets of the city and suburbs? I have been told that there are four times forty, or perhaps more. Go to Paris. We are told we must not go to Paris, because the system there is entirely different. I take exception to that. I have given very careful study to the subject, and I know to my own satisfaction that the system which was in existence in Paris and is now done away with was identical with the system which is now in operation in Brisbane. What was the system in force in Paris? There was professed registration of prostitutes; there was compulsory examination of the women; and there were lock or prison hospitals.

The average number of prostitutes on the register in that city was a little under 3,600. The number of prostitutes in Paris has been variously estimated, but I will take the official estimate—the estimate of the officer who was for very many years at the head of the Morals Police in Paris, and occupied that position until lately. That officer is not at all likely to over-estimate the number of prostitutes in that city for this reason: that his duty was to keep the names of all the prostitutes on the register, and as he did not succeed, an over-estimate of the number of those women would make his failure only more palpable. And what does he say on the subject? He states that the number is from 30,000 to 50,000. I think we may be quite certain then that there must be at least 40,000. But, to make assurance doubly sure, I will average it at 36,000. From this official estimate, therefore, it appears that, with all the vigilance of the Paris police, with all the means fair and unfair adopted to put women on the register, the authorities in that city did not succeed in securing the registration of more than one-tenth of the whole. And the remainder are clandestine prostitutes carrying on their profession, or whatever it may be called, in secret. Under a system like this, clandestine prostitutes are the most dangerous, for this reason, that when they become diseased they do not go to see a medical man, because they are afraid of falling into the hands of the police. They do not see a doctor until they are compelled to do so. The consequence is that there were over 32,000 clandestine prostitutes in Paris, who were centres of disease; the policemen, the doctors, and the prisons, prevented their going to get medical advice in the earlier stages of the disease. Registration in Paris, therefore, and registration in Brisbane also, is registration in name, and not in reality. Take the statistics of England under these Acts. No doubt hon. members are aware that the Contagious Diseases Acts were in operation in certain military and naval stations where these Acts have been in operation for the seventeen or eighteen years before they were suspended. The districts under the operation of the Act were called subjected, those not under, unsubjected districts. This afforded a means of comparison between the subjected and unsubjected districts. Elaborate statistics have been prepared on the subject, tables having been kept from the beginning. The statistics are very voluminous, extending over many years. They are intricate, because the men are continually changing between the unsubjected and subjected districts; they often are not confined exclusively to syphilis, but to other disorders; and taken in parts they are utterly perplexing and sometimes quite contradictory. In 1879 a select committee was appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into this matter. It was composed of sixteen gentlemen, ten of whom had been advocates of the Act, and were committed by their speeches in the House—and, I believe, outside the House—to maintain them. The other six gentlemen were opposed to the maintenance of the Acts. Their first duty—I believe, their most important duty—was to get to the bottom of this mass of statistics, to study them, analyse them, classify them, and come to some definite conclusion as to the beneficial operation, or otherwise, of the Act in the subjected districts, and compare the results with the state of things in the unsubjected districts. For three years these gentlemen carried on their labours, sitting during three sessions of Parliament. The chairman, who belonged to the majority, brought up a report, which was called “the majority report.” This was strongly objected to by the minority, because they said the conclusions of the majority were based altogether on false premises, as the majority had insisted—instead of confining their

attention to the constitutional disease of syphilis—on including all venereal diseases, which were trivial in their nature, not dangerous, not constitutional, and not hereditary. The conclusion they came to, taking that as a basis, was as follows. I will read the paragraph in the report, because I think it is most important. It was the conclusion of the whole matter, and the verdict of those gentlemen who for years advocated the upholding of this system and almost swore by it. At page 50 of the evidence taken before the select committee we have the conclusion of the majority in these words:—

“Your committee examined carefully into the question how far the Acts have operated to influence the efficiency of the army. Their effect in this respect was considered from several points of view, and it appears that they have augmented the available strength of the army to an extent proportioned to that which the statistics showed that they have diminished disease. Applying the plan adopted”—

That is, including all disorders, more than four-fifths of which are not syphilitic—

“for measuring the true effect of the Acts in reducing disease, your committee contrasted the changes of condition as to efficiency, so far as the diminution or increase of efficiency resulted from a greater or lesser number of men being in the hospital in consequence of venereal disease, in unsubjected districts, with corresponding changes in subjected districts. This comparison involved considerable difficulty, but after carefully eliminating all discoverable inaccuracies and sources of error, your committee were satisfied, contrasting the fourteen subjected with all unsubjected districts and stations, that during the period between 1870 and 1873, when the Acts were in full operation, unaffected by Lord Cardwell's order, they saved 5·38 per 1,000 men daily to the army.”

Hon. gentlemen will observe that this does not mean the lives of men, but this was the proportion of admissions to the hospitals less in the subjected than in the unsubjected districts. Now, 5·38 per 1,000 means a saving of 269 cases out of an army of 50,000 men, but only 26,000 men were, as it appears, in the subjected districts during those years. See what it would be if the majority had confined their attention to the real question—that is the saving with regard to the men who were afflicted with this disease, this constitutional disease which affects innocent children and is handed down from father to son. Dr. Barr, who was stationed at Aldershot thirteen years, shows that he examined 54,848 cases, and out of those examinations there were only 7,667 cases which were treated for venereal disorders. Altogether the proportions were as follows, per cent:—Gonorrhoea, 65; primary sores, 27; secondary syphilis, 8. Of primary sores two-thirds are not syphilitic at all, leaving nine only really syphilitic cases. There were thus, 9 and 8 are 17 per cent. of cases of true syphilis; 17 per cent. of 269 is less than 46, which would be the real saving in the subjected districts out of 50,000 men. Does not that become small by degrees and beautifully less? But that is not all, Mr. Speaker. We have not the statistics before us, and we cannot verify these things for ourselves; but we may take the conclusions of the majority for what they are worth, and those of the minority for what they are worth. It is of no use to say that the majority made a mistake. They included all venereal disorders, so as to swell the number, and increase it as far as they could. We say this was unfairly done, because the inquiry was about constitutional syphilis. What does Mr. Stansfeld say? He knows, I believe, more about the question than any other man in England, and there is no man in England who doubts Mr. Stansfeld's veracity. This is the conclusion to which he came after profoundly studying the intricacies of all the statistical information regarding contagious dis-

eases during the seventeen or eighteen years the Acts had existed in England. This is Mr. Stansfeld's summing up:—

“Our contention on these figures is this. We say it is proved in evidence that the result of the operation of the Acts is a greater proportion of constitutional to non-constitutional abuses, a very doubtful positive decrease in the amount of constitutional diseases; and taking all the figures which we are not prepared to admit of the advocates of the Acts, the diminution of constitutional disease amounts at most to 0·15 per 1,000, or 7½ out of 50,000 men.”

Will anybody, after that, say that there was any necessity for the passing of these Acts; that these Acts have accomplished any good; that they have stamped out the disease; that they have even diminished the disease? Mr. Stansfeld says, in another paragraph, that, taking both men and women into account, syphilis is found to have increased in the subjected as compared with the unsubjected districts. That is a remarkable fact we have to deal with in this House to-day. It is said that good has been accomplished in the large towns where these Acts have been in force, inasmuch as there has been less exhibition of prostitution in the streets. I have examined the evidence given by a Catholic clergyman in Cork—no doubt a gentleman of high character, I think he is a dignitary of the Catholic Church—named the Rev. James Hegarty. I am giving the evidence on both sides, because I do not wish to practise any deception in any way. He was in favour of the continuation of the Acts because he thought the streets were more orderly and there were not so many brothels. The evidence of any Catholic clergyman having to do with the morals of the people under his charge was very valuable as far as it went. But we have, on the contrary, the evidence of Mr. Kingston, a gentleman of independent means, who resided three times as long in Cork—namely, thirty years—as the clergyman, and devoted this thirty years of his life to what is called rescue work. He was a gentleman of true religious character, and had been the means of rescuing nearly 300 of those people from a further life of shame. He said the diminution of prostitution in Cork was entirely external, and that in reality clandestine prostitution had largely increased, and that immorality among boys and young men had increased; and he went into lengthened details and fully established these statements. I could quote the evidence of a great number of different clergymen, some of whom, like the Rev. Mr. Hegarty, have been in favour of the Acts from external appearances; and many, on the other hand, of those who have devoted years of their lives to the study of the question, and are thoroughly convinced that clandestine prostitution has greatly increased, as well as immorality among young men and boys, in the large towns where the Acts have been in force. It is argued that good has been done in the hospitals where the lady-principals, as they are called, have rescued some women from a life of shame. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that this is the case, but is that anything in favour of the system? We all know that there were a good many well-meaning, benevolent people among those who owned slaves in the West Indies and in the Southern States of America; but is that an argument in favour of slavery—in favour of a system under which human beings were bought and sold as mere chattels? Such arguments are utterly vain. Then we are told that good has been done in Brisbane. The Premier said that during one year 163 women had been treated in the lock hospital, and otherwise these women would have been centres from which contagion would have spread. But does that follow, Mr. Speaker? That is only on the

assumption to which I just referred—that if this system does not succeed, no other means can succeed. But that is contrary to the fact. There are many large towns in England that would not have this system. They rejected it; the whole population were in a turmoil, and there would have been a riot in the streets if the Government had forced it upon them—in Glasgow, Winchester, Bristol, and Liverpool it seems these Acts were never in force; but the municipal authorities, private individuals, and benevolent persons addressed themselves to the work of reformation. Hospitals were established for the reception of persons suffering from this dreadful disease, syphilis—this constitutional disease which affects children to the third and fourth generation; and the work of curing them has been very successful. That is so in Glasgow and other places, and I believe the disease can be stamped out. Now, what is there to prevent us here from adopting that rational, human and Christian system? What is there to prevent the Government from saying, “We will give you this subsidy to your hospitals on condition that you will establish wards for syphilis, which shall be accessible to all people on demand and without paying any fee”? This is a great national question. Now, I think I have made good what I have stated, that this system has failed in the fulfilment of its promise in stamping out disease; and I have pointed out that other system that has proved successful in other places, and may be successful here. Let us have the good without the evil. Let us have the humanity without the cruelty and wrong of the thing. We ask for the repeal of this Act, secondly, on the ground that it is tyrannical and opposed to the most cherished principles of the Constitution of England. Every man on British soil has a right to his personal freedom. This is older than the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act. It has existed from the time of King John, and the signing of the Magna Charta, if not before. Every man who is not arrested or held in bondage lawfully on suspicion of crime, has a right to be free. A slave who escapes from his taskmaster in some foreign country, the moment the sole of his foot touches British soil is a free man. Every man, but not every woman. By this hateful law women are made an exception. That young woman whom the policeman suspects to be no better than she ought to be, on what principle of English law is she arrested and held in bondage? It may be that she may have fallen into sin, but is fornication a crime by British law? We know it is not. On the contrary, if a medical man declares that she is free from disease she may leave the institution, and she can go where she likes. That is, she has official authority to go on in the practice of her sin. It is said of slavery that it degrades the slave-holder as much as it degrades the slave; and every cruel and iniquitous system warps the mind and hardens the conscience of every person connected with it. Let us take as an illustration a portion of the report of Dr. Weir, the health officer at Bombay, who was in favour of the continuation of this Act. His report is dated 20th December, 1876—a little less than ten years ago—and in it is to be found the following statement:—

“To the women themselves, this Act is of the greatest benefit, not only physically, but professionally. The registration ticket is equivalent to a clean bill of health and a certificate of competency.”

That requires no comment. The right to personal freedom is highly prized in England. It is the envy of all European nations, and I venture to say that it is as greatly valued in Queensland, and it will be presently seen that the people in Queensland will not long be down-trodden by any such tyrannical law. The people of Queensland have already said they will have no black labour, and they will say as emphatically that there shall be no white slavery—no pariah class of women

ruthlessly thrust beyond the pale of British law, arrested on no suspicion of crime, subjected to the cruel examination, and put from time to time in prison in order that men may safely gratify their sensual appetites. We ask for the repeal of the law because it is a cruel law. Fifty years ago a fiend in human shape moved by a kind of black inspiration—as it has been called—invented an instrument which would kill a great many people at one explosion. He let it off at the window of his lodging in a street in Paris on some state occasion when the King Louis Philippe and the Queen were on their way to review the National Guard. Eighteen persons were killed; and the man was executed. This machine was called the infernal machine; but no machine ever invented in Paris, no instrument of torture ever used in the dark chambers of the Inquisition of Spain, is to be compared to that masterpiece of human cruelty invented for the compulsory examination of women—that table, or chair, or bed, or rack in which these poor women are subjected to an ignominy no words can describe. It is no use to say it is shameful for women to present a petition to members of this House. The time has gone by for talking such nonsense. If it were not for the women of England we should have had this hateful Act in force at the present day in England. It has died by the blow of the women of England, and British women will not allow it to exist in any British community. Take the case of Caroline Wybrow. She was a young woman eighteen years of age, living at Chatham with her mother. They were very poor, and they lived in a very low part of the town because they could not afford a high rent. The poor woman obtained her living by nursing and needlework, and the girl assisted her mother and increased their scanty means by scrubbing out the houses of some of their neighbours, some of whom were prostitutes. The police naturally suspected she was one of them; and they made her appear at the examination room, and she was told to get up on one of these horrid machines. The girl protested her innocence and refused. Being urged and threatened, in a paroxysm of fear and shame, she said she would rather have her throat cut. She was remanded for six days, and during that time one of the medical officers said if she did not submit he would get six strong women to hold her down, or she would get six months' imprisonment. Still she refused; but eventually she was persuaded to submit. She consented to do so on the condition that the instrument should not be used. Even then she said one of the doctors held her down whilst the other performed the examination. Immediately, she was released. The doctors denied some of her statements, but they could not and did not deny what the girl persistently asserted, that she was a virgin. Shortly after her release she was married to a soldier—probably the man whom the police had seen visiting her—and in a few days over nine months she became a mother. Now, what happened to the girl Caroline Wybrow may occur under this hideous system to any virtuous woman, either virgin or wife. Monsieur Guyot, who was a member of the municipality of Paris—a man of the highest reputation, the highest character—who has been the chief instrument in securing the abolition of this hideous law in Paris—said that there were a great number of cases in Paris where young virgins had been arrested as prostitutes. And in the *Westminster Review*, No. 126, for April, 1883, page 503, it is stated that complaints of outrages of this kind may be counted by hundreds. No doubt in England they have been very careful, because the administration of the Act has been closely watched by a disapproving public, but this case happened in England. And how do we know how many cases of the

same kind never come to light? But we know this: that there are virtuous girls and wives who would almost rather die before making confession to their lovers or husbands that they had been thus violated. I do not wonder that there have been cases of suicide—a number of them—of women who could not face their relatives or the world, after this hideous shame had been inflicted on them. I say that this system is a cruel system, because it is a preventive of reform, tending to make girls who have once fallen into confirmed and professed prostitutes. Many women in the humbler walks of life are exposed to great temptations, and fall. Fall into the hands of bad men who profess love and promise marriage; or fall from the pressure of poverty and fear of starvation. Many of these women, smitten by remorse, and tasting in that remorse the bitter fruits of transgression, would return to the paths of virtue and never sin again. But falling into the clutches of the police, subjected to the shameful violation of the doctor, they feel themselves lost beyond the possibility of redemption and give themselves over to despair, feeling there is no return. Henceforth they are leprous outcasts, the slaves of the State, the registered prostitutes of the Government. We say that we want to have this Act repealed because it is a cowardly system. This tyranny and this cruelty are directed against the weaker sex—against women. If the Government want to stamp out syphilis why don't they pass a Bill to deal summarily with men?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JORDAN: If soldiers are so bad—I do not believe they are half so bad as they are made to be—but if soldiers are so bad and cannot be permitted to marry, why not subject soldiers to examination every morning? That is the only way to make the examination of any use. If disease is so rife among civilians, why should not every unmarried man, or every man who is what they call a “loose fish,” be subjected to a daily examination by the doctor? If any woman walking in the streets, either alone or in company, may be stopped, questioned, threatened, arrested, and committed to the doctor's examining room to prove that she is not a harlot, why should not the same powers be given to the police to deal with men? Why not?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JORDAN: Why not? We dare not attempt it. Manhood would rise against it in wrathful indignation and hurl us from our seats.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is the reason.

