

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 1887

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 20 September, 1887.

Petitions.—Date of Divisional Board Elections.—Motion for Adjournment.—Discourtesy to a Member by a Judge.—Cooneana Coal and Iron Company Enabling Bill—first reading.—Formal Motions.—Motion for Adjournment — Incomplete Returns. — Questions without Notice.—Electoral Districts Bill—second reading.—Adjournment.

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

PETITIONS.

DATE OF DIVISIONAL BOARD ELECTIONS.

Mr. PALMER presented a petition from the Cloncurry Divisional Board, praying the House to make arrangements for the holding of the divisional elections in some of the districts of that part of the colony at some specific time between the months of June and October, as, in consequence of the annual elections being held in January or February, when the country in ordinary seasons was more or less flooded, large numbers of electors were disfranchised. He moved that the petition be read.

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

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

Mr. LUMLEY HILL presented a petition from the Daintree Divisional Board, praying that, in consequence of the flooded state of the country in January and February, arrangements should be made for the divisional elections in some districts to be held at some specific time between the months of June and October; and moved that the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

Mr. KATES presented a petition from the Clifton Divisional Board, praying the House to arrange that the annual elections in that division should be held on the 1st of July, as the present date was most inconvenient for the electors of that district, nearly all of them being then more or less engaged in their respective pursuits, in consequence of which large numbers were disfranchised. He moved that the petition be read.

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

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

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

DISCOURTESY TO A MEMBER BY A JUDGE.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall put myself in order in what I am about to say by moving the adjournment of the House. I was very much surprised, on reading the papers last evening and this morning, to see the opinion expressed by a gentleman who occupies a very high position on the Supreme Court bench of this colony. I always thought that we lived in a free country, and that as long as any man was humble in his position and wrote a courteous, respectful letter even to the highest in the land that letter would always be received respectfully. A young man who was standing his trial in the Supreme Court called at this House last Thursday evening, sent in for me, and asked me if I would write a letter to the court stating what I knew of his character. I had known him for a period of six years, during three of which he was employed in the Wide Bay district, and worked for a gentleman on whose estate I had carried out contracts, and I had therefore an opportunity of seeing him frequently. I told the young man that I would do so. On Friday his brother again waited on me and asked me if I would go to the court. I replied that I would; but having

an appointment at Southport, and finding that the steamer would not be back till late yesterday afternoon, I subsequently informed him of these facts, and he then asked me if I would write a letter. I said I would, and accordingly wrote a letter, a copy of which I have in my hand. But on looking at the newspaper reports of the matter it would seem that the judge considers it almost a disgrace for a man to be elected to a seat in this Assembly. Well, sir, I am of a very different opinion. I think it is a very honourable position for a man to be elected to by his fellow-townsmen. The newspaper report says that—

"His Honour, on looking at the first letter, said: This is a letter written to me from Parliament House, and I will not read it. It is not right for a member of the Legislature to interfere with a judge, and I will not receive a document written in that style. I decline to read it. This one (referring to the second testimonial mentioned) is a little better; it is written from a public-house."

I will read the letter I wrote, and I think every member of this House will see that I had in no way attempted to interfere with his Honour. As regards the style of the letter, in my opinion it is most respectful, and such as should be observed in writing to a gentleman occupying so high a position. His Honour seems to have a very low estimate of this House. I believe, however, that at one time he tried to get returned by the constituency of Brisbane to a seat in this Chamber, but he only held one meeting. The greeting or reception he got then was of such a character that he never had any more meetings, and he abandoned the contest, I think, next morning.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) : Did he not go to the poll?

Mr. ANNEAR: No; he abandoned the contest next morning. I do not wish to say one disrespectful word of the judge, but I know that the honour that gentleman sought was not afforded him by the electors of Brisbane, and his first meeting was sufficient to cause him to abandon the holding of any more meetings. This is a copy of the letter I wrote to His Honour:—

"His Honour Mr. Justice Harding.

"Sir,

"Having been asked to state what I know of Henry Jackson, now found guilty of perjury, I have the honour to inform you that I have known the prisoner for a period in all about six years, three years of which time I had an opportunity of seeing him frequently when in the employ of the late Mr. W. P. Wood, in the Wide Bay district; and I have always found him to be a most respectable, honest, and industrious young man. I regret very much that unavoidable absence from town will prevent my appearing before your Honour to give my testimony on oath.

"I have the honour to be,

"Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"J. T. ANNEAR."

I think that is a respectful letter, and I am sure if that letter was written to His Excellency Sir Anthony Musgrave, the Governor of the colony, he would not have used the remarks concerning it that were used by the gentleman to whom it was addressed. I look upon the position I occupy as a member of this House as a very honourable one, and I hope my conduct will be in accord with that view of my position while I occupy it. In writing that letter I was doing what a great many men would do, and I consider a good action done with a good intention never reflects unfavourably on anyone. I need not say any more, but I think it my duty to mention this case, as I have met scores of people in Brisbane who have expressed their wonder to see me at large. They have said to me, "What sort of a letter is that you have written to his Honour? His Honour is very erratic at times,

and we wonder he has not sent for you and had you placed under arrest." That would not trouble me, however, for I know that those who do not offend the law never need fear a judge. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not know that I can throw any light upon this matter. I think it is a strange thing, however, that objection should be taken to a letter because it is addressed from the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council. Possibly the hon. member was somewhat departing from the usual practice in addressing his communications to the judge during the hearing of the case. His testimony could be given, but it is not usual to address a judge personally by letter, and that I believe is a good rule. But all that is an entirely different question from that of objecting to a letter because it was dated from the House. The judges are allowed very great latitude of expression, and very wisely so, I believe; but, for my part, I regret that the learned judge should have taken it upon himself to use such language from the bench as he is reported to have used in this case.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I really think the hon. member for Maryborough must be very thin-skinned. I think the judge may naturally have concluded, seeing that the letter was headed from the House of Parliament, that possibly the hon. member was trying to address him as a member of Parliament. I think—and the Premier, I have no doubt, will agree with me—that a member of Parliament may be no better or no worse than anybody else. The judge may have been a little indiscreet, though I do not think so. He may have thought: There may be some reason why this gentleman addresses his letter from the House of Parliament—to indicate to me that he is a member of Parliament, and I will therefore put that letter on one side. The learned judge may have considered that this gentleman was using a privilege as a member of Parliament which he did not possess. I think he showed clearly that that was his view of the case when he did not take the same objection to a letter addressed to him from a public-house. I do not think any great harm has been done the hon. member for Maryborough, nor do I think the matter of sufficient importance for discussion by this House. It is just a storm in a teapot. I will point out that it was quite within the hon. member's province to appear, and he ought to have appeared before the court, and have given evidence before the judge personally. If he had done that the whole trouble would have been avoided.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—I disagree with the remarks of the hon. leader of the Opposition. I do not think that because an hon. member dated a letter from this House it should debar the letter from being received by the judge. The leader of the Opposition said that a member of Parliament is no better and no worse than any other person. He is no worse at any rate, and I think receiving a letter from Parliament House is something better than receiving a letter from a public-house. The judge's remarks showed me, when I read them, that the man was evidently off his head. No sane man would use such remarks. Whether he is sane at present or not, I do not know; but when he used that language he was certainly not sane. I do not believe any sane man would, in the position of a judge, use such language, and that was my opinion when I read the report of the case.

Mr. ANNEAR: With the permission of the House I will withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

COONEANA RAILWAY BILL.

Mr. DONALDSON moved—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill to authorise the Cooneana Coal and Iron Company, Limited, to construct and maintain a branch line of railway connecting with the Southern and Western Railway.

Question put and passed.

FIRST READING.

Mr. DONALDSON presented the Bill and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were passed :—

By Mr. PALMER—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a Return showing the actual amount expended from the ten-million loan of 1884 for the Southern, Central, and Northern districts, to 30th June, 1887, specifying the works and dates on which such expenditure took place.

By Mr. W. BROOKES—

1. That the Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill be referred for the consideration and report of a select committee.

2. That such committee have power to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit during any adjournment of the House, and that it consist of Mr. McMaster, Mr. Chubb, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Sheridan, and the mover.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

INCOMPLETE RETURNS.—ALTERATION IN DEEDS OF GRANT.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said : Mr. Speaker,—Before passing to the Orders of the Day I wish to bring before the House a matter which, I think, is of some importance. Some time ago, on my motion, certain papers were ordered by the House to be laid on the table. I will read the order, and then the House will be able to judge for itself whether the order has been complied with or not. It is as follows :—

“That there be laid on the table of the House, all papers, minutes, and correspondence relating to applications for the following gold-mining leases on the Charters Towers Gold Field, with the Warden's reports thereon, viz :—Gold-mining leases Nos. 905, 915, 959, 960, 981, and 983.”

A return was duly laid on the table by, I believe, the Minister for Works. I have not had time to go through the whole of the papers, but I have gone through quite sufficient to convince me that the whole of the papers are not here. In one memo., signed “Edward Deighton,” mention is made of the opinion of the Attorney-General having been asked. Where is that opinion to be found? I want the Minister for Works to explain to this House why he has not published the opinion of the Attorney-General upon the leases which were so long in dispute at Charters Towers, as to the *bona fides* of the different applications for which I moved for the production of these papers. The action of the Mines Department was based upon the opinion of the Attorney-General, and that opinion is not here. I ask the Minister for Works what explanation he has to make in reference to that. I do not know whether he is or is not aware that that paper is not here; but if he is aware, his conduct is reprehensible and contrary to the order of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said : Mr. Speaker,—At the time I assumed the control of the Works Office, this matter had been for some time under consideration by my predecessor. While he was dealing with it he referred it to the Attorney-General, as mentioned in the papers, for his opinion. The Attorney-General, I believe, sent in his opinion. That opinion I did not see, but I was told that it was in the office. On going through the papers

I felt that I did not require the Attorney-General's, or any other lawyer's, opinion. It was simply a matter on which I had to exercise my own judgment, and I did not think it necessary to refer to the Attorney-General or to anybody else. If the Attorney-General's opinion had been adverse to mine I should not have followed it, for the whole thing was as clear and distinct as possible; it was not by any means a difficult question to settle. I asked the Attorney-General if he wanted his opinion sent back, telling him that I did not want it, as I was going to act upon my own judgment. He said it might be sent back. With that I sent it back to him, and acted on my judgment, the result of which is shown in the papers that have been laid on the table.

Mr. MOREHEAD said : Mr. Speaker,—We have just had a most interesting and most characteristic speech from the Minister for Works; and after hearing it I fail to see the necessity there is for a Ministry consisting of more than the Premier and the Minister for Works. I am told the Minister for Lands cannot move in his office without consulting the Minister for Works, even in the most trivial matters in connection with the Lands Department; and we have now learned from the Minister for Works that he does not care two straws about the Attorney-General's opinion. In addition to being a heaven-born Minister for Lands and a heaven-born Minister for Works he is also a much better lawyer than the Attorney-General. It is quite evident, from what fell from the hon. member, that his opinion and that of the Attorney-General did not agree; and he being, I take it, a man with more force of character, has worsted the Attorney-General in the encounter, and made him take back the opinion which, he said, he did not want, but which was asked for by his predecessor, a gentleman who—and every hon. member of the House will agree with me, I think—was quite as capable a man as the present occupant of that office. Of course, the present Minister for Works is beyond taking advice from any body, on any subject. But that is not the main question, which is, that the Minister for Works has directly disobeyed an order of the House. The House made a certain order, and that order has been deliberately and wilfully not carried out by the Minister for Works. Further than that, Mr. Speaker, when those papers were laid on the table of the House, I asked the Minister for Works whether they were the whole of the papers connected with the motion, and he said they were.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : So they are.

Mr. MOREHEAD : The hon. gentleman says, “So they are,” but that is a statement which evidently is not born out by the facts. The order was for “all” papers, and he admits that one—the opinion of the Attorney-General—has been suppressed or sent back. He does not say it is not in existence, but merely that he did not want it. Following the same lines, the hon. gentleman might excise any names, or omit any papers which the House might order to be laid on the table, but which he did not think necessary to the case. It is time the House prevented any such interference with its rights by any Minister. In this case a deliberate and successful attempt has been made by the Minister for Works to take from papers ordered by the House to be laid upon the table, a document which he did not think was necessary, and which he said was of no value. It is the first instance on record, I think, where a Minister has deliberately disobeyed an order of the House, and not only deliberately disobeyed it, but,

when challenged as to that order having been fully complied with, has assured the House that it was. And the House would have been misled if it had not been for the close examination which has been given to the documents by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan. I hope we shall have from the Premier some more satisfactory explanation as to this most extraordinary conduct on the part of the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. H. Jordan) said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the hon. leader of the Opposition should have given the House to understand what is the foundation for the extraordinary statement he has made—that the Minister for Lands does not venture to do anything without consulting the Minister for Works.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Your answers to deputations show it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: What deputations?

Mr. MOREHEAD: There was one in yesterday's paper.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think I understand. I read the paragraph in the paper this morning to which the hon. member refers; it did not set forth what I said. There was no reporter present in the office when I met that deputation, and the words put in my mouth are not given correctly—that I would consult my colleague. I said nothing of the kind; and if the hon. leader of the Opposition has no better foundation for his statements as to what took place at a deputation than a report by someone who was not present, I think it would be better if he did not state what took place. There is no foundation whatever for what the hon. gentleman has said—that I do not venture to do anything without consulting the Minister for Works. I have not consulted the Minister for Works, I think, on a single question that has come before me—and a good many questions have come before me—nor am I likely to do so, unless there is some special reason for it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I read in the newspaper what the hon. gentleman read. If he saw that, why did he not contradict it?

The PREMIER: That would be an endless task.

Mr. MOREHEAD: This misreporting always takes place with the present Ministry; they are always misrepresented by the Press.

The PREMIER: No; by the opposite side of the House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There was no reporter present, and I did not say I would consult my colleague.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to know if the Premier is going to make any observation on this.

The PREMIER: I know nothing at all about it, except what has just been said.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: With regard to this matter of disregarding the law, I should like to know something about the alteration which has been made in title-deeds lately. Attention has been called to it—I do not mean by leading articles in the paper, which I do not pay much attention to, or in reports of deputations, which I do not pay much attention to, because they may be misreported, but by letters in the paper from well-known gentlemen of this town, signed by their names, written in all coolness and in all deliberation, and complaining that the title-deeds which are now got for registration, and now come from the Lands Office, have been altered in rather an important way. The words

“their heirs for ever” have been left out, so as to convey an impression that the deeds only constitute a lifetime interest in any property that has been acquired. I do not know if this is an innovation of the late Minister for Lands; I think it came in about his time. I do not know whether he in his wisdom thought he could devise a better tenure, a better security, a better deed than had been in existence almost since the world began, or since the earliest ages of civilisation. These words were thought to be necessary generations ago; they have always been used, and now suddenly they are left out. If they were surplusage I must say I do not think there was any harm in them; and an omission of that nature is likely to arouse suspicion, and damage the holders of the new title-deeds as against the holders of the old deeds. I do not think the outside public appreciate the Minister for Works' idea of his legal knowledge as being such that he can afford to dispense with the advice of the Crown law officers or the Attorney-General. I look upon the law as an evil, but a very necessary evil, and I think that in tampering with articles of that kind we are treading on very dangerous ground.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not propose to say anything about the matter raised by the hon. member for Townsville, because I do not know anything about it. I do not know anything about the case referred to, or about the opinion of the Attorney-General, who is not now here. I believe it was simply a question of priority, and the Minister for Mines thought the first applicant ought to have the prior right to consideration. I do not think that is a matter on which legal opinion was wanted.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Why was it asked?

The PREMIER: I do not know whether it is the same matter, but I remember my late colleague, Mr. Miles, spoke to me about a case in which he was bothered by a lot of correspondence, and I said, “Give it to the first applicant.” I understood he had done so. With respect to the matter raised by the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, there is some strange delusion apparently prevailing in the minds of some persons. The old form of conveyance, when people took an estate in fee-simple, as it is called, was to convey to them and their heirs—that meant to them as long as they lived and the people who according to law succeeded them after they died. The persons who succeeded them after they died, if they did not make a will, were called heirs; consequently “heirs” was the right word to use. But by an Act passed here in 1877 we made a different law, and provided that if they died without making a will the land should not go to heirs, but should go to administrators—that is, the descent of real property was put on precisely the same footing as the descent of personal property. Now, if any one were to speak of personal property as being given to a man and his heirs, you would be able to conjecture what he meant; but you would know he did not understand the words he was using, and it seems just as absurd, now that we have made real property descend in the same way as personal property, to talk about giving it to a man and his heirs as it would be in an agreement for the sale of a cow to agree to sell it to a man and his heirs. For my own part, Mr. Speaker, I have had to do with a great many legal instruments, and in no instance since 1877 where they have been the subject of my revision have I allowed the word “heirs” to be used in any matter relating to property in Queensland. So far as regards the representatives of individuals who might be out of this

country, my rule has been to let the word "heirs" remain, because in respect of land out of Queensland they may have heirs; but the word "heirs" as a word used with respect to land in Queensland has no proper meaning. If the word is used it does not mean heirs; it means something else; and it would have to be inferred that the person who used it did not exactly know what he ought to say, and therefore that when he used the word "heirs" he meant administrators. That being what "heirs" means, if it means anything, it appears to me just as well to use the proper word in the first instance, and not use a wrong word which will have to be interpreted to mean the same as the right word. I have not a very clear recollection of the change taking place in the deeds of grant. I thought for a moment that it was by a regulation under the Lands Act, but I have not the slightest doubt that I was responsible for it personally, though I cannot distinctly remember doing it. I have not the slightest doubt that it is the right thing, and I am sure that is the opinion of everyone who knows anything about the principle.

Mr. DICKSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am glad the hon. member for Cook has brought this matter before the House. I had intended to speak upon it when we were discussing the estimates of the Real Property Office, as it would be more convenient to do so in committee, when we might have had an explanation from the Premier, perhaps, a little fuller than that which he has now given. However, I am sure that what he has said will tend to a great extent to allay the uneasiness which has arisen as to the tenure under which people hold their freehold property. There is a feeling of uncertainty in this direction. The regulations under the Act of 1876—

The PREMIER: 1877.

Mr. DICKSON: No, 1876. That Act prescribes a certain form for deeds of grant, and in it the words "heirs and assigns for ever" are set forth as being the precise form in which Crown grants should be issued for all land alienated under that Act. I have had Crown grants submitted to me by parties who have taken up land under that Act and obtained deeds in which the word "heirs" had been erased and "administrators" had been inserted, and a feeling of uncertainty has arisen as to whether they were complete when that was the form expressly set forth in the schedule of the Act—that any alteration unauthorised by the Legislature should have been made in connection with the form.

