

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 1887

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 29 September, 1887.

Questions.—Motion for Adjournment.—Railway Survey from Herberton to Georgetown.—Motion for Adjournment.—Railway Arbitrator's Decisions.—Electoral Districts Bill.—Lady Bowen Hospital Land Sale Bill.—Permission to Examine a Member of the Legislative Council.—Messages from the Legislative Council.—Personal Explanation.—Report of Refreshment Rooms Committee.—Supply.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTIONS.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL asked the Minister for Works—

1. What amount of land was resumed at Mount Perry for railway purposes, what amount paid for same, and who received the money?

2. What compensation was given for removing refinery, and also for removing houses and weigh-bridge, and to whom so paid?

3. What amount was paid for land for post and telegraph office, and to whom was the amount paid?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) replied—

1 and 2. The area of land taken for railway purposes at the Mount Perry railway station was 9 acres and 5 perches; but as this area was included with 3 acres 3 rods and 36 perches from portion 15, distant above one mile from the station, in the award of the railway arbitrator, the exact amount of award for the 9 acres and 5 perches is not stated. It may, however, be estimated that the amount paid to Messrs. Hart, Mein, and Flower, as agents for Mr. J. C. Smyth, for the land resumed and damage arising thereupon was £518 11s. 6d., which amount includes compensation for all improvements.

3. £300 was paid for land for post and telegraph office to the credit of Mr. J. C. Smyth.

Mr. STEVENS asked the Minister for Works—

1. Have the Government abandoned the trial survey from Nerang to the border?

2. If so, will the Government state their reasons for doing so?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—

As the Government did not consider the survey from Nerang to the border a pressing matter, the survey party recently employed there was transferred to the Cleveland line.

Mr. HAMILTON asked the Minister for Works—

Is it the intention of the Government to commence a survey of a line of railway from Herberton to Georgetown during the present session?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied—

In answer to the hon. member, No.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

RAILWAY SURVEY FROM HERBERTON TO GEORGETOWN.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of referring to the particularly insulting reply given to my question, as a representative of the Cook district, by the hon. Minister for Works just now. We all know that gentleman's insulting demeanour in the House, and we all know very well the vicious manner in which he has turned round upon his own colleagues. We all know, not only his insulting manner in this House, but also to his subordinates, and I for one shall not allow myself to be subjected to it in this House. This question was asked about a year ago, and it was fenced upon that occasion. The reply then was that the line could not be surveyed at present. I subsequently repeated the question a few days ago. My constituents wished to know, and they were disgusted with the reply which they received upon that occasion. My question on the latter occasion was, "Is it the intention of the Government to complete the survey of this particular line?" and the reply was, "Not at present." I then asked the question to-day—"Is it the intention of the Government to commence a survey of a line of railway from Herberton to Georgetown during the present session?" and the reply from the Minister for Works was, "The hon. member knows." I say that that is utterly untrue. The Premier, as usual, is prompting his colleague. We know very well that the Premier has not the manliness to tackle hon. members himself. He is prompting his colleague now, as he always does, and just as he did the other night when his colleague was talking. He held his hand before his face so that hon. members would not see the manner in which he was relishing the vicious attack made by the Minister for Works. The reply I received just now was, "The hon. member knows."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I said nothing of the sort. I said, "In answer to the hon. member, no."

Mr. HAMILTON: I beg to apologise; I thought the hon. gentleman said that "the hon. member knows." I take back all I have said, Mr. Speaker. I thought the hon. Minister for Works deliberately insulted me by his reply. I am very sorry I made a mistake. At any rate the hon. gentleman has given me a straightforward answer, and, with the consent of the House, I will withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

RAILWAY ARBITRATOR'S DECISIONS.—ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

Mr. STEVENS said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to move the adjournment of the House, in order to bring under the notice of hon. members a subject of considerable importance to the community in general; and that is the subject of railway arbitration—not only in general, but more particularly as regards the arbitration

cases which have recently occurred in the Logan district. The decisions point to either one of two things—either that the person appointed to act as arbitrator is unfit for his position or the system is bad. It may be one or the other, or both. It may be said that, if I thought my constituents had suffered damage or considerable injury, I should have brought their case before a committee of the House, and tried to obtain redress for their grievances in that manner. But the session is so far advanced that it would be impossible to get a committee to deal with the cases, and bring up a report before the House before the end of the session. Consequently those persons who suffered would be put to a considerable amount of expense, without any result being attained. I have a long list of cases, but I will only treat them in a cursory manner, as it would take two or three evenings to enter into them fully. I will give some instances, however, so that hon. members may judge for themselves. One was that of H. G. Schneider, who had a small area of land on the Nerang River. The area of 3 roods 21 perches was resumed, and he claimed at the rate of £30 per acre, the claim amounting to £26 8s. 9d. The land was of considerable value to him, as he had barely sufficient for his own requirements. He is a surveyor, and requires a little land for his horses and a cow. Three years ago £25 per acre was offered for land adjoining his, but was refused. Other land in the vicinity was purchased at £30 per acre, and the purchaser has since made a considerable amount on his bargain. Though this was proved by thoroughly competent and respectable witnesses, the valuator refused to admit that the sum mentioned was a fair price to pay, and put a ridiculously small value on it. The land remaining is not enhanced very much by the railway, because the owner has to make a considerable detour to make use of the railway. The award was £7 18s. 10d. — for land honestly worth £30 per acre. The next case was that of a farmer named G. A. Hope, living in the same neighbourhood. The quantity resumed was 8 acres 11 perches of really valuable land, and 7 acres 2 roods 37 perches of land not so good. He claimed £25 per acre for the good, and £5 per acre for the second class. He also claimed 35s. per acre for 40 acres, which the railway cut off from water, and on which water could not be obtained. It was proved that land adjoining this farming land of Hope's was sold at £25 per acre—land about 1½ mile or 2 miles further from the railway; yet his land was valued at £5 per acre. His claim amounted to £710 4s., and the evidence proved clearly that this amount was not a great deal too much, yet the amount offered by the arbitrator was £103 11s. 3d. Another person victimised was Albert Ruge, from whose land rather more than an acre was resumed, the severed portion consisting of high ridgy land and gullies, totally unsuitable for the purpose of manufacturing cordials, by which he gets his living. His frontage to the main road also was cut off, and the property almost destroyed. It was proved that he gave £21 per acre some time ago; but the whole of the compensation offered was £19 7s. 9d. I am not going into minute details, because it would be too tedious to do so; but I will give a few salient points. Another case was that of Stanley Harris, from whom 12 acres was resumed, a considerable quantity being damaged by severance. He claimed £225 in all. A portion of his land was rendered unfit for cutting up into allotments by the peculiar shape in which it was left by the railway and the roads. Land adjoining it was sold at £75 per acre. A large portion of his land is completely cut off from permanent water, and this damages it to a great extent for grazing purposes. He has had 400 or 500 head of cattle