Mr. JORDAN: Yes, sir, that is the reason. But women are weak and defenceless; we may treat them in this inhuman way in order that men may safely gratify their sensual appetites.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Cowardly men!

Mr. JORDAN: Shame, I say, on Queensland. She is the only colony of fair Australia which has enacted such a law—which makes pariahs of a class of women, brands them with the red-hot brand of eternal infamy, registers them as prostitutes, bars their way to a return to the paths of virtue, and renders repentance to them almost an impossibility! Have we who have arrived at old age, or at middle age, forgotten our British parentage? Have we in Queensland, in this nineteenth century, become ashamed of our old English chivalry which made man the champion of woman, the defender of her person against all comers? Have we in this very session, in this House, passed a Bill chiefly for the protection of young men on conviction of crime, to let them for the first offence go free and have another chance of redeeming themselves? and do we refuse to hold out a helping hand to a poor girl whom some heartless libertine

has betrayed? How will the name of Queensland be honoured among the nations of the future, as the only Australian colony maintaining a law against women of which Paris has become ashamed, and has spewed it out of her mouth? We ask, in the name of the women of Queensland, not only of those 4,000 or 5,000 who signed that petition, but in the name of all the women of Queensland—of every honest woman who looks at this vile law as an insult to her sex—we ask that this should be repealed, because it is opposed to the divine law of chastity. That law forbids fornication and teaches us that it is a deadly sin. But this law which you have passed in Queensland, and which you wish to maintain in Queensland, permits fornication, protects it, encourages it, professing to give securities against any evil consequences that may arise from the practice of it. The Government have become parties with the harlot. As she stands at the street corner, she says to that young man, who has just come from the parting embrace of his mother—who thinks, as she looks into his face, she sees in it the reflections of her own purity,—“I have peace offerings with me this day; I have paid my vows; I have submitted my person to the learned hand of the physician; I have perfumed my bed with myrrh; I have washed my hands in innocence; therefore come I forth to meet thee. Come—the good man is from home; the good, paternal Government has provided for your safety; I am one of the Queen's women; the Queen of England says I may practise my lawful calling in the streets! I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved work and fine linen of Egypt.” With her much fair speech, and her clean Government bill of health, she causeth him to yield. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter. Do we profess in Queensland to be a Christian nation, to be guided by the teachings of God's Holy Word—and I am not ashamed of speaking of it in this House—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JORDAN: Do we not daily on meeting here acknowledge the Supreme Being, invoke His aid, and ask for the guidance of His counsel? Do we not pray that all things may be so ordered and settled by our endeavours on the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established amongst us for all generations? The best and surest foundations for the health, for the honour, and for the greatness of Queensland are truth and justice. That these may be established among us for all generations, our legislation must be in harmony with the divine law of chastity. Whence came the overthrow of those great cities that represented the wealth and power of the Old World? Read it in the broken arches and the prostrate columns, where the fishers dry their nets by the sea, where the boding owl sits and the fierce hyena stalks amid their ruins half-buried in the sands of the wilderness! It is written for the most part in two words—sexual vice. This was the worm at the root, the rottenness at the heart, which laid their glory in the dust. Shall we not reverse our steps, follow the example of England and repeal this law? As for our soldiers and sailors, I am pleased to think that means have been adopted by good women and good men too for the amelioration of their condition—their enforced idleness in times of peace. Useful literature, periodicals, manly amusements—may God speed these efforts! I love the British sailor; I admire the gallantry of our brave defenders. I wish our sailors and soldiers were better paid; I wish that they were better looked after. We owe them very much. I wish

they were allowed to marry. All other things being equal, Mr. Speaker, a man who has a wife and children makes a better man and a braver soldier. Let him feel that he is fighting for wife and children as well as for his Queen and his country. Does anyone believe, now that the Queen has set her hand to the Bill for the repeal of this Act, that our soldiers will be renegades in the field or less victorious in battle? or that the armaments of England on every sea will be less terrible to her enemies? No; we do not think that at all. The God of battles will be the shield of England's greatness if in all our legislation we acknowledge Him as our rightful King and Supreme Lawgiver.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—It is impossible to have listened to the hon. gentleman who has just sat down without feeling much impressed by the earnestness, and, indeed, the enthusiasm with which he approached this subject. But we have to deal with it, I think, not altogether under the impulse of enthusiasm. We have to deal with it from a practical point of view. Sentiment enters a great deal into the matter; and no doubt has entered into the matter a great deal in the petitions that have been presented to this House; and I, for one, should be very glad if I could see my way to believe that it was consistent with my duty to vote for the repeal of the Act in question, which is evidently so obnoxious to a great number of persons. I do not attach quite so much weight to some of the petitions as some hon. members do—for instance, the petition from the women of Queensland, as it was called, that was presented this afternoon. I am quite certain, Mr. Speaker, that, fortunately or unfortunately—it may be either, according to the sense in which the term is used—a large proportion of the women who signed that petition do not understand the subject.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I am satisfied that a very large proportion of them have not the slightest idea of the nature of the Act the petition refers to. I will go further, and say I believe, Mr. Speaker, that a very large number of the women in this colony, if they did understand the subject, which fortunately or unfortunately they do not, would be disposed to think the system, as it really exists in Queensland, should be continued.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The PREMIER: That is my view, and I am not ashamed to say so. I believe that, sir; I feel that I deal with this matter at a great disadvantage compared with the hon. member, because I cannot feel enthusiasm upon the subject, nor if I did do I think it is a subject upon which I should be justified in showing any enthusiasm. I have simply to call the attention of the House to the facts that have to be dealt with. To my mind, the arguments of the hon. member, though they are most admirable arguments, fail in this: that they are addressed to a state of circumstances quite different from those which really exist in Queensland. They are arguments which would be of the greatest weight if addressed to the legislature of Belgium, or that of some other of the Continental countries which adopt such a system as the hon. member thinks is in force here. But they fail, to my mind, to be applicable to the subject we have to deal with, and I will proceed, as briefly as I can, to show why they do fail. First of all, the hon. member appears to think that the disease—syphilis—is not nearly so terrible as some people think it is. He says that the total number of deaths reported from it is not so very great. That is quite true; that is to say, the

number of deaths put down to syphilis is not very great. But how many diseases take their rise in that disease—how many hereditary diseases, not called by that name, are well known to have originated in it? It is known that there is no disease on earth that is so terrible, so fearful, in its results as this. There is no such terrible disease, sir, on this earth.

Mr. MACFARLANE: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, thinks otherwise. I know he does not think so, and the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, evidently does not think so either. Does he know how many black men in Australia and Polynesia there have been whose blood is upon our heads for allowing that disease to go amongst them? Does he know that nearly half of the black population of Australia has perished from it, and that there are many islands in the Pacific now where scarcely a man, woman, or child is free from it? Does he know it is a fact that there are some countries in the world—I do not want to stigmatise any—but there is one great country which rules over a great part of Europe, where there are very few people, except in the higher classes, who are free from that disease? It is true that this disease does not permeate the whole community here, but it has affected the whole of the aboriginal population, or almost all of it, except in those parts of the colony where they have been free from contact with the whites, but where they have their deaths occur—50 per cent. of them—from that cause alone. This is a fact we have to remember. It is not a disease which may be cured. The hon. gentleman thinks it is—that its evil effects may be cured. But this is one of the unfortunate effects—you may think you have cured the disease, but it may break out in the grandchild, passing over the intermediate generation altogether. I have heard of cases of that kind from persons under whose knowledge they have come—that is the nature of the disease. That only proves this: that it being a disease of such terrible consequences, *prima facie*, it is desirable that the State should endeavour to prevent its spread as much as it can. I do not say that it proves any more than that. I opine, of course, that we do not deny that it is the duty of the State at all to prevent the spread of disease. Among the arguments the hon. member has addressed to the subject this afternoon are these: That it is contrary to the law of God. I do not know in what sense that term can be used; I do not know any divine law which prohibits the general Government of a colony from trying to prevent the spread of a disease, or trying to cure a disease when it is contracted; nor can I conceive how, in a rational sense, the term "law of God" can be used in reference to such a subject. I do not wish to pursue that subject; it seems to me a horrible profanation of the term. I believe divine law justifies legislatures and governments in endeavouring to do away with disease as much as possible, to avert its consequences, and prevent its spread. We follow that principle in every other case, and I fail to see why there should be any exception in this, which is the most horrible of them all. I know that some people go so far as to say this, "If a man will commit such a sin, let him die." That is a terrible thing to say.

Mr. W. BROOKES: We do not say that.

The PREMIER: I do not think my hon. colleague does say so; but I have heard that argument. I say that is the very opposite point of view to that from which we should approach the subject. I approach it from this point of view: Here is a terrible disease, creating

terrible ravages in various parts of the world; we are in a part of the world where it has created most terrible ravages amongst the natives of the country—leaving out our own relations and friends—and in the neighbouring islands; and, therefore, it is a subject that deserves attention. Then how do we deal with it? But before I proceed to the law as it is, I wish to say a few words with respect to the arguments used against it, which, as I said, to my mind, do not seem to hit the right point but to be aimed at something else. Now, the hon. member said, first of all, that the system we have is ineffectual; that it has been a failure, in so far that it has failed to stamp out the disease. There is no doubt of that, but I know of no disease in man that has yet been stamped out. I know that diseases have been stamped out in animals by killing off all infected with them; but it would hardly be proposed to deal with human beings in that way. No legislation has the effect of stamping out disease, but it has the effect of diminishing it in many cases. I am told, however, in this case that it has not had the effect of diminishing the disease. I am not going to trouble the House with statistics, but I mention as a very strange thing that of the committee the hon. member referred to a majority of ten expressed themselves as satisfied that the operation of the Acts had to an enormous extent reduced the disease.

Mr. JORDAN; No.

The PREMIER: Well, I read extracts from the statements made by Lord Hartington and Mr. Osborne Morgan on a previous occasion, when the subject was under discussion in this House, showing that the improvement in those districts in which the Act was in force, as compared with those in which it was not, was enormous.

Mr. JORDAN: It is a mistake.

The PREMIER: I do not know where the mistake is. I say there is the evidence, and I cannot see that Lord Hartington or Mr. Osborne Morgan were less likely to know what the effects of the Act were than the members of the minority of that committee.

Mr. JORDAN: The figures are misquoted.

The PREMIER: The hon. member says "the figures are misquoted," but if he argues in that way there is no use in referring to figures at all. On page 1549 of volume xlv. of *Hansard* will be found an extract which I quoted from Mr. Osborne Morgan's report. He said:—

"I have got the figures for 1880 here. They are perfectly appalling.

"I will give Aldershot, which is a subjected district. The admissions to the hospital there were 74 per 1,000. Surely that is large enough. But in London, an unsubjected district, there were 225 men per 1,000 absolutely taken into the hospital for one alone of these diseases. In Manchester, 232 per 1,000 were so taken in; in Dublin, 210; and in Belfast actually 273 per 1,000 were admitted into the hospital. The figures are actually appalling. Now, let me give the figures of 1881. In London, 210 per 1,000 were admitted to the hospital suffering from venereal disease; in Belfast, 279 per 1,000 were admitted; in Manchester, 223 per 1,000; and in Dublin, 209 per 1,000."

But apart from all such statements, surely diminishing centres of contagion must diminish disease! No statistics in the world would prove to me that more disease would be contracted from twenty centres of disease than from a hundred. Does it require argument to prove that? The disease can only be contracted from an infected person, and if that infected person is kept out of the way of giving the infection so many less people will get it. That is a self-evident proposition. It is the same as saying a part is less than the whole. No statistics will prove that fifty people will give as much contagion as a hundred.

No statistics will satisfy anyone on that point. There is no doubt it must have the effect of diminishing the disease to some extent. To me that is a self-evident proposition, though it may not be of itself sufficient ground for putting the Act in force. It is true that in England it is now repealed, but I fancy we shall yet hear a great deal about that repeal. I have heard, though not directly—a gentleman who came here has told my hon. colleague the Colonial Secretary—that the condition of things in Aldershot now is something utterly appalling—a very great deal worse than it was before the repeal of the Act. Instead of the admissions to the hospital being 74 per 1,000, as in 1880, I believe they reach something like 500 per 1,000 since the Act has ceased to be in operation. If we remove the source of contagion we must to some extent diminish the disease, and if we diminish it to an appreciable extent is it not something worth trying to do, unless there are other arguments of greater weight against the continuance of the Act? Let me say here that none of our laws can deal with any subject thoroughly. I do not know of any law in the world that can do it. They can only deal with certain manifestations of evil. We cannot put down sin or vice, but we can deal with certain manifestations of sin or vice where they are found to be injurious to the public welfare. That is all that it is attempted to do. This law, it is said, is imperfect, and does not attain all that we desire it to do; but no law can do that, and the best law is that which achieves most in that direction. Therefore, to point to the law as imperfect is not, to my mind, a conclusive argument at all. The hon. member says, "Why should we not resort to the humane, rational, and Christian system"—which he did not exactly describe, but I suppose he meant a system of allowing people infected with the disease to go into the hospital if they think fit. That might be a very good system, but it would allow freetrade in the dissemination of the disease to say that nobody need go into the hospital unless they liked. If they all would go into the hospital when infected I might be inclined to try the system, but I am afraid they would not. I will pass to some other parts of the hon. member's argument. He said it was "tyrannical, cruel, and cowardly." I am putting together the various epithets the hon. member applied to the Act. Well, I look upon that from this point of view: The only persons who are liable to the law in force in this colony are "common prostitutes." Now, common prostitution has been an offence under the laws of England always. The laws never, except for one short period, endeavoured to punish fornication, but common prostitution has always been an offence, an unlawful occupation, and persons who keep an establishment for that purpose are guilty of misdemeanour. Well, it is found that a number of persons engaged in this unlawful occupation, are distributing disease and death to other people. Now, may not the law step in, under these circumstances, and say, "If we cannot stop you from plying your unlawful calling, at any rate we will stop you so far as we can from killing our citizens"? Are we justified in taking up that position or not? That is a position which we may take up, and which no one would attempt to dispute with respect to any other occupation. I do not know that any other occupation could be suggested that would have similar results, and in respect of which it could be said that that was not a perfectly justifiable and logical position to take up. The hon. member says the law is tyrannical, because it applies to women only. I should be glad to see it applied to both

sexes if that could be done, because the man who would communicate that disease is worse than the woman, and deserves more punishment. Here it is said the law is imperfect. It is a pity, but that is no reason why there should be no law at all on the subject. Now, is there any reason why women only are dealt with in this case? The answer to that appears at once—women only engage in this unlawful occupation. Do not many of our laws deal with the incidents of unlawful occupations in which men engage, although they cannot stop them altogether? As to being “cowardly,” I do not think that persons engaged in wrong-doing can complain if the law comes down upon them. The law finds them engaged in an unlawful occupation, and says, “You shall not engage in it in such a way as to injure other people.” It has been said that the Act has been passed in order that men may safely gratify their sensual feelings. I fail to see it. That may have been the object in some places; it may have been the object in Belgium or Italy, say; it may have been in the minds of some of the persons who promoted the passing of the law in England with respect to the garrison towns; but I do not think, though that motive may have existed in some people’s minds, that it is sufficient reason for condemning a law which seems to us to be justified by entirely different considerations. To my mind the law in this colony is in no way conceived for the purpose of enabling men to gratify their passions, nor do I believe it enables or induces one more man to gratify his passions. I have never seen any satisfactory evidence that it does so, and it certainly makes no difference in that way in Great Britain whether the Act is in force or not. The only difference it does make is that where it is not in force there is a great deal more disease. This Act does not encourage anyone who would be deterred by fear from immoral practices; certainly it has not that intention; and I am quite sure that if hon. members will not confirm themselves to vague generalities, but will take some particular instance—keep some particular case in their mind and think whether sin is more likely to be committed in consequence of that Act being in force—the argument will not stand investigation. The hon. member gave us an extract from the Proverbs of Solomon with some modifications, and applied it to a woman subject to this law—licensed, as he calls it. I do not think a thing of that kind ever occurred; I do not believe one man was ever led astray by any such thing—or very few; I think it is an entirely fanciful illustration. Now, sir, I am not going to follow my hon. friend through all his speech with regard to the effects of the Act upon the women themselves. One effect undoubtedly this Act has had in Queensland, and that has been to deter women from entering the ranks of common prostitutes. I do not suppose for a moment that all the women engaged in prostitution are included on the register of the Brisbane Police Court: no doubt they are not; but I believe that all the common prostitutes are, or nearly all. I take this opportunity of saying that I think a great deal of unjustifiable aspersion is cast upon Brisbane in that respect. I have been in a good many cities, and have lived in Brisbane for some time; I have passed through Albert street occasionally, which is said to be the worst place; and I have certainly never been in a city where I have seen a less display of that form of vice than in Brisbane. I have been in a good many cities in different parts of Europe and Great Britain and Australia, and I have certainly never seen a city where it was less displayed. I think that argument does not carry any weight at all. Now, sir, it has been said also that this system prevents women from reformation. As I have

said, it undoubtedly prevents them from joining these ranks very often; but it is said it prevents reformation. Now, on that point again, as on nearly every point connected with this question, there is an absolute conflict of opinion—a conflict of the testimony of most estimable persons, to all of whom we must give credit for speaking the truth as they understand it. I will read again a passage that I read on a previous debate, from Mr. Osborne Morgan’s evidence:—

“There were innumerable cases cited from Devonport and Portsmouth, and the annual report clearly shows an enormous decrease in juvenile prostitution. I should like to say one word about the innumerable cases of reclamation of young girls under the Acts. Miss Webb showed a letter written by the benevolent wife of Archdeacon Grant, saying that the Acts had a beneficial effect on the inmates of the hospital. Cases after cases have been brought before us who would never have had an opportunity of getting out of this course of life but for these Acts. Is it possible that those Acts should have the immoral results that their opponents say they have, if men like Mr. Grant and Mr. Russell, who have lived and had experience all these years, bear unequivocal testimony of their good effects? And that is really the opinion of the majority, and the almost unanimous opinion of those who have had experience of their operation in the subjected districts.”