The PREMIER: Surely it is not in the schedule to the Act?

Mr. DICKSON: Yes. It says, "The form contained in Schedule P of those regulations shall be the form of deed of grant issued under the provisions of the Act." This being a departure from that form has given rise to the present uncertainty. I am very glad the Premier has made the statement he has, showing that the passing of the Act of 1877 has made it necessary that the word "administrators" should be inserted in lieu of "heirs and assigns." I have no doubt that that explanation will tend to allay existing anxiety. At the same time it is very unfortunate to find that the Real Property Office has not been apprised of the legal validity of this change, because they have refused to enter up transmission on deeds of grant in consequence of "heirs and assigns" having been erased and "administrators" being inserted without any legislative authority. It is, therefore, a matter of considerable interest, and now that it has been brought under notice I trust that the hon. the Premier will see that the Real Property Office is properly

advised, and that no delay will take place in the registration of titles. From the requisitions that have issued from the Real Property Office it seemed to be a legal question as to whether the interpolation of "administrators" was correct. At any rate there is some hitch between the Lands Department and the Real Property Office, and possibly the Crown Law Officers, because the requisition refers the person claiming to register his title to the Crown Law Officers; so that the departments are not in accord in the matter. It is therefore highly desirable that it should be looked into, and that the altered form dealing with deeds of grant should be legalised without further delay.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears that the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, has revealed a very serious state of things. It appears that the Minister for Works has placed himself above the authority of this House. He has deliberately refused to obey an order of this House, and he has also misinformed the House. Certain papers were ordered by this House to be produced; those papers were not produced, and consequently the order was disobeyed. An hon. member moved for all the papers connected with a certain matter; the Minister for Works laid certain papers on the table, and now he informs the House that he knew one of the papers was not amongst them. I certainly think the House should take some action in the matter. It looks all the more strange because from what I have heard I have every reason to believe that if all the papers are produced they will certainly not reflect credit upon the Ministry.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—In regard to the matter to which the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, has referred, I think the Minister for Works will see that what he has admitted he has done might lead to very bad results. I do not wish it for a moment to be thought that I accuse him of having desired to do anything that is not quite right, but, sir, if a Minister having a document in his possession such as the one to which reference has been made—the opinion of the Attorney-General in connection with certain transactions—if he has a right to send that back and say, "I don't want this; I don't wish to keep this paper," then of course he might say equally well that he did not want to keep some other of the papers which might perhaps have an important bearing on the subject. The object of getting the papers has scarcely been referred to. That object is to have the whole of the evidence connected with the subject available to the House, and surely the House has a right to have all the evidence that is available placed before it in connection with a subject upon which it is intended to institute inquiries. In this case it appears to have been known before the papers were asked for that the Attorney-General had given his opinion in connection with them, and that being the case of course reference could be made to the absence of that document. But, sir, suppose at some future time a Minister who wished to act dishonestly was asked to produce certain papers in connection with a subject in which his action was not above suspicion, he might surreptitiously remove some of those papers and destroy them—because if any one paper is taken away connected with a matter of that kind any other may be taken away. I think it is only right, as the subject has been brought up, that the House should express its dissent from the treating of any paper on a subject of that kind as if it did not belong to it. It may form a very bad precedent which may be taken advantage of by any Minister in aftertimes, if he desired, to suppress certain papers. I think, sir, that if

this opinion of the Attorney-General has not been destroyed it should still be produced to the House, as it was the order of the House that it as well as all other papers should be produced.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I am extremely sorry that the hon. the Minister for Works on his advent to the administration of the Mines Department—knowing, as he does, very little about mining—should have taken such very high-handed procedure as he has done in this his first step, I might almost say. I am certain that he means no harm, but we know that the road to a certain place is “paved with good intentions,” and however good his intentions may be, that does not prevent the chance of injustice being done, more especially, as I say, he is utterly unacquainted with mining. Now, the question is not so simple as the Premier seems to think—a mere question of priority. If it was simply that, then there would be no dispute; but there is something more than a mere question of priority. It was a question which was referred to the warden at Charters Towers, and it was so difficult for him to decide that he recommended the Minister to allow the matter to be decided by ballot, but at the same time recommending strongly that the gentleman who did not get the lease should get it. That is in opposition to the Minister for Works. Now, this warden has had ten or twelve years’ experience in the administration of goldfields, and here we find in one of his reports that he speaks very highly of the party who did not get the lease, and thinks he ought to get it. In addition to that, the Chamber of Commerce at Charters Towers petitioned the Minister to grant the lease to the person who did not get it. They know something about the justice of the case, and they know something about mining—more, I should probably think, than the Minister for Works. In addition to that, again, the Committee of the Miners’ Union at Charters Towers sends a petition to the Minister for Works asking him to give the lease to a certain party; and, still more than that, 1,600 miners holding miners’ rights send a petition down against the very action which the Minister for Works took immediately he went into the Works Department.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Was he not right?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I do not say whether he was right or whether he was wrong; but I think it would have been much better if the hon. gentleman had asked the House to have the papers printed, so that members might read them, and judge for themselves. If he will not do that I shall take an opportunity of reading them to the House, and they will then be printed through the gentlemen upstairs. Whether the Minister was right or wrong, in the face of all these adverse opinions all the papers should be produced. I do not pretend to say whether the Minister was right or wrong, but I say that the opinion of the Attorney-General, let it be worthless or not in the mind of the Minister for Works, should have been tabled with the rest of the papers. I am given to understand that the opinion of the Attorney-General was asked for before the present Minister occupied the position in the Works Office; but, in that case, where was the Under Secretary? Was he not able to advise the Minister? Is the hon. gentleman above taking advice from the Under Secretary as well as from the Attorney-General? Surely a man cannot become a capable administrator in one day by being simply dubbed “Minister for Mines.” The mere title does not make him an administrator. I hope the hon. gentleman will move that these papers be printed with the Attorney-General’s opinion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, certainly.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I beg to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House I will ask the Colonial Secretary whether he will move that the returns which he laid on the table of the House, relative to newspaper advertising, be printed?

The PREMIER: He did not lay them on the table.

Mr. NORTON: They were laid on the table.

The PREMIER: Not formally laid on the table.

Mr. NORTON: I will ask the hon. gentleman whether he will formally lay them on the table and have them printed, so that the information may be in the hands of members at some future time? Although they are printed in *Hansard*, it may be more convenient to have them in a separate paper.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no objection to laying them on the table to-morrow.

Mr. DICKSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I would ask the Premier, without notice, if the maps referring to the new electoral districts are to be issued? I understood from something he said last week that hon. members could obtain the maps of the smaller electorates from the Printing Office, but I find they are not available.

The PREMIER: At the Colonial Secretary’s Office.

Mr. DICKSON: I was told that they had been issued.

The PREMIER: There are a lot in my office, and I wondered that hon. members had not asked for them.

Mr. ALLAN: I asked for one at the Colonial Secretary’s Office and could not get it.

The PREMIER: You can get it now.

Mr. CHUBB: I was there on Friday and could not get what I asked for, and I was there again this morning.

Mr. HAMILTON: I have just written for one to the Printing Office, and am told that there are none in stock. I received a list of maps, but the one defining the various electorates I have not received.

Mr. NORTON: Why not issue them to hon. members?

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

SECOND READING.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it will be generally admitted by members on both sides of this House that the necessity for a Redistribution Bill has arisen; in fact, I would go further and say that the necessity arose some considerable time back—a period approaching two years ago—and I think it is to be regretted that the present occupants of the Treasury benches should have waited until this period of their own existence and the existence of the Parliament before introducing such an important measure. Because it cannot be denied that the present Ministry, both through internal dissension and outside opposition, has been discredited before the country; in fact, the Premier has himself admitted that the Government only occupy their present position at the strong

request—or mandate, I think he called it—of a certain section of the House who differ from the Government policy on several important points. While admitting the necessity for a Redistribution Bill, it is not my intention to admit either the justice or the propriety of the measure now under discussion. I was, and I am sure every other member of this House was, under the impression that the Government intended in introducing this Bill to make it part and parcel of their policy with regard to dealing out justice to the northern portion of the colony, but I think in that particular it will be shown that the Bill does not meet the case. The same objection can also be sustained against the way in which the Central district and the pastoral districts generally are proposed to be treated. I object to this Bill *ab initio*—that is, to the basis taken by the Premier as the proper basis of representation. It is generally admitted that the adult male population should be made the main basis of representation in this colony. They are those to whom we give the right to vote, and they are the ones who return us—who practically legislate for the colony; but in order to get what I maintain is a false basis of representation, the Premier ingeniously weaves into his system the total population of the various electorates of the colony. I would point out further that the Premier in framing his electoral districts or groups has ingeniously managed to throw an amount of representation in excess of that already prevailing into the metropolitan and surrounding boroughs, and by so doing has done an injustice to other parts of the colony. Now, it is of course theoretically a very right and proper thing that there should be a quota of representation, and the Premier assumes, or endeavours to make this House and the country believe, that he has nearly succeeded in that respect in the present measure; but even had he done so, which I deny, I say the position of this colony—a young and growing country—makes it impossible to apply any such system as he proposes. If such a system were applicable anywhere it appears to me that it would be applicable in the thickly populated nations of the world; and that being admitted, one would imagine that in England, Scotland, and Wales—where we may say the maximum population has been arrived at—such a system would prevail; but if we analyse the electorates of Great Britain we find that nothing of the sort prevails there, but a very different state of affairs. For instance, in London and other large cities the quota of representation is much larger as regards population than in the outlying and thinly peopled portions of the British Islands, and if that principle is good in England it ought to tell here with tenfold force. The bulk of our population is on the coast, and full consideration should be given to the sparsely populated portions lying in the interior. That has been the practice in the past, and I had hoped it would have been continued in the future, but it is not so; and if hon. gentlemen look at the tables they will see that it is not the case. And not only is their position not in any way made as good as it was—the position of those who occupy the larger territory with a smaller population—but it is materially worse under this measure. They will find that the metropolitan and surrounding electorates are placed in a much better position as regards representation. If hon. gentlemen will look at what is called the metropolitan group they will find that that group, with six members, has an average total population of 7,984 for each representative, according to the census of 1886, and an average adult rate of population of 2,324. Now, if we look at the proposal under the Bill we see that the metropolitan group is increased by one member, while the total population is diminished from 7,984 to 7,077,

and the adult male population is reduced from 2,324 to 2,060. But that is not all the jugglery that has been played with regard to the metropolitan and surrounding constituencies. We find there are put into the East Moreton group four electorates which cannot be considered as much better than suburbs of the metropolis—Bulimba, Enoggera, Toombul, and Toowong—though they have as much to do with East Moreton as with Brisbane, neither more nor less. They are to all intents and purposes suburbs more or less extensive of the city of Brisbane.

The PREMIER: Is Cleveland?

Mr. MOREHEAD: I have not stated that.

The PREMIER: Cleveland is in the Bulimba electorate.

Mr. MOREHEAD: So far as the bulk of the population residing in the electorate of Bulimba is concerned it is practically an adjunct of Brisbane; and so are Enoggera, Toombul, and Toowong. And you will find, Mr. Speaker, that this group, of which these four electorates form a part, represent for each member an average total population of 5,204, and an adult male population of 1,361; and they will return sixteen members as against twelve before. In fact, the whole increase of representation in the southern portion of the colony is thrown into the metropolis and its suburbs. Now, when we come to the Northern division of the colony we find that there is an increase from ten to fourteen members, and we find that the total population represented by each member is 3,477, and the adult male population 1,399. I maintain, sir, that, at any rate so far as regards the northern and outlying portions of the colony, the adult male basis is the only fair basis upon which you can frame a measure dealing with the representation of the people in Parliament. Now we will take the Darling Downs group. We find eight members and an average adult male population of 1,063. Now, on the same principle, sir, the Northern division should have had about 184 members.

The PREMIER: On the same principle as what?

Mr. MOREHEAD: On the same principle as the Darling Downs. I am comparing the discrepancies between the different groups to show that while there is an apparent intention to deal out what is supposed to be even-handed justice in this imaginary quota, that it is not so, Mr. Speaker. Now, in regard to the advantage of comparing them with another group of Southern electorates, if hon. members will look at the Wide Bay and Burnett group they will find that there are nine members representing an adult male population of 1,202. Assuming that the Northern division is to be treated in the same way, it will be entitled to 153 members; so that I think it can be clearly pointed out that as regards the representation to be given to the North under this Bill, as compared with what is to be given in the South to those three districts—the Metropolitan, the Wide Bay and Burnett, and the Darling Downs groups—they have not got their fair share. Now, sir, there are other grave discrepancies also in connection with this proposed distribution of members. I will take the Southern pastoral group, for which there are four members, the increase to that division being caused by the enormous growth of the Warrego district. The average total population represented by each member is 3,521, and the adult male, 1,523. On the same adult basis as the Wide Bay and Burnett group, this Southern pastoral group is entitled to five members, or on the same basis as the Darling Downs group, to six members; but by this proposition

it is only to receive four members. Coming to the Central division, one member is to be taken away from it—why, I do not know, because if eleven members are granted to that division, its quota will be as high as that of the Darling Downs group, and I think it cannot be too strongly impressed upon this House that a vast difference exists, in my mind at least, in electoral representation between individuals at a distance and individuals who are close in. The hon. Premier knows as well as I do, and as has been said over and over again, that any metropolitan district would be well represented if it had no member of its own at all. We know perfectly well that Brisbane would be well represented by every member in the House, and that principle is recognised to its fullest extent in England. Take the case of the city of London, the number of registered electors in which is over 29,000, who only return, I think, two members. If we go to another place which is not London, but which is called Kilkenny, hon. members will find that it returns one member for something under 1,900 registered voters. Now, if this principle is recognised in a thickly populated country, I think it ought to receive very full recognition in a country such as this. And it has always been recognised in previous electoral Acts. I recollect perfectly well when I first joined this House, that on the electoral roll of the Mitchell district there were something under 100 voters—93, I think—of which about 26 only voted. But the Government of that day did not for that reason refuse representation to a large outlying and important district. Now, by the present project we are all to be placed in the same basket—those who have borne the heat and burden of the day—the pioneers—and those who have grown up in the large towns. They are all having exactly the same, or as nearly as possible the same, electoral rights and privileges, which I say is a gross injustice. Well, sir, while on the subject of these groups, and the districts grouped in this Bill, I would like to know how the Government have arrived at the populations of these various subdivisions or new electorates.

The PREMIER: Through the Registrar-General.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is impossible for the Registrar-General to have made the computation in regard to some of these divisions.

The PREMIER: Yes; the whole of them.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Well, sir, there is a see-saw line, which I will ask hon. members to look at on the map, showing the western and nearly all the southern, in fact all the southern, boundaries of the Maranoa district. Just look at that boundary. I should like to see the Registrar-General at the bar of the House and ask him to explain how he arrived at the population embraced, or cut off by those lines—the western and southern boundaries of the Maranoa district.

The PREMIER: They are run boundaries.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am aware of that; but I would like to know how the Registrar-General discovered how many people were in each of those runs.

The PREMIER: By the census.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The census would not show it. In an important measure like this, in which we not only deal with the question of distributing members, but of considerably increasing their number, I think the Government ought to give us the fullest information, and, as nearly as possible, the exact population to be included within any boundary. I am inclined to believe that that has been done in the most perfunctory manner.

The PREMIER: I have every reason to believe it has not.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I would like to believe it also; but it would not in any way alter the arguments based upon these figures. It might turn out in future that the population is either in excess of, or below, what the Registrar-General estimates it to be. To come to really the great question—namely, how will this redistribution affect the position of Northern members in relation to the Central and Southern members?—we find that the effect of the Bill, if it becomes law, will be this: Forty-four members will be given to the South, which is practically an increase of five members, because one will be taken from the Central division. The Central districts are included in this paper with the Southern division. I think we must exclude them from the North, because even the most ardent advocates of separation can hardly expect to include the Central districts in the Northern colony. The Bill gives an increase of five members to the South and of four to the North; the actual division being forty-four Southern members and twenty-four Northern and Central members. Excluding the Central members from the Northern, there will be left fourteen Northern members; a state of affairs very much to be deprecated, and which, under a better classification or division of representative rights, would have been prevented. I think there is not a single member, outside of those who represent the city of Brisbane and its suburbs, who will not deprecate strongly this tremendous voting power that will be given to Brisbane—this tremendous centralising power—if the Bill pass in its present state. I fully expected that the hon. gentleman would have seen his way, instead of aggregating as much as he could the representative power of the colony in Brisbane and its surroundings, and knowing what dire effects have been produced by it in the past—knowing that the Southern Government has led, to a great extent, to the cry for territorial separation—that if he had an opportunity of giving fair representation to the different portions of the colony, he would have seen his way to increase very largely the quota of the representatives allotted to the Northern and outside districts. But on the contrary, as I have very clearly pointed out, he has given to individuals in and around Brisbane an increase of voting power, and has, as far as possible, diminished the voting power of those in the outside and Northern districts. No doubt the hon. gentleman will be able to explain the strange inconsistencies in these figures which have been furnished to the hon. members in the tables which have been circulated. I shall be very glad to hear his explanation of the matter, and to learn why the Darling Downs group of electorates and the Wide Bay and Burnett group have been so favoured as against other portions of the colony, and also, of course, the more serious question of why such an enormously increased representation is proposed to be given to the metropolis and the surrounding districts. With regard to the alterations of the boundaries of the different electoral districts, it is, of course, utterly impossible to discuss those on the second reading of the Bill. We have not yet had maps supplied to us to enable us to arrive at any just opinion as to the propriety or otherwise of those boundaries. I have received several letters protesting against the alterations which have been made in certain districts, but not having a map sufficiently large to examine them closely, I have not been able to do anything in the matter. I think that if the maps are ready they should be issued to members and not kept in the office of the Premier. They ought to have been

distributed with the other parliamentary papers. I would point out, in respect to the proposed divisions of the colony which are located round about the metropolis and the more thickly populated portions of Southern Queensland, that the hon. gentleman stated the other night, as I understood him, that he would have the maps of those districts available to the members representing them, but that there were not enough for every member to get one. I have not received those maps, and from that I conclude that I have not misunderstood the hon. gentleman, but that what I have just stated is correct.

