

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

TUESDAY, 19 JULY 1887

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1887.

QUEENSLAND.



DEBATES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

DURING THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT OF THE COLONY
OF QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA,

APPOINTED TO MEET

AT BRISBANE, ON THE NINETEENTH DAY OF JULY, IN THE FIFTY-FIRST YEAR OF THE REIGN OF HER
MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1887.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 19 July, 1887.

Meeting of Parliament.—The Governor's Opening Speech.
—Absence of Member.—Seat Declared Vacant.—Bill
pro forma.—Papers.—Address in Reply.

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.

PURSUANT to proclamation, bearing date 2nd July, convening Parliament for the despatch of business, the Council met shortly before noon this day.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

At noon His Excellency the Governor came in state to the Houses of Parliament, and was received at the main entrance by the President, the Postmaster-General, and other members of the Legislative Council, and conducted to the dais in the Upper Chamber. The House being seated, a message was sent to the Legislative Assembly to the effect that His Excellency desired the presence of Mr. Speaker and hon. members in the Council Chamber, and the Assembly attended accordingly, and being seated in the place reserved for them below the bar,

HIS EXCELLENCY read his Opening Speech as follows :—

“HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“It affords me much pleasure to meet you again, and to have recourse once more to your advice and assistance in the management of the affairs of the colony.

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“The completion of the fiftieth year of Her Majesty's most happy and prosperous reign, which has been marked by unexampled progress in almost every branch of human knowledge, and by signal development in all the Australasian communities, has been loyally celebrated by Her Majesty's subjects in all parts of the British dominions, and I have been much gratified to observe the hearty manner in which the people of Queensland have joined in the general rejoicings.

“Shortly after the close of the last session of this Parliament, her Majesty was pleased to direct that representatives of the Governments of her several colonial possessions should be invited to meet in London to confer together upon matters concerning the common interests of the Empire. In response to this summons all the self-governing colonies sent representatives, and it was deemed desirable that one of my Ministers should proceed to England for the purpose of representing the colony in conjunction with the Agent-General. At the Conference which met in London on the fourth of April, under the presidency of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, many subjects of great importance were considered and dealt with.

“I have the strongest reasons for believing that the holding of this Conference will be productive of highly beneficial results. A more real appreciation of the essential unity of the Empire and of the community of the interest of its several parts has been created; and I have

no doubt that, as a consequence of the cordial relations thus established, the conduct of negotiations between the Imperial and Colonial Governments will be found in future to be greatly facilitated. A full report of the proceedings will be laid before you, when received from the Secretary of State.

“Amongst the most important of the matters submitted for consideration was the establishment and maintenance of an additional squadron for the defence of floating trade in Australasian waters at the joint expense of the colonies. Upon this subject, respecting which, as you are aware, previous communications had taken place between the Australasian Governments, a preliminary agreement was arrived at, subject to the approval of the several Parliaments. This agreement, for which your sanction will be asked, I commend to your most careful consideration. I am convinced that its conditions are highly favourable to the colonies, and that it will, if adopted, secure, at an extremely moderate cost, a practical immunity from hostile attack.

“The proposals which were made last year by my Government, in conjunction with the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria, for the administration of the affairs of British New Guinea, and of which you have already expressed your approval, have been adopted by Her Majesty's Imperial Government, subject to the extension of the term of the proposed guarantee to ten years. Bills to give effect to these proposals will be at once laid before you.

“The disastrous floods which occurred in the early part of the year, and which occasioned a lamentable loss of life and property, have retarded to some extent the recovery of the colony from the effects of the long-continued drought. I have observed, with much satisfaction, the ready response which was made by the people of Queensland to the appeals for aid to the sufferers.

“I am glad to note the large and increasing demand for land for occupation by *bonâ fide* settlers. My Ministers are deeply sensible of the importance of encouraging agricultural settlement, by giving increased facilities to intending selectors for acquiring full information as to the nature and quality of land open for occupation, and by assisting in the collection and diffusion of practical knowledge as to the profitable cultivation of the soil. With this object, I have, in anticipation of your sanction, authorised the establishment of a Department of Agriculture, under the charge of the Minister for Public Lands.