Now, sir, that is testimony to which I cannot refuse to give credence. I give credence also to persons on the other side; but that does call attention to a remarkable fact—that the agitation for the repeal of these Acts comes principally, if not almost entirely, from places where they are not in force, and where the beneficial effects of them have not been seen. They are *a priori* objections—objections raised by people with the best meaning, undoubtedly, but people whose knowledge on the subject, I am afraid, is not always as great as their zeal. The third great reason the hon. member gave for the repeal of this Act is, that it is opposed to the divine law of chastity. It may be my obtuseness, but I fail to see what there is in this Act inconsistent with the divine law of chastity.

Mr. W. BROOKES: It is legalised fornication.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is under the misapprehension, then, that this law in some way makes prostitution lawful.

Mr. W. BROOKES: Yes; that is exactly what it does.

The PREMIER: It is exactly what it does not; it does nothing of the sort. It leaves the law exactly as it was before; the occupation remains an unlawful one, and every person engaged in it is liable to punishment. It is true that some ridiculous arguments of that sort have been addressed occasionally to courts of justice, and in one instance I believe they had some weight; but that is not the effect of the law, it is not the spirit of the law, not the object of the law. So far from making prostitution lawful or more respectable, it has certainly had the very opposite effect in this colony. That is to say, in places where this Act is in force the risk of coming under its operation is well known to women, and as far as possible they endeavour to avoid it. I believe, therefore, that the objections which have been made to the Act are not applicable to the law as it exists here. The hon. member told us a pathetic story of a girl called Caroline Wybrow, which is always brought up. All that can prove is that the law of England was once used unjustly. Of course arguments similar to that might be used in favour of repealing any law on the Statute-book. Persons have been condemned to death unjustly; there should therefore be no capital punishment. Persons have been convicted unjustly of various offences; therefore the laws against those offences should be repealed. The fact that the law may be abused is no

reason for repealing it; it is a reason why great care should be exercised in putting it in operation. Certainly there has been no instance of anything of that kind in this colony. As I have said before, I should be very glad if I were able to see my way to vote for the repeal of this Act, or to think that it was not my positive duty to help to maintain the Act in operation; but under the circumstances that we have here, I believe just as sincerely that it is the duty of Parliament to maintain this law upon the Statute-book as my hon. friend the member for South Brisbane believes it should be repealed. That is a matter upon which we may fairly agree to differ. I believe the Act tends to the general welfare of the community. It certainly helps to preserve its physical health, and as far as I can see it is in no way incompatible with any moral law or moral obligation. I quite agree that we have no right to pass any law that is morally wrong. That is the first question that should be applied to any proposed legislation—is it wrong, morally wrong? Is it contrary to divine law? If so, we have no right to pass it; but when you have answered that question, and ascertained that it is not wrong, the only other question is—is it expedient? Now, sir, I fail to see anything in the law of God—in the divine law—what ever you wish to call it—to prevent us from saying to people engaged in unlawful occupations, “We cannot stop your unlawful occupations altogether, but we can at any rate prevent you from killing our people by them.” I know of nothing in any divine law against that. The only question that remains then is—is it expedient? and upon that opinions may differ. I hope hon. members will deal with the matter without any unnecessary heat; for, as I said before, in the defence of this system there is no room for enthusiasm. It is merely a sanitary measure, and is put on the Statute-book to protect the lives, not only of the existing people, but of those to come after them; and there are a large number of virtuous and sensible men who treat it purely as a matter of expediency, and who hold, as I do, that it is a subject of vital importance or that no question of right or wrong arises at all.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—If this question could have been decided by a silent vote I should have been very glad indeed to have retained my seat. But as there is no likelihood of this law being repealed by holding our tongues, it becomes the imperative duty of those who think the law is unjust, unnatural, and altogether tyrannical, not to sit still, but to declare our opinions on the matter. There is one thing which gives me great hope. During all the seven years I have had a seat in this House I have never heard the Premier give such a poor reply to such an eloquent and convincing speech as that of the hon. member for South Brisbane.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no! That is not so.

Mr. MACFARLANE: It is perfectly clear to me that his heart is not in the work, and that gives me great hope. I am certain that if the present Parliament does not repeal the Act there will be such a storm throughout this country as will astonish the Premier and those who vote for its retention on our Statute-book. That storm was so great in the old country—I say it distinctly—that no Ministry would have dared to retain that Act in its place on the English Statute-book a single year longer. I wish hon. members to remember that this Act was passed, as has been said by the Premier, as a sanitary measure. It was passed for the purpose of saving our soldiers and our sailors. In the early days of the Act in England the soldiers had actually to undergo the same examination in

their regiments that the women had. But what did the soldiers do? They rebelled. They said it was an unmanly thing to submit to such an examination, and they were relieved by the Admiralty. I wish to ask, are these Acts necessary? I will prove, from statistics which I hold in my hand, that previous to the passing of the Act in England in 1864 venereal diseases of all kinds were gradually diminishing. The statistics show that between 1860 and 1865 these diseases were gradually diminishing, and were becoming less permanent in their effects upon the human constitution. But from the time these Acts were put in force in the old country up to the time when they were repealed they had not only not diminished but had actually gone on increasing. The year 1864 had the highest death-rate from these causes that was ever known in any one year up to that time, and this fact alarmed the Admiralty, and the whole public became panic-stricken. Being thus alarmed, it was only natural that the Government should take precautionary measures so as to protect our soldiers and our sailors. I have in my hand the statistics for 1884. The writer of the pamphlet containing them says:—

“But what were the facts? For years before 1864 venereal disease in both army and navy had been steadily and regularly increasing, and the general health and condition of our soldiers had so much improved, that the mortality from all causes had diminished one-half in fifteen years, while contagious diseases of a venereal origin, in lieu of increasing to an appalling extent, had really for some years prior to the enactment of this measure declined so steadily and so considerably, that had the fall in the percentage of cases treated taken place after instead of before the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Acts, the advocates of the measure would have pointed triumphantly to results as conclusive of the question in a sanitary point of view.

“Thus I find, on referring to the War Office statistics prepared by Dr. Balfour, the head of the statistical branch of the Medical Board, and published in the Parliamentary Blue Books, that in the year 1860 there were 440 admissions to hospital per 1,000 of mean strength for venereal disease in Devonport and Plymouth. Without any Contagious Diseases Act the number was reduced in the year 1864 to 289—a fall of 151 cases per 1,000 at these two stations.

“In Chatham and Sheerness, during the year 1860, there were 351 admissions to hospital per 1,000 of mean strength, on account of venereal diseases. During 1865 the admissions were 292 per 1,000—a reduction, without any Act, of 59 cases per 1,000.

“At Shorncliffe, during the year 1860, there were 327 admissions per 1,000 of mean strength, for venereal diseases. Without any Act, this number was reduced in the years 1865-6 to 219 per 1,000—a diminution of 108 cases per 1,000.

“At Woolwich, during the year 1860, there were 473 admissions per 1,000 of mean strength. Without any Act in 1865, the admissions for the same cause were reduced to 204 per 1,000—a fall of 269 per 1,000.

“At Aldershot, during the year 1860, the admissions per 1,000 from this cause were 339. In 1866 there were 233—a fall, without any Act, of 106 cases per 1,000.

“At Portsmouth, in 1860, the admissions were 503 per 1,000. Subsequently in 1865 they were reduced to 329—that is, a reduction without legislative interference, of 174 per 1,000.

“Thus, taking the stations to which the Acts have been applied, at Devonport and Plymouth, there was a reduction of 151 cases; at Chatham and Sheerness, of 59; at Shorncliffe, of 108; at Woolwich, of 269; at Aldershot, of 106; at Portsmouth, of 174, per 1,000 of mean force, without any interference whatever, showing, before the passing of the Act to these stations, a decline of 857 cases per 6,000 of mean force. The same reduction was going on throughout the whole services. In fact Dr. Balfour, in his evidence before the Commons' Committee, says: ‘It may be stated, generally, that prior to the introduction of the Act there had been at all the stations a progressive decrease in the amount of this class of diseases.’ Here is positive proof that contagious diseases were rapidly, steadily, and most satisfactorily declining, when an outcry was raised on the ground of their progressive

increase at military stations. I shall shortly show that since the passing of the Act this decline has ceased. At present I merely wish to call attention to the incontrovertible fact that disease was declining in the army and navy when the people of this country were asked to submit to exceptional legislation on the ground of its appalling increase. The same observation as to the general decline in contagious diseases applies, and with even greater force, to the civil population."

I might go on, throughout all these various places, to show what has taken place during the years since the Acts have been in force. I want to refer, now, to the opinion of Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson, of the London Hospital, who, it is well known, was formerly editor of the *British Medical Journal*. Mr. Hutchinson is an authority whose opinion I suppose scarcely any one will gainsay. This is what he says about the Contagious Diseases Acts:—

"Much has been said of the ravages of syphilis in the English population. Let us glance for a moment at the other side of the picture. In doing so, we may state at once our conviction that a very exaggerated estimate is entertained by the laity, and has recently been studiously fostered by members of our profession. It is not uncommon to be asked by intelligent non-medical inquirers as to the Act, whether it is not true that 'half the diseases met with are the results of immorality'; and others who make more reasonable estimates are yet far beyond what is probable. These mistaken notions have arisen in part from the random statements of individuals, and, in part, from the publication of statistics of certain institutions, which are to a large extent special. . . . Although there is an impression to the contrary, yet recent discoveries and more accurate investigations, so far from extending the domain of syphilis as a cause of chronic disease, have decidedly tended to limit it. Many surgeons used formerly to believe that struma and allied diatheses were remotely in connection with it; and it was suspected as a cause of degraded health in many cases in which it could not be proved. . . . We do not believe that syphilis is the cause of struma; we do not believe that it has anything whatever to do with the common constitutional forms of skin disease; we do not as a rule believe that its influence is ever felt beyond the second generation."

We are told by the upholders of these Acts that the disease is transmitted to the third and fourth generation, but I have here produced evidence from a competent and reliable authority, showing that it never descends beyond the second generation. If it was the terrible disease it is represented to be, the whole country would have been ruined long before this time. But instead of that, it has been clearly shown that for the last twenty-five years this disease has been going on at a very greatly reduced rate, and at a very greatly reduced severity, so that it has now become perfectly mild compared with what it was in former days. If we read what took place a hundred years ago we shall find that it was indeed a terrible disease, the ravages of which make one shudder. But at the present time it is nothing compared with what we are taught to believe it is by those who uphold the maintenance of this law. I have a few statistics here to show what Mr. Mundella, the member for Sheffield, thinks about the Act. They are quotations from Mr. Mundella's reply to Sir John Pakington, during the debate on Mr. Fowler's Bill for the repeal of these Acts. That gentleman says:—

"I brought in a Factory Bill last year, and two able men, who had served on the Contagious Diseases Acts Commission, were appointed to inquire into the actual condition of factory children throughout the United Kingdom. They examined no fewer than 10,000, and reported an almost entire absence of diathetic diseases—scrofula, rickets, and syphilis."

Only fancy, we are taught to believe that the rising generation are actually saturated with syphilitic disease, but here we find that two commissioners examined no less than 10,000 children and do not find the disease in any of them, yet

these were children of the poorest class—the very persons among whom we are led to expect the disease will exist! Mr. Mundella further says:—

"Am I entitled to draw any conclusion from this, that the children are not suffering from the evil courses of their parents?"

I think we should draw some conclusion from it, especially in view of what was advanced by the Premier two years ago and this session with regard to this disease. I will now just quote a short extract from an article written by Dr. Burns Thompson to the *Edinburgh Daily Review*. He says:—

"How can anything be said in palliation of Acts like these? If it could be shown that the maladies with which they deal are exceedingly prevalent and dreadfully fatal, and that stupendous physical benefits might be expected from their application, many might be tempted to endure them at least for a time, and allow the silly outcry about innocence suffering from disease to soothe them into inaction. . . . In respect to the extent and malignancy of these diseases, my own testimony might be esteemed of some little value. I have done professional duty for fifteen years in the districts usually supposed to suffer most from such ailments, and for ten years have stood at the head of the Edinburgh Dispensary, where I have had good opportunity of knowing the prevailing diseases, and I can only say that the representations given by the advocates of these Acts are to me perfectly unintelligible; they seem to me to be gross exaggerations."

He adds:—

"It is needless to enlarge on these points, for if, as is affirmed by the first living surgeon (Professor Syme), the maladies are trivial, it will be hard to rear on such a foundation a superstructure of stupendous physical benefits, and nothing else could palliate for one moment the existence of these loathsome Acts."

Mr. Simon, medical officer of the Privy Council, and one of the first pathologists in Europe, remarks—

"That true syphilis is almost invariably amenable to medical treatment, and probably, in an immense majority of cases, not of more than transient importance to the person attacked."

That is the opinion of one of the first physicians in the United Kingdom. The Premier asked me, this afternoon, the question—Did I know that the black population in this colony had been actually decimated by this terrible disease? Is that true? If it is, the more shame on the white men of this colony. It is no credit to us, but rather a lasting disgrace, that we should allow such a thing to take place. What is the use of our Contagious Diseases Acts if they cannot prevent that? Why did those blacks die? Why do we vote money for doctors all over the country for the purpose of stamping out this disease?—though I do not think we shall ever do that by such Acts. We vote £500 a year for a medical officer in Brisbane, £400 for Rockhampton, and £200 for Townsville, and hundreds of pounds for other places in different parts of the colony for the purpose of attending to these blacks. Why, then, were those poor creatures not cured? Why did they die? So long as we continue the present system, when we can find a better one—and before I sit down I shall show that we can find a better one—the responsibility rests with us, but mainly with the Executive of the colony. But to return: Mr. Holmes Coote, late surgeon of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, makes these observations:—

"It used to be presumed that prostitutes lived a few years of sin and misery and then died, but this view has not been found to be in unison with the facts. To sum up, it will be vouched for by observers in all cities that the health of prostitutes is above the present standard of female health. It is a popular error to suppose that these women die young, or make their exits from life in hospitals and poorhouses. Venereal diseases do not appear to greatly influence the longevity of prostitutes, and syphilis, when not absurdly treated, is in the great majority of cases a mild disease."