The PREMIER: Yes; they could not be got ready in time.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The matter of the representation of any one of those districts does not centre in the member who represents it; and I think every member of the House is entitled to have as full a map, and on as large a scale as possible, of every division in the colony, whether in a metropolitan, a southern, a central, or a northern district. As we are not in possession of such maps it will be impossible to discuss the various matters of the boundaries in the House; but we shall, no doubt, be able to give them fuller consideration when we get into committee. Of this I am sure: that the alterations will require very great attention and careful consideration. I believe myself that the Bill has been brought in in too much of a hurry; that the boundaries have been fixed in a perfunctory way without sufficient information; and that sufficient time has not been taken to prepare the measure either as to its general scheme or in its details. I am perfectly certain that unless substantial justice is given to those whom I have described as feeling themselves unfairly dealt with in this Bill great dissatisfaction will be produced. I feel confident, however, that hon. members will not readily consent to this centralising scheme of representations proposed by the Premier. I am perfectly certain that the members of the Northern, Central, and outside districts, and a large number of those members who sit at the back of the Premier, will not deliberately agree to what I consider is a great injustice done in this Bill. I feel sure that we may depend on their assistance in making this Bill much more complete than it is at present. Let not the Premier understand that there is any intention on the part of the Opposition to oppose a just redistribution of the electorates. But it is their intention not to be parties, if they can help it, to doing any injustice, and I maintain that an injustice is done by this measure to the Northern and outside districts, and to almost every district outside of Brisbane; and the Opposition intend, if possible, to remedy that in the Bill. I shall not detain the House any longer beyond adding that I do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill. When we get into committee we can deal with the figures with respect to the various divisions, and also with the question of boundaries, and I hope that the Bill in an amended form will become law.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—We have had a long rambling speech from the leader of the Opposition, condemning generally the Bill brought forward by the Government, but the hon. gentleman has not particularised anything; he has not pointed out any particular part that he thinks wrong. All that he says is that the measure is wrong generally, and if he had summed up his whole speech in the old rhyme—

"The reason why I cannot tell,
But this I know, and know full well,
I do not like you, Dr. Fell"—

it would have explained the state of his mind to a nicety. However, I will not go to that length,

as there is one point that he said he disagreed with in principle. He says that the redistribution ought to be based on the adult male population basis only. Of course that is a very clear and distinct issue. It is one on which the Government do not agree with the hon. gentleman, and it is one on which I disagree with him entirely. The general population basis is the one on which redistribution or electoral Bills ought to be founded entirely. The hon. gentleman also stated that the way in which electorates are brought out, not only with reference to general population but also with regard to the adult population, is extraordinary. He has tried, very unfairly I think, to make people outside believe—for members in the House who have the figures to examine will not be deceived by his statement—that the Government have acted with bad motives towards the North, and have robbed them of a fair share of representation. Let hon. members look at the population of the different electorates. Take Bowen, the first on the list. They will see that it has the smallest population of any electorate in the whole colony, from one end to the other, and in many other districts we find that the Northern electorates are, both in regard to their general population as well as their adult population, small as compared with some of the Southern electorates. I maintain, moreover, that the steady, fixed population of the Southern and Central districts deserves more consideration in this Bill, as compared with the comparatively migratory population of the Northern districts.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The wandering digger!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I believe that a settled man, who has a wife and family dependent upon him, is a much more important factor in the social condition of the colony than any wandering digger, however important he may ultimately become. He will, no doubt, settle down some day, and then he will add very much to his value and the security he gives to the State for the powers conferred upon him by this Bill. With reference to the squatting districts, one never knows the number of men on the roll there. It may be 500 in one year, and anyone having a personal knowledge of the men in the district might be able to strike off 150 after the rolls are made up. In my own district, the electorate of Leichhardt, so little was known of the electors there by those who revised the rolls, that I could pick out 120 names of men who had gone away from that district, some of them for many years. I know, from my own personal knowledge, of men who went to California eight or nine years previously. And that kind of thing occurs, not in one district alone, but in many districts. The hon. gentleman also objected to the arrangement by which the metropolitan districts are allowed to have so many representatives. But when I look at the average total population of 7,077, and average adult male population of 2,060 to each member, it is a very much larger number than in any other electorate in the country—in some instances double, and in almost every instance one-third more. If the hon. gentleman intended that the metropolitan constituencies, from the mere fact of their being nearer the seat of Government, were to be absolutely disfranchised, I could understand the force of his arguments. Unless that is what he meant there can be no object in his remarks. It is admitted by everybody that constituencies near the seat of Government have opportunities of bringing their wishes and wants more frequently and more forcibly before Parliament than the outlying districts, and that view is given effect to in the distribution shown in this Bill, for not only the metropolitan districts, but

the districts of East and West Moreton also, have a larger proportion of population than the outlying districts of the colony. I do not think myself that there is anything in that principle at all, though it is here fully recognised, because I think members generally of this House would be more disposed to consider the requests and wants of the outside districts, even of individuals, than similar or more numerous signed demands of large numbers in the vicinity of the seat of government.

Mr. DONALDSON: Is that your experience?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know that while I was a resident of the outside districts, for the last five-and-twenty years, I never had to complain of the indifference of the Legislature to the wants of those districts of the colony when it was appealed to.

Mr. DONALDSON: They were probably too attentive to you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know of any other objections raised by the hon. member, though I listened to him very carefully. The only points to which he seemed to address his objections were the arrangements of the different constituencies as to members, and to the fact of their not having been apportioned solely upon the adult population of the districts as opposed to the general population. So far as anyone could tell from the figures, the electorates under the Bill might have been just as much arranged upon the adult population as upon the general population. I myself was very much astonished to see the result of the figures as brought out by the Premier, because I expected a very much greater disproportion than appears here in that respect. I cannot imagine anything that would give greater satisfaction to every district in the colony. No doubt many people will want a corner cut off a district here and a portion included in another place, but if all these things are to be attended to it would be better to leave it to every hon. member to cut out his own constituency. So far as I have had any experience of the opinions of members of Parliament and others as to the way in which the boundaries of the different districts should be arranged, I find that everyone has some particular corner or constituent parts he would like to have retained in his electorate and some that he would like to exclude. We should set aside these small things and look at the question in a general and broad way, and see if the proposal is fair and reasonable in its general principles and in the way in which the boundaries have been adjusted. As to the Central districts, of course there was no hope for the Leichhardt, and it had to be reduced by one member on account of the population in it.

Mr. DONALDSON: They will reduce it by another.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If they do, and if I lose my seat, it will be their loss not mine. I may say the re-arrangement of the Central districts is generally remarkably good. Normanby had, of course, to be reduced, and is altered by taking in something out of the Blackall electorate; and in many other directions the electorates had to be re-arranged in such a way as to apportion the population fairly. Some of them had an immensely larger proportion of population than they should have, and in others the population was ridiculously small. A portion of the Leichhardt district should properly belong to Maranoa, and it has been so altered. Many on the Upper Dawson go to the Central Railway for their goods, and persons in another portion of the electorate get their goods and stock to and fro on the Southern and Western line, above Miles and Chinchilla, and that portion has rightly been added to the Maranoa district. I do not think

there is a station to be found above the brow of Bigge's Range that goes to Rockhampton for supplies. I need not say any more, as I think I have answered all the objections the hon. gentleman made. Any objections he raised were general ones, but by the time the Bill gets into committee he may have some special objections to urge, and it will be then time enough to answer them.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—Considerable stress has been laid by both the previous speakers upon representation by population, either general or adult male; but there are other considerations which should also be taken into account, and which, I believe, have been wholly omitted from any recognition in this Bill. I will venture to quote from one of the Right Hon. Mr. Gladstone's speeches in Midlothian, made during his celebrated electoral campaign in Midlothian in the year 1879. Speaking upon the Redistribution Bill he proposed to bring in then, he said:—

"Now, gentlemen, besides the consideration of population, which I think to be the main one, and besides the consideration of revenue, which also has some importance, there is another element that enters into the equitable examination of the question, and that is the element of distance. A small number of representatives are more effective when they are close to the seat of government than when they are far from the seat of government. On that account it is that London and the metropolitan district, with their vast population of four millions, or one-sixth of the whole population of England and Wales, do not influence the return of more than between thirty and forty members, which would only be about one-twelfth or one-thirteenth of the population of England and Wales. It is thus recognised that nearness is a reason for having a more limited number of members, and consequently that distance constitutes a claim for a larger number of members than the population would warrant."

If this obtains in the old country where the distances are very much more limited than in this colony, how much more should it obtain here? I do not think anyone will deny that this is the idea of a true liberal politician, spoken too in the days when he was almost in the zenith of his strength and of his fame. I do not think anyone will deny that these axioms he laid down were carefully calculated and the result of a well-balanced mind. I say I object to this Redistribution Bill upon these grounds, and on the ground that the capital, and the immediate vicinity of it, is over-represented in comparison to the far-away districts—the Central and Northern districts. In a matter of this kind, if the representatives of Central and Northern electorates want to have their districts represented in a way satisfactory to them and the people whom they represent—remembering the overwhelming majority of the Southern representatives—they must pull hand in hand together. Those districts are separated, on the map hanging on the wall, by a broad line from east to west. At present the country north of that line has twenty-one members; if the Bill pass in its present form it will have twenty-four. The present number of members south of the line is thirty-eight; if the Bill become law it will be forty-four. There is an increase of six in the Southern division as against three in the Central and Northern divisions combined. That will be the result of this Bill, and I maintain that it is obviously unfair to those districts which are far away—districts which have often to come to Brisbane to find their own representatives—that, in addition to their other disabilities they should be wiped out and forgotten solely on account of the population test, whether adult male or any other. In the Central and Southern pastoral districts the population basis was made out at a most inopportune time, when men in those districts had actually been driven out of employment through the serious and protracted drought, which had

raged for something like three years; and there was also, in addition to that, the uncertainty as to the future owing to the new land legislation which had been just carried. When the census was taken those districts were actually depopulated, and no reliable information could have been obtained as to the exact state of the population. In a country like this population is not the only thing to be taken into consideration in settling a question of this kind. In a country like this, where we see a district coming specially forward and making greater strides towards the wealth and prosperity of the producing interests of the colony, there we should allot new members—more especially if there is to be any addition to the number of members of the House, as to the expediency of which I am doubtful. I have always held this view, and in speaking in this way I am only consistent with the first speech I ever made in this House. That was in 1879. Some reference having been made to a second member for the Valley, I said:—

“With reference to the representation of Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, from the force of circumstances, had become their capital, and they were all proud of it; in the interior they were all anxious to see it advance. It had always got this advantage, that the whole of this branch of the Legislature was well acquainted with its wants, and would see that it had justice done to it;”—

I might have added that the other branch of the Legislature, too, had every opportunity of seeing what those wants were, and of doing justice to the place—

“whereas, with respect to the outside districts, there were not more than ten, out of a House of fifty-five members, who had ever had the opportunity of judging from personal experience of what they were called upon to legislate for such districts.”

I maintain that pretty nearly the same proportion of ignorance exists now, I am sorry to say, among members of the House. It is all very well for the Minister for Works to say that during his twenty-five years' experience in the outside districts they have always had their wants promptly attended to. My experience in the outside districts lies within a year of that of the Minister for Works, and I can assure him that during the whole of that period the wants of those districts were almost completely ignored. However, there is this much to be said for the men of those districts in those days: they did pretty well what they wanted for themselves; they did not come crying out to the Government for everything they wanted. They knew their voices would not be heard, so they put their shoulders to the wheel themselves and did a great deal of what now falls upon the Government; for people, by the clamour of their tongues and the weight of their votes, can make the Government do things which I have no doubt it is sometimes sorry it has got to do. I do not intend to detain the House by making a long speech on the Bill, neither do I intend to oppose the second reading of it; but I hope it will be greatly modified and very considerably altered before it comes out of committee. I hope due regard will be paid to the more distant electorates of the colony. I cannot learn that anybody has been consulted about the fixing of the new boundaries or the alteration of the old ones. Hon. members have not been taken into the confidence of the Government even with regard to their own constituencies. My own constituency—the Cook—is one which badly wants additional representation. It wants subdividing, and I consider it is fairly entitled to three members. Under this Bill it gets three members, but it has a lot of surplus country and surplus population thrown into it in a way which is not at all desirable.

The PREMIER: Will you suggest something else?

1887—2 R

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: You may depend I will, when the Bill gets into committee.

The PREMIER: You can suggest nothing that has not already had the most careful consideration.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I do not know when you did it. A very large and important portion of my electorate is absolutely disfranchised. Port Douglas, for instance, is tacked on to the Cairns electorate. A large proportion of the population is in the immediate vicinity of Cairns, and if this Bill pass, Port Douglas will absolutely have no say in an election.

The PREMIER: Do you want Port Douglas to have a member all to itself?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Port Douglas, the Hodgkinson, and the Daintree and Mosman Rivers would make a very good electorate with a community of interests.

The PREMIER: And with a total population of about 1,500.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: There are more than that; and besides it has vast resources, and is a long way from here. It is fully entitled to a representative, having, as it has, a community of interests. I give the Premier all credit for the trouble he has taken over this Bill. I admit that it would be an exceedingly difficult thing to frame a Bill of this nature which would be satisfactory to every member of the House; but I wish the hon. gentleman had made greater allowance for the disabilities which the more distant portions of the colony labour under, because I am sure that if he had he would not have enlarged the representation of the southern portion of the colony, including the capital and its immediate vicinity, in the way that he has. If the people of Brisbane would only look at it in the right light, it would be a great advantage to them to have representatives coming down from the more remote parts of the colony; even if they only spent their two guineas a day in Brisbane, it would be better than sending in local images who know very little about the colony that they have to govern. They are very good voting machines, and therefore I suppose the Premier is rather anxious to multiply them. For my part, when the Bill goes into committee I shall do everything I can to increase the representation of the North, because I think it will be for the common weal of both North and South if that is done, and the people of the North are brought more thoroughly into unison with the people of the South than they are at present. I shall do all I can to effect that, and also to enlarge the representation of the Central districts, even at the expense of some of the metropolitan groups in the immediate vicinity of Brisbane.

The HON. G. THORN said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall not trouble the House very long. First of all, I think the Bill ought to have been accompanied by another Bill, brought in by the representative of the Government in another Chamber, making provision for the election of members to that Chamber. I am not going to give my reasons now, because, perhaps, it would be aside from the subject under discussion. I come now to the Bill before the House. I must say, in the first place, that I think sixty-eight members are too many for our small population. Not that I am in favour of a small House, but, comparing our population with the population of the other colonies, I think the number is too great. In South Australia, with a population not dissimilar to ours, they have a House of fifty-two members; and in Victoria, with a population three times as large, they have a House of only eighty-six members. In New South Wales, certainly, they have a large House,

but there, as I see from reading the Sydney papers, politicians of all shades have come round to the opinion that the House is too large; though it is not large in proportion to their population as compared with what this Bill proposes. On the same basis as that now proposed, New South Wales, according to the population there, would have 200 members, whereas there are only 120, and I am satisfied that when the next Redistribution Bill is passed in that colony the House will be very considerably clipped down. There is another reason why the number of members should be kept down here; we have now payment of members, and these are times when we should keep down our expenses as much as possible. Now, sir, I do not think the Premier's basis of representation is an unfair one, but at the same time I cannot commend him for the way he has carved out the different electorates. I fully expected to see the census papers here, so that we ourselves might have some show in carving out the districts.

The PREMIER: They have been circulated.

The HON. G. THORN: I can assure the Premier I have not seen them, though I have seen some maps, of which there does not seem to be a sufficient supply for all the members of the House. Now, sir, I am not going into detail to-night; probably I shall have something more to say in committee; but I shall point to a few inequalities that have struck me with regard to this redistribution. First of all, as to the North, I think they have not much to complain of with fourteen members, though I do not think I should be opposed to their getting one additional member. But hon. members must be aware that the population of the North is migratory; and though no one has more respect for the mining population than I have—it is the mining industry at the present time which is keeping the colony going—yet we cannot look on the mining population with the same unalloyed satisfaction that we can on the farming population. However, I am prepared to do justice to the North, and would prefer to let the Southern districts remain as they are, and give the North four or five additional members. Now, with regard to the Central districts of the colony. I find that one member is wiped out from Leichhardt, and part of the Leichhardt district, comprising Juandah, Taroom, and Mount Hutton, is put in the southern part of the colony. We know that the trade from that district comes to the South, but for the same reason, the country round Nanango ought, properly speaking, to belong to the West Moreton group of electorates, because the trade from that part comes to Brisbane and Ipswich. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Already there is a coach running and a train; and it is quite possible for people to come right through from Nanango to Brisbane in one day by coach and rail. I think that this part of the Burnett—and I am quite sure the hon. member for Burnett will not differ from me—ought to be tacked on to Stanley. Then about Port Curtis. We know that the country between Bundaberg and Gladstone is about the finest scrub and forest country in Australia. It is within the rain belt, and therefore that rich scrub and forest land, when the railway is constructed through the district, will enable it to sustain a very large population. It has no right any longer to be tacked on to Rockhampton. Rockhampton has kept that part of Port Curtis back in the same way that Ipswich used to keep Brisbane back in the early days of the colony. I was never a party to that, and I was the first to break up the bunch. I saw the injustice of the thing, and when I see an injustice I am always the first to go to the rescue of a weak cause. I say this magnificent country ought not to be kept

back any longer by Rockhampton; it should be tacked on to the Mulgrave district. I hope the Premier will see his way to do that. I would also suggest that the whole police district of Gladstone should be tacked on to Bundaberg. These changes will not disturb the balance so much as the Premier might think, because since the last census there has been a large increase of population about Mount Morgan, which will tend to restore the equilibrium. I now come to the Darling Downs group, the smallest of the lot, and the only group that one would be led to suppose there was something crooked about. Comparing the population of this group with the population of West Moreton, I find that at the date of the last census, while it returned nine members, it had really fewer people than West Moreton—that is, comparing adults. In order to keep the population in that group I find that about Toowoomba there has been a regular system of filching land, north, south, east and west. They have actually cut off part of Northern Downs, where there is the densest population—about Jondaryan, where there is a great number of selectors. To make up the population of Aubigny they have gone into the electorate of Stanley, now represented by Mr. Kellett and Mr. White, and filched away a large slice. They have gone along near the main coach road to Esk and taken all the magnificent country about the Blackbutt Range, close up to Taromeo. That country has not a very dense population at present, but it is bound to have a large population settled there before very long.

The PREMIER: About 100 altogether.