“The result of the census taken in May of last year will be laid before you. They disclose, as might be expected, some inequalities in the representation of the people, which, with the aid of the information now available, you will be invited to remove.

“GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“I have every reason to believe that the colony has entered upon a period of renewed prosperity, to which the largely increased development of our mineral resources that may be anticipated from the favourable attention now bestowed

upon them in Great Britain, and the general influx of capital from that country, will largely contribute.

“The public finances have, however, not escaped the natural consequences of the long-continued adverse seasons, but I see no reason to doubt that with careful administration they will shortly exhibit their usual satisfactory condition. In the meantime strict economy will be necessary, and the Estimates of Expenditure have been framed on that basis.

“HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“Your early attention will be directed to measures for improving the administration of public business in the more remote parts of the colony, and ensuring an equitable distribution of public expenditure. I am confident that you, as well as my Ministers, are anxious to meet all well-founded demands that may be made in this regard.

“A petition for the division of the colony was last year presented to the Administrator of the Government, and forwarded to the Secretary of State for Her Majesty's consideration. Her Majesty, however, has not been advised to give effect to the wishes of the petitioners. I believe that the measures to which I have just referred will be found to remove all reasonable grounds for any renewal of this movement.

“Bills to consolidate and amend the laws relating to local government will again be laid before you.

“You will also be asked to deal with the very serious question of declaring and defining the law as to natural water, the importance of which, in a climate such as ours, cannot be over-estimated. In connection with the subject a measure providing for the conservation and distribution of water by local authorities constituted for the purpose will also be submitted to you.

“Your sanction will be sought for the construction of some lines of railway, for which the necessary funds have been appropriated.

“The following, amongst other measures, will also be presented for consideration—

A Bill to provide for the Registration of Copyright in Books published in Queensland ;

A Bill to amend the Postal Laws ;

A Bill to amend the Audit Act ;

A Bill to make better provision for the Protection of Women and Girls ;

A Bill to amend the law as to Fisheries in Queensland Waters ;

A Bill to regulate the Manufacture and Supply of Gas ;

A Bill to amend the law relating to Auctioneers ;

Bills to provide for the Protection of Workmen and the Security of their Wages

Bills to amend the laws relating to Diseases in Animals;

A Bill to shorten the Duration of Parliaments.

“My Government have for some time had under their consideration the desirableness of taking preliminary action with a view to the early completion of our admirable educational system by the establishment of a university. Such an institution, if founded on the wiser and broader basis adopted in the younger States of the American Union, would not only afford to our young students of both sexes an opportunity of obtaining that higher education of which they are now for the most part deprived, but would be the means of imparting throughout the colony scientific and practical instruction on subjects vitally connected with the development of the mineral and agricultural resources of the colony.

“I am sure that you will give your best attention to these and all other matters that may be brought before you, and I pray that the blessing of Divine Providence may continue to attend your labours.”

HIS EXCELLENCY and suite then left the Chamber, and the members of the Assembly having also withdrawn, the sitting was suspended until half-past 3 o'clock.

The PRESIDENT resumed the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

ABSENCE OF MEMBER.

The PRESIDENT announced that he had received a letter from the Hon. F. T. Brentnall, stating that owing to his departure for Europe he would not be able to attend at the commencement of the present session.

SEAT DECLARED VACANT.

The PRESIDENT announced that he had received an order from Her Majesty in Council, approving of the report of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in the appeal of the Attorney-General of Queensland *v.* Gibbon, declaring that the seat of the Hon. J. Gibbon had become vacant, and that he had accordingly removed the name of that gentleman from the list of members.