Now, sir, I will just read a table, to which I hope every hon. member will listen. It is from the Commissioner of the Punjab, India, and will afford us a very good comparison. He says:—

"It is well known that venereal diseases are much more malignant in hot climates than in England, and we should look for the worst manifestation of disease in such climates as that of India. The last report of the Sanitary Administration of the Punjab—an immense district—shows, however, that grossly exaggerated notions as to the prevalence and malignancy of these affections in such climates have been freely circulated. The Sanitary Commissioner, E. C. De Renzy, Esq., surgeon, in his annual report furnished to the Government, remarks:—'That the injurious effects of the venereal disease have been greatly exaggerated, whether considered as a cause of inefficiency, invaliding, or mortality, and that relatively to other causes which affect the army in this respect, venereal disease may be regarded as of very secondary, almost insignificant, importance.'"

He then refers to the offspring, and this is the part to which I ask the attention of the House:—

"In five years there were only 16 admissions for secondary or inherited syphilis among the children of European soldiers, or 3·2 per annum out of an average strength of 4,529; that is less than one in a thousand, and taking it for granted that each admission represents a distinct individual child, which is very unlikely, the result of five years' observations may be stated thus:—European soldiers' wives: Admissions from all causes, excluding venereal, 17,829; admissions from venereal, 26; deaths from all causes, excluding venereal, 523; deaths from venereal, 0."

Then, he gives a table as to the children. Of European soldiers' children the admissions from all causes, excluding venereal, were 19,157; venereal, 16; deaths from all causes, excluding venereal, 1,922; venereal, 2. Thus we have none of the soldiers' wives die in five years out of 17,000 cases of sickness, and only two children out of 19,157. This does not show that the evil is so great as it is represented, or that there is any cause for the panic raised. If the evil was as great as it is represented, I would not lift my hand in favour of the repeal of the Act; but I am as persuaded as I stand on my feet in this House that the Act is not only useless but actually doing harm. The very thing we are doing to prevent disease is increasing it. How can I show that? In two ways. These girls—the Queen's girls, as the worthy hon. member for South Brisbane called them this afternoon—look upon themselves as privileged; and after examination they are much demanded. That is quite a common thing. The consequence is that the privileged ones—the registered ones—have far more to do than those who are not registered.

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

Mr. MACFARLANE: We know it from the statistics of the city of London: and human nature is the same all over the world. Men are not going to go where they think there is any danger, but if they think they will be free to commit sin without danger, it is quite natural that they will go. But, instead of being protected, it is quite the reverse. The very system of examination goes to spread disease. It has been proved over and over again, both in Continental countries and in England, that on account of the rate at which these girls are examined, the examining doctors and surgeons have not time to properly clean the instruments used in the examination. This has been brought out in evidence. A great many things have come out in evidence which I cannot state in this House, and probably I have mentioned a great many

1886—3 v

things for which I shall be sorry when I see them in print. Here is a quotation from the *Medical Times and Gazette*:—

"Recently in London, twenty of the leading practitioners, each with a visiting list of from thirty to forty families daily, met and seriously discussed the following question: 'Do you see the effects of syphilis in the cases coming under your care?' All replied most decidedly in the negative but two, and they practised in the lowest districts."

Now, if the disease was so common as represented, would not these twenty leading surgeons of London have come in contact with it in their private practice? But eighteen out of twenty say they did not see such a thing. It does not come in their way. Only two confess to having had something to do with it. Then again, of sixty-two medical practitioners in Nottingham fifty-nine subscribed their names to a petition protesting against the Contagious Diseases Act, containing amongst other clauses the following:—

"We are unanimously of opinion, which is fully borne out by the results of our practice, that the great majority of cases of syphilis are readily cured, and that when cured the offspring are healthy and free from taint."

And Mr. Skey, speaking upon this point, says, after remarking that the association for extending the Acts had largely overcharged the horrors of the disease:—

"The public mind is alarmed. It has been coloured too highly. The disease is by no means so common or so universal. I have had an opportunity to-day of communicating with several leading members in the profession at the College of Surgeons, and we are all of the same opinion—that the evil is not by any means so large as has been represented. I think if you took the impression of any individual on reading the reports of the association for extending the Acts you would infer an extent of syphilis in excess far beyond the truth—very decidedly beyond the truth. It is not so common; it is not so severe."

Now, perhaps we will find something here which will astonish hon. members. If syphilis was the terrible, loathsome, and fatal disease it is described to be, is it possible that surgeons of the greatest experience, and with a full knowledge of its effects, would willingly subject themselves to the experiment of inoculating the disease upon their own persons? Dr. John Hunter, I believe, is one of the greatest authorities—one of the greatest surgeons—that ever lived, and he inoculated himself with syphilis. He says:—

"One of my acquaintances in Paris covered his arm with syphilitic sores by inoculation, merely to study some points in their nature and pathology."

He actually inoculated his own arm so as to discover the effects on the constitution.

"Curzias Turenne inoculated himself over and over again; Lindworm is said to have inoculated himself 2,000 times."

Those hon. members who have any fear at all about the evil effects of syphilis are probably not aware of these facts.

Mr. HAMILTON: That does not refer to syphilis; not to true syphilis.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Yes; it is the true syphilis. Then the pamphlet goes on to say—

"Mr. Boeck, the Norwegian surgeon, saturates his syphilitic patients with syphilis by inoculation repeated to twenty and thirty times over."

Do we ever hear of scientific men inoculating themselves with cancer, or leprosy, typhus, typhoid, or scarlet fever? No; those are dangerous troubles, but they are not afraid to inoculate themselves with the virus of syphilis. Now, our Premier and some other member in this House are directors of insurance societies, and if syphilis were so very severe and dangerous a disease, don't you thin

they, as directors, would ask the question, in the papers they send out, whether the applicant has ever suffered from syphilis? But no such question is asked. I have never seen such a question asked in any insurance office. Now, I want to touch upon another subject. The city of Glasgow has been referred to this afternoon, both by the mover of the motion and the Premier, and I just want to state the matter fairly. The Premier says to us that if he can be shown any better system than the present one he will be glad to adopt it. I want to show a better system; and if that system really appears to hon. members to be better than the existing one, I hope they will give the matter their serious consideration, and adopt such a system as will really prove beneficial. In reading from the paper which I am about to read from, I will only take such portions as I can read with any degree of modesty—there are some things I cannot read. This article is written by Dr. Alexander Paterson, and was read before the Glasgow Medico-Chirurgical Society in December, 1882. These are “Statistics of the Glasgow Lock Hospital since its foundation in 1805, with remarks on the Contagious Diseases Acts and on syphilis.” Now, the hon. gentleman who introduced this motion this evening, if I heard him rightly, stated that in Brisbane, for the last nine or ten years, the deaths from syphilis amounted to over a hundred, or nearly fourteen per annum. Now, that appears to me to be a very large number of deaths from syphilis when compared with the number of deaths in the Glasgow Lock Hospital. In the Glasgow Lock Hospital there are now sixty beds—at one time there were thirty, now there are sixty—without any person can occupy at any time without any recommendations, but voluntarily coming in and placing themselves under the care of the local surgeon. That has been the system in Glasgow for the last seventy years, and there is no city in the world that can show a cleaner bill of health, as far as the absence of syphilis goes, than the city of Glasgow. It would take too long to go through all the statistics, so that I will quote the tables for every ten years since the establishment of the institution. Between the years 1805 and 1810 there was only one person in the lock hospital out of every 941 of the population. During the next ten years, up to 1821 the number was 1 in 404; up to 1831 it was 1 in 606; in 1841 it was 1 in 621; in 1851 it was 1 in 1,419; in 1861, when a great rise took place, it was 1 in 972. Then in 1871 there was only 1 in 1,506; and in 1881, the last year to which the table refers, there was only 1 person in every 2,018 of the population who entered the lock hospital. Now, we were told when this question was before the House on a former occasion that there was supposed to be 100 prostitutes in the city of Brisbane; that there were always about 30 in the hospital and 30 in prison, and that the others roamed about spreading disease. What do we find in the city of Glasgow? We find that in the year 1855 there were only 31 in the hospital at one time, in 1856 only 35, 1857 only 29. Then, jumping to 1860, that was one of the worst years, and in 1869 there were only 22. I now want to show the total number for last year who have occupied the lock hospital in Glasgow. I find a very large number in 1869. The total number of prostitutes in the lock hospital in that year was 624. The next year it was 558; the next 431; the next 393; the next 440; in 1874 it was 468; in 1875, 446; in 1876 the number was 446; in 1878 it was 453; 364 in 1879; 414 in 1880; and in 1881 the number was 373. That is the last year the numbers are given for. I mention these figures to show how very few prostitutes occupy the lock hos-

pital in Glasgow, which is an unprotected town. It has never been a protected town, as they have never put the Contagious Diseases Act in force. Since 1869 they have been working under the police regulations. At that time the new police regulations were put in force, and what have they done? They have altered the state of affairs in this way. The chief constable of Glasgow, in giving his evidence before a committee of the House of Commons, stated that in 1849 there were in Glasgow 211 brothels; in 1874 they were reduced to 204; and in 1877, when he gave his evidence, the number had been reduced to 38; and that was in an unprotected city! Now, what has been the secret of this reduction of the disease, and of the number of prostitutes, and how does it compare so favourably with other towns and cities which are protected? It is simply through the police regulations being put in force that these beneficial results have followed. The results are stated here just to show the difference. The population of the city of Glasgow, in the year 1821, was 147,043; and there were 364 patients admitted during that year. In 1881, sixty years afterwards, the population had increased to 704,000, and at the same rate there ought to have been 1,744 patients admitted in that year, whereas there were only 349. That shows that Glasgow stands pre-eminently in the full front in reference to the working of this particular question. It shows that without any Act whatever they are placed in a far better position than any other town, either in England or on the Continent of Europe. Just to show you how things stand, I will compare Glasgow with Plymouth. Now, Plymouth has 70 brothels for 180,000 of a population, against 38 to a population of 704,000 in Glasgow. Surely this compares very favourably; and the question for us to ask is, what brings about the difference? Are Scotchmen purer than Englishmen? Not a bit of it.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Oh, yes!

Mr. MACFARLANE: Not a bit of it. But a different system is put in force—the system that gives the power to the police to shut up brothels, and to prevent these unfortunate girls walking about the streets. Solicitation in the city of Glasgow is prohibited, and any man solicited has nothing else to do but to hand the woman over to the police. The consequence is that the streets are clean; they are perfectly free from this class of girls, so far as I could see when I was there lately. Certainly I did see some of these girls in the low quarters of the city; but it is a pleasure to go through the streets of Glasgow as compared with the streets of Sydney, or Melbourne, or London even. It is a pleasure now to go through the city of Glasgow compared with twenty-five years ago, when I left Scotland, and came out here. The Premier, in replying to the hon. member for South Brisbane, used this expression—he is not here but he may hear of it by-and-by—he made use of these words:—“Prostitution is an unlawful calling.” Now, if it is an unlawful calling, if it is unlawful for prostitutes to walk the streets, then why are they not prohibited? If unlawful, why do the Government give them a certificate to break the law? They are actually allowed to break the law by permission of the Government. But the Premier says it is an unlawful calling. I say it is not unlawful; it is made lawful by the Government themselves, simply by giving them a clear ticket—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACFARLANE: That they are free for public use. Another argument was used by the Premier, in replying to the member for South Brisbane, in reference to females alone being interrupted while males were allowed to go

free. He admitted the law was imperfect, but he said that was no reason why we should not do what we could to minimise the evil. Well, suppose while he sat there in this House, a telegram came down from Cooktown, or any other outside place, that a Chinese vessel was coming down the coast with cholera on board, what would he do? Would he not order the vessel to be put in quarantine at once at the nearest point? Would he send an order to quarantine the women on board that vessel and allow the men to go free? He would not; but would it not be just as wise an order as the present thing we are doing? What do we do under the Contagious Diseases Act? We lay hold of, perhaps, a fourth of all the women of the district. That fourth is put to public examination. But the men who were the means of putting these women in that position are allowed to go free. Not one of these women but is diseased by men. These women were once pure as any woman or any child. But instead of laying hold of the men, and dealing out universal plain justice to men as well as to women, we lay hold of the weak and the feeble—women—and incarcerate them against their will. Many of them go with their will. There are such cases, I know. But once they have been degraded to that point, shame is almost driven out of their being. They are placed in prison if they refuse to be examined. I think this is the worst phase of the whole question—the cruelty and unmanliness of acting in that way. Here is a sentence I want the Premier to listen to: “Any attempt to arrest the progress of a disease common to both sexes, by an examination and seclusion of one sex only appears to me to be manifestly absurd. How are all the attacks of the disease in females contracted? Obviously from the male sex.” That is a statement made by Dr. Paterson, of Edinburgh. I was saying that Glasgow occupies such a prominent position in reference to this question that we should adopt the same system, and free our colony from the stigma of being the only colony in Australia which has adopted the Contagious Diseases Act. What does Glasgow do? They simply do this: They have sixty beds in the public hospital where girls are allowed to go whenever there is anything wrong. They require no line, no recommendation; they are free to come and free to go. It has been proved by this system of kindly treatment that the disease has been reduced to a perfect minimum compared with other countries. That is what I want. It is more humane, more just, more beneficial than our present system. It has proved itself to be more efficient than any other system ever adopted; simply by police regulation. Now, sir, if prostitution is an unlawful calling, why do we not attempt to put it down? If prostitution is an unlawful calling, why do we allow those girls to parade the streets with certificates to break the law? These are plain questions. I do not intend to take up the time of the House any longer, for there are a great many members yet to speak. But I appeal to this House for the sake of humanity, for the sake of the good name of the colony—seeing that a far better way can be pointed out—to record their votes for the resolution. I believe that the Government will be compelled by the force of circumstances outside and inside the House to repeal this obnoxious law and free ourselves from the stain attaching to ourselves at the present time. We are pointed at in London even with shame. When I was there I was asked, with astonishment, if in Brisbane, without naval or military forces, such a thing was required. I hope for our own good name that this House will assert its dignity and repeal this obnoxious Act from this time henceforth.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise simply to ask your ruling, whether it is in any

way possible to suppress *Hansard* to-morrow morning? The discussion is of such a nature that it will not be fit to go into our homes, amongst our families, and be read by the public generally.

The SPEAKER: *Hansard* can only be suppressed by order of this House.

Mr. SHERIDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Then I sincerely hope that that order will be obtained, and I may say that if I had thought of it when this discussion commenced, I would have taken the liberty of calling your attention to it, and also have asked you to have cleared the galleries, so that the eyes and ears of the public at large will not be polluted by reading such statements to-morrow morning.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I hope such an order will not be made. I believe that some of those gentlemen who are objecting now to *Hansard* being circulated have been reading papers—some of them colonial papers—which contain matters far more disgusting than this, and with no justification. In this instance we are discussing an important subject, and many hon. members will probably have to vote according to their consciences; in doing so they may cause a certain stigma to be cast upon them and may wish to justify their conduct. This is a very grave and important subject that we are discussing, and every phase of it should certainly be ventilated. “To the pure all things are pure,”—and all those persons who will probably read it will do so in order to ascertain what votes hon. members gave, and to find out what justification they gave for so exercising their votes.

After a pause—

Mr. HAMILTON: Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. HAMILTON: I move the adjournment of the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—I would not like to give a silent vote upon this question. When the subject was last before the House I voted with the hon. member for South Brisbane; but I was not long in coming to the conclusion, especially after hearing the most able speech delivered by the Premier, that I had given a wrong vote. There is no hon. gentleman in this House that I respect more than the hon. member for South Brisbane; but I do think that this resolution should not be carried. The hon. member for Ipswich stated to-day that he did not think the Premier had his heart in the question; that he made rather a weak speech. The hon. Premier did not make a very long speech; but, sir, no arguments could, in my opinion, be more forcible than those used by that hon. gentleman—very unlike the speech of the hon. member for Ipswich, which was a great tirade of words that had very little in them. On the former occasion I promised the hon. member for South Brisbane that I would vote with him, and I kept my word; but I cannot see my way to do so now. I feel quite sure that the arguments used by the Premier are unanswerable—that is, he has stated that it is the duty of any Government, if they see an evil, to suppress it as far as possible. I think this is an evil that can be suppressed by carrying out this Act, and not by repealing it.