The HON. G. THORN: I say there are not many people there now, but there will be. There are a good many already about Crow's Nest. Then to make up the Moreton electorate, which commences near Sandgate, they have again filched from Stanley on the other side, taking away the country about Kilcoy. I think, sir, that the parts filched away from Stanley to make up these other electorates ought to be put back again; and I hope the Premier will allow the Moreton district to stand as it is. What I am complaining of now is the way in which the Toowoomba group has been made up, land having been filched from the electorates all round—from Stanley, from Dalby, and also from the Southern electorates about Warwick. They have actually carved out an electorate called Cambooya, which comes close up to the Drayton boundary according to the map, in order that Toowoomba influence may exercise great sway in that district. There is no doubt about that; I can see it as plainly as possible. The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, must not suppose I am not up to all these matters. There is not a thing under the sun with regard to dividing electorates that I am not up to. I can tell pretty well the nature and style of the population of those districts. Warwick had nearly all the influence before, but now the electorates are so arranged that Toowoomba shall have it, and not Warwick. I think that is a matter that should be dealt with when we go into committee. Then again there is "Chinchilla"—I do not like that change at all, sir. I do not like to see the name "Downs" electorate blotted out. In the olden days we had Northern Downs, Eastern Downs, Western Downs, Darling Downs, and now it is proposed that there shall be no more "Downs" electorates. I think "Northern Downs" should be retained, and that we should go back to the old boundary of Dalby. I think that group of electorates should still be called "Downs"; I do not care what Downs so long as that name is retained. I am sure most people would prefer that name to "Chinchilla."

I find, according to the last census returns, that the Darling Downs group of electorates had an adult male population of 8,501, and returned nine members, while the West Moreton group had 8,617 adult males, so that in reality the latter, according to the old boundaries, had 116 more adult males than Darling Downs and less members. I do not say that West Moreton is entitled to more members. On looking over the census returns, when the Premier was in England, I could see that, so far as West Moreton was concerned, without alteration of its boundaries, it was entitled to the same number of members that it has in a House of sixty-two members on the basis of population. I mentioned it to the hon. member for Bundamba and many others, and pointed out that we were entitled to the number of members we have now. That was, of course, before we had any land filched from us.

The PREMIER: You have still seven members.

The HON. G. THORN: Yes; but a reduced area. Now, as to the East Moreton group. Nerang—that is part of the electorate I am at present supposed to represent—the Upper Logan. Well, sir, the people on the Logan side of Fassifern desire to be severed from the Ipswich side of that electorate, but putting them with Southport is like going out of the frying-pan into the fire. They have no more interest in common with Southport than they have with Ipswich. Part of the electorate of Nerang runs to within ten miles of Ipswich, and anyone going from there to Southport would have to go through the Logan electorate by road to Beenleigh, and thence to Southport. Instead of the Premier running the line east and west I would suggest that he should run it north and south, which, I believe, would satisfy all parties. With regard to the metropolitan group, I have nothing to say against it. I do not agree with those members who talk about the Brisbane group of electorates being over-represented. I do not think they are; but rather than give Woollongabba a member I should tack it on to South Brisbane, and substitute a new electorate of Kangaroo Point, running down to Doughboy Creek on the left side of the Logan road. I shall say no more at present, except that the more I look into the Bill the more I dislike it for many reasons. However, if the Premier will give members some liberty in committee, and not make it a party question, I believe it may be made a good measure. If it is not likely to be made a good one I should prefer to see several additional members tacked on to the North, where they are required, and leave the rest of the electorates down south with the boundaries as they are at present.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—I intend to say only a few words on the Bill, and I may say at once that I do not like it. I agree to a considerable extent with what fell from the hon. member who last spoke. I think, if the proposed addition of members is made to the House, it will be too large. It is quite large enough at present for the population of the colony. I should like to draw a little attention to the position the Central districts occupy compared with other districts. According to the revised papers which have been placed before us, the Central district, with ten members, has 1,237 adult males for each representative, and I will just compare that with the Darling Downs and West Moreton group, which occupy a somewhat similar position. Now, the Darling Downs group has 1,663 adult males to each member, and at the same rate the Central district would be entitled to twelve members, because if you multiply 1,063 by 12 you get 12,756. Again, if the Central district is

compared with West Moreton, it should have twelve members instead of eleven, because the population of the former is 12,800, and the latter 12,400. In either case, if you compare the Central district with West Moreton or Darling Downs, it would be entitled to twelve members, whereas it is only proposed to give it ten. With regard to the Leichhardt I do not know very well what to say. I have not one of the large maps yet, but it seems to me to be cut up in a very extraordinary way. A large portion is taken off the northern end and a large portion off the southern end, and then again the railway has been chosen as a boundary, which is the worst possible boundary.

The PREMIER: Only through a scrub. It is not the boundary where there is settlement.

Mr. SCOTT: I have another objection to the division. The northern part of the district is bounded to a great extent by the railway. Now, it is very well known that the interests of the people on each side of a railway are identical. In the same way a river is a bad boundary, because the interests of the people on each side are very much alike, and I think it would be very much better if the boundary were altered so as to leave the whole of the railway for a considerable distance in the Leichhardt district. I rose principally to point out the great discrepancy between the number of members proposed to be given to the Central district and the number proposed to be given to the Darling Downs and West Moreton group, and I trust that may be remedied in committee. The Minister for Works, in speaking, said that during the twenty-five years he had resided in the outside districts he had always found the wants of those districts attended to. I am glad to hear that that has been the experience of the hon. gentleman, and I may add that the Leichhardt district to which he refers must have been well represented if the hon. member was satisfied.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think it necessary to detain the House very long by any remarks I may wish to make on this Bill, because I presume the real contention as to the details of the measure will be in committee, but I would ask the member for Fassifern to try, when speaking of my electorate again, to confine himself to the truth. The hon. gentleman represented that all the country between Isis Scrub and Gladstone is rich scrub, whereas nearly all that country is forest land. I know the country a little better than the hon. gentleman does, and I do wish that he would be more careful, because I am quite sure the district will gain nothing by misrepresentation. There are patches of very rich scrub throughout that country, but there are also large areas of very rich land that is not scrub, but which are quite as valuable as scrub, and more easily cleared. It is an utter misrepresentation to call that scrub.

The HON. G. THORN: I did not say it was all scrub.

Mr. NORTON: The hon. member's words sounded very much like it.

The HON. G. THORN: I said rich land and scrub.

Mr. NORTON: The hon. member said what he did not mean. With regard to the Bill itself, I agree with the leader of the Opposition that the basis of representation should be the adult male population. I do not mean to say that the Bill should be based wholly on that principle, but the voting power should be the basis upon which the Bill should be drawn. Of course, due consideration must be given to the fact that some populous districts have a large number of women and children—the wives and families of electors who

are taxpayers ; but notwithstanding that, I still adhere to that one point—that the basis of the Bill ought to be the voting power. I also agree with what has been said about not merely the Northern districts being under-represented, as compared with the South, but also the Central district. The Central district is the worst represented of the whole lot—by far the worst—and I think a most unfair allotment has been given to the three different divisions; taking the three together, the Central is far the worst treated of the whole lot. I refer particularly to my own district. I think some consideration should be shown to the identity of interests in a district. That is quite of as much importance to a district as the number of representatives. Now, in my own district the division would suit me, as a probable candidate, very well, but I am bound to consider the influence it would have on the people resident in the district. For instance, the interests of the people about Gladstone are not the same as the interests of the people near Rockhampton. Then take the interests of the people about Mount Morgan. It is quite true, if we take the present electoral rolls or the census returns, Mount Morgan has a comparatively small population, but everybody knows that the population about Mount Morgan is growing enormously, and that it will continue to grow and it will maintain a large fixed population. That is one consideration that seems to have been overlooked.

The PREMIER : No, it has not.

Mr. NORTON : It may not have been, but it looks as though it had. At any rate I take it that if an increase is to be given in the number of members, a locality such as Mount Morgan, where the population is increasing so rapidly, ought to be given a separate representative. Of course I do not mean to say that Mount Morgan ought at present to have a representative for itself, but it might be combined with Crocodile Creek. There the interests of the population are, generally speaking, the same; they are a mining community. Now, sir, I do not undervalue a mining community at all. I do not make any comparison between them and the agricultural interest, because the agricultural interest is as valuable in its way as the mining interest is in its way; but I would point to the fact that the colony has lately and on former occasions been almost entirely dependent on the mining community to maintain its position. The mining community have staved off disaster. Gympie staved off one disaster, and mining is now staving off a disaster. I say, therefore, that to the mining community we owe for what it has already done, and for what it is likely to do, as much as we owe to any other interest in the whole colony. I point that out, because the country round about Gladstone and towards Bundaberg has not the same interests as the locality I have referred to. Although in the district around about Gladstone there is a number of miners, and that number is largely increasing; at the same time their proportion, compared with the rest of the population, is not so great as the proportion of the miners on the Crocodile and Mount Morgan. Then the localities round Gladstone are not fairly treated under this Bill for other reasons. The population is not large now, but that is not the fault of the people there; it has been decreased in the first instance by the construction of the railway, which cuts off all the traffic which used to come from the Western districts, and in the next place by the construction of the line to Mount Perry, which takes from Gladstone a large amount of traffic from the South. Therefore it is hardly fair, now that the effect of the construction of those two rail-

ways has been to decrease the trade of the Port Curtis district, to say that because the district is not more populous, it shall be treated as a portion of a big electorate, and overshadowed by it. If the Government had carried out their promise, made more than once in connection with the railway from Port Curtis to Bundaberg, the population in the district would even now be very much larger. I see the Minister for Works is laughing. He always laughs in the wrong place; of course he cannot see beyond the present. At one time he viewed with great disfavour the Springsure railway; but when he wanted to be re-elected he found it to his interest to advocate the construction of that line, and I take it that if he represented Port Curtis, and found that he had something to gain by advocating the railway to Bundaberg, he would be as favourable to that line as anyone else. It is not merely a line from Bundaberg to Gladstone, but it is a line joining the most northern port from which traffic will come overland from the North and from the other side of the world. It is the line by which the traffic will be carried which is made up of those numerous travellers who for various reasons prefer to land at the earliest opportunity after a sea voyage and complete their journey by rail. If, as I said before, the Ministerial promises had been kept with regard to that line, there would, even at the present time, have been a largely increased population in the district, and in fairness to the people there, I feel bound to urge that now as a reason why they should not be treated as it is proposed to treat them. I am not prepared to make any distinct recommendation as to an alteration of the boundaries; but I may say that at a meeting called at Port Curtis a short time ago the people objected most decidedly to being thrown into a larger district, wherein the representation of the other portion would entirely overawe and overrule the representation of their side. I mention that merely as one case; but there are other districts in which just the same defects exist; and it appears to me as if, in some instances in which I know something of the localities, the object has been to arrange electoral districts with clashing interests, in order that the electors themselves might be at a disadvantage and be set squabbling amongst themselves. I do not know whether party or political reasons exist for the boundaries which have been made; but I give the hon. gentleman who fixed them credit for having shown great skill. At the same time I am not surprised that so many hon. members have already objected to the alterations made in the districts they represent.

The PREMIER : No one has suggested any improvement.

Mr. NORTON : No doubt the hon. gentleman thinks no one is capable of suggesting any improvement, but I think he will hear a good many suggestions when the Bill is considered in committee; and he has already heard it suggested that there should be an increase in the Northern and Central constituencies. It is impossible in discussing the question in this manner to define boundaries, or say how they should be altered, but I suppose hon. members will claim the right to do so when in committee. So far as the Bill is concerned, I do not see any objection to the second reading, however, because we have all maintained that the sooner a new Electoral Bill becomes law the better it will be for the country.

Mr. STEVENS said : Mr. Speaker,—I do not agree with those hon. members who think that the principle of this Bill ought to be entirely on the basis of adult population. I think there are many other things which should be considered. Adult population should be a very important

factor, but I think that the gross population, the natural characteristics of the country, and the identity of interests should be also well considered. If not, I think very great injustice may be done. For instance, I think it would be absurd to take a new goldfield or a rush, and treat it in the same way as a district which has been settled for many years by what might be called a permanent population. After a very short time a member elected to represent such a district, where a new rush had taken place, might find himself simply representing a few squatters, all the diggers having packed up their traps and moved away from the field altogether. Then again, unless we consider the gross population we shall be doing a great injustice to those who in the course of a year or two will be adults and have a vote in the representation of the country. I think these things should be very gravely taken into consideration, as they require just as much attention as the question of adult population. So far as the number of members is concerned, I do not think it a matter of very great consequence. I do not see that there is any reason to suppose that a House containing sixty-eight members will be a worse House than one containing fifty-nine members, and the increase is not a very great one. I am free to admit that if the majority of those nine additional members should talk as repeatedly as some hon. members at present in the House—members who jump up on every possible occasion, and seem to think that they only have the right of carrying on debates—I say I am free to admit that it would be a very great evil. But then it is just as likely that some of them might be of a very different description, and of very great benefit in toning down some of what I may call the thoroughly irrepressible and exuberant members. I notice that some of the speakers, while stating that they did not think the number of members should be increased, advocated that there should be more members given to other parts of the colony; but they did not point out what districts should have the proposed additional members taken away. With regard to the division of the Logan electorate, I may say that it meets with a great deal of disfavour there. Those of my constituents who are situated in the western portion of it, and also those in the adjoining electorate of Fassifern, think that if the electorate is formed as proposed by the Bill, and called the Logan district, there will be very little identity of interests between the persons in that electorate. For instance, there is a large population residing about Beaudesert, Tambourine, and the surrounding district; and there is a large population at Redland Bay, and also at Goodna. If we only look at those three points we shall see they have not the slightest identity of interests. They are like the three points of a triangle, each having an interest entirely different from the others. However, that is purely a matter of detail. So far as the Bill is concerned I am quite prepared to accept it upon its second reading. I do not know whether there is any intention of dividing upon it; but if it comes to a division I shall vote for the second reading, leaving the question of considering the distribution until we are in committee.

MR. ADAMS said: Mr. Speaker,—So far as I am concerned I do not think there is much to complain of in the Bill. But I fancy the divisions might have been better made than they are. For instance, throwing the Isis Scrub into the Burnett electorate will make that electorate very unwieldy indeed, and I think it would have been much better if the Isis Scrub had been included in the electorate of Mulgrave. That would not interfere with the number of the

population inasmuch as the Eidswoold mines are turning out excellently, and I anticipate that in a short time there will be a large population. I know that at present there are 700 people there. That ought to have been taken into consideration, and if the division were made as I suggest, it would be far wiser and far better for many reasons. The interests of the part proposed to be added to the Burnett are identical with the interests of the Mulgrave electorate as a whole. Then, again, the Bundaberg electorate is cut up in such a way that it will be almost impossible, or it will take a vast amount of trouble at any rate, to ascertain correctly where the boundary will be. It goes from selection to selection, and is not a direct line. I am told that in one part of it, the Woongarra Scrub, it cuts a selection right in two; so that the occupiers or owners of that property will hardly know which electorate they are in. Had the line been taken in the first instance from the mouth of the Burnett and run up the western boundary of the municipality of Bundaberg, from there south to the Elliott River, and then down to the mouth of the Elliott, or taken to the sea-coast at the mouth of the Burnett, it would have made a very nice compact electorate, and I believe the population would have had equal advantages. At the present time, sir, I would only mention one or two things in connection with the schedule, because I know other points will come before us in committee if the Bill pass its second reading, as I have no doubt it will. I think it is my duty to point out a few discrepancies in the schedules, so that the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill may have them rectified before it comes on for discussion in committee. For instance, in the schedule defining the electorate of Bundaberg, I find it is said in the last two lines:—

“Thence by a line due north along the eastern boundary of portion 17 to the left bank of the Fitzroy River.”

If we have to go to the mouth of the Fitzroy we shall take the whole electorate of Port Curtis in with us. Therefore I imagine that this is merely a clerical error, and instead of its being the left bank of the Fitzroy River, it should be the left bank of the Burnett River. I merely mention the matter that it may be rectified. Then I find in the schedule defining the electoral district of Mulgrave, it says—

“Commencing on the east coast of the colony at the south-eastern corner of portion 1,210, parish of Banks.”

Now, there is no parish of Banks, and therefore it cannot commence there. That ought to have been the parish of Barr. Further on it says—

“And bounded thence by the southern watershed of the Elliott River south-westerly to the head of that river; thence by a line north-westerly to the Burnett River at the south-western corner of portion 1, parish of Electra; thence by that river downwards to the confluence of the Perry River.”

Now, the Perry River being about forty miles up the river, I do not think you will find it by going down the river. Therefore I think that is another typographical error. Then it goes on—

“By that river and south-western boundary of Warra Run to the Burnett Range.”

I believe that instead of being Warra Run it should have been Walla Run—

“by that range and the range forming the northern watershed of the Kolan River north-westerly and easterly to the head of Stony Creek.”

I think that is another typographical error. These schedules should be corrected so that we may know exactly the lines on which we have to travel. I merely mention these few errors, Mr. Speaker, so that the gentleman in charge of the Bill may rectify them before they go into committee. I know it would be far more economical

for the country, and far more easy for the gentlemen who have to work up the electoral rolls, if the electors were divided as I say—that is, leaving the Isis Scrub in the Mulgrave electorate and taking the left bank of the Burnett as the boundary of the Bundaberg electorate. Taking it thence to the Elliott and down the Elliott to the sea-coast, and up the sea-coast to the Burnett River, would form an electorate that would be far easier worked in every way. I think this suggestion is well worth the consideration of the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill, and one that should receive attention before we go into committee.