BILL PRO FORMA.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. T. Macdonald-Paterson) presented a Bill to amend the law relating to wild animals, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

PAPERS.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I have the honour to lay on the table the following papers:—

1. Eleventh Annual Report of the Secretary for Public Instruction.
2. Report of the Board of Trustees of the Queensland Museum for the year 1886.
3. *Regule Generales* of the Supreme Court under the Insanity Act of 1884.
4. Report by Robert L. Jack, Government Geologist, on Geological Observations in the North of Queensland, 1886-7.
5. Report on the Argentine (Star) Silver Mines, Kennedy District, by Robert L. Jack, Government Geologist.

6. Report on a Cobalt Lode at the Black Snake, near Kilkivan, by W. H. Rands, Assistant Government Geologist.

7. Report by W. H. Rands, Assistant Geologist, on the Geology of, and Mineral Deposits occurring in, the country in the neighbourhood of Beenleigh and of the Logan and Albert Rivers.

8. Report by W. H. Rands, Assistant Geologist, on the Glenelg and other Reefs in the neighbourhood of Thane's Creek and Talgai, and certain Mineral Deposits near Stanthorpe.

9. Report by W. H. Rands, Assistant Geologist, to accompany Geological Map of the City of Brisbane and its environs.

10. Annual Report of the Department of Public Lands for the year 1886.

11. Regulations under the Crown Lands Acts, 1884 to 1886.

12. Return of Applications for Agricultural and Grazing Farms and Volunteer Selections accepted under the Act 43 Vic. No. 28, for the years 1885 and 1886.

13. Annual Report of the Commissioner for Railways for the year 1886.

14. Regulations under the provisions of the Gold Fields Homestead Leases Act of 1886.

15. Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1886.

16. Report by Her Majesty's Special Commissioner on British New Guinea for the year 1886.

17. Annual Report of the Acting Government Resident at Thursday Island.

18. Sheriff's Report upon the Gaols of the Colony for the year 1886.

19. Report of the Australasian Stock Conference.

20. Report respecting Proposed Emigration of Highland Crofters.

21. Report of the Executive Commissioner upon the Colonial and Indian Exhibition.

22. Despatch transmitting Report upon the Sugar Industry in Trinidad.

23. Further Correspondence respecting Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between Great Britain and the Republic of Uruguay. (Despatch.)

24. Despatch transmitting Additional Treaty of Commerce between Her Majesty and the King of Roumania.

25. Despatch transmitting Order in Council for giving effect to Treaty between Great Britain and Guatemala for the Mutual Surrender of Fugitive Criminals.

26. Despatch transmitting Order in Council respecting Treaty between Great Britain and Russia for Mutual Surrender of Fugitive Criminals.

27. Despatch, dated 1st December, 1886, conveying Her Majesty's Assent to Acts passed during the Session of 1886. (Nos. 1 to 11.)

28. Despatch, dated 17th January, 1887, conveying Her Majesty's Assent to Acts passed in the Fourth Session of the Ninth Parliament. (Nos. 12 to 21.)

29. Despatch, dated 19th February, 1887, conveying Her Majesty's Assent to Acts, Session of 1886. (Nos. 22 to 34.)

30. Despatch transmitting further Correspondence respecting International Copyright Union.

31. Despatch transmitting Order in Council respecting Extension of The Foreign Deserters Act to Zanzibar.

32. Despatch announcing Assumption by Germany of Protectorate over portion of Solomon Islands.

33. Despatch transmitting further Correspondence respecting the Employment of Naval and Military Officers in the Colonies.

34. Despatch respecting the Adelaide Jubilee Exhibition.

35. Despatch enclosing Agreement to provide for Naval Defence of Australasian colonies.

36. Despatch respecting Correspondence respecting the issue of fictitious British or Foreign Postage Stamps in the Colony.

37. Despatch enclosing Draft of proposed Bill to indemnify the Imperial Government against the Expenses connected with the Government of New Guinea.