Mr. LISSNER: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put,

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—My friend, the senior member for Kennedy, moved the adjournment of the House for the purpose of giving me an opportunity of saying a few words on this subject, as by jumping up hurriedly a few minutes ago I lost my opportunity. I believe with the Premier that most of the women signing the petition referred to would hardly have signed it if they thoroughly understood the facts of the case, and I think it is probably a matter of congratulation that they do not understand it. I know that the great argument dinned into the ears of those women—I have heard it from private sources—is that their daughters are not safe in the streets after dark. That is an argument that has been dinned into the ears of those women by those persons who were going round to get the petition signed.

Mr. FRASER: No.

Mr. HAMILTON: And many women in consequence were afraid that if their daughters happened to be out after dark any policeman has it in his power to take them in charge and run them in. That is the principal argument, although it is an utterly absurd one, as we know that such a thing has never occurred here. I believe one or two solitary instances of that occurred a great many years ago in London, where virtuous girls were run in through the Act which was in force there; but that occurs in the case of any other persons who are run in for robbery or any other crime. If I believed that the police had the power to do such a thing, I would be one of the first to vote for the repeal of the Act. I think it is a most horrible thing, that anyone should have it in his power to be guilty of such conduct. One hon. member assured me not half-an-hour since that he was going to vote against the Act, simply because he believed that by its repeal these women would be prevented from following their occupations in the street. We know that that would have no effect one way or the other. It has been said that it would be desirable that the Act should not be unequal in its operations. If any measure could be introduced to include men, I think it would be a very good thing—that if the Act could be enforced upon men who are supposed to require similar supervision, it would be correct, and I for one would support it. The hon. member for South Brisbane states that some other system can be found far more effectual than the present one, but he has failed to suggest any other system. If he could suggest another that would be found more effectual than this, without its disadvantages, I myself would vote with him, and I have no doubt others would, who feel reluctantly compelled to vote for the Act as it stands at present, and who, while recognising the evils connected with it, believe those evils are fully counterbalanced by the benefits of it. The hon. member in his opening remarks asserted that these Acts were passed hurriedly and without due inquiry. Now, the *Lancet* should certainly be an authority on this subject, and let us see what it says:—

"And here may be noticed another very absurd objection urged by the opponents of these Acts, which would not deserve notice were it not still persistently repeated. It is said by them that these Acts were passed hastily, and without due inquiry; in short, that they were smuggled through Parliament. The first Act was passed just two years after the subject had been dealt with by a select committee of the House of Commons, and was actually opposed in its passage by Messrs. Henley and Ayrton. The second Act was founded upon two years' experience of the first Act, and of an exhaustive inquiry extending over sixteen months by eminent physicians and surgeons, whose names were a sufficient guarantee of the soundness of their recommendations. It is true that one of their number (Dr. Graham Balfour) was a dissident on this very point of the periodical examinations, but he subsequently changed his views when he learned, from his official position, their great value in lessening constitutional syphilis."

It goes on to state:—

"When we turn to the probable moral effects upon the women themselves of the periodical examinations which are so much objected to, we must contend that any disadvantages which may have attended them are more than counterbalanced by their good moral and physical results. It must be remembered that these examinations are conducted at stations selected by Government officials, by the visiting surgeons in presence of a female attendant."

That is what is said in an article in the *Lancet*, the leading medical journal of the world. The same article goes on to say:—

"So long as the Acts continued in full force, and the examinations were held, disease was detected in its earliest stage; the shocking cases seen in voluntary lock hospitals were unknown among the registered prostitutes. Moreover, there was also a remarkable difference between the ratios of disease in those newly registered and those who had been previously so."

It further states:—

"Mr. Tremayne, one of the members for South Devon, truly described these inspections as 'a horrible necessity,' and seeing the probable results which they are designed to prevent, there can be little doubt as to what would be the verdict of the public if they could once realise the fact that a large proportion of the prostitutes in our streets are at one and the same time selling diseases and aggravating their own condition."

Now, in connection with the examinations, the hon. member for South Brisbane states that it is degrading, and that these women dread and loathe the examination. But one must recollect that the only class subjected to this examination is considered the most degraded class in the community; and I hardly think that the women who carry on this nefarious calling feel it very much. It must also be recollected that that hon. member made another quotation to show that they approved of the examination, because professionally it benefited them by the extra amount of custom they obtained from the guarantee they received by being treated in this manner. Another objection the hon. member made was that the Act does not stamp out syphilis. Well, we have regulations for the stamping out of all sorts of disease—scarlet fever and most dangerous diseases—and none of these regulations ever succeed in stamping out those diseases, but they have done a great deal to ameliorate them. That is a great consideration, and to show that these Acts have been beneficial in that way I will again quote from the *Lancet*, because quotations from a journal of such high standing deserve very great consideration. One or two of the quotations I shall make are rather long, but this is such a serious and important subject, that we should give it the fullest consideration before expressing an opinion upon it by our votes. In a leading article in the *Lancet*, referring to a leading article which appeared in the *Times*, I find it stated:—

"In a leading article which appeared in the *Times* on the day which followed the passing of Mr. Stansfeld's resolution, in April, 1883, it was remarked that 'the Contagious Diseases Acts had received their death-blow.' This assertion was both premature and rash, for the history of Acts somewhat similar, though much less perfect, shows that their temporary suspension generally leads to their being re-enacted with more vigour than ever. Thus, in Malta, though there had been, from the time of the Knights, police regulations and personal periodical examination of all females leading a life of prostitution until 1859, these examinations were resisted in that year and fell into abeyance. The consequences which followed were so awful that the local Government was moved to pass, in 1861, a very stringent ordinance which remains in force, and which requires periodical medical inspection three times a month. Similarly the Contagious Diseases Act, which was repealed after having been in force at Bombay, has been re-enforced, and other similar instances might be adduced. In all that has been published respecting these Acts since September 5th in these columns, care has been taken to deal with them not in their medical aspects only, but also from a social

and moral point of view. Having shown that they were successful in reducing to a considerable extent diseases among the women in the protected districts, in extinguishing juvenile prostitution, reclaiming the abandoned, and diminishing the number of prostitutes, we pass on to see how far they succeeded in reducing disease in the army and navy. The first inquiry made as to the working of the Act of 1866 was that of the select committee of the House of Lords, whose report was issued in July, 1868, from which the following is an extract: 'At Aldershot the amended Act has been fully carried out for only two months and already the decrease of cases among the troops has been nearly one-third.'

The article goes on to show how a similar decrease occurred in various other places, but I shall not take up the time by reading it, on the principle that one straw will show which way the wind blows as well as half-a-dozen. I shall read from another article to the same effect. This article appeared on 17th October, 1885, and it states:—

"It is now two and a-half years since it was resolved by a majority of the House of Commons that the compulsory periodical examination of prostitutes in the districts subject to the Contagious Diseases Acts should be abolished. The result of that resolution carried with it much more than the mere discontinuance of these examinations. There being no longer any occasion for their services, the special metropolitan police stationed in all the subjected districts were withdrawn. Prostitutes, being no longer compelled to submit to the fortnightly examination, which had the effect of detecting disease in its early stages and ensuring the prompt removal to the hospital of all found infected, continue to ply their calling until from physical suffering they can do so no longer. They are then on their own voluntary application examined, and being found to be diseased are admitted into the hospital. The only compulsory clause retained is that of detention until cure. With this exception, and also that there is sufficient hospital accommodation, the condition of the subjected districts is very much the same as it was before these Acts were passed, and as it is in those seaports and garrison towns to which the Acts have never been applied. The inhabitants of all those cities and towns which have had the full benefits of these Acts have now ample opportunities of contrasting the present with the past condition of their respective districts. Judging from the remarks made by the deputation which waited upon the late Home Secretary, there would appear to be an almost unanimous feeling that, for the sake of the miserable women who are now to be found in greatly increased numbers plying their trade of prostitution unchecked in all these places, the recall of the police and the restoration of the compulsory examinations are most urgently called for."

I will just read another on the same subject. This article says:—

"It has been shown in previous issues of the *Lancet* that the effects of the Acts were such as to eradicate juvenile prostitution altogether in the several districts, while at the same time the hospitals and wards provided by the Government for the cure of these women exceed by nearly two beds to one all that voluntary efforts have been able to effect in the three kingdoms within the last century and a-quarter. It is now evident that, besides all this, they were successful in reducing disease among the women to whom they were applied, and these women were the first to feel the benefits of the Acts. To complain, therefore, of the Acts as dealing harshly with them is alike unjust and absurd. All these beneficial results of the Acts were amply proved before the select committee of the Commons, which sat for four years, and reported in 1882. In this report it is stated:—

"There can be no doubt that in the subjected districts the number both of prostitutes and brothels has, since the Acts, largely decreased. . . . But without pushing the argument *post hoc ergo propter hoc* too far, your committee feel that they are justified not only by a comparison between the condition of the subjected districts before and after the Acts, but by comparison between the present condition of these districts and that of the large towns, in setting down a main portion of these good effects to the credit of the Acts!

"Much of this diminution was accounted for by the excellent spiritual and moral influences brought to bear on the women while in hospital, and the successful efforts made by the superintendents and chaplains of these hospitals to place them in the way of obtaining a decent and respectable livelihood after their discharge."

"Now, all this has been upset by the resolution of 1883, which prevented the compulsory examination of these women, and so made the Acts almost a dead-letter. . . .

"Miss Webb, the lady superintendent of the hospital, in a letter which Mr. Bentinck read, remarked—

"Knowing, as we all do, the immense increase of these unfortunate women in these towns since the Contagious Diseases Acts police have been removed, it is fearful to contemplate how many ought to come in compared with those who do so, and the terrible mischief occurring in consequence. With regard to the condition of the patients since the alteration of the law, there is a marked difference for the worse, and, moreover, it takes, in most cases, many months for their cure. . . . This class of women will not seek admission till they feel absolutely compelled, and many who come in are sad wrecks, under twenty years of age."

"Similar testimony to the evil results which have followed the abolition of compulsory examinations could be obtained from the other districts, all of which are falling into the same appalling state as they were in the year 1862."

Now, the hon. member for South Brisbane attempted to prove that syphilis is not a very dangerous disease, since the vital statistics showed that the mortality from it was very slight. It is perfectly true that very few people indeed, if they are treated at all, die directly from syphilis, but there is no disease under the sun which is indirectly the cause of so many other diseases as syphilis. In the first place, it reduces the system to such a very low state that it is liable to the attack of any prevailing disease. In addition to that, it causes phthisis and scrofula to the second and third generations. Indirectly, I suppose it is the cause of as much suffering as any disease that exists; and not only that, but it is an utterly loathsome disease. The hon. member also stated—of course, no one will doubt that the hon. member speaks conscientiously, and I must compliment him on his earnest and excellent speech, but he is wrong in regard to some of his premises—he also stated that he had been informed that the examination was utterly useless, and that a woman an hour after examination might give twenty individuals syphilis. Well, now, that is a mistake. Of course there are various venereal diseases; but in the true syphilis, from which secondary and tertiary diseases follow, and which is the chief amongst these venereal diseases, the time of incubation after the absorption of the virus is from two to six weeks. Therefore, if a woman absorbs that virus, it is impossible that she could communicate the disease to anyone an hour or two afterwards, for no symptoms can appear for a fortnight at least. It is argued that under the voluntary system women might go to the hospital; but we must recollect that all the best authorities say you cannot expect to be cured of syphilis under three months. You must undergo a process of treatment for that time, and even then you are not absolutely cured; you can never be certain that the poison is eliminated from the system. The indications of the disease may disappear in a week or so, but the poison is there, and may make its appearance in a few months, or even years, afterwards. Well, it is not likely that women engaged in this nefarious occupation would care to remain in hospital three months unless they were forced to do so. Now, the hon. member for Ipswich has stated that there were a number of authorities in support of the statements he made; but in only one instance did I notice him give an authority, and that was Jonathan Hutchinson, and that authority of course cannot be disputed. The hon. member made comparisons between the state of things here and in Glasgow, but it struck me that we would not exactly approve of the system adopted in Glasgow. The hon. member says that if any man there is solicited by a

woman in the streets he has the power to give her in charge. Now, the great objection urged against this Bill is that policemen have it in their power to accuse a woman and take her in charge on the ground that she is a prostitute; but it appears that in Glasgow that power is not limited to policemen, but can be exercised by any man. The hon. member also states that syphilis is not a dangerous disease. Well, all the authorities are convinced that it is. The hon. member made some slight mistakes; he confounded one disease with another. Of course it is very unpleasant to go into all these matters; but you have to do it to meet the arguments of your opponents. When the hon. member spoke of inoculating, he was referring to a variety of syphilis which is not constitutional—what is called a soft suppurating chancre—a very different thing from constitutional syphilis. The course of incubation is only a few days, instead of from a fortnight to six weeks. In that case inoculation can take place, and re-inoculation is one mode of cure; but no sane man would inoculate for true chancre. There is no weight, therefore, in the hon. member's argument that the disease is not dangerous because medical men had inoculated themselves with it; they inoculated themselves with the virus of another disease altogether. Moreover, Henry Lee and Ricard, who I suppose are the greatest authorities on syphilis in the scientific world, state that if you are once inoculated with true syphilis, during that time you are not liable to inoculation any more; just as after being inoculated with vaccine matter, so long as you are protected by that, you are not liable to fresh inoculation. That is a scientific fact. He also stated that it is the fault of the males. If supervision could be exercised over them it is only right that it should be. But it strikes one that that argument is a very absurd one. He asks, from whom are the diseases of females contracted? And the reply is, from males. It is just as easy to ask, from whom are the diseases of males contracted? The reply would obviously be, from females. The hon. member also stated that in voluntary hospitals girls were free to come and free to go. I will read an extract showing what incalculable damage will result, and has resulted, from that course.

Mr. MACFARLANE: It has not done so in Glasgow.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is just as liable to happen in Glasgow as in Ipswich. The extract is from a letter by an "M.R.C.S.," addressed to the *Lancet*, and it is as follows:—

"While visiting the Royal naval sick quarters at Portland some time ago, my cousin, Mr. E. V. de Méric, Staff-surgeon, R.N., who was then in charge, kindly took me round, and on my expressing surprise that four-fifths of the beds were occupied by venereal cases, he assured me that it had been so ever since the Contagious Diseases Acts no longer gave some sort of protection to the men. If this be so in a small place like the Royal naval sick quarters at Portland, what must it be in large seaports such as Portsmouth or Plymouth? I have heard, too, that at some of our seaports, when a transport is expected, many women in hospital affected with venereal disease leave the institution in order to go and meet the ship; and what can the surgeons do? Of course, nothing. With regard to the argument that is often brought forward against the compulsory detention of prostitutes, that it would be interfering with the 'liberty of the subject,' it seems to me the same law which deals with mania or smallpox patients might come into force to prevent a woman with a venereal complaint carrying devastation freely in her path without let or hindrance, excepting, of course, if the law take the high moral instead of the practical and scientific ground."

A most able and straightforward annotator in the *Lancet* of February 17th, 1883, after discussing the decision of the select committee of the

House of Commons on the Contagious Diseases Act, August, 1882, not to recommend its extension, contains the following words:—

"Having established the great physical and moral gain effected by these Acts, the logical outcome of the recent inquiry would be to recommend their immediate extension; but this the committee hesitated to do in deference to the position and character of some of those who opposed them.

"Now, there seems to me scarcely a doubt that if the entire question were explained simply and without any artificial varnish to those who so strenuously oppose the Contagious Diseases Acts—were it shown to them more particularly from a medical point of view—they would at once cease their opposition, and be the first to advocate, not only the feeble way these Acts have been applied in this country, and also their extension."