Mr. DICKSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I have only had an opportunity of seeing the Bill this evening, and therefore I am not in a position to go very fully into the matter. The tables of statistics showing the distribution of the population among the various electorates require some time to check them, and to ascertain whether the distribution is fair and equitable. However, I believe that the Premier has taken very great pains with the measure, and I think both sides of the House will give him credit for a desire to put before the country a Redistribution Bill which will give additional representation to various parts of the colony, and which has not been framed with a view to any party lines. I think it may fairly be stated that the hon. gentleman has taken extreme pains with the measure, and the result, so far as can be seen from a cursory reading, is a very creditable attempt to deal with a question of very great difficulty in a country like this, where the population is shifting, and the census at each quinquennium necessitates an entire redistribution of representation throughout the colony. I am not going to enter into the question as to the basis of representation—whether it should be solely based on the male adult population or not—but I may say that I am inclined to think that we are hardly ripe for the male adult population solely being taken as a basis for representation. We must fairly consider the question of the settled population and the gradual development of the country, and also the local and physical conditions of the country. We cannot entirely overlook such considerations as these in a matter of this sort. My only regret in connection with the measure is that a scheme could not be framed without enlarging the present number of members to any considerable extent. I think it would have been more satisfactory to the country generally if we could have dispensed with the nine additional members proposed, but I say this clearly: that we must either accept the Bill as a whole or reject it. It is framed in such a way that I do not think we can attempt to amend any one district without disturbing the balance of population throughout the colony, and I am therefore content to accept the measure even with the addition of the nine members, though, as I have said, I would have much preferred it if that number could have been reduced. The country has, I think, some difficulty at the present time in finding fifty-nine members, and the difficulty of finding representatives will no doubt be increased by the additional members. It is, however, gratifying to see that the remote districts of the colony, the Northern districts particularly, will have a considerably larger proportion of representation, and although it might not be as large as they might wish, still I think we may accept it as a very fair instalment, and as evidence of a desire on the part of the Government to recognise the requirements of the North with respect to its representation in Parliament. I trust that the Bill will pass, and I believe it will, because I think hon. members will agree with me that

although it may not be in every respect what we should like, yet to amend it would disturb the balance of the several electorates. I do not think we can improve it very much. I am of opinion that it is desirable to have a Redistribution Bill passed this session before we go to the country, and I am inclined to think that the present Bill will be a decided improvement upon the existing state of things. I do hope that when the Bill does pass, and the new electoral rolls are framed, greater care will be exercised in compiling them than was shown on the occasion of the last purging of the electoral rolls. There is no doubt that the rolls, of late, have not received that attention which they ought to have received, nor have claimants for registration been admitted as freely as I think they ought to have been. I will not say whose fault it has been, but it appears to me that the clerks of petty sessions have shown somewhat of obstructiveness and disinclination to admit as freely as they ought to have done claimants for registration on the electoral rolls. I have been told that about Brisbane no claim can be admitted where the claimant does not distinctly give in his application the number of the allotment and subdivision not only on which his house is erected, but also the house in which he has resided as a lodger for the past six months. I think that is a very frivolous and narrow objection, and it seems to me that unless fresh instructions are issued to clerks of petty sessions in the compilation of the next rolls, we shall have very imperfect rolls under which the general elections will be taken. I think this matter ought not to be overlooked in accepting this important measure, and that the new rolls should be so framed that they will contain, not only the names of all those electors on the present rolls, but also that no difficulty should be placed in the way of registering the names of a large number of the population of this colony, who are at present excluded from the franchise simply through their claim having been sent in with some small omission of minor details as to the exact site of their qualifications. Therefore while, as I have said, the Bill may not be all that hon. members would like to see it, and while our electorates may be carved and hacked about in a way that somewhat disconcerts us at present, I think that, in view of the necessity of increased representation in the colony and in view of a general election, the Bill may be accepted as it stands, because I see clearly that to amend it in any one part, be it in ever so trifling a matter, will necessitate the readjustment of the balance of representation throughout the whole of the divisions which are intended to be established by the Bill. Under these circumstances I shall support the Bill as it stands, but I shall be prepared to give fair consideration to any representations that may be made with respect to it in committee. As I have already stated, the Bill, to my mind, is a very creditable production, and shows very great pains on the part of the Premier.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—The views expressed by the hon. member for Enoggera, who has just sat down, are just those views which I should expect from a gentleman representing, I may say, the metropolis, for his electorate is included in one of the metropolitan districts. The hon. gentleman stated that he was not only prepared to accept the Bill, but he did not wish to alter it in any way. He says that, on behalf of the electorate that he represents, he will accept it *in globo*, and does not even wish to amend it in committee, because he thinks any attempt to amend it would have injurious effects; so that if it were distinctly shown that there were defects in the measure, and that the outside districts did not receive that fair consideration to which they were entitled, he would not be prepared to

remedy those defects because it would probably be at the cost of some metropolitan electorate, and might disturb the balance of representation provided by the Bill. It has been always understood that one great cause of complaint in the more northern portions of the colony was that of inadequate representation; that was one of the grounds on which the petition was based that we sent home. It states—I am reading now from the Premier's report on the separation petition sent home to Sir Henry Holland—at page 4 the Premier states, as one of the grounds for desiring a division of the colony—

“(3.) That Northern districts have not due representation in Parliament.”

Then, at page 9 of the report, in referring to the question of redistribution, he says:—

“I may mention in this connection that the Government have long since intimated their intention of proposing a redistribution of electoral representation, as soon as the results of the census of last year had afforded them the necessary information for that purpose. The returns which are essential to enable Parliament to deal with the subject are now nearly complete, and it is proposed to introduce the Bill in the session of the present year.”

This Bill is the result, and, so far as I can see, the evils complained of—namely, centralisation down here in Brisbane, and the overwhelming weight which the southern part of the colony has always had—are not met; and it is now proposed to increase these objections by the Bill before the House. In the year 1885 the House was composed of fifty-five members, and it was in answer to the repeated demands of the North that the number was then increased by four members to fifty-nine. But the proportion of representation between the southern and northern parts of the colony remained practically the same, for, whilst the North certainly got two additional members, the South also got two additional members, and the balance of power remained just about the same as it was before. Let us see how this Bill is going to affect that representation. I maintain that it puts the North in a far worse position than they are in at present. It is quite true that this Bill proposes to give the North four additional members, to which it is fairly entitled, but it also proposes to give the South five additional members, and four of those five are to be given to Brisbane and East Moreton, and the fifth one, which is given to Darling Downs, is taken away from the Central district, a part of the colony which has always acted in concert, as far as it conscientiously could, with the North.

The PREMIER: We take one away from Darling Downs. We do not give them one.

Mr. BLACK: The hon. gentleman is correct in one respect. At present the Darling Downs group has nine members, and it is to have eight. The West Moreton group remains the same—seven, as against seven at present. The East Moreton group is increased by three members. They have six at present, and it is contemplated now to give them three additional members. The metropolitan group, at present returning six members, is to have seven. I will analyse this East Moreton group. It is almost entirely, I maintain, to be included in the Metropolitan group. There are Bulimba, Enoggera, Nundah, Oxley, Toombul, and Toowong, and surely these might all be called metropolitan constituencies. They have thorough identity of interests with the Metropolitan group, consisting of North and South Brisbane, Portitude Valley, and Woollongabba. If we take the adult population of Logan, Moreton, and Nerang, which may be considered outside constituencies, we shall find that the adult male population of the East Moreton group, without these three, amounts to 8,165. If we add that 8,165 adult males to the

14,421 of the four metropolitan electorates we shall get a total of 22,586, returning thirteen members, or one member for every 1,737 adult males. The way in which the return is made out shows that the metropolitan constituencies only return one member for every 2,060 adult males, whereas in reality, as I have pointed out, they return one member for every 1,737. In the metropolitan electorates, and of course I include the electorates immediately surrounding Brisbane, I say that considering the facility with which the people in those electorates can bring any complaint before the Government, and can bring pressure to bear upon any Government here, I consider they are getting far more representation than they are entitled to, and this is attained entirely by the sacrifice of the Central and Northern electorates. If any electorates are deserving of consideration, or deserving to be in any way over-represented, I think they are certainly those which are at a very great distance from Brisbane, and I especially refer to the extreme Northern electorates. When we analyse this a little more, we find that on the basis of representation according to the number of adult males, 1,399, or say 1,400 adult males, are sufficient to entitle a Northern constituency to return one member. Surely the more Southern electorates should not return a member for less than that, and that they certainly do. The Central division returns one for every 1,281 adult males, that is 120 less than are required to return a representative in the Northern division. In the Wide Bay and Burnett district 1,200 adult males are considered sufficient to justify one member being returned as against 1,400 in the North. Why is that? Then we come to the Darling Downs group, and I am sure hon. members will admit that the representatives of that part of the colony are well able to take care of themselves, and do study the interest of that part of the colony and their own electorates, and yet we find that over 1,063 adult males in that group are entitled to the return of one representative, as against 1,400 in the North. Is there any reason for that? Then we come to the West Moreton group, a bunch of six electorates all close to Brisbane, and there 1,128 adult males are considered sufficient to justify them in returning a representative. Thus again, we see this over-representation in the South, and, as I maintain, inadequate representation in the North. The East Moreton group, in the way the electorates are put down here, includes Logan, Moreton, and Nerang, and they will return one member for every 1,361 adult males, still a little under what is allowed for the return of a representative in the Northern electorates. I contend that this Redistribution Bill, as far as the North is concerned, may rank with the other Bills which the hon. the Premier has brought in this session as likely to relieve the North of grievances which they have been undoubtedly suffering under for some time. It will do nothing of the sort. It is quite true that it gives an additional four members to the North. It is also quite true that it gives my own electorate an additional member, but speaking from a Northern point of view, and considering that this Bill is supposed to be brought in to remedy the inequality of representation existing up to the present time in the North, when the North returns one member for every 1,230 adult males, whereas the South returns one member for every 1,000, this Bill will do nothing to redress that undoubted grievance. What I should have preferred to see, Mr. Speaker, was an Additional Members Bill to give additional representation to the North until the electoral rolls could have been properly compiled, which they are not at present; and then from time to time, as necessity required it, to add another member to constitu-

encies which, having sufficiently expanded, were deserving of consideration. There is no provision whatever made in the Bill for a district like that which we have in the extreme north, known as Croydon. That is in the Carpentaria division, which is to have one member. But I am informed that there are over 6,000 people already at Croydon; and although the Minister for Works does not think the mining population is deserving of such consideration as the agricultural population, I do not think the people of the North will hold that view. Contributing largely as they do to the revenue they will consider, I imagine, that they are entitled to proportionate representation in accordance with the revenue they contribute. That is a point that has been entirely ignored by previous speakers, as to whether contribution to the revenue is not to be some basis for representation. I may mention to hon. members that the North—and when I say the North I am using the expression from a separation point of view—the North contributes one-fourth of the entire revenue of the colony—that is an ascertained fact—it contributes nearly one-third of the whole Customs duty, and yet it is only to have about one-fifth of the representation. It is to get fourteen members out of the sixty-eight. The North is undoubtedly entitled to far greater consideration from this House than it has ever received before or than it is likely to receive by this Bill when it becomes law. Under it it will still be overwhelmed by the Southern vote, and even if the Central vote is thrown in with the North it will then have only twenty-four votes, as against forty-four in the South. This Bill tends more to centralisation than any Bill we have yet had before us, and it in no way does away with the necessity for territorial separation. It will show the electors in the North how useless—notwithstanding the promise of the Government to do equal justice to all parts of the colony—it is to expect justice when they see such manifest injustice as this forced upon them, and it will do more than anything else to make the people more determined to go in for territorial separation. They want something more than mere promises; they want to see some of those promises carried into effect. I can see, Mr. Speaker, that it is the intention of hon. members to allow this Bill to go to a second reading. Do not let them suppose that the North is going to be deceived by such a half-and-half—such a cold-blooded—attempt as this Bill is to pacify them. There is nothing in it that will remedy their grievance of under-representation. The population of the North is increasing at a most rapid rate.

The PREMIER: How many members ought Mackay to have—four or five?

Mr. BLACK: If the hon. gentleman will only keep quiet, he will, no doubt, have an opportunity of replying to me later on. The hon. member knows that there is justice in every word I have said; indeed, there is ample evidence of that in the irritation he shows when he hears the facts I am relating. The hon. gentleman will give me credit when I say that I have never had a single word of conversation with him about giving an additional member to Mackay. I am not discussing this measure, as many other members have done, from any personal point of view—how it will please their own constituencies, and utterly ignoring the rest of the community. I am not speaking here with a view of my electorate getting an additional member; I am speaking solely from the point of view of a Northern member—not necessarily as the member for Mackay—as one of those Northern members who have seen, year after year, the injustice which the North has been subjected to by the South,

and who are more convinced than ever that nothing but territorial separation can ever remedy it. Southern members do not understand, nor do Southern electors understand, the requirements of the North. They know nothing about them. How very few members have ever been north of Townsville! They may read something in the papers about the North, although very little indeed is ever reported in the Southern papers about the North. In fact, hon. members are living in a sort of fools' paradise, brought about mainly by the hon. the junior member for North Brisbane, who on one memorable occasion said the North had neither money nor brains; and they think the North will be soothed by the passing of this Bill. The inequality in the representation will be just as great when this Bill, in its present form, becomes law as it is now; and the centralisation which it promotes by giving to Brisbane and the metropolitan districts greater representation than ever they had before will by-and-by work upon all the other constituencies. If any districts should have less representation it is those very districts in the South to which the Premier proposes by this Bill to give additional representation. I shall not oppose the second reading of the Bill; it would be useless to do so. If I saw I was likely to get any support from the other side—if they looked at the question from the point of view that I do—that is, from a Queensland point of view, instead of merely from a Southern point of view—I would ask them to join me in endeavouring to throw the Bill out. But it shall not be laid to my blame if the Bill is defeated; it shall not be said that I compelled the Government to go to the country without a Redistribution Act. I say again that the present Bill, so far from remedying any of the grievances the North has suffered under for many years through under-representation, will do nothing of the sort; and if the North will be satisfied with it, I am very much mistaken.

Mr. ALAND said: Mr. Speaker,—Perhaps I ought to be dissatisfied with this Redistribution Bill, because a portion of the district I represent not only has not had additional representation given to it, but has had one of its members taken away from it. I recognise the very great difficulty there must be in preparing a scheme for redistribution, and I for one say, as far as my light goes, that the Premier has brought in a fairly reasonable Bill, and one which hon. members ought not, I think, to carp very much at. This Bill is very much like a Treasurer's statement. It is based upon figures, and we know that figures can be used in every possible way. One person may make a set of figures prove one thing, and another person, perhaps more expert, will make the same figures prove something else. The hon. member for Mackay has, of course, looked at this Bill from, I may say, a purely separation point of view, and has tried to point out—perhaps has pointed out, though not to me—that under it the North is really being treated with very grave injustice. In confirmation of what he stated he compared the figures of the Northern division with the figures of West Moreton, East Moreton, and the Metropolitan group. Now, I did the same thing, and from the way I worked the figures out I think the North has nothing at all to complain of, but that rather the southern portion of the colony by this Bill would not have the same proportionate representation as the North. Taking the West Moreton group and the East Moreton group and the Metropolitan group, one member represents 5,522 of the total population, or a male adult population of 1,503. Comparing that with the Northern division, we find that they have one member for 3,477 as against 5,522, and one for

1,399 as against 1,503. Of course there is a difference of opinion as to what should constitute a proper basis of representation; but the northern portion of the colony has been well served whether we take it on the total or merely on the adult male population. I hold that the adult male population does not form the proper basis. I think that women and children are to be considered in this question; and I hold that a man with a wife and family ought to be reckoned as far more important in the State than the man who has none. He has proportionately a greater stake in the colony, and he has a right, and his wife and family have a right, to be properly represented in the Parliament of the country. Now, the hon. member for Fassifern made some of his usual funny remarks about the way in which the electorates have been "engineered." He complained very sorely that a portion now belonging to Stanley has been taken from that electorate and added on to Aubigny. I think anybody looking at the lay of the country will at once recognise the fairness of adding that portion to Aubigny; it is on the same line of railway, and if I mistake not it is on the same side of the range. At all events Crow's Nest always appeared to me to belong to the Darling Downs district. I hope this Bill will not only pass its second reading, but will pass through committee in pretty much the same form as it now stands. I recognise with the hon. member for Enoggera the difficulty there is in amending a Bill of this kind; when once we begin to alter the boundaries of electorates I do not know where it will end.

Mr. STEVENSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the hon. member who has just sat down has a very funny mode of calculation. He tells us that taking into consideration the total population, the Northern and Western districts are represented—

Mr. ALAND: Mr. Speaker,—I must correct the hon. member. I did not make any calculation of the Western districts; I merely took the Northern districts.

Mr. STEVENSON: I beg the hon. member's pardon. He tells us that the North, under this Bill, even taking the adult population alone into consideration, will be equally well represented with the South. Well, sir, let us take his own constituency. The electorate of Drayton and Too-womba is to be represented by two members, having an adult population of 1,990; and the Burke is to be represented by one member, having a population of 2,063. Where the proportionate representation comes in there I cannot understand. I think the South has very much the best of it. The hon. member argues about the Northern men as if none of them had any wives or families. Do we not know that many of the pioneers of the country are doing hard work outside and keeping their wives and families in Brisbane or some other of the coast towns? Do they not contribute to the population of Brisbane and other coast towns as well as those who live here? We know that those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day outside have at very great expense to keep their wives and families in towns, for the sake of getting education for their children for one thing, and sometimes because they are living such a rough life that they cannot have their families with them. I think they ought to have more consideration on account of that, because if they had their wives and families with them they would have some share of the representation that is coming to the South, and the South would be deprived of it. That is taking it on the population basis, even admitting that to be a fair basis, which I do not admit. The hon. member for Mackay has clearly shown that

the North, so far from getting more fair play under this Bill than it has had in the past, will really be worse off. If we give the North additional members, and the South additional members in proportion, the North is no better off; in fact, the South gets more than its proportion. But what I principally protest against is that the Central districts should be deprived of one of their members. The North is to have additional representation, and so is the South, and why should the Central districts be deprived of the representation it has now? Some of these Central electorates are very large ones too; the Barcoo has only one member and an adult population of 1,791, the Gregory has 1,444, and the Mitchell 1,578. Well, sir, I think the voices of the Central district at any rate will be against that way of dealing with the representation, and I believe steps are being taken up there now to ask the members for the Central districts to protest against it. I do not think it is worth while entering into details with regard to the boundaries until we get into committee, when I hope that some steps will be taken to alter the boundaries and to get additional representation for the Central districts. In several of the electorates, according to the new boundaries, one part is brought into collision with another—the interests of one end of a district are not identical at all with those of the other. My own electorate of Normanby is proof of that. It is brought right down to Rockhampton. It has mining interests, farming interests, and pastoral interests, and I say that those interests should not be brought into collision in that way. I hold that as far as possible every interest ought to be represented by itself, and the interests of the districts about Rockhampton could very easily be arranged so as to admit of that. Of course, there is to be no effort made, as far as I know, to prevent the second reading of the Bill passing, but I hope that some strong steps will be taken in committee to amend it.