38. Correspondence respecting Conference in London of Representatives of Colonial Governments.

39. Despatch respecting Nomination of Colonial Candidates as Engineer Students in Her Majesty's Service.

40. Blue Book for the year 1886.

41. Seventh Census of the Colony of Queensland, taken on the 1st May, 1886.

42. Regulations for the Marine Force under the Defence Act of 1884.

43. Proceedings in connection with the Appeal to the Privy Council respecting the Seat of the Honourable James Gibbon, M.L.C.

44. Victorian International Exhibition, 1888.

45. Address presented to Her Majesty the Queen, at Windsor, on 4th May, 1887, by the Delegates at the Colonial Conference.

46. Address presented to Her Majesty the Queen, at Windsor, on 4th May, 1887, by the Delegates of Queensland at the Colonial Conference.

47. Correspondence and other Papers respecting Mr. Justice Cooper's Travelling Expenses.

48. Third Report on the Creation, Inscription, and Issue of Stock, under the provisions of the Queensland Stock Inscription Act.

49. Report of the Chief Inspector of Distilleries.

50. Report on the Charters Towers Water Supply.

51. Report on Bulimba Drainage.

52. Report on Rockhampton Drainage.

53. Reports and Correspondence in connection with the Supply of Water from the Gold Creek Reservoir.

54. Report upon the working of the Queensland Government Savings Bank for the year 1886.

55. Report upon the Government Life Insurance and Annuity Business for the year 1886.

56. Return under the Intestacy Act of 1877.

57. Correspondence respecting Survey of the Queensland Coast.

I move that the papers be printed.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: Hon. gentlemen,—I would ask the Postmaster-General whether he has laid those papers on the table by command or by order of this House. He has not given that information; and I think I am right in saying that without being presented in one form or the other they cannot be received.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I am obliged to the hon. member for pointing out what may have been an omission on my part; but it is always understood that the member who represents the Government here always conforms to the rule on the subject when presenting papers, and lays them on the table by command

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT having acquainted the House that, for the purpose of greater accuracy, he had obtained a copy of the Speech which His Excellency the Governor had delivered to Parliament, and having read so much of it as was addressed to that House,

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and prepare an Address in Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor; such committee consisting of the Hon. W. Pettigrew, the Hon. W. Horatio Wilson, the Hon. J. D. Macansh, the Hon. W. F. Taylor, and the mover.

Question put and passed.

The Select Committee, having returned, brought up the following Address in Reply, which was read by the Clerk:—

“To His Excellency Sir ANTHONY MUSGRAVE, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Queensland and its Dependencies.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

“We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Council of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our continued loyalty and affection to the Person and Government of Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and we thank Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present session.

“In common with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects throughout the Empire we heartily rejoice at the completion of the fiftieth year of Her Majesty's most happy and prosperous reign.

“We shall give our most careful and serious consideration to the various matters referred to by Your Excellency, and we beg to assure Your Excellency that it will be our earnest endeavour to join with Your Excellency and the other branch of the Legislature in passing such laws as will lead to the permanent welfare and prosperity of all classes of the community.”

The Hon. W. F. TAYLOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—I rise for the purpose of moving that the Address, as read by the Clerk, be now adopted, and in doing so, I shall, with your permission, make a few observations on some of the principal subjects treated of in the Speech of His Excellency. It is, I am sure, very gratifying to know that the jubilee of Her Majesty's reign has been so universally and so well celebrated throughout Her Majesty's dominions, and I am perfectly certain I am correct in saying that in no place was Her Majesty's jubilee more heartily celebrated than in the colony of Queensland. I need not remind you of all the benefits which have occurred during the glorious and prosperous reign of Her Majesty the Queen. I am sure we all realise the good she has done by her influence, not only to her nation, but to humanity at large. Her influence on the councils of Europe has always been for good, and I am glad to be in a position to state to-day that all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in Queensland heartily entered into celebrating the jubilee of her reign. Among other matters in the Speech there is one which refers to the settlement of New Guinea. It is a source of congratulation to us to know that there is a likelihood of the condition of affairs which has obtained since the adoption of the protectorate being, to a great