I have quoted copiously from the *Lancet*, because I know that the opinions of that eminent medical journal—a non-political paper, one of the highest, if not the highest, scientific authorities in the English-speaking world—will have great weight in this Assembly, and will assist hon. members in forming their own conclusions before being called upon to vote for or against this motion. For my own part, I hope I shall not be influenced by any cry; and I think, seeing that the Act has been repealed for some time in England, and seeing that it is in force in this colony without any disastrous effects hitherto, it might be as well to wait and see how the repeal has acted in England before we take any further steps in this colony.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Speaker,—The subject under discussion is not a very savoury one; at the same time its consideration has been so forced upon members of the House by the innumerable petitions which have been presented this session, that I think it is incumbent upon us all—at least those who choose to address the House—to express our opinions concerning it. I agree with the hon. member for Blackall in his remarks about the petition signed by a large number of females in this colony. I regret very much indeed to find that ladies in this colony should have put their signatures to a petition of such a character, inasmuch as it is hardly to be expected that they could have made themselves fully conversant with the details of this very painful subject. But seeing that they have not hesitated to address the Legislature on the subject, I feel no squeamishness in expressing my opinion that *Hansard* ought not to be suppressed on this occasion, but that it should go forth to the public as usual, conveying the opinions of hon. members upon a matter forced on their consideration, which opinions I trust will not be given to gratify any prurient curiosity, but solely with a view to show that the members of this Chamber have addressed themselves to the consideration of a very large social question, and are not afraid of expressing their opinions openly upon it, desiring that those opinions should be circulated through *Hansard* in answer to the views which have been represented to us as those held by a very large section of the community upon the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act. I think, sir, that all who have addressed the Chamber in favour of this motion—even my hon. friend the member for South Brisbane, who has made such an eloquent appeal to us both to-night and on a previous occasion—are carried away by a certain amount of sentiment, and really do not regard the very great extent of the danger to which the whole community would be liable supposing we were to be guided solely by sentiment in dealing with this matter. Every person who signed those petitions would have done well to have read carefully the very full speech which the Premier made on this subject last session. Although his reply to-night must have carried conviction to

everyone who heard it, yet hon. members who heard him on the former occasion will agree with me that his speech to-night was not so full or so exhaustive as the former, which I believe decided the votes of a number of members on that occasion. The particular sentiment by which hon. members seem to be carried away is the chivalrous idea of protecting the honour of women, on which my hon. friend the member for South Brisbane has expatiated so largely and so eloquently. But, sir, we in this Chamber particularly have to regard the matter in its strict light and bearing as regards the welfare of the whole community. In that light, I would ask the hon. member for South Brisbane—If he proposes to repeal this Act, what does he intend to substitute for it, so as to protect the community from the great growth of evil which will undoubtedly occur if the Act is repealed? The Premier has already stated that the vocation of prostitution is illegal, but that at the same time we cannot step in and prevent it from being carried out. We can only step in and guard against the consequences. The question is very well put, in his work on "Practical Hygiene," by Dr. Parkes, a well known medical authority. Dr. Parkes says:—

"It has been also proposed to detect and cure the disease in prostitutes. A great outcry has been raised against this proposal, which is yet a matter of precaution which the State is surely bound to take. A woman chooses to follow a dangerous trade—as dangerous as if she stood at the corner of a street exploding gunpowder. By practising this trade she ought at once to bring herself under the law, and the State must take what precaution it can to prevent her doing mischief. The State cannot prevent prostitution. We shall see no return to the stern old Scandinavian law which punished the prostitute with stripes and death; but it is no more interference with the liberty of the subject to prevent a woman from propagating syphilis, than it would be to prevent her propagating smallpox."

In that light we have to regard this matter. It is undoubtedly a very disagreeable subject to discuss, and it is perhaps rendered somewhat more difficult by the debate containing the opinions of medical men, who, according to the axiom, differ very frequently in their views. Doctors will differ, and therefore those who rely upon their opinions in this matter will find authorities on both sides to justify them in the views they hold. I would ask the hon. member for Ipswich, who has informed us that from the time the Act came into force in Great Britain until the date of its repeal there has been no decrease in the number of syphilitic cases, to answer this question—Would not a very much larger increase in the number of cases have been exhibited if the Act had never been in operation? And the same with regard to this colony. The hon. member informs us that there has been an increase in the number of syphilitic patients here since the Act came into force in Queensland. But I will ask him, how can he be satisfied that there would not have been a very much larger increase if the Act had never come into operation? As far as I can understand the matter, the Act has been a safeguard, and so long as we cannot prevent the sin—and I do not think the hon. gentleman will for one moment think that by repealing this Act we will discourage the sin—it is our duty as practical legislators to endeavour to avert the evil consequences of that sin. And these evil consequences are not sufficiently dwelt upon by the hon. gentlemen who address themselves to this subject. I have had placed in my hands a most valuable work entitled, "Transactions of the International Medical Congress, seventh session, held in London, August 2nd to 9th, 1881, prepared for publication under the direction of the Executive Committee by Sir William MacCormac, Honorary Secretary-General, assisted by George Henry Makins, F.R.C.S., Under Secre-

tary, and the secretaries of the sections." One of the papers read there emanated from Dr. A. L. Gihon, Medical Director of the United States Navy. He addresses himself to the question in a very interesting paper on the "Prevention of Venereal Disease." He says:—

"But let the facts be known that the ruin brought by venereal disease reaches far beyond the original transgressor and soils the pure and guiltless, and that no degree of personal rectitude can protect the dweller in a large city from chance defilement, and the question of protection falls to the same place with the protection against smallpox, scarlet fever, or diphtheria, especially when the further fact is considered, that those who practice prostitution have been taught by personal interest the lesson of sanitary self-protection; so that the risk of infection by them is to-day less than by the thousand irregular or accidental channels of propagation."

He proceeds further on to say:—

"Since the cutaneous and fecal syphilides are known to be communicable, it requires no effort to conceive of the dangerous defilement of sheets, towels, napkins, clothing, and whatever else may have been in contact with an eczematous surface; or of that of drinking vessels, forks, spoons, and other articles pressed by diseased lips, or of the danger of succeeding a syphilitic predecessor in the hands of the barber, hairdresser, or dentist. Fournier has called attention to the singular power of irradiation and sutornia there is in the syphilis of nurses and nurslings, and he illustrates his statement that 'nothing is more dangerous than a syphilitic child in a household.'"

Then the doctor proceeds to give a number of instances, with which I need not take up the time of the House, inasmuch as, while I am of opinion that we ought not to suppress *Hansard*, I do not think it should be unnecessarily loaded with literature of a not generally interesting or edifying character. However, the authority of a medical man such as this may be a contribution to the debate, and therefore I shall give one or two further extracts from his paper. He says:—

"Statistics having been given as to the large amount of syphilis in the army, navy, and mercantile marine of the United States, and in the British navy, the author proceeds:—

"The public charities of the great cities exhibit a sufficiently alarming, though by no means accurate, proportion of these diseases among the poorest classes, but where can the evidence be found of their prevalence among the higher orders of society? At the hot springs and other health resorts of Europe and America, they may be discovered seeking relief for chronic rheumatism, for scrofula, for affections of the nervous system, for obscure cutaneous diseases; for everything, indeed, but the venereal fact. If every reputable practitioner of medicine could be induced to tabulate the facts of his professional experience, the public would realise that Gress and Sims, Sir Thomas Watson, Sir James Paget, Sir William Jenner, and Mr. Simon did not exaggerate when they stated of their own knowledge of the ravages of these diseases among pure women and innocent children, that their victims were numbered by thousands."

Dr. Gihon further states:—

"The Section of State Medicine has, therefore, wisely included the prevention of syphilis among the great problems which sanitary science has to solve. The solution of this problem has hitherto been hindered by the efforts of those who have stigmatised it as an attempt to foster prostitution, deliberately ignoring the fact that its actual aim is to make marriage safe,"—

I would call the attention of hon. members to this particularly—

"its actual aim is to make marriage safe, and to protect the ignorant and innocent and helpless from a danger they can in no other way escape. The committee of the American Public Health Association, charged with the duty of attempting this solution, have recognised the insufficiency of any system of mere registration and compulsory examination of prostitutes, since no account is therein taken of the men, who are often the original contaminators of the women, and the real propagators of the disease, and since prostitutes, except of the very lowest orders, may be safely trusted to take care of themselves. Contagious Disease Acts, involving the sanitary and police control of public women, have undoubtedly accomplished a large measure of good."

I would call the attention of my hon. friend the member for Ipswich to what follows, as these statistics may be set against those he has given to the House :—

"This is conclusively shown by the following summary from the last report of the Director-General of the British Navy, published by order of the House of Commons, August 24, 1890 :—

RATIO of SYPHILIS in the NAVY of GREAT BRITAIN from 1860 to 1870 inclusive, at PORTS under the CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS, CONTRASTED with that at PORTS not under these ACTS :—

PERIOD.	RATIO OF CASES PER 1,000 FORCE.					
	AT PORTS UNDER THE ACT.			AT PORTS NOT UNDER THE ACT.		
	Primary.	Secondary.	Total.	Primary.	Secondary.	Total.
No Acts in force, 1860-63	...	...	75.02	...	...	70.05
Acts of 1864, in force 1864-65	...	...	79.12	...	...	100.00
Acts of 1866 and 1869, in force 1866-70	34.72	12.47	47.19	50.14	25.6	84.74
Acts of 1866 and 1869, in force 1871-79	28.79	11.10	39.89	72.27	21.8	94.88

Now, as I have already stated, the hon. member for South Brisbane has not suggested any substitute for the Contagious Diseases Act which he proposes to repeal. I really do not think any member of this House will be found to agree with him that the Act should be repealed without some substitute being provided. All the debate this evening in advocacy of the repeal of the Act has gone to show that its operation upon women is unseemly, indecorous, and degrading. Then, I presume, those who argue for its repeal hold that it demoralises the women still further, and prevents their reclamation in the paths of virtue. That seems to be the chief objection; but I do not think it has been advanced that the other portion of the Act should be repealed. I would ask the hon. gentleman what he proposes to substitute? Or does he intend to satisfy himself with the repeal of the Act and allow the evils it is intended to prevent to spread unchecked throughout the community? I do not think the system he has mentioned as being in force in Glasgow is likely to prove beneficial—I do not think it would be sufficient merely to enlarge the lock hospitals for the accom-

modation of all those who are afflicted with the disease. I think the State has a larger duty to fulfil than merely to provide such hospitals, which would not be filled so largely as the hon. gentleman imagines, if those who were labouring under the disease were not forced by the arm of the law to go there. I join issue with him there. The writer whom I have mentioned proceeds to make a recommendation which is worthy of consideration, as to whether it would not be an improvement on our present system. He says :—

"The proposition of the committee of the American Public Health Association, endorsed by the very large majority of the members of that body, contemplates 'the enactment of a law constituting it a criminal offence to knowingly communicate, directly or indirectly, or to be instrumental in communicating, a contagious disease, such as smallpox, scarlet fever, or venereal disease; and giving to boards of health, and to the State and municipal health officials under their control, the same power in the prevention, detection, suppression, and gratuitous treatment of venereal affections which they now possess in the case of smallpox or other contagious diseases.' The committee have been subsequently charged with the suggestion of a project of State law and municipal ordinance which can accomplish this object, and are now in consultation with prominent members of the bar for this purpose. The practical difficulties in the way are not few, but they are not insuperable. Only a small number of offenders will probably ever be brought to punishment; but this is true of other violations of law. Abandoned women may be tempted to make false accusations, but this will operate to deter men from encountering this additional risk. Ignorance cannot be pleaded in excuse, since it will become the duty of the physician to instruct his patient of the harm he is capable of inflicting, and to exact of him that voluntarily exclusion which may be necessary to protect others from the risk of contamination by him. It would not be desirable, if practicable, to require the confinement of venereal patients in hospitals, though these should be provided as voluntary resorts for gratuitous treatment. In the naval and military services it is possible to make the concealment of disease an offence, and to require medical officers in their sanitary capacity to be informed of the physical condition of every individual under their charge; and it is not exacting too much of every physician to require such a rigid inquiry into the antecedent history of every case of communicable disease as will assist in the discovery and extermination of its cause. In this there need be no violation of professional confidence. When it is understood that the communication of a venereal disease is a crime against society, no code of ethics will excuse the physician's neglect of his duty any more than it does now in the case of smallpox; while the syphilitic who infects a woman, however degraded, or he who marries and contaminates a pure woman and begets a diseased child, has no right to cloak his infamy under a medical diploma. It will add to the responsibilities of the physician's vocation; but he who has accepted the mission of health among his fellow-men in any other spirit, or for any other purpose than self-enrichment, will not scruple to labour zealously in battling against this most dread form of preventable disease."

This, sir, is a suggestion which demands full consideration. I cannot, after the short time I have had to consider the extract I have just read, at once give it a full endorsement; at the same time it seems to me that before we deal with the repeal of the Act as at present administered, we ought to provide some other safeguard against the spread of this much-dreaded disease throughout the community. I must say that I think the hon. members who have endeavoured to extenuate the evils of the disease are self-deceived. We have only to travel to the Sandwich Islands to observe the gradual decadence of the whole of the native population on account of a disease ostensibly called leprosy, but which is known to be a form of syphilis. That large population of Hawaii comprises a race possessing in a large degree a high amount of intelligence, which, when receiving the benefits of a liberal education, develops the same intellectual vigour and ability possessed by the European races; yet the disease has been so deeply seated in preceding generations that the total extermination

of the native population of those islands is a mere matter of time. We ought to take a lesson from this; and I contend that it is our duty now to see that sufficient safeguards are provided by which we shall not let this most baneful disease gain a sure footing in our midst, and become a future curse to thousands yet unborn.

Mr. W. BROOKES said: Mr. Speaker,—After hearing some remarks made by the hon. member for Blackall, which I thought were rather strong, I went so far as to call them “foolish observations.” That expression is not a pleasant one, and I withdraw it. But I may say this: that he is not the only offender in that respect during the course of this debate. Even the last speaker shared opinions which, I think, cannot be supported, because everyone who is at all conversant with the agitation against the Contagious Diseases Act knows that it was begun by women—the noblest women in England. I remember very well reading the letters of Harriet Martineau, who wrote over the signature “An Englishwoman.” When we remember that the chief and bitterest charge against the Act is the degradation of women, it would be a curious thing indeed if women were not to be heard. There is another feature. Anyone reading such publications as are to be found—well, everywhere, will know that in all departments of Christian work women take the lead. It is not men, but women who take the lead—Christian women—and they are the glory of their age, both in England and in the United States. I think the last speaker called this an unsavoury subject, and it has been so regarded by others. I regard their modesty as mock modesty, and their reticence as entirely misplaced. Is the subject any more unsavoury than sewage and drainage, upon which hon. members will talk hour after hour? This is a subject which comes home to everybody, particularly to women, and women are taking the lead in the agitation on the question; and seeing that I presented a petition this afternoon signed by 4,817 of the women of Queensland, at least I may say what I have said in their behalf. There is an idea that this is a subject that should be shunned—a subject that young persons should not know anything about. Allow me to just say that I think the ignorance of the young people is the cause of a great deal of the disease, and that if they were only fairly cautioned they would not act as they do now, the young men particularly. If physiology were taught in our schools as it ought to be, and more information was given of the way in which we are constructed, it would be an advantage. We are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and we are easily put out of order, and spoiled for the work of the world. Boys and young women ought to be taught the elementary principles of these things, and I do regard it as a prurient modesty—that was the expression used by the last speaker—I regard all reluctance to talk plainly on this subject as having its bottom in prurience; because we know that there is no person in this world who can put on more airs of modesty than a harlot. We have heard a great deal about sentiment. I would like to have a definition of the word “sentiment.” The last speaker used it many times. The Premier in his speech prefers the practical view, and we are told that we must not talk sentiment; but sentiment governs half our actions in this life, and the sentiment which looks with disgust on legalised prostitution is, I think, not so much sentiment as a desire to act in conformity with God’s law and word. The Premier said that the occupation of a prostitute is an unlawful occupation. It has been said before in the debate, and it must be said again and kept continually before the public, that this Act makes prostitution a legal calling, and it has been urged in our law courts in Brisbane that it

is unjust to compel women to register themselves and to carry about with them a certificate, and then to drive them out of their places of abode and to regard them as outcasts of society. There is where the evil begins. The Act certainly does not lessen the number of prostitutes. The hon. senior member for Cook read a great deal from the *Lancet*. Now, let me tell him that, although it may be the chief medical paper in the world, there is no paper that contains so much medical humbug as the *Lancet*, and if you want to know how that is, just compare the *Medical Gazette* with the *Lancet*, and you will see they are always at daggers drawn. According to the *Lancet*, there is nothing we can eat that will not poison us; nothing we can wear that will not breed disease; no air that we can breathe that will not do us harm, until one almost feels inclined to cut one’s throat in sheer despair of being able to live at all. Now, the Act does not diminish disease. It does not decrease the number of prostitutes. It increases them, because there is a general desire to get from under the Act, and the amount of clandestine prostitution is indefinitely increased. The hon. member for South Brisbane gave us an illustration of that. There are 3,000 registered prostitutes in Paris, and yet the very man who ought to know says there are at least 30,000. And so it is in Brisbane at this very moment. It is not true that all the whores in Brisbane are congregated about those nasty places in Albert street and Margaret street. They are to be found at Toowong and on the New Farm road.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. W. BROOKES: I will go further; I know it.