Mr. FERGUSON said: Mr. Speaker,—As one of the representatives of the Central district I have as much reason to complain of this Bill as any member of the House, not only in regard to the way the electorates have been cut up, but also with respect to the decrease in the number of representatives. The people of the Central district are complaining very bitterly of this Bill. There has been a meeting of the electors of Blackall to protest against it; there is to be another meeting this week of the people of the town of Rockhampton for the same purpose. I have had urgent telegrams sent to me from the mayor of Rockhampton, who presided at the Blackall meeting, and from the mayor of North Rockhampton, complaining of the ill-treatment the Central district is going to receive from this Bill if it is carried into law—which I hope it never will—as it stands at present. When the Premier introduced the Bill he said that population was not to be considered as the basis altogether—that it was not to be the basis of representation entirely, but that those portions of the colony which contributed largely to the revenue should have more consideration than others, and that geographical position should also be taken into consideration. Now, sir, I have just looked at the way in which this Bill is going to deal with the Central division, and I see, on looking at the maps, that that division has quite as much territory as the Southern division, and is, if anything, a little larger. The Southern division is to return forty-four members, while the Central division is to have ten. Therefore, so far as territory is concerned, the hon. gentleman has forgotten that altogether. Then, with regard to revenue, according to the returns of revenue and expenditure furnished in connection with the proposed Financial Districts

Bill, I find that in the Southern division the revenue collected up to the 30th June, 1887, was £1,370,680. Taking forty-four members, that shows £31,000 of revenue collected for every member. Then taking the Central division, the revenue collected amounts to £426,609, so that they have one representative for every £42,000 of revenue collected. Therefore the people of that division contribute over £10,000 of revenue per member more than the Southern division, and the extent of territory is as much as, if not more than, the area represented by the forty-four members representing the Southern districts. So that the basis of population is strictly adhered to if not overdone, and no consideration whatever has been given to territory or to the revenue collected by those people. Therefore the electors of the Central division have more reason to complain than any other division of the colony. They have eleven members at present, and this Bill proposes to reduce the number to ten, in the face of all this preponderance of territory and revenue, according to population. And not that alone, but several electorates in the southern part of the colony have more representation than they are entitled to in proportion to revenue and territory. According to the representation of the Darling Downs, the Central district is entitled to twelve members. Take West Moreton, it is entitled to eleven, and taking Wide Bay on the same basis of population, it is entitled to about the same. So that, leaving other things out of consideration, the Central district is entitled according to population to more members than the greater part of the Southern constituencies are receiving. It has always been a complaint in the Central division that the preponderance of representation is given to the South; that the Southern members can always outvote us on any question that comes before the House if they choose, which they generally do. But the division of the electorate is more extraordinary than anything I have mentioned yet. We find that the electorate of Blackall is wiped out altogether. It is a smaller electorate than the others surrounding Rockhampton, and the interests of the residents in it are identified with those of the town of Rockhampton. At any rate they do not clash. That electorate has been wiped out and attached to the Leichhardt, Normanby, and Port Curtis electorates, while a new electorate has been formed on the north side, which was part of Blackall electorate before. So that that electorate is tacked on to four other electorates. But the most extraordinary part of it is this: Part of this electorate is tacked on to Normanby, which is not in any way identified with Rockhampton. It extends up as far as Port Mackay, comes down to Rockhampton, takes in about three-fourths of the area of the municipality of Rockhampton, surrounds Rockhampton itself, and follows the Fitzroy River for six or eight miles towards the coast; so that this division will never give satisfaction to the people. It cannot be expected to give satisfaction. A large proportion of the men employed by the corporation of Rockhampton will be attached, under this Bill, to the electorate of Normanby, and the division is altogether most unreasonable. I have always contended that the northern part of the town, which is now a separate municipality, should receive a representative to itself. That is correct enough. I have also maintained that the municipality of Rockhampton should be the boundary of the electorate of Rockhampton; and, if there is to be any electorate adjoining Rockhampton, it should be connected with those boundaries—but not such an electorate as Normanby, which extends so far north. Of course, the Bill is bound to pass the second reading, but I hope that in

committee it will be amended in such a way as to do a little more justice to the Central part of the colony than it will do in its present form. It is a most unfair Bill, as far as my own district is concerned. I am sure any hon. member who looks at the maps will see how unjust it is right through. It appears that the Government are determined to wipe out as much as possible the interests of the electorate of Rockhampton, or to divide it as much as possible. There is no other conclusion that can be arrived at. They have given portions of the electorate of Blackall to four different electorates in no way identified with the interests of the town; and it is quite clear that the Government are determined to split up the power and the interests of the people of Rockhampton as much as ever they can.

Mr. FOOTE said: Mr. Speaker,—This is a Bill on which I do not wish to give a silent vote, but the remarks I shall have to make will be very few. I have not gone through the Bill, but I have ascertained, as well as I possibly can without a map, the situation of things as they now exist. It seems to be admitted that there will be an increase in the representation, but there is some difficulty as to how the increased representation should be apportioned. I notice that hon. members generally agree that the Bill has been exceedingly well got up, and that the originator of the measure has spared no pains in order to make it as perfect as he could. It seems to be admitted that it should be allowed to pass its second reading, but I should think, if I may judge by the remarks of hon. members, that by the time it gets through committee it will be so altered as to be scarcely recognisable. For my part, I think a great deal more has been done than there was any necessity for. I think that an additional members Bill would have met all requirements on the present occasion. There are certain districts which ought to have increased representation, and there are other portions of the colony that do not require it, and I think it a very great pity that measures of this sort should so often be brought in, altering as they do the boundaries of the different electorates. I think, Mr. Speaker, that under this Bill, and at the general election which must take place early next year, fully one-third of the electors will be disfranchised. Their names will in many cases not be on the electoral rolls, and many others will be on the wrong rolls. The boundaries are so altered that many people will not know to what district they belong, and as a natural consequence electors will be disqualified. That is one very great objection I have to the alteration of the electoral boundaries. I think myself it would be much better if we left the boundaries alone, and in some cases threw two electorates into one, giving it two instead of one representative. That would meet the difficulty to a very great extent. The hon. member for Fassifern made allusion to the electorate of West Moreton. It is to have the same number of representatives as at present, but in order to make up the population in other districts—Aubigny for instance—a portion of West Moreton is to be cut off and added on there. Another slice is taken off and formed into a separate electorate called Laidley, and yet another portion is taken off and placed on the coast line. Well, it might be proper to separate that portion, but I do not think West Moreton is treated fairly, because if it has an increase of population it should have an increase of representation, instead of portions of the electorate being taken off and added on to Aubigny to give it additional representation. I have remarked that this thing has been done before, and that the present Government has been notorious for cutting and clipping

down West Moreton since they have been in power. This seems to me to be a sort of centralising scheme, and worked out for the purpose of giving metropolitan members to these districts. I certainly have some complaint in reference to the manner in which my own electorate has been cut up. I should have very much preferred that it should have been allowed to remain intact, because it seems to me as if it was intentional—I do not say it was intentional—to cut it off in one form or another, giving one piece to Fassifern and another to Stanley, part to Rosewood, and giving part of Oxley, and so on. I am quite near enough to Brisbane. I do not want to be brought any nearer, and it looks to me as though it was intended to place a metropolitan member in that electorate, and consequently give increased representation to the city of Brisbane. These things may not be intentional, but they have a very awkward look, and are by no means pleasing. However, it is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill; but I think it will require very considerable alteration. As I said at the outset, I should much rather prefer that the boundaries had been left alone, and that an additional members Bill should have been introduced, giving increased representation where required.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree with much which has fallen from the hon. member as to the details of the Bill. I do not think it would be convenient to discuss details on the second reading of the Bill. They will be better discussed and worried in committee, and changed so as to give that fair play and justice to outside districts, which this measure does not give them. It is difficult to discuss the Bill, seeing that it contains no principle but simply an alteration in the boundaries of electorates, and a provision for registration of voters and the making of new rolls. That is the only principle that the Bill contains; and the tables which have been put before us contain no principle either. Before we can discuss the Bill properly we should first agree upon a basis of representation. I maintain, and I have always maintained in this House, the principle which has been affirmed in the House before this, that the true basis of representation in a new country which is just being formed is the adult male basis.

THE PREMIER: That has never been recognised.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: On the last occasion when the present party were in power, that was the principle which was adopted.

THE PREMIER: We left out one member. That is all that was done.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I maintain that that has been the principle adopted. Now the present Government disclaim any party motives. Although I will not say that the Bill has been framed from a party point of view, it has been framed from a geographical point of view, and if hon. members will look around this Chamber they will see that parties are, to a very great extent, defined and determined by the geographical position which they represent in the colony. So that it is just the same thing as saying that the Bill has been framed from a party point of view. The hon. gentleman who heads the Government, and introduced the Bill, has received some credit from this side of the House for his expertness in producing a Bill of this kind in such a short time after his arrival in the colony. I do not know when the Bill was framed, but I am quite certain that if any person is entitled to credit it is the gentlemen in the Registrar-General's office, and not the members of the Government, because,

as I said before, there is no principle in the Bill. They have simply been told to alter the boundaries in certain directions according to the census, and they have done so. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government has admitted more than once the injustice of the representation in the northern part of the colony, and also the difficulty of governing the more distant parts of the colony from the city of Brisbane. He admitted that, I believe, when he made his famous statement in defence of keeping Queensland intact against the separationists, and in this House also. Now, according to the basis of representation, it not being the adult male population, as I contend it should be, the Bill does not alter in any degree for the better the representation of the northern portion of the colony in this House, for if we take into account the loss entailed by the Bill on the Central district, it will really be a loss to the northern portion of the colony, because, as I have said, the geographical basis determines the position in which members sit in this House, and it is well known that the Northern and Central have always worked together; therefore what one loses the other loses, and the North is losing the assistance of a Central member by the Central division being deprived of one member by this Bill. The northern portion of the colony, as pointed out by the hon. member for Mackay, is entitled to much larger representation than the Bill gives. The Bill gives the northern portion of the colony—by the North I mean North Queensland, from Cape Palmerston northwards, the district we have always been in the habit in this House and in the country of calling the North, and delineated on the maps also as Northern Queensland—the northern portion of the colony will, by the Bill, only have an addition of four members. The southern portion will have an addition of five members, and the Central division will have a loss of one; so that as far as geographical position is concerned, the additional representation of the South compared with that of the North will be as six to four. Now, considering that the North has admittedly been under-represented in the past, and that it is now much under-represented, this under-representation will not only be continued, but will be intensified by this measure. And can we, on this side of the House, for a single moment consent to allow a measure of this kind to become law? Does the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government imagine that, because he has a majority at his back, who are being favoured by the alteration being made, we shall allow that majority to assist him in depriving us of even the modicum of fair representation that we have at present? I do not think he can anticipate anything of the sort; if he does, I believe he will certainly be disappointed. The Minister for Works, in his reply to the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, was kind enough to bring in the nomads of the colony, or the wandering diggers, as he called them, saying that they were unfit to have the same amount of representation as the men employed in cultivating land on the Darling Downs or anywhere else in the colony. Now, I should have thought that the opprobrium connected with the wandering digger had faded away long ago from this House, seeing how much he has done for Queensland; but it seems that, no matter how much that unfortunate individual does for the good of the colony, he still has to retain the name of being a wanderer, a nomad, and to be subject to the disability of being under-represented in this House. Does the hon. gentleman think for a single moment that anyone believes him when he says that a man in the North or in the West, because he is a miner, or a man working on a station—a nomad, as he calls him—is not equally fit for representation as the

man working on a farm? Does he not know that in England the most intelligent portion of the population are the mining population of the North of England as compared with the clods of the central and eastern counties? There is no comparison, in fact, as to intelligence between them; and I say the same comparison exists in Queensland in regard to the men working on the goldfields and the men working on farms, as exists in England at the present time. The hon. gentleman has never been on the goldfields; he knows not what they are. I have been on the goldfields; I have been a wandering digger; and many members of this House have been wandering diggers; and many of the foremost men in Australia have been wandering diggers—men who have written their names and made their mark on the history of their country. And I hope we shall see many more wandering diggers write their names and make their mark in this colony as well as in other places. I can tell the hon. gentleman that I have found more intelligence and greater ability for the discussion of political questions, generally speaking, round a diggers' camp-fire than I have very often found in this House; and I appeal to those hon. members who have sat round a diggers' camp-fire night after night, as many hon. members have done, whether they will not bear me out in saying so. Yet these are the men that are to be placed under a disability simply because their calling in life prevents them from settling for a number of years in one particular spot. I think that instead of placing any disability upon such men, or upon the men who bring wastes under subjection, we ought to do the reverse. They are the men who are doing more for the country than any single individual in the city of Brisbane. The men who go out as pioneers to subdue the country and bring it under subjection and civilisation, are of far more importance, though the hon. gentleman opposite thinks they are of less importance, than the stay-at-home tradesmen of the city of Brisbane or any other city in the country. One hon. gentleman even went so far as to say that a single man without a wife, a wandering digger—though he did not use the term—is of far less importance to the community than a man with a wife and family. According to that way of thinking, a man with three wives and families would be of far more importance. According to that, Mr. Speaker, we should become Mormons; and then we should be very important individuals. I say that the doctrine is unsound. It may suit very well in old settled countries where all the conditions and parts of the country are equal; but in a young country like this, in its infancy, growing into existence, it depends entirely on the class of men I am speaking of for being brought to maturity. I say these men are more important than men with wives and families, who do nothing for the country but have wives and families. The hon. gentleman opposite also has admitted that the more distant parts of a country should be better represented than the parts nearer the capital, and much better represented in proportion than the capital itself, and yet in this Bill he has departed from that, and according to the tables he has placed before us it is proved. There cannot be the slightest doubt about it. The more distant the people in the colony are the more under-represented they are by this Bill; the nearer you come to the capital and the denser the population, the better the representation. If we take as a fair basis the adult male population and add to that, which must not be forgotten, the taxpaying power of the population, and add also the producing power of the population, what shall we find? We shall find that the northern parts of Queensland, which will be so

much under-represented by this Bill, actually are entitled to one-fourth of the representation upon that basis. They produce one-fourth of the revenue, and they produce more than one-fourth of the productions of the colony, which are exported, and in the same proportion they import more than one-fourth; and yet this is the part of the colony which is to remain under-represented. Now, sir, taking into account the rate of progress of the North and South, and comparing them together, we know that the North is progressing more rapidly than the South. That is a fact well known to anyone who reads; and if we allow this Bill to become law with the under-representation that it contains, what will be the under-representation when the next redistribution Bill comes into existence? Why, there will be a proportional representation of more than two to one. The reason why the northern part of the colony is so much under-represented at present is that it was not properly represented—that it did not get a sufficient number of members—at the last redistribution. That under-representation has been increasing ever since until it has become a very large quantity; admittedly so by the hon. gentleman himself; and yet he is going to continue the same system, and in the course of five years or ten years, when another Bill is introduced, the same thing will happen. The same cry will be admitted that the North is under-represented—that is allowing that the North remains an integral portion of the colony until that time.

The PREMIER: The South is increasing faster than the North.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Not proportionately.

The PREMIER: It is, proportionately.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I can take any figures the hon. gentleman chooses. I can take records of this House to prove it. The increase in representation, which has never been sufficient, is sufficient in itself to prove that the North is increasing more rapidly than the South. It is only a short time ago, not more than a few years, since the North had only one-tenth of the representation, and it has at present one-sixth. Then, which is increasing more rapidly, the North or the South? Will the hon. member say we are over-represented? He cannot say so, because he has admitted that we are not fully represented, therefore the North must be increasing the more rapidly.

The PREMIER: At one time it was.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: And it is still. If, Mr. Speaker, we admitted females within the franchise, we might then contend fairly and honestly for the population basis; but until we do so, until we cease to confine our franchise to the males—the breadwinners, in fact the taxpayers of the colony—we are not entitled to go beyond that for representation.

Mr. W. BROOKES: Do women pay taxes?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The men pay the taxes of the country.

Mr. W. BROOKES: For the women?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The men earn the bread in the colony. The men produce what is exported from the colony, and the few women who do the same as the men are not worth taking into consideration. There are a few, no doubt; but there are very few indeed. The great majority of women whom we know are married women depending upon their husbands, or daughters depending upon their fathers.

Mr. W. BROOKES: They pay taxes.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: There is another thing which hon. members should take into account, which is admitted by the Premier

himself, and which has been practically admitted in argument, although not in words, by members who have spoken on that side, and that is the distance. Is it not much easier for a man, or a body of men, who find themselves misrepresented or misunderstood in this House, in East Moreton, or West Moreton, or even in the Darling Downs, to use their influence with their members, or with other members of this House, than it is for men a thousand miles from here, without any communication unless by wire? Have we not read of deputations coming from the Darling Downs, West Moreton, and East Moreton, importuning Ministers, and by their importunity gaining what they wanted? Have we heard of such things from the North? We know how difficult it is even for a member to come from the North, and how much more difficult must it be for a deputation to come? Even on that ground the representation of the northern part of the colony should be increased to more than it would be fairly entitled to, and not lessened as it is by this Bill. There is another matter which has been entirely overlooked by hon. members in speaking. At the time the census was taken on the 1st of May, 1886, there was a very small population in one portion of Northern Queensland compared with what there is now—I mean the Croydon Gold Field. The Croydon Gold Field at that time I do not suppose contained 1,000 men; but admitting for argument's sake that it did contain 1,000 men, although the census, I believe, will show that it did not, what is stated at the present time by people who have come from the Croydon? I had a conversation the other day with the late warden at Croydon; I have spoken of it with a gentleman who came from there; I have spoken to others at different times within the last five weeks who have been there within the last three months, and the consensus of opinion is that Croydon has a population of at least 6,000 or 7,000 men at the present time. Of course they are wandering diggers—or are said to be wandering diggers, although I hope that the reefs will be permanent enough to settle them on the soil instead of keeping them wandering diggers. This sudden increase should be taken into account in estimating the number of members required for Northern representation; and if we add that 5,000—I am only taking 5,000, although I have been frequently told there are 6,000 or 7,000, but I shall take the increase at 5,000—if we add that 5,000 to the total number given by these tables of adult males in the Northern division it will give 24,589, making actually one-fourth of the total male population of the colony. I think that is a fact that should not be forgotten, and when we go into committee I shall take very good care, if no other hon. member does, that it shall not be forgotten. I did not intend to go into details; but coming more to details, and dealing with these figures as we find them, and taking them as being correct—although one hon. member rather hinted his suspicions that they were not correct, comparing them with certain Treasury tables which we have had at different times placed before us, which were proved afterwards to be incorrect—taking the admission of the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government that the more distant parts of the colony should be better represented—can he give any reason why the northern portion of the colony, with its 19,589 males, should only have fourteen members, while the two groups of electorates in Darling Downs and West Moreton, together having only 16,400 males, are to have one member more? Fifteen members to represent 16,400 males, and fourteen to represent 19,589 males—the latter in the most distant part of the colony, where their cry cannot be heard. It is not far to West Moreton, and

it is a very short distance by rail to Darling Downs; they can be heard; but it is a week's journey to the northern portion of the colony. Now, does the hon. gentleman at the head of the Works Department carry his dislike to the wandering digger so far as to say that 1,000 men on Darling Downs are entitled to the same representation as 1,400 men in Northern Queensland? If he does, he carries it much further than I think he would dare to assert in this House. Now, let us look at the West Moreton group. Will the hon. gentleman say that 1,128 people there are entitled to the same representation as 1,409 in the northern part of the colony? Then again, if we take one of the towns of the Darling Downs, and the towns of the West Moreton group, and the towns of the Northern division of the colony, what do we find? Take Charters Towers; it has an adult male population of 2,769. Are they wandering diggers? I should like to ask the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government whether they are wandering diggers. Are they not settled there? Is not Charters Towers growing year by year, and has it not continued to grow ever since it was established? Well, as I have said, there is an adult population in that town of 2,769, and it is only entitled to two members, while Drayton and Toowoomba is entitled to two for a population of 1,990 men. Will any member in this House stand up and declare that that is fair? There is 700 of a difference in the adult male population, and yet the district of Cambooya is entitled, according to this measure, to one member for 975 men, only 200 more than the difference between the adult male population of Drayton and Toowoomba, and that of Charters Towers. Ipswich is nearly as bad, but not quite. I contend that there is no principle in this Bill. The difference between the total populations is very slight indeed. There is a very large population of women and children at Charters Towers, but then they are the wives and children of "wandering diggers," and I suppose the wives and children of wandering diggers are of no more account than the wandering diggers themselves. I promise the Government that, although this Bill will not be opposed in its second reading, it will be very much altered before it leaves the committee, or it will never leave it at all. I will take good care that when this measure comes out of committee the North will not be under-represented, as it was on a similar occasion ten years ago, but that it will be fully represented. I hold that in representation the North, either on the basis of adult male population or the amount of Customs collected, or on the amount of taxation, or on the principle of distance from the seat of government, is fairly entitled to one-fourth of the representation of the colony. I shall do my best to obtain that proportion of representation when the Bill is in committee, and I am sure that I shall be assisted by every member in this House who has any idea of fair play and justice.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—I have listened with a considerable amount of interest to the speeches on both sides of the House, and it seems to me that the arguments simply show this: that if you start on a wrong basis you can make out a very good case against the Bill. I wish to direct the attention of hon. members to the basis on which the Bill is drawn. The hon. member who has just sat down says it is framed on no basis at all. If that were so it would be very difficult to discuss the principle of the Bill. But I recognise three distinct principles in the measure. The first is the basis of population, which I maintain is the true principle on which the redistribution of the electorates should be framed. Let us, then, take this basis of population and see how the various districts

are represented, and we shall find that in connection with this another principle comes into operation—namely, that the more distant an electorate is from the capital the fewer are the individuals who can return a member. In the North we find that it only takes 3,477 to return one member, and if we turn to the Central district, which is nearer the metropolis, we find that there the number required to return one member is increased to 3,624. Then coming to the Southern pastoral group we find that the number is 3,521.