extent, settled satisfactorily. I believe it is contemplated by Her Majesty's Government to annex the present protectorate, and I have no doubt that in course of time this action will be beneficial to the natives of New Guinea, and will be a source of benefit to the inhabitants of Queensland and the Australian colonies generally. It is, in my opinion, a source of regret that Her Majesty's Government did not take this step sooner, because I believe we might then have been spared what may ultimately be a dangerously close proximity of neighbours. However, we must accept the matter as it stands, and make the best of it. It is very gratifying to know that there is an increasing demand for land for occupation by *bonâ fide* settlers. The conditions under which settlement now takes place are, to a great number of people, somewhat novel. It has been the practice in this colony, and in other parts of the British dominions, to alienate land as rapidly as possible. In all the colonies, when there has been a deficiency in the revenue, the first step has been to sell land, as if the land was an inexhaustible thing, a thing that could not be used up, and all we had to do was to sell it to meet existing deficiencies. I regret to say this practice has been freely followed in this colony. I regret it because, in a great number of instances, the land has not realised the amount it should have done; nothing like full value has been obtained for the land. Large areas have been alienated from the Crown, and at the present time the agricultural areas in the immediate neighbourhood of Brisbane, Toowoomba, Warwick, Maryborough, the Peak Downs, and other districts, have passed from the Crown into the hands of proprietors who hold large areas. I do not think this condition of affairs is for the good of the community. It is certainly for the good of those who have been fortunate enough to secure the land; but, as the object of legislation should be to benefit the many and not the few, I consider that the legislation which has brought about this state of affairs is in the highest degree reprehensible. Therefore it is a matter for congratulation that the present Ministry decided to take a step in the other direction with regard to the management of the lands of the colony. The experiment—for it was an experiment, because up to that time I do not suppose any British community ever tried the experiment of leasing the land instead of selling it outright—the experiment was looked upon with great suspicion by many, and is now regarded by a large number as a mistake. But that it is a step in the right direction, and will secure the largest possible benefit to the greatest number, is, I believe, certain. The history of the nations of Europe—more especially of Great Britain and Ireland—must convince us of the fact that the alienation of land on the part of the Crown is a decided mistake. The fruits of the alienation of land in Great Britain and Ireland are being borne in the present generation, and what the results may be it is impossible to say. The effects are cropping up every day, and show that the wholesale alienation which obtained in the past, and up to the present, has been pregnant with bad effects. In support of what I state I may quote a paragraph which appeared in a sub-leader of the *Courier* of the 14th instant. This sub-leader, in referring to the proposition of Mrs. Gordon-Baillie to introduce into Victoria 1,000 Scottish crofter families, says:—

“These people are the remnant of the once-large population of the western islands and counties of Scotland, now depleted and reduced by the unwise legislation which has permitted the land which once supported it in frugal plenty to be turned into deer forests and game preserves.”