Mr. FOOTE: Tell us how you know?

Mr. BROOKES: I will tell you how I get to know these things. Through the police. They know all these places. I remember very well riding in an omnibus in a very respectable part of the city, and a person in the omnibus pointed out a very respectable and nice-looking cottage in which you might suppose a minister of religion lived, and it was said that that was a noted brothel; and steps have been taken since to have it removed. I only mention this to show that if this Act is supposed to bring all the prostitutes under the law, it does nothing of the kind. While it professes to diminish the danger and prevalence of venereal disease, it does nothing of the kind. If there is anything certain, it is that it does neither of these two things. Well, now, the last speaker quoted from some international congress which was held in Europe, and what he read did not, to my mind, appear to be a very feasible suggestion. It was a suggestion that would never be regarded for one moment by a practical-minded gentleman like our Premier; but this is the outcome of it, that there is no Contagious Diseases Act in the United States of America. The puritan spirit of the United States will make it impossible for there ever to be such an Act in existence—that is to say the religious spirit. I mean that the religious convictions of the people in the States will for ever prevent them having such an Act. Now, the Premier made a rather remarkable statement when he said the intention of the Act was good. Really, I do believe it is good. I do not believe for a moment that the Act was devised and framed except from good motives, but I say it is an entire mistake. A person may commit wrong and mean well, and I say this Act, while its intention may be good, works infinite evil. Then he made another extraordinary statement. He does not see that this Act is contrary to the divine law. Well, that I cannot understand. We all have the divine law in our houses. We are all of us more or less familiar with it, and I find that

fornication is as plainly stated to be a sin as any other sin, and perhaps more so. I regard this Act as running direct athwart the divine command. That is the way in which I look at it, and that is the way in which the public look at it. To show the extent of public feeling on the question, I may mention, Mr. Speaker, that the number of petitions from churches praying for the repeal of this Act number forty-five, three others from church assemblies, and all the denominations, except two, have passed unanimous resolutions condemnatory of the Act. Well, is it more likely to suppose that these churches have acted from a feeling of sentiment or that they have acted from mature religious convictions. I prefer the latter supposition. And there was the petition from the women of Ipswich with 2,002 signatures; the men's petition with 4,809 signatures to it; and I presented one from the women of Brisbane with 4,817 signatures. It is very easy to call that sentiment, or for members of the Legislative Assembly to say that all this large number of persons are actuated by sentiment; but I can assure hon. members that if this Legislative Assembly regards this expression of opinion as sentiment, and refuses to repeal this Bill, the public will soon find a Legislative Assembly that will repeal it. There is an infinite danger in this House setting itself against a strong, well-set, well-defined current of public opinion. Now, about the Premier. I will give my views, for what they are worth, as to the duty of a Premier. I say that the duty of a Premier is to carefully watch the signs of the times as expressed in the papers, and by the actions of the public. I don't mean for a moment that the Premier should shift his sails with every passing breeze, but when we have, as on this occasion, such an abundant weight of public opinion saying that this Act is contrary to Divine law, and that they want it repealed on that ground, I would like to know whether it is possible for the public with any patience to bear to be told by the Premier, "I am of opinion that it is not contrary to divine law." Who is to give the final decision—the Premier or the public? The Premier may give his decision first but the final decision will be given by the public, and it will be given against him, and I would much rather it would not. And what I say of the Premier applies to Parliament. We are sent here to represent the people, not their follies, their whims, or caprices, which may change from day to day; but when the public gives an opinion on any matter, as on this, there must be reasons far better than any that have been assigned in this debate by those who have spoken against the motion—there must be far better reasons assigned to satisfy the demands outside. Now, the Premier says, and I dare say it carried weight with several who heard him—that since the repeal of the Act the virulence of the disease at Aldershot had considerably increased. Now, that is not so. Here again is an answer to the member for Blackall. Here is a woman, a good Christian woman, engaged in what she calls Christian work among the women at Aldershot; she has given in a report, part of which bears on the subject we are discussing, and she says that "At Aldershot the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act has been a sore discouragement to the patrons of vice, a corresponding aid to the cleansing of society; that the proportions of prostitution and the number of women who are living by prostitution is greatly reduced. Some people think it only one-half what it was. Since the sin has lost the patronage of the State, it has become less lucrative to the people who practise it, and to the occupiers of houses of ill fame." Of course a great deal of this bears on the degradation of women. I have had a few facts put into my

hands which show how this Contagious Diseases Act affects prostitutes. The document was presented to the Premier by a deputation of persons opposed to the Contagious Diseases Acts. It was handed to them by the ladies who manage the Industrial Home. The house committee of that institution say that out of 136 women who were received into the home since it has been in existence, many of whom were registered women, only one registered woman has reformed; and out of sixty-five received into the home last year seventeen women returned to their sinful life, and all these seventeen were registered women. So far as the opinion of the ladies managing this very valuable institution goes, it is to the effect that they deprecate the continuance of the Act. They actually find in their practical daily work of managing the institution that this Act is a very great hindrance to their work. Well, now, about sentiment. I don't suppose many people will accuse John Stuart Mill of being sentimental; I never heard that he was. This is his opinion. He was asked by a select committee of the House of Commons:—

"Do you think that the tendency of the Act is to do moral injury?"

And the answer to that was—

"I do think so, because I hardly think it possible for thoughtless people not to infer, when special precautions are taken to make a course, which is generally considered worthy of disapprobation, safer than it would naturally be, that it cannot be considered very bad by the law, and possibly may be considered as either not bad at all or, at any rate, a necessary evil."

Well, then, as to the opinion of other gentlemen, I would just like to give the opinion of the Bishop of Oxford. He writes that he cannot attend a certain meeting, and says—

"I can only express my own feeling—1st, that it is a false and shocking assumption that vice *must* exist; 2nd, that a policy which, afraid to deal with *men*, takes advantage of the weakness of women to do them grievous wrong, is self-condemned."

The Bishop of Bedford expresses very much the same opinion. He says:—

"I cannot myself reconcile the making of sin safe with any theory of morals higher than that which is based on the barest expediency—certainly I fail to reconcile it with any conception I am able to form to myself of Christian morality."

Why multiply these quotations? We all read the papers, and do not we know that, as with one voice, there is absolute unanimity outside? The moral sense of the whole community is stirred to its depths upon this question; and I must confess that I listened with a little impatience when I heard the Premier and the Colonial Treasurer talking about sentiment, and about expediency, and about the Act being of a practical character. But I will tell the present Government, every one of them, this: That if we lose the motion to-night, it is not lost; no fear of that; we will hammer away at it until we get it passed. Every year we will bring it up. We will do as Mr. Stansfeld did—he worked sixteen years before he got the Act repealed in the English House of Commons, and I may say for these men and women here working in this cause that they will work for sixteen years. Those people who are working to have this Act repealed are persons who believe there is a higher law than that of expediency, and something higher than statute law. They do not believe that prostitution is a necessary evil; they believe, on the contrary, in a higher law—that as we get wiser and more Christian prostitution and every other form of sin will gradually decline. We all agree in some Utopia—some call it the millennium—which may be a long way off; but undoubtedly we are all tending to that; we must aim at it, at all events. We have

the highest authority that we must try and be pure as our Father in Heaven is pure. That is impossible, we know; but we do not, therefore, go and grovel in a gutter. We do the best we can, and the men and women who are concerned in this agitation intend to do the best they can—they intend to get rid of this Act. I commend it to the Government for their consideration—how far they are wise and prudent even in a low, political sense—in setting themselves in the middle of the highway and saying, “You shall not go along this path any longer.”

Mr. FRASER said: Mr. Speaker,—I voted on a former occasion in support of the resolution of my hon. colleague, and I intend to do so to-night. I should hope that in speaking upon this question we may all give it the weight which the community justly attaches to it. A great deal has been said, and may be said, on both sides of the question, and it occurred to me when the hon. member for Cook was quoting the *Lancet*, that he was only quoting one side of the question, as the hon. member for North Brisbane has said. We all know, Mr. Speaker, that that is a medical man's journal, and we know that the Act might be a good thing in their opinion because, in some respects, it was the cry, “The craft is in danger.” But the whole of the medical profession do not think alike upon this question, and I can allude to some leading men in the profession—I will not enumerate them—who emphatically condemn these Acts. I remember there was one who, thirty years ago to my knowledge, was a very eminent man then—Dr. Neild, of Liverpool—and he unqualifiedly condemned them; and I could mention others. I intend to notice what the hon. member for North Brisbane has already noticed—the remarks made in connection with the “lady” aspect of this question. We are all taught that women are really the “ministering angels” of the community, and I should like to know how they became so unless they became conversant with the ills and evils of the community. It is mere affectation to say that all these things ought to be concealed from them. It will be a dark day for humanity if we keep them in ignorance or make them stand aloof from important movements of this kind. Now, Mr. Speaker, I only intend to notice one or two things. I do not want to occupy the time of the House; but the hon. member for Cook made an observation that I feel I am called upon to emphatically deny. He tells us that the argument used in order to induce the ladies of Queensland to sign this petition was something to this effect: “That while this Act is in operation it is dangerous for your daughters to go abroad at night.” I venture to say that such an argument as this is a mere creation of the hon. member's own imagination—that it has no foundation in fact. I am pretty well conversant with the movements in connection with the getting up of some of these petitions, and I challenge the hon. member—I am sorry he is not in his place—to adduce one single instance in which such an absurd argument has been used to induce intelligent ladies of Queensland to sign these petitions. Of course, dealing with the logic of facts, it would be presumptuous to dispute the conclusions of the Premier from his point of view, but when we come to deal with matters of opinion we are at liberty to form what opinions we please. The hon. member stated that the existence of this Act, and the certificate that it gives to those women to ply their traffic, was no inducement or temptation to youth to fall into their snares. To my mind this is one of the most formidable objections of this Act, and I am not single in this opinion. I cannot do better than quote a very much higher authority than myself—a man who has been mentioned

already, and whose name is a passport for all that is honourable and intelligent—and that is Mr. Stansfeld. What does he say upon this very point? He made these remarks in his address in the House of Commons when moving his resolution for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act:—

“You stimulate by this sanction, by this guarantee, false and illusory though it be, this temptation of the devil; you deprave above all the youth of the country, the adolescence of the country; and you do the very worst thing in your blind ignorance which it would be possible for you to do if you thought only of health and nothing of morals, because there is nothing so fatal to the health of the community as infamously to stimulate the sexual propensities of early youth.”

I think this is a very important consideration, and to assert that a condition of this sort is no temptation for youth, and does not influence youth and thus remove what in many cases would be an important deterrent—to make such an assertion as that is to say that we do not understand or that we know comparatively little of human nature. Upon that ground alone I feel justified in supporting the resolution of my hon. colleague to-night. Before I sit down there is another observation I wish to make. It is very true that we should not always be moved in these matters by mere clamour from outside; but there is such a thing as paying deference to public opinion, especially when such opinion emanates from a class whose opinions are deservedly entitled to attention. They are not a section of the community likely to be actuated by mere sentiment, as we have heard this evening, or who are likely to deal with this question without fully weighing the consequences; but they are a section of the community who, I venture to say—and it cannot be questioned—have the moral welfare of the community emphatically at heart. Well, sir, when we find a general movement emanating from this section of the community, as represented by the petitions presented to this House during the last month or two—I say, in a matter of this sort, when opinions are so much divided in the House, and it cannot be proved one way or the other that the injury would be very serious—I say, in deference to this expression of public opinion, this House would be fully justified—nay, more than justified—it would be only doing its duty—in responding to that opinion and conceding what is so emphatically and generally demanded.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall not detain the House many minutes, as I am of opinion that the sooner we come to a vote the better. So much has been said on both sides that I really think there is nothing further to be said, but I do not wish to give a silent vote upon the question. It is my intention to support the resolution moved by the hon. member for South Brisbane. I believe that if the House does not carry this resolution to-night it will not be very many years before it will be carried, and by a very large majority. It was stated in an early part of the evening that the ladies who signed the petition presented did not know what they were signing. That I look upon as a libel upon the ladies of Queensland. The ladies of England signed a similar petition by thousands, and they certainly must have known something about what they were signing. It is just possible that some of the ladies who signed that petition did not know the whole of the particulars, but there is not the slightest doubt in my mind but that a very large majority of them knew what they were about, and there is no better indication that this Act will have to be repealed than the fact that the ladies have taken up the cause. If it is not repealed now, I venture to say that at the

next general election those ladies will take care that hon. members returned to this House will be pledged to repeal the Act. It is a mistaken idea that the ladies have no control over the ballot-box. They have a very large control over it, as they have control over their husbands who have the votes, and they will take very good care that those votes are given for members who will have the Act repealed, and that very soon. I listened to the speeches of hon. members very carefully, and I could not help thinking, while the Colonial Treasurer was speaking, that if this disease is so terrible and it is so necessary to have this Act in force, what a terrible state society must be in in the other colonies where they have no such protection? They must be in a terribly bad state down south.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: So they are.

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member for Cook says they are in a bad way there, but if so what is to prevent them coming up here?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: The Contagious Diseases Act.

Mr. McMASTER: The Contagious Diseases Act is not going to check the persons the hon. member refers to from coming up here. I believe the time has arrived when this Act ought to be repealed, and I am quite sure that those who have taken up the cause will not leave off their efforts until such time as the Act is written off our Statute-book. I notice that the Premier admitted, and the senior member for Cook also admitted, that they would be willing to apply the Act to men. Now, if this resolution should not be carried and the Act repealed, and the Premier will only introduce a Bill by which the examination will be applied to men, I venture to say that after the next general election not a single member will come back to the House who will not be pledged to the repeal of the Act. The men will not allow themselves to be examined, and if the operation of the Act is extended to them there will be such a cry raised that this House will very soon have to repeal the Act.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—I must say that the course taken in this debate, and the prurient details and nasty discussion entered into, has nearly emptied the House of all but the most fervent fanatics on this subject.

Mr. W. BROOKES: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. member in order in applying the term "fanatics" to hon. members?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has not applied the term "fanatic" to any hon. member. He has only applied it as a figure of speech.

Mr. W. BROOKES: Well, don't do it again!

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: The hon. member for North Brisbane has succeeded in putting me out of the thread of my discourse; he has confused me to some extent in thus calling me to order. But, sir, I must say that, as far as I can see, with the exception of a few hon. gentlemen who came here to debate the Land Bill, which they expected would be brought on to-night, and which is really a matter at the bottom of the welfare of the colony—with the exception of those hon. members who are waiting for a chance to debate that Bill, all the others have been driven out of the House and gone away home. It is very likely, therefore, that in a thin House this motion will just be carried as it was in the House of Commons. In the House of Commons the repeal of the Act was carried in a thin House, in the early hours of the morning, after everybody had been driven sick with the nauseous details given by the advocates of repeal of the Contagious Diseases

Act. I believe the effects of its repeal have been fully realised now, and that in the garrison and seaport towns the disease and trouble is double and treble what it was ever known to be before.