Mr. DONALDSON: Quote both figures, please.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I am coming back to that, but am now dealing with this particular part of the question. Then we come to the Southern division, which is still nearer the capital, and we find that there 4,226 persons are required to return one member. Next we come to the Darling Downs, which is yet nearer the capital, and we find that in that district it takes 4,295 persons to return one member. And then, coming to West Moreton, nearer to the capital again, we find that there 5,204 persons are required to return one member; and, lastly, coming to the Metropolitan group, we find that the number of persons returning one member is 7,077. It is therefore plain from these figures that this general principle has been adopted: that, the further away an electorate is from the capital, the less is the number of population required to return a member. I think this argument is brought out very clearly by the figures in these tables. We have two principles, then, on which the measure has been framed. The first is that of total population, and the second, distance from the capital. Then we come to the third principle, which is that of adult males. The whole of the arguments on the other side of the House have been directed to show that the principle of adult male population ought to be the principle adopted. I do not agree with that at all. I think the true principle of representation is population. It has been said by the member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, referring to an argument used on this side of the House to the effect that a married man who has a family should have more representation than a single individual—that on the same principle a man with three wives and three families should have more representation still. But that does not follow at all. It does, however, follow that the larger the family a man has, the greater interest has he in the State, and the more is he taxed. If you take a man with a family of eight, and the taxation at £3 per head, then that man pays £24 to the revenue, while the wandering digger who has been brought before us only pays £3 a year. Other arguments have been adduced to show that the Bill is worked out on a wrong principle. It has been contended that wealth should be one of the considerations kept in view in making a redistribution of representation. If wealth is brought in then Brisbane is over-represented at once; but that would not do as a principle. Then the geographical position has been brought forward. I do not think myself it matters very much what is the extent of a district. We cannot represent the rocks and trees and cattle, but we can represent the people. What may be the size of a district matters very little, or what the geographical position; it is the people that have to be represented. I say, then, that if we start on the principle that either wealth or geographical position or extensive territory or adult males should be taken as the basis of representation, we start on a wrong basis. We should start on the basis that the total population should be taken as the true principle of repre-

sentation, as that is fair to the whole colony. I think some members have forgotten that we cannot have a Redistribution Bill without a disturbance of the whole of the electorates, and they appear to think that their districts should not be touched. Ipswich has been touched, but I am not going to complain about that. Hon. members seem to think that a Redistribution Bill should be introduced on the principle that "You can do anything you like with any other people's district, but you must not touch my district." Anyone can see that if you begin to tinker with one district and give more representation to it, you disturb the balance of representation in the whole of the electorates. I think, then, that the Bill is a very good one indeed, and although we may alter it in committee I am perfectly sure of this, that we cannot mend it much. Therefore, believing, as I do, that the Bill is a good one, I shall support the second reading, but in committee will support it with a few amendments that I can go in for; but, looking at it as a whole, I do not now see where those amendments are to come in.

Mr. DONALDSON said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member who has just sat down says that representation should be on the basis of population; but if that be admitted we might just as well, in the country districts, throw up the sponge and leave the representation to the cities entirely. That is what the hon. member's argument means, because, as a matter of fact, the bulk of the population in these colonies is confined to the immediate vicinity of the capitals, and the same disproportion appears at Brisbane. I do not think it is at all a correct basis to go upon. It is no doubt a very difficult matter to bring in a Bill that will meet with general approval, and the Premier in bringing this matter forward has had a very difficult task to deal with. He has no doubt looked at it from all points of view and tried to bring in a perfect measure, but I think no measure of this kind can be perfect unless there is some attempt made to have the different interests of the colony represented. That can only be done by grouping so as to include the producing powers and interests of the colony in such a way as to try and equalise the representation as far as possible. I know, of course, that cannot be done perfectly, but it can be far better done than it is in the Bill before us. Were I to call this Bill by its proper name I should call it a Bill for the purpose of giving increased representation to Brisbane and its surroundings.

Mr. BULCOCK: Why should it not?

Mr. DONALDSON: I will tell the hon. member why it should not. The over-representation of Brisbane and its surroundings has already been the cause of a good deal of discontent in this colony. The chief cry of the North has been against the over-representation down here, as against their representation.

The PREMIER: Not a bit of it.

Mr. DONALDSON: That is one of the chief cries of the North.

The PREMIER: They tell you that to-day, and they will tell you something else to-morrow.

Mr. DONALDSON: I have heard it said for four years in this Chamber, and I have, I think, some knowledge of the country as well. There is another thing to be considered, and it is this—and I do not say it offensively—hon. members representing electorates close to the city show very great ignorance of the requirements of the colony and of the productions and interests of the North and West. How many members are there in this House representing city constituencies, and constituencies near Brisbane, who have ever been through the interior of this

country? They know little or nothing of its requirements. And whenever any measure, having for its object the alleviation of grievances in the North or West is introduced, it meets with great opposition from those members.

Mr. BULCOCK: We get many chances of hearing of them.

Mr. DONALDSON: There is very little chance of getting them remedied. The hon. member for Enoggera, Mr. Bulcock, is one of the members to whom I particularly refer, and there is no one more selfish in his desire for the representation of the city and city interests. I do not think there is one member of the House more ignorant of the producing interests of this country than that hon. member. He may know something about the South and about Brisbane generally, and I give him every credit for that; but as for knowing anything about the North or West I do not suppose there is a more selfishly ignorant member than that hon. gentleman. I say this candidly, and perhaps rather warmly; but, as a rule, I never make statements for the purpose of giving offence, and I can assure the hon. member I do not wish to speak offensively of him. But there are, as I say, many hon. members who will not take the trouble to go beyond the limits of this city, and they can know very little about the requirements of this colony. It is a vast country, and there are very few members in this House who have had an opportunity of seeing it sufficiently to be able to judge of its requirements. I see the hon. member for Enoggera, Mr. Dickson, who was returned the other night by a large constituency, when criticising the Bill to-night, fell into the same error, and considered the Bill was perfect, inasmuch as it gave increased representation to the South. He is another of the Queen-street representatives. No hon. member keeps his eye more open to Brisbane interests than that hon. member. I know he would do all he could, and would, I believe, tax the interior so as to relieve Queen street if he could do it. I know what the hon. member's views are politically, and I am certain he would give as little fair play to the interior of the country as any hon. member in the House. Although he has travelled over it once or twice, he has not gained the information he should have gained from his travels. With regard to the basis of population, it ought to be borne in mind by hon. members when the census of this colony was taken in May, 1886, a terrible drought had prevailed for some years previous to that time, that on all the stations in the interior there were as few hands as could possibly be kept. There were no improvements going on, and people could not get employment there. What was the result? Brisbane was crowded at the time with unemployed, chiefly driven in from the country districts. The census returns are therefore very unfair to the country districts in this respect, because the people were all driven in.

The PREMIER: Where to?

Mr. DONALDSON: To Brisbane; and the hon. member knows that deputations waited upon him upon the subject. We have heard to-night of the nomads of the interior, and the hon. member knows that many of them waited upon him to find employment.

The PREMIER: How many altogether?

Mr. DONALDSON: Only a few may have waited upon the hon. gentleman, but they represented a large number behind them. I am very sorry to say that a large number of them were driven in from the country districts at that time, though I must also say that the country districts have improved in this respect since that time. I am pointing

out that at that time all improvements were stopped on the stations, and because they could get no employment many people were compelled to leave the interior, and consequently the census returns then taken did not give a fair average of the number of people in those districts. Again, the census was taken in the month of May, when there are very few shearers there.

The PREMIER: Where do the shearers work at other times?

Mr. DONALDSON: They very often go into the towns, and return when there is more work to be done. Then there is another matter I have to refer to, and that is in connection with the Maranoa returns. In the Maranoa district there was a railway camp at the time the census was taken, and there is a foot-note to the census returns to say that the railway camp was included. Why were not the railway camps between Brisbane and Ipswich included, and the railway camps in other parts of the colony?

The PREMIER: There were none of any consequence.

Mr. DONALDSON: There were railway camps throughout the colony at that time. There was railway construction going on between here and Southport, and in the Wide Bay district between here and Gympie, between Maryborough and Bundaberg, and a large number of men were employed also between here and Ipswich on railway construction, and I want to know why they were not also mentioned. That foot-note was evidently made for the purpose of pointing out that a large proportion of the population in that district was not permanent. I admit that there is no such thing as a permanent population. Take the population of Brisbane. I suppose there is proportionately a larger number of a roving population in Brisbane than elsewhere in the colony. People are continually coming into Brisbane from the outside districts, and I suppose Brisbane has a larger floating population than any country district can possibly have. I certainly object to population being taken as the basis of representation, because, as I said before, it would have the effect of giving the whole representation to the capital and its immediate neighbourhood, which is already too largely represented as compared with the rest of the colony. It is proposed to increase the number of members around Brisbane by five, an increase which will give a great deal of dissatisfaction in the West. True, the West is to get one additional member, but the number of male adults there is larger than in most districts much nearer Brisbane. Though not so large as the city, it is larger than the Darling Downs and both East and West Moreton. I think, notwithstanding the fact I have just pointed out, that a large number of the population was not in the district when the census was taken. Another objection I have to the Bill, and I believe it is one which is very generally entertained, is the great increase in the number of members. Nine is an unnecessary number to add to the present members of the House, for already the number is sufficiently large. If one or two additional members had been provided for, in order to do away with certain admitted inequalities, that would have sufficed. If the representation of New South Wales were on the same basis that colony would have about 200 members, and in Victoria the number would be about 250. I believe that in New South Wales it is contemplated to introduce a Bill to reduce the number of members from 120 or 125 to 100. In Victoria, where they are passing a Redistribution Bill, although the population is over a million, it is not proposed to increase the number of members beyond 85. Here in Queensland,

with our vastly smaller population, we have already 59 members, and it is proposed to increase the number to 68. I know there will be a great difficulty in committee to alter the boundaries or to reduce the numbers. It cannot be done. The Bill will have to be accepted as a whole or rejected. It is quite true that there are inequalities in it. I have already had private letters from some districts complaining that there is no community of interests in some of the proposed electorates. That may possibly be rectified to some extent. We should not stick too closely to figures. One district might be fairly represented with only 1,000 of population, while an adjoining district might have 1,500; and it would be better to preserve the community of interests than the accuracy of numbers. I notice that the natural boundaries, such as ranges and rivers, have been followed as far as possible. This may look very nice on the map; at the same time it will not be satisfactory to the electors in many constituencies. These are details which can be remedied in committee; but as to the Bill as a whole I am afraid, as I said before, that we shall have to accept it or reject it pretty much as it stands. I reserve to myself the right in committee to try, as far as lies in my power, to equalise the Bill as much as possible, and to do away with some of the inequalities which at present exist.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—I was very much amused just now at the interjection of the hon. member for Enoggera, Mr. Bulcock, "Why should not Brisbane have the preponderance of legislation?"

Mr. BULCOCK: I did not say that. I said, "Why should not Brisbane have more representation?"

Mr. MURPHY: That means exactly the same thing.

Mr. BULCOCK: How do you make that out?

Mr. MURPHY: It strikes me that the hon. gentleman wants to "bulcock" the whole colony. He is not satisfied with the "bulcocking" he has already been able to do in some of the constituencies; he wants to "bulcock" the whole country. He would like, no doubt, to have all the electors under his thumb, so that he may play the little game he has been playing for so long in some of the metropolitan constituencies. I can assure him that he will find that there is too much intelligence in the country constituencies to allow a gentleman of his stamp to "rule the roast" over them as he has done over some of the Brisbane constituencies. To discuss the merits of the Bill, I find that the western portion of the colony has the least representation for its population of any part of Queensland. I will take the purely pastoral districts, and it must be remembered that they are the farthest away from the centres of population. There is Burke, with a total population of 3,335, and an adult male population of 2,063; Gregory, with a total population of 2,067, and an adult male population of 1,444; Bulloo, total population, 2,163, adult male population, 1,440; Warrego, total population, 3,570, adult male population, 1,849; Barcoo, total population, 3,990, adult male population, 1,791; Mitchell, total population, 2,654, adult male population, 1,578; Balonne, total population, 3,228, adult male population, 1,256; Maranoa, total population, 3,125, adult male population, 1,518; Leichhardt, total population, 3,661, adult male population, 1,124; making a total population of 29,793, and an adult male population of 14,093, which is represented by only nine members. These constituencies embrace the whole of the far West of the colony, and in which only one interest—the pastoral—prevails. They are the farthest away from the seat of govern-

ment, and with the worst communication with it. Having no seaboard, they have no steamers to bring them to Brisbane when they want to have their grievances redressed. The bulk of them are even without the telegraph, and their mail communication is very infrequent. Sometimes, during the wet season, they are cut off from all communication whatever for weeks and weeks at a stretch. And these people, notwithstanding that the Premier laid down the axiom that the further from the seat of government the greater should be the representation—

The PREMIER: I do not remember doing so.

Mr. MURPHY: If he did not, he ought to have done. I thought the hon. gentleman quoted from Gladstone to that effect.

The PREMIER: I did not. I did not see any sense in that quotation.

Mr. BULCOCK: It was the junior member for Cook who made the quotation from Gladstone.

Mr. MURPHY: I thought it was the Premier, and I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon for having attributed it to him. A quotation was made from a speech by Gladstone, whose word, upon a question of this kind, ought to be taken for something; and in my opinion, that would be a very good basis for us to go upon. I find that those nine members represent, each of them, 1,566 male adults. Now, sir, although the male adult population may not be perhaps the best to take for the coast districts or for the centres of population, it certainly must be the best basis to go upon in these far Western constituencies. It has been pointed out over and over again that when this census was taken these districts were very much depleted of their population, because, as we all know, the drought was more intense there than in any other part of the colony. Drovers, shepherds, stockmen, and others were sent away out of those districts in order to find feed for their stock in other more favoured localities, and the census was taken immediately after the drought broke up, before those men returned to their usual occupation. I know that in my own neighbourhood nearly all the stations were only about half manned. I am quite sure that if the census were taken now the population would be found to be nearly half as large again as it was according to the census taken last year. There is another thing I object to; that is, the way the constituencies have been grouped. I object to have my constituency grouped as a Central district constituency; the Western district constituencies should have been grouped together. Why should the Barcoo, with 1,791 male adults, be grouped with Rockhampton, which gets two members representing only 1,191 adults each? We in the West have to pay for that; we are punished in order to bring the representation of the Central division to the average of 1,281. Again, sir, why should we be classed with Fitzroy, a town constituency in a centre of population, where there are only 1,068 male adults, when the Gregory has 1,444 male adults, and the Mitchell 1,578? We are punished in order that the centres of population may have a greater representation; you can deduce nothing else from these figures. Again, take the Wide Bay and Burnett group. As I showed just now, these nine purely pastoral and far-out constituencies average, each of them, 1,566 male adults. In the Wide Bay and Burnett group nine members each represent an average of 1,202 male adults. Again, turning to the Darling Downs group, I find a member put down for 1,091, and one for 975; Drayton and Toowoomba, 1,920, forsooth, get two members. Now, it is utterly absurd to treat the far-out constituencies in the way proposed. The Central districts, as a whole, are deprived of one member,

and yet in the western portion of the colony, where the representation should be greater according to population than anywhere else—being so far out and labouring under so many disadvantages—we have to put up with one member for 1,566 votes—male adults, who are all voters. In the West Moreton group there are seven members, each representing 1,128 voters; the East Moreton group has nine members for 1,361 male adults, and the Metropolitan district has seven members representing only 2,060 each. Now, while I give the Premier credit for trying to do the best he could to equalise the representation, I say he has completely overlooked the western portion of the colony. I am quite sure that the portion of the colony for which I am one of the members will be very much dissatisfied with this Bill, because they will certainly look to get a better representation than they have under it. The Minister for Works spoke about a nomadic population. There is no doubt that there are a great many nomadic people in the West; a good many of our employés run about from one station to another, but they do not leave their districts. Many of the wives and families of these men reside in the cities—in Rockhampton, in Brisbane, in Toowoomba, in Townsville—and though they go occasionally to visit their families, they come back to the districts where they are accustomed to find work, and where they are known. That accounts in a great measure for the small general population there is; and then again you must remember that when you get out into the very far West, none but men can go there. It is impossible to drag women and children through all the wilds, and over the rough roads, with long stages without water, and subject them to all the other disadvantages that attach to pioneering in the desert. I do not think that simply because these men are pioneers they should be deprived of their votes. I am satisfied that the Premier has made a mistake in not giving more representation to the western portion of the colony, and less to the metropolitan. They are not like the metropolitan constituencies; the people in the West are all producers, they are men who live by the land and on the land, and they produce the raw material, the handling of which produces wealth in Brisbane. Yet these are the very people that under this Bill are disfranchised. They are the very people who ought to have the largest measure of representation, because they are the most valuable people to the community. There is another thing I should like to mention, and that is with regard to the boundaries of the electorates; but I suppose that is a matter that can be better dealt with in committee. I think that in making the boundaries of the Western constituencies it would be far better to follow the boundaries of the runs than to follow a haphazard line across the country as some of them do, and for this reason: You never know, on a station, on which side of the boundary to register your men's names. One month they may be living on one side and next month they may be on the other, and there will be a great deal of confusion caused by that. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill; but I hope that we shall be able to get some amendments into it in committee, although, like a great many other members, I do not see how it is possible to alter any one part of it without altering, perhaps, the whole.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. H. Jordan) said: Mr. Speaker,—I feel sure, sir, that in framing this measure every effort has been made by the Chief Secretary with a view of doing justice to every part of the colony, and yet it appears that he has not succeeded in pleasing any section of the House. So far as we have heard yet, nearly all hon.