This is a fact which does not admit of being controverted, and I am sure that it is not looked upon as right by the people of this colony that large areas of land should get into the hands of comparatively few proprietors; and that we should adopt the very plan the present Government sought to adopt to utilise the land for the benefit of the greatest number is very apparent. Look at the enormous revenues derived from some of the landed proprietors about London and other large cities of Great Britain; revenues derived from lands leased on long terms—ninety-nine years' leases. The original owners saw that the land would be valuable, and did not meet present exigencies by selling the land, but very wisely held the land and leased it for long terms. The leaseholders have done well out of it, and the owners have made vast fortunes. If this can be done in the case of private individuals, why not by the State? I have said that the practice is a novel one, because the usual practice has been to alienate the land as quickly as possible, to sell it at all hazards to meet present emergencies. But the present Government endeavoured to put a stop to that practice, and it is very much to their credit that they should attempt to stop the wholesale alienation of land, more especially when just before they came into power an attempt had been made to alienate enormous portions of this country for a mere song, I may say. Up to the time the present Government adopted the leasing policy, the land was looked upon as of little or no value, and it was almost given away to whoever chose to take it; but now, I am happy to say, the people of this country are in a position to say that the land is expected to be utilised in a proper manner, that an attempt is being made to make the land pay the expenses of government instead of taxing all sorts of commodities; and that this attempt will ultimately prove successful I earnestly hope and believe. I am very glad also to learn that the present Ministry have come to the conclusion that it is advisable to establish a department of agriculture, for the want of some such department has long been felt. Some five or six years ago, when I was resident at Warwick, we recognised the great advantages that would be derived from a sort of school of agriculture—something that would give farmers a little insight into the character of the land they tilled, and what crops were most suitable in different places. We did what we could in that direction, and I may mention that the late Sir Arthur Kennedy always advocated the formation of schools of agriculture and model farms. I am glad, therefore, that the Government of the day have taken this matter seriously into their consideration, and have established a department of agriculture; for I am perfectly certain that it will confer a great benefit on the farming community. The Government have also determined to adopt measures for improving the administration of public business in the more remote parts of the colony, and ensuring an equitable distribution of public expenditure. This is a question which has been before the country and before Parliament on more than one occasion previously, and a somewhat serious attempt was made last session to adopt some legislative means to bring about this result. But there was a very marked difficulty in the way. The agitation for the separation of the northern portion of the colony assumed such proportions that it was hardly advisable until that question was settled one way or the other that any such action should be taken as is now contemplated. Now that the matter of separation is for the present settled, I think it is the duty of the Government—a duty which they

appear to recognise—to make provision for carrying out the administration of public affairs in other parts of the colony and decentralising as much as possible. Those who have lived up country have felt very much the tendency to centralise—nothing can be done by the local authority; everything must be referred to head-quarters. Of course this necessitates delay; and the people at head-quarters are not in a position to grasp the bearings of local matters, which are far better understood by the people resident on the spot, and the consequence is that in many cases injustice is done, or nothing at all. I trust this condition of affairs will be remedied, and that as far as practicable each community will be enabled to manage its own affairs without reference to head-quarters. The present Government have also determined to deal with the question of water supply. This is a question, as we all know, of most vital importance to a country such as this—a country destitute of large rivers or lakes, and which is subject to long-continued droughts. It appears to me somewhat extraordinary that instead of spending such large sums of money in the construction of railways—many of which, I am sorry to say, have not been profitable—former Governments of Queensland have not taken this matter up, and taken some decided initial steps towards conserving water and increasing as far as possible the facilities for obtaining it. There is no doubt that if the matter is properly gone into the effect will be not only that large areas of country which at present are almost useless will be rendered fertile, but the climate of the colony as a whole will be to a great extent altered and rendered more equable by the conservation and storage of large areas of water. In a report which I had the honour of writing for the Government on the subject of water supply I mentioned this matter very strongly, and I am happy to say that decided steps have been taken now in order to conserve water on a large scale. Of course this subject can be gone into at very great length, but it is not my wish to weary hon. members with detailed statements as to how water should be supplied to communities, and how it should be filtered, and so forth. I think I may say, however, that we have a practical illustration in this city of what a bad water supply may be; but we should try, as far as is within our power, to supply pure water to the people throughout the colony, which will no doubt result in the increased health of the community, and in increased comfort. I see it is also the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to regulate the manufacture and supply of gas; that is a measure which I think is very much wanted in this colony, and one which should have been passed a very long time ago. The people of this city, at all events, have in the past suffered greatly from the excessive price they have had to pay for their gas, and I think it is high time some means should be adopted whereby the profits of gas companies should be to a certain extent limited, or, at all events, that a certain proportion of the profits should be divided amongst the consumers. I know it is the case in Great Britain that gas companies paying over a certain percentage have to make a rebate to their consumers, and there is no reason why the same condition of things should not apply here. It is also the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to diseases in animals, and this I also consider a very necessary measure indeed. We all know of the fatal effects of pleuro and other diseases to which stock are subjected, and by which owners have lost very large sums of money, and I think that means should be taken to prevent, to a certain extent, the read of these diseases. It is a matter of fact,