Mr. W. BROOKES: No; it is not.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I beg to differ from the hon. member—I believe it is. As to this petition being hawked round to the ladies for their signature, or to the ladies of England, I must say that I lift up my protest against that. This is a thing for the men to decide for themselves. They are the legislators; at all events, legislation on this subject does not come within the scope of female suffrage at all. The men are the legislators, and I say to take this into respectable homes, and amongst women whom one would call ladies—to shove this loathsome petition under their notice for them to sign, is about the most discreditable thing I have known to be done in the history of this colony. I have no female relations, and therefore I can speak independently, but I have heard expressions of opinion from heads of families into whose houses and behind whose backs this dirty petition has been intruded. As for what the senior member for Ipswich said—that he must give his advocacy to the cause—there was nothing more left to say. After the eloquent speech, from his point of view, of the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, and the reply of the Premier, we might have gone to the vote over the thing, and the question would have been more satisfactorily solved than if we stop here all night and go on into next week. It would have been much better than to have the whole night spent in these revolting details; it would have been more satisfactory, and a more general consensus of opinion would have been obtained. If the vote is taken now after everybody has been driven out of the House, I shall attach very little importance to it, and I really hope the Government will not attach much importance to it.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—I know hon. members want to get to a division on this question, and I shall not take up much time. The hon. senior member for Cook said that a straw was enough to show the way the wind blows, and I shall just say something about the statistics and facts produced by the supporters of this Act, to show how they pose before the public. The hon. the Treasurer quoted from a return which I am sure he would not have quoted if he had studied both sides of this question. The navy returns have been proved in the most clear and unmistakable manner not to be trustworthy so far as the working of this Act is concerned. For a number of years the navy authorities have taken the statistics of five stations which are under this Act and five not under the Act, and have compared them to show the percentage of disease in the navy. Their attention was drawn year after year to the misleading character of the returns, and in 1882 or 1883 the Lords of the Admiralty admitted that they were misleading, and promised to omit them in future. However, the medical authorities ignored their instructions, and published them again, but now I believe they have been stopped. Now, this was what was done: The average strength of the stations under the Act has generally been about 11,000 men, and the amount of disease was given at so much per thousand. Will it be believed that of these 11,000 there were 4,000 boys in the training ships, who were not subject to the disease at all, but who were persistently included in these figures? It has been stated again and again in the newspapers, and quoted in this House, that since the suspension of examinations

things have been very much worse in those towns. Now, this is one instance out of many to show how public opinion is attempted to be manufactured. The *Daily Telegraph* published the following letter:—

"SIR,—As an ounce of fact is proverbially superior to an indefinite quantity of theory, I think that I am justified in citing one or two instances of the effects of the present suspension of the Acts against contagious diseases. Being in practice as a medical man in the town most affected by the measure, I am able to speak with some authority upon the subject. Last week a large transport entered Portsmouth Harbour with time-expired men from India. Upon the same day thirty diseased women left the hospital with the avowed intention of meeting that transport, and there was no law to prevent it. I say that if an unfortunate soldier coming home to his native land after an absence of years and exposed to such temptations should yield to them, and entail disease upon himself and his offspring, the chief fault should not lie at his door. It surely emanates logically from those hysterical legislators who set loose those thirty bearers of contagion, and their like, upon society. For fear delicacy should be offended where no touch of delicacy exists, dreadful evils are to result, men to suffer, children to die, and pure women to inherit unspeakable evils. Loose statements and vague doctrines of morality may impose upon hasty thinkers, but surely, when the thing is reduced to its simplest terms, it becomes a matter of public calamity that these Acts should be suspended for a single day, far more for an indefinite period. The apostles of freetrade in infection have worked to such good purpose that within a few weeks the streets of our naval stations have become pandemonia, and immorality is rampant and self-assertive where it lately feared to show its face. Property has grown depreciated near our public-houses since the suspension of the Acts on account of the concourse of vile women whose uproar and bad language made night hideous. I venture to say that, were the old laws enforced again to-morrow, there would still in a hundred years' time be many living who could trace inherited mental or physical deformity to the fatal interregnum which the champions of the modesty of harlots had brought on.—I am, sir, truly yours,

"A. CONAN DOYLE, M.B., C.M.

"Portsmouth, June 5."

This person, of the name of Doyle, had his attention called to misstatements in the letter, and he replied:—

"I am glad that you have called my attention to my error as regards the dismissal of women from the hospital. I had the story from two members of the visiting committee, but Dr. Snowdon, the indoor officer, assures me that there is no foundation for it. I have, of course, written a contradiction of it to the paper."

The contradiction, of course, did not spread like the original report; and three weeks afterwards the letter was copied into the medical Press without any notice being taken of the contradiction. The fact was that, though the examination of women was suspended, they were still compulsorily detained in the hospital. Well, sir, I did intend to say a good deal more on this Act. I would like to point out another thing—that where the Acts have been longest in force, and where they have been most rigorously enforced, they have been the most complete failures. I suppose that those Acts have been longer in force in Paris than in any other city in the world. It was stated some time ago that the number of registered prostitutes in Paris was about 3,600, and that there were some 47,000 unregistered prostitutes. A test was made by the successors of Ricord, the great French surgeon and writer, at the hospital specially set apart for the treatment of diseases of this kind. They instituted special inquiries into the cases of 873 men suffering from these diseases, and the result showed that out of those 873 men no fewer than 625 indicated that they had contracted the contagion from women licensed under the Act. That shows that they are far more dangerous, far more to be guarded against, than the clandestine prostitutes. It has been said that clandestine prostitutes are the

worst, but that appears to be, at least, doubtful. The Premier cited, as an illustration of the terrible nature of these diseases, the ravages they had committed upon the aboriginal natives of these colonies and of the South Sea Islands. It is a well-known fact that many diseases, on first making their appearance among certain races, are far more destructive and deadly than they are at subsequent periods. The plague in Europe, cholera, and smallpox, were far more fatal some two or three hundred years ago than they are now. We know also that measles carried off great numbers of the uncivilised races who have never previously been exposed to it. One very good reason for it is that they have no medical treatment; they do not know the nature of the disease, nor how to combat it. I will now quote from the opinion of Mr. John Simon, F.R.C.S., for many years the medical adviser of the Privy Council of Great Britain. He was asked to report on the proposed extension of the Contagious Diseases Act to the civil population of Great Britain. Dr. Simon says:—

"I am very far from thinking that the above"—

He is referring to the danger from contagious diseases—

"are the sole considerations to which regard must be had, in deciding such questions as the present. But they seem to me to define a position which ought not to be abandoned, except under strong compulsion of circumstances, and with reasonable prospects of success. Evidently, if venereal diseases were now the same gigantic scourge and terror which they were some 350 years ago, when they inspired Fracastoro's poem; if curative medicine had continued as powerless against them as then; if we saw them still raging as great intractable epidemics, impeding national movements, and forcibly occupying the mind of society with all sorts of lazarous presentations; the reasons for legislative action, *provided such action could be effectual*, might be stronger than the reasons for neutrality, and considerations as to the personal aetiology of the disease, might perforce have to be subordinated to the urgency of a public danger."

And he goes on to state that the severer form of syphilis is not nearly so prevalent as many people imagine, and not so severe. It was stated by the society for applying these Acts to the civil population that a very large percentage of the children of the poor of London were suffering from the effects of these diseases. During ten years 118,000 children were treated in one of the large London hospitals, and the percentage of those affected by them was almost nominal. I believe that is the opinion of experts. During the last few years public opinion in England has become very strong, and pronounced against the retention of these Acts. Mr. Stansfeld, who conducted the agitation in the House of Commons, said he did not wish to fight the question on moral grounds, or on constitutional grounds, or with regard to the liberty of the subject. He wished it to be argued on purely sanitary grounds; and there is no doubt he carried his motion on those grounds. The feeling in the old country against the Acts was so strong that the motion for their repeal was carried in the House of Commons without a division.

Mr. PATTISON said: Mr. Speaker,—It is not my intention, nor do I think it desirable, to occupy the time of the House for more than a few minutes. My object in rising is to explain the reason why I shall not vote as I intended to do on entering the Chamber this afternoon. Up to that moment I was of opinion that the abolition of the Contagious Diseases Act was necessary, but after listening very attentively to this debate I have altered my opinion on the subject. I certainly think that the arguments—the really solid arguments—are altogether in favour of the continuance of the Act. I have

listened to a very great amount of filth—a greater amount than I have listened to all my life before—this evening—filth which I regret will appear in the pages of *Hansard* to-morrow morning, and be circulated broadcast over the length and breadth of the land. I am only a new member, but if I had had a little more knowledge of the ways of the House I should certainly have moved that strangers be excluded. I have acquired that information since the debate began, and I am astonished that none of the older members, who knew of it all along, did not avail themselves of it in order to stop the publication of such an amount of filth as will go forth to the world to-morrow. As a rule I only address the House on subjects that I know a little about, and I am therefore at some slight disadvantage on the present occasion. I have not the information on this subject possessed by the hon. member for Ipswich, or the junior member for North Brisbane. Those hon. gentlemen seem to be thoroughly posted up in the subject of brothels. Only yesterday the hon. member for Ipswich, on being told that he had never been away from that town, informed us that he had been at Glasgow, and told us the number of brothels he found there. Most travellers are satisfied when they have found one, but the hon. member for Ipswich actually found twenty-two, and he wishes the House to believe that that is the sum-total of the brothels of Glasgow. Does the hon. member mean to tell me, and ask me to believe, as a man who reads and thinks, that that is anything like a fair representation of the prostitution of Glasgow? It is an insult to my common sense to ask me to believe any such thing; and I refuse to believe it. My reason teaches me that if there is an immoral town on the face of the earth it is Glasgow. I think if the records were traced it would be found that there are far more than twenty-two brothels. I have no doubt that if the hon. member had been industrious he would have found that there are also a great many private brothels. Marriage laws do not meet with the same respect in that city as they do in the colonies; and it does not appear necessary to the Glasgow people that they should always go through the form of matrimony. To my mind the argument of the Premier on this subject was most conclusive against the repeal of the Act. In my opinion the arguments advanced in support of the repeal are altogether insufficient, and they have done more than anything else to convince me that my view on the subject was an erroneous one. I came here promising to vote for the repeal, but as I cannot do that consistently with the opinion I have now formed, I shall abstain from voting on the question. I simply rose for the purpose of explaining why I shall not vote as I intended, but I do not suppose the reasons I have given will be satisfactory and conclusive to the hon. member for Ipswich.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not intend to occupy more than two or three minutes in the observations I am about to address to the House. I do not know that I should have risen at all had it not been for the rather intemperate speech which has just been delivered by the hon. member for Blackall. I think the hon. member has assumed an amount of superior virtue that is not altogether becoming, because in the assumption of that extraordinary virtue he has—whether intentionally or not—cast a very considerable reflection on the whole of the members of this House. The hon. gentleman has not been very long a member of the House. Some of us have been here a number of years, and we have heard this subject discussed on previous occasions, as it has been this evening, in a proper and gentle-

manly way, and I do not see why we should be aspersed by the hon. member. We are told that we have sat and listened to an amount of filth that has quite shocked and horrified the hon. member for Blackall. I would like to know who has indulged in filth this evening. The word “brothel” came from his lips in almost every other sentence. If that is not suggesting filth I do not know what is. Hon. members must not suppose that a subject like this, in which matters have to be unveiled that, if we consulted our tastes and inclinations, would be veiled over, can be dealt with as one could desire. The subject is a very important one, and members who have spoken on it have dealt with it in a delicate and gentlemanly manner. Nothing has been said in the course of this discussion to warrant the remarks that have been addressed to hon. members by the hon. member for Blackall. The hon. member said that if he had been acquainted with the forms of the House, and had known that all this filth was to be poured into the ears of hon. members, he would have shown older members of the House the right way to do things—he would have called attention to the strangers present, and had them excluded from the House. But even if he had done that the debate would have appeared in *Hansard* all the same. The only effect of such a procedure would be to have had those who are occupying the gallery excluded. The public would have the debate reported to-morrow just the same. The hon. gentleman has therefore something more to learn of the forms and proceedings of the House. I do not think he has done himself justice on the subject in the way he has just addressed the House. There is nothing that has taken place this evening that warranted the observations the hon. gentleman has made with respect to those gentlemen who have taken part in the discussion, and if the subject is one which most hon. gentlemen, if they consulted their own tastes, would rather have left untouched, it is through no fault of theirs, but in obedience to the voice of duty, that they thought it necessary to bring this matter, which has been agitating the public mind outside for some time, before the attention of the House. It is quite impossible to impart to a subject of this kind the very fragrant exhalations that we are accustomed to associate with matters more to our tastes and inclinations. The question has been fully argued this evening in a most admirable speech by the mover of the resolution, and also in as able a speech as could possibly have been made by the Premier in opposition to the views of the hon. member for South Brisbane; and what has been said by other hon. members has been expressed with a purity of feeling in accordance with the high tone, as I maintain, of the speeches made respectively by the hon. member for South Brisbane and the Premier.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to make an explanation, and will not detain the House more than a minute. The hon. member for Blackall has informed the House that he never speaks on subjects unless he knows something about them, yet there is no member of the House who speaks on subjects that he knows nothing about as often as that hon. member does.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Is this an explanation?

Mr. MACFARLANE: The explanation I want to make is this: The hon. member for Blackall said I travelled to Scotland to find out twenty-two brothels. If the hon. gentleman had been listening to what I said, he would have heard

that I quoted from the captain of the police in Glasgow that the brothels had been reduced from 404 to 22 between the years 1877 and 1881. I hope that will satisfy the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SHERIDAN said : Mr. Speaker,—I rise in consequence of a petition having been presented to this House this evening, signed, or presumed to be signed, by 4,817 women of the colony. I regret that that number could have been got to sign such a petition, or that such a petition should have been presented to them for signature. It is my intention to vote for the repeal of the Act. At the same time I cannot but express my disapprobation at such a petition being presented from a number of women as we have had submitted to the House this afternoon.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put and negatived.

Question—That the Act entitled “An Act for the prevention of contagious diseases,” passed in 1868, ought to be repealed—put, and the House divided :—

AYES, 15.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Sheridan, Salkeld, McMaster, Wakefield, Bulcock, Buckland, Grimes, Jordan, Brookes, Fraser, Kates, Macfarlane, and Ferguson.

NOES, 15.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Dickson, Clubb, Dutton, Moreton, Lunley Hill, Kelett, Lissner, Foxton, Philp, Pattison, Horwitz, Hamilton, Murphy, and Norton.

Pairs :—For : Mr. Aland, Mr. Isambert, Mr. White, Mr. Adams, Mr. Foote, Mr. Mellor. Against : Mr. Bailey, Mr. Annear, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. McWhannell, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Smyth.

The SPEAKER : The votes being equal, it is my duty to give the casting vote. I vote with the “Ayes,” and the question is therefore resolved in the affirmative.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER said : Mr. Speaker,—As I believe it is not the wish of hon. gentlemen to go on with any contentious matter, but only to get through formal business before we adjourn, I move that the House do now pass to the Orders of the Day with the object of enabling a Bill to be formally introduced.

Mr. HAMILTON said : Mr. Speaker,—I have a motion to propose which comes next to that which has just been decided. It is a formal motion which will not take up much time. The motion is :—That a select committee be appointed to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit and report upon the petition I presented to this House.

The SPEAKER : The hon. member cannot move his motion. The question is, that the House now proceed with the Orders of the Day.

The PREMIER : Perhaps the hon. member did not hear what I said just now. I said I understood that there was no desire to proceed with any opposed business, and the only private Order of the Day being a purely formal matter, I moved that the House pass to the Orders of the Day.

Question put and passed.

BUILDING SOCIETIES BILL.

On the motion of Mr. WAKEFIELD, it was affirmed in committee—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to building societies.

The resolution was adopted by the House, and it was ordered that a Bill be brought in founded on the resolution.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said : On Tuesday we propose to take into consideration the Council's amendments in the Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill and the second reading of the Oyster Bill ; after that to resume, and I hope conclude at an early hour, the debate on the second reading of the Land Bill, and I hope we may have time to proceed with Committee of Supply afterwards. I move that this House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

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