1887—2 s

members, with the exception of one or two on this side, have a great deal of fault to find with the Bill. The Northern members are dissatisfied because the interests of the North have not been sufficiently regarded, and because great injustice has, as usual, been done to the North. Members representing the West have found fault with it; we find the metropolitan members dissatisfied; members representing the Downs are not pleased; and we find, in fact, that the Premier has never been so far from pleasing anyone as on this occasion. Yet I venture to say that he never undertook a task more difficult. I know from my own experience the difficulty surrounding it, because I have had something of the same kind to do years ago when holding the office of Registrar-General; and I am perfectly satisfied that the Premier never bestowed more pains in trying to do what is right to every part of the colony than he has in framing this Bill. The fight on this occasion has centred around the idea as to what is the correct basis of representation, and there is great difference of opinion upon that point. Hon. gentlemen opposite who oppose, who find material fault with the Bill, insist upon it that the basis of representation should be the adult males in every electorate. One member has gone so far as to say that one man is as good as another and a great deal better. That is the substance of it. He said that a man without a wife and family should have an equal share in the representation with a man who has a wife and five or six children, and contended that if it were correct that a man with a wife and family should have a larger share in determining the number of members for any particular electorate than the man without a family, then a man with two or three wives and two or three families should have a still larger share. But I do not think there is any logic in that. I think it was a most ridiculous way of putting the question. I think, sir, one man is not as good as another. I hold that a man who has a wife and family is very much better for the purposes of the State—I mean as far as the interests of the community are concerned—than a man who has only himself to support. It is argued that men are the producers of wealth. Well, they are; but women and children are the consumers of wealth. And in regard to the question of revenue, which has been so largely dwelt upon by the hon. member for Mackay, there can be no doubt that a man without a family does not contribute nearly so much to the revenue as the man with a family. Customs duties amount to about three guineas per head of every person in the colony; so that a man who is married and has a family of five will pay about fifteen guineas a year to the revenue for Customs duties alone, whereas the man who is by himself will only pay about three guineas a year. Men who have families have a greater stake in the colony; they pay much more to the revenue, and are generally inclined to settle down and make the colony their home; but it is not so with men who are so unfortunate as to be the pioneers of the country. I give them all credit for that; very great consideration should be shown to them on that account. Those brave men who go out as the pioneers of settlement, and make the first footprints of civilisation on this vast territory, deserve very great consideration. I admit that, but at the same time they are not a class who settle in the community, because a great number of those who go out with their lives in their hands, as it were, to those far distant places are single men who have never made a home in the colony and never intend to make it their home—a great many of them; whereas those who are married generally settle in the country. They are permanent

residents, and ought certainly to be represented on the principle of total population. I venture to say, after all that has been said to-night about adult males being the true basis, that total population is the true basis of representation. That is my opinion. But this, as the hon. the leader of the Opposition correctly said to-night, has been modified greatly in the Bill. The Premier has very cleverly, as he said, interwoven with this idea of representation other considerations besides that of total population. He has made that concession; distance, territory, and other considerations have been taken into account.

Mr. MURPHY: No, no!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am following the arguments of hon. members who spoke on the other side, and who, especially, have gone carefully into figures, and insisted throughout all their comparisons that there was unfairness, particularly to the North and West, and other parts of the colony, because, as they have over and over again, and one after another, contended, adult males is the only correct basis of representation. But I differ from them entirely on that point. I believe that women and children must be taken into account. And although, as I have said, we have made a modification of that, because the vast interior of this colony is settled by a large number of adult males, yet I hold that that is the true principle. All those things have been taken into consideration by the Premier, and I believe that the Bill will be found to be a fair and just one throughout. I know something of the difficulty of framing a Bill of this kind, because I had a great deal to do with taking the census twice, and I know how difficult it is to produce such a Bill as we have now before us upon the principle of population. In taking the first census in 1876, I found, when making my preliminary arrangements, what a very difficult task it was. There was no consistency whatever in the boundaries of the various divisions of the colony. It was divided into population or census districts, registry districts, police districts, and electoral districts, and they were all different. I bestowed a very great deal of labour in reducing the boundaries of the population or census districts to precisely the same thing as the registry districts of the colony. Having done that, I endeavoured to get the Government to confirm the principle of making all the various divisions of the colony alike. I desired to have the police districts identical with the census and registry districts; but I found it opposed. Officialdom came in the way, and I could not get it done; it was too much trouble for other people to undertake the task which I had been foolish enough to take upon myself. That having been done when the Electoral Bill of 1878 was introduced, I endeavoured to get the principle recognised to this extent, at all events, that the subdivisions of the population or census districts should be the same as the electoral districts, and I believe that principle was confirmed, and acted upon as far as possible. I know it has been acted upon as far as possible in this case. The hon. the leader of the Opposition instanced the case of the electorate of Maranoa, and, referring to the arrangement of the boundaries, asked what a zig-zag thing like that meant. It means that the boundaries of the runs have been taken as the boundaries of the electoral district. I believe that is the case. It was done some years ago—the subdivisional boundaries of the population or census districts were observed for the electoral districts. I repeat again what I have said, that I believe the Premier has taken that principle and acted upon it; that the boundaries of the subdivisions

have been observed as far as practicable so that we may ascertain what the population is. The hon. member for Warrego has said that when the census was taken the drought had not long broken up, and the population of the Western district was very small; and he contended that the people who ought to have been employed there if the seasons had been normal had all come to Brisbane—that they flooded Brisbane—and the consequence was the population of the district was not fairly represented in the census returns. Now, I do not think that is the case at all. I believe the people had gone over the border.

Mr. MURPHY: That does not alter the argument.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At one time we could estimate the population approximately, because we took the arrivals and departures from the Customs Department, and, with the births and deaths taken into account, we could get a pretty fair estimate of the population from year to year, but that is not the case now, as there are greater facilities for going across the border. But these men who had not been able to find employment in the Western district went across to New South Wales.

Mr. MURPHY: They were away, wherever they had gone.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member for Mackay endeavoured to show that great injustice had been done to the North because they had only four additional members, and he said in the course of his remarks that the Metropolitan group had got one additional member. But if we look at the increase in the Metropolitan group as compared with the Northern district and take into account that the North has four additional members and the South only one, we cannot but come to the conclusion that the North has been fairly dealt with.

Mr. BLACK: I stated that the Metropolitan group had four additional members—not one.

The PREMIER: He calls the Logan the southern boundary.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know anyone who can use figures more ingeniously and cleverly than the member for Mackay, but I am satisfied that this task has been honestly and skilfully performed by the Chief Secretary, and I am satisfied that if we amend the measure we shall make a tremendous mess of it. One hon. member—I think the junior member for Cook—complained that the members themselves should have been taken into the counsels of the Premier; but I think if that idea had been carried out we should have arrived at a state of perfect chaos.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What is it now?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We should never have arrived at so fair and honest a result as we have arrived at now, and I think if we attempt to interfere with the Bill we shall make a great mistake. I feel satisfied that justice has been done, and I believe that the Bill will pass much in its present form.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—The colony has been looking forward with great interest to the production of this Bill, and I think the interest shown by the northern part of the colony has been more intense than that shown elsewhere. I refer, of course, to the extreme North, and when the people come to find out the real state of matters I do not think they will congratulate themselves on being relieved from the grievances which they have been continually complaining of for a great number of years. As the figures will show, the evils of under-representation as compared with the South will still continue to exist, and the

burden will be in no way removed, as the South receives five out of the nine members proposed to be added to the list. Taking one thing with another the North will be just where it was before. I agree that there is not much to be gained by having additional representatives in the House, and I am afraid that by the time we have population equal to that of New South Wales we shall require 200 members if we go on at the present rate of increase.

The PREMIER: New South Wales had more than we had when they had our population.

Mr. PALMER: At the present rate of increase there is no doubt that when we have 1,000,000 people we shall require 200 members. Now, we have a Bill here which has been prepared by the Premier, very cleverly, no doubt; but, notwithstanding that the Premier says he has drawn the Bill with a desire to give a fair representation to all parts of the colony, there is no doubt that the hon. gentleman has a Southern leaning. He is a Southern man, and any assistance he has had has been from Southern men, so that we have a Bill prepared in the interests of the South. I would like to put against that a Bill prepared by Northern men, with the assistance of Northern members. Say, a Bill prepared by the member for Townsville, assisted by the member for Mackay; put one against the other and strike a mean between the two. I am afraid we shall never have the chance of doing that, but, at the same time, I think it would be just as fair that an Electoral Bill, drafted by Northern members, should be accepted by this House as a Bill drafted by the Premier in the interests of the South. There is not the slightest doubt that the distribution is unfair. Take the district of Drayton and Toowoomba. Compare it on the map in extent of territory or in population with the district of Burke. Drayton and Toowoomba have two members with a male population of 1,909, while Burke, with 2,063 adult males, has only one member. Look at the extent of territory that a member for Burke has to go over to ascertain the requirements of his district. I suppose 600 to 700 miles from one corner to the other; and, moreover, he has to represent contending interests, so that, if justice was done, Burke should have two members, and Drayton and Toowoomba only one. It would be far easier for one member to represent Drayton and Toowoomba, than for one to represent Burke. Besides, I hold that what has been said about the census returns of the Western and Northern districts not being correct is perfectly true. I know of plenty of stations where papers were not left, and in many cases they were not called for by the enumerators. The districts are too extensive for the enumerators to get over, and they have not horseflesh to carry them over the districts in the time allowed. So that the census returns are not so reliable as the Premier wished us to believe, especially with regard to the Croydon Gold Field. I do not think the population of Croydon, according to the census returns, was more than 1,000; but there is not the slightest doubt that there are now 7,000 inhabitants there. And touching the ignorance of hon. members with regard to Northern interests, we know that provision was made some years ago for steamer passes to be issued for hon. members to visit the Northern districts, so that they might learn the requirements of the North; but I have not heard of more than one hon. member taking advantage of the privilege, and he made as short a stay as he could and soon came back to Brisbane. With regard to the Bill, the groups are so full of inequalities, and have been so often touched upon, that it is not worth my while going over them.

The PREMIER: I have been listening for it all the time.

Mr. PALMER: Well, I will give one or two. Here is Ipswich, right under the wing of Queen street and Brisbane; it has two members, with an adult male population of 2,191.

The PREMIER: Compare that with Bowen or Cairns.

Mr. PALMER: Then there is Cook with one member, and 2,000 adult males.

The PREMIER: Including all the fishermen.

Mr. PALMER: That one member represents all the marine industry in the whole of York Peninsula. It should have been the other way—two members for Cook, and one for Ipswich. But it is in the Metropolitan group that I think most of the iniquity of the Bill lies, because there is no doubt that everyone in the House more or less represents the city of Brisbane.

The PREMIER: It has some very poor representatives then.

Mr. PALMER: I have heard members from a distance advocate the interests of Brisbane better than the local members.

The PREMIER: I must have been out of the House when that occurred.

Mr. PALMER: I hold that the metropolis, besides being represented by the seven members representing the Metropolitan group—two members for North Brisbane, two for South Brisbane, two for Fortitude Valley, and one for Woollongabba—will be represented also by the members for Bulimba, Toombul, Enoggera, and Toowong. If London were represented on the same basis it would have more than half the members in the House of Commons.

The PREMIER: That is absolute nonsense.

Mr. PALMER: It is not at all a sound principle that towns should be represented on the same basis as the country; and the basis laid down is not applicable to the colony with its varied interests and scattered population. In the northern and western portions, where trade and population are increasing, the representation is the least. I hold that extent of territory and distance from the seat of government should be considered in apportioning the representatives, because there is a great difference between travelling over a district 20,000 square miles in extent and going over two or three miles of country or a small agricultural area. The Burke electorate contains 124,000 square miles, and I have found it a most serious task to visit the various portions of that district every year since I was elected; and even now, with another electorate taken out of it, the district is of enormous extent. The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, said the North had nothing to complain of; but I think it will be shown in committee that the North has a great deal to complain of. The concentration of interests in the metropolis is not conducive to the requirements of the colony—namely, that the productive interests should be encouraged and represented as efficiently as the towns, which produce nothing. If there is any principle in the Bill, it has been most cunningly devised to favour the towns at the expense of the country, for we shall be worse off than we were before. There is an addition of four in the North, while there is an addition of five in the South; and the year before last we gave two additional members to the North and two to the South. I scarcely think the Premier will enter into the spirit of the thing and give the people of the North what they ask for—that is, better representation in every way, and better control

over their own matters, in finance and other directions; and I think the Bill, if it become law, will not be looked on as one the people of the North had a right to expect.

Mr. FRASER said: Mr. Speaker,—I must confess that it is a difficult matter to know where or how to begin—there have been so very many bases of qualifications laid before us this evening. We have the adult male population basis, the basis of revenue, that of territory, and that of population as a whole. It has been asserted that the principle of adult male population basis has been accepted by this House. It has been advocated in this House, as you know, Mr. Speaker, but it has never been accepted as a sound and correct basis for representation. I think it is too much to accept a position of this sort. We were told by the hon. member who has just sat down that the producers are entitled to every consideration. So they are; but I wonder what is the use of producers if there are no consumers. I maintain that the consumers are entitled to consideration, and, as has been already observed, women and children—although they have not the franchise, which I maintain is a reason why they should be the more taken into consideration—are the most important section of consumers in the community. Another complaint has been advanced. We have been told that some hon. members who have addressed themselves to this question have looked at it from their own immediate local point of view, and yet, singularly enough, the members who made this charge dealt with the question from no other point of view than their own immediate standpoint. One hon. member from the North, another member from the West, and another member from the Central district seemed to be unable to say anything beyond their districts or outside of their own districts. I claim for hon. members in this House, on this side as well as on the other side, that every consideration is invariably given to the claims of the Central and Northern districts when they are fairly brought before the House. Great stress has been laid upon the fact that the time at which the census was taken was unfavourable for the population of the outlying districts. Well, sir, it might have been so or it might not; but in the nature of things the taking of the census could not be arranged to suit the season or to suit the localities. Another objection has been urged because the recently discovered goldfield of Croydon has not been taken into consideration. To prepare a Redistribution Bill to meet contingencies of this kind would be an everlasting operation and would never come to an end, and I must say that I do not think hon. members who have spoken have dealt fairly with the Premier in the matter. I make bold to assert that upon the very face of the Bill there is manifested an earnest desire to place the representation of all parts of the colony upon a fair and equitable footing. The Premier may have failed, and I should like to know who would not fail; I would like to know where or how or by whom a Redistribution Bill would be introduced which would give satisfaction to all members from all parts of the colony. To go back to the basis of representation again, Mr. Speaker: In no other case, in no other colony, and in no other country, has the basis of adult male population been asserted or maintained. There may be a great deal to be said for it, still I venture to say that the population, as a whole, is the only fair basis of representation. Now, let us see what injustice is done to the North in this matter, and what favour is shown to the South, and especially to the metropolis. One hon. member, this evening, quoted very extensively from the opinion of that very great

statesman, Mr. Gladstone—and there is no statesman whose opinion I should take in preference to his. But it is a very singular thing that in the Electoral Bill carried through Parliament by that gentleman he did not carry out the principle advocated by the hon. member who has quoted him, because the far northern electorate of Great Britain, North Scotland, which is the most distant, scarcely received any additional number of members. The additional number of members given were given to the large centres of population in the South.

The PREMIER: And especially to London.

Mr. MOREHEAD: London itself has two members.

The PREMIER: London has forty-five members.

Mr. FRASER: London and the metropolitan district have fifty-two members, and there is no great preponderance given in Great Britain to the electorates at a distance from the metropolis, compared with the number returned from London. Besides, the conditions of Great Britain are entirely different and cannot be advanced here, either as an example or as in any way an analogy. Some hon. members have harped very much upon the unfair favouritism shown to the metropolitan district here. I do not know exactly what is meant by this. The Metropolitan and East Moreton electorates contain a population of 96,373 to sixteen members, or 6,023 individuals to each member. I am taking the total population, because I utterly ignore the adult male population as a basis for representation. In the Metropolitan district each member represents 6,053 persons, while in the North each member represents only 3,477, and in the Central districts 3,624; so that the North is favoured by nearly cent. per cent. as against the Metropolitan district. Now, it has been said that Brisbane has in its favour the electorates of Ipswich and West Moreton, but any member who has paid any attention to things at all must know perfectly well that there is no love between Brisbane and Ipswich. Instead of being an advantage to Brisbane, those electorates are a disadvantage; that is my experience in the matter.

Mr. HAMILTON: They all sit on the same side of the House.

Mr. FRASER: I therefore think that, upon the whole, looking at it fairly, impartially, and broadly, the North at any rate has very little cause to complain of the attempt made in this Bill to give them a fair share of representation, though I do not mean to say that we should expect the Northern and Central districts to be quite satisfied with matters as they are arranged. It would be rather too much to expect that. It is not to be expected that any measure of representation, or any favour, or any liberal treatment in this matter is likely to satisfy the North. They have made up their minds that they will have territorial separation, and nothing short of that is likely to satisfy them. If anything were likely to satisfy them, they ought certainly to receive this attempt to serve them with much more favourable consideration than they seem to have done.

Mr. JESSOP said: Mr. Speaker,—As there are still several members who wish to speak on this subject, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I have no objection to the adjournment. I believe there are some members who desire to speak, and I myself wish to say something before the debate is closed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. The business on the paper to-morrow will stand in the same order as to-day. I may state that there are now several spare maps here of the smaller electorates—that is, the town electorates—in the Minister's room. They will be in charge of the officers of the House, and any member who wishes can obtain one. With regard to those of East and West Moreton and Darling Downs, the Minister for Lands informs me that they will be ready in the morning.

Question put and passed, and the House adjourned at two minutes past 10 o'clock.