and not of theory, that pleuro can not only be very much lessened, but if proper measures are taken it can be stamped out altogether. A few weeks ago I had the honour to form one of a deputation who waited on the Colonial Secretary for the purpose of pointing out to him the necessity of instituting a laboratory, or some such scientific means, whereby the diseases which threaten our herds can be studied, and the virus necessary for the inoculation of cattle afflicted with pleuro collected and distributed. There is certainly no difficulty in carrying out any such system; it is simply carrying out the practice that has obtained for many years in the case of vaccination. It is a very easy matter to obtain virus and ascertain its purity, put it up in hermetically sealed tubes, and send it to the different parts of the colony. We are constantly getting vaccine lymph from Great Britain, and the establishment of a laboratory such as now proposed would be a very great benefit to the colony. It would increase our scientific knowledge of such diseases as I have mentioned, and no doubt would be the means of improving to a great extent the carrying capabilities of the country. I trust that the Government will consider this matter very seriously, and lose no time in establishing a laboratory such as that proposed by the deputation I refer to. It is also the intention of the Government to make some movement in the direction of establishing a university, and I think we are all agreed that the time has come when some such movement should be initiated, and I trust it may meet with all the success it deserves. There is no doubt that as our population increases it becomes more necessary to afford a higher education to the youth of the colony. At the present time they are obliged to go to Sydney, Melbourne, and elsewhere, and I shall be glad indeed to see some steps taken that will give a higher education to the youth of both sexes. I have much pleasure in moving that the Address as read by the Clerk be now adopted.

The Hon. W. HORATIO WILSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—I have great pleasure in seconding the motion moved by the Hon. Dr. Taylor, that the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech be now adopted. The Speech of His Excellency seems to deal with many very important questions, but I only intend to refer to a few of the principal topics, and especially those which have not been mentioned by Dr. Taylor. The first matter I shall refer to is the Imperial Conference, and with respect to it, although the information at our command is of a very meagre description, yet I think it is evident that substantial work has been done by our representatives, and that their labours will lead to very beneficial results to the colony. We cannot but admit that the hon. the Premier has most ably represented us, and no doubt when we have in our hands the official report of the Conference we shall be the better able to see what was done, and will then appreciate at their full value the efforts made to establish a thorough understanding of our colonial requirements. I note that Australian matters were almost exclusively discussed at the Conference, and it must be to a certain extent flattering to the vanity of Australians that, although other countries were represented, very little business relating to them was brought forward. One very material result of the meeting of these representatives seems to have been that the Foreign Office has been roused from its apathy in connection with the New Hebrides question. That is a matter that has lain in abeyance for a very long time, and I now trust that the result of what passed at the Conference will have the effect of inducing

the mother-country to do something towards bringing to an issue this important question. There were other very important matters discussed—such as the postal affairs, the question of the duplication of a telegraph cable to Australia by a route other than the existing one, and a reciprocal system for enforcing judgments. But special reference should be made to the proposal for the establishment and maintenance of a more effective squadron for the defence of floating trade in Australian waters. I am glad to notice that a preliminary agreement was arrived at, and that it will be submitted to Parliament for consideration and discussion. I must join with the Hon. Dr. Taylor in an expression of satisfaction that the Government intend to give increased facilities to intending selectors for acquiring valuable information as to the nature and quality of land open for occupation. That is a matter which has been very much neglected in the past, and it is quite time that some systematic effort should be made in order that the department of agriculture should be placed on a sound footing. I am glad to notice that the inequalities in the representation of the people, as disclosed by the census returns, are to be remedied, and that this important subject will receive the early attention of the Government. Hon. gentlemen no doubt will also be glad to consider the measures that are to be introduced for improving the administration of public business in the more remote districts. I do not believe myself that the colony in its present state is ripe for separation, and I trust that the measures which have been referred to will remove all reasonable ground for a revival of the separation agitation. The Secretary of State for the Colonies—Sir Henry Holland's—unbiased judgment ought, I think, to commend itself to the intelligent understanding of Northern Queenslanders, and, when intimating his conclusions in relation to the petition for separation, I notice that he said:—

“We are advised that it would be competent for the Imperial Parliament to pass an Act for the division of the colony; but, in our opinion, it would be very difficult if not undesirable for her Majesty's Government to adopt any such course until we had either some resolution, or address, or Bill passed by the Legislature of the colony, or unless, perhaps, some overwhelming case were made out which would justify such an interference. We do not think at present that a sufficiently strong case has been made out to justify action on the part of her Majesty's Government in the direction desired—namely, to exercise that latent power which exists in the Imperial Parliament to legislate for a colony which has a responsible Government—especially a colony in the position of Queensland—and upon a question of the kind now brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.”

Members of divisional boards will be glad to learn that the Local Government Bill, which was before this House last session, will again engage our attention. I notice also that there are other very important measures to be brought forward, such as “A Bill to provide for the registration of copyright in books.” That is a matter of great importance, because at present we have to depend entirely upon the British law, and we have no method of registration of copyright either of books or music. I see also with pleasure that the Government, following public opinion, intend to introduce a Bill for the better protection of women and girls. There is also a Bill promised to provide for the protection of workmen; that is a measure which is very much called for, because workmen and contractors at the present time have no security or lien for the work they do, and I know that the present state of the law has hitherto resulted in much mischief. It is satisfactory to know that the Government have also under consideration the desirableness of taking some steps towards the establishment of a university, and I

presume that it is intended that land should be set apart for the endowment of such an institution. At any rate, any scheme brought forward which would “be the means of imparting throughout the colony scientific and practical instruction on subjects vitally connected with the development of the mineral and agricultural resources of the colony” ought necessarily to be of great utility. Hon. gentlemen, I do not intend to take up your time by going at greater length into the other subjects mentioned in the Speech, but will content myself by seconding the adoption of the Address in Reply as read by the Clerk.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—I have to move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: Hon. gentlemen,—There seems some difficulty in dealing with the question. I may be allowed to say that I think this is one of the most unusual amendments I have ever heard of. An address to the House has been moved and seconded, and the leader of the Opposition now gets up and, without any reason whatever, moves that the debate be adjourned. I hope some hon. gentleman will give a reason why this unusual course should be adopted. I can understand that my hon. friend opposite, having been, like myself, so long out of the colony, is quite new to the ways of this Parliament; but surely he who prompted the hon. gentleman should give some reason why we should go away this afternoon without doing the work for which we met, which we have plenty of time to do, and for which, so far as I am aware, hon. members have plenty of ability. I shall oppose the adjournment of the debate unless very good grounds are given for this very strange course.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: I fully agree with the motion of my friend the Hon. Mr. Murray-Prior. I think it is the duty of hon. members to listen to what others are saying, and there is not one of us, so far as I know, with the exception of the mover and seconder, who had the slightest idea what the Address would be. I have not had time to think over the whole of the numerous questions referred to in the Speech, nor have other hon. members. Furthermore, it has been observed that it is a novel mode of proceeding to adjourn the debate at this stage, but it is anything but novel. As recently as the session before last the Address was moved and seconded, and the adjournment of the debate immediately followed. Under those circumstances I think hon. gentlemen have every right to be allowed time to consider the Address.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM: I agree with what the Hon. Mr. Gregory has said, and I can add a few words. The same hon. member who moved the adjournment of the debate this evening, the Hon. Mr. Murray-Prior, moved the adjournment of the debate on the Address in Reply in the year 1885. The Postmaster-General consented to it, and, in the short speech he made afterwards, approved of it, saying he thought it necessary that hon. members should have time not only to read the Speech but also to consider both the Speech and the Reply. I think it is a most reasonable course.

Question—That this debate be now adjourned—put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow at 3 o'clock.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at fourteen minutes to 5 o'clock.