grazing on that land, and the portion on the northern side of the railway is cut off from water. There was a considerable quantity sold two and a half years ago at £20 per acre; but the valuator, in spite of all this evidence, which was not disputed, places a value of £3 10s. per acre on the land. In all these cases where the valuator was asked, "Is the residue of the land very much enhanced in value?" of course his reply was always, "Yes"; but when asked "How?" or "To what extent?" he never was able to answer; he said, "I consider it is. The award in this case was £76 0s. 7d. The next case was that of Robert McReadie, from whom 6 acres 18 perches was resumed, for which he claimed the moderate sum of £7 per acre. Besides that, there were 125 acres cut off from permanent water, portion of a dairy farm of very great value to him, and he claimed 25s. an acre on that, the whole amounting to £199 1s. This gentleman had sold portions of his land close to the part resumed at the rate of £40 per acre. There is no permanent water on the severed portion, and whenever he has tried to obtain water in any quantity it has turned out brackish; so that the severance has rendered the dairy farm to a great extent valueless. He has to take his stock one and a-half or two miles to get through the railway gates for water, and that entails a considerable amount of expense and labour. He was awarded the magnificent sum of £35. Another claim was that of E. Campbell, of Beenleigh, for compensation for the unexpired term of the lease of a store and dwelling-place at Beenleigh, which he had to quit because the land was required for railway purposes. He claims for the amount of rent and the extra rent he would have to pay for a new building, the rent he would have to pay for a dwelling-place for his manager, the erection of stables and other conveniences for himself and his customers, and the considerable loss to him by leaving the best site in Beenleigh. The arbitrator considered he had suffered no loss at all, but to give him an award of some kind he made an award of £10. On the very face of it this is absurd—to take a man's place of business, dwelling-house, all his conveniences for business, and drive him to another site not so valuable, and say that he has suffered no damage. It was proved by competent witnesses that the loss to him would be £600 through having to go to another site. The next claim is that of William Saunders, who had land on that portion of the railway line near Beenleigh. The land severed by the railway was used for fattening stock, which were driven back from the good grass land. Hon. members will easily understand that cattle which are being fattened will not feed peaceably where men are at work constructing a line, or where a railway is running. He lost £1 a head on his stock, and many of his customers who used to send cattle for agistment removed them when they found they were disturbed by the construction of the railway. He claimed £150, and the witnesses proved that the claim was by no means exorbitant; but the award of the arbitrator was £50. No argument was brought forward against the claim, and no witnesses were examined; he simply wrote down £50. John Waters claimed £405 10s. 1d. for 20 acres 1 rood 15 perches—£10 per acre. A great deal of money was spent in improving this land and rendering it fit for agriculture. £6 per acre was paid for clearing and stumping, and that alone amounted to £122; 15 acres was severed from water, for which he put down £15, and there were various other items, amounting to £65. He applied to a neighbour to sell him some land adjoining, but he refused to let him have it at £30 an acre. The award in this case for all the land taken, the

damage done by severance and other losses, was £154 7s. 9d. Arthur Bryant had land resumed, and had to remove his dwelling-house. He made inquiries as to what he could get his cottage removed for, and the lowest offer was £15. In addition to that he lost the land resumed for railway purposes, and yet the award was £14 6s. 7d.—actually less than it would cost to remove his house. W. Stark claims as compensation £117 for 18 perches of land in the township of Beenleigh. This was portion of an orchard in the township, very valuable land and very highly cultivated, which returned a very good living indeed to its owner. He claimed for the resumption of the land, for a number of fruit-trees destroyed, a number of grape-vines four years old, in full bearing, and other items, and for damage to the residue of the land. As it was of small area, of course the resumption made it of still less value to him, and prevented him from making anything like as good use of it as before. This case was very closely gone into, a number of witnesses were examined and cross-examined without their evidence being shaken, and the amount awarded was £42 12s. 6d. The valuator, on being examined, said he knew there were some improvements on the land, but did not know their value, or what they were, or anything about them; and yet he put a value on the land. The next case is that of J. F. Mengel. His was a very similar case. It was a most valuable site, close to the Queensland National Bank, one of the best positions in the township. He also lost a number of fruit-trees which had afforded him considerable profit; and by portion of his land being cut off he was prevented from enlarging his place of business. He claimed £275. Evidence was brought forward to show that it was anything but an exorbitant claim, but all that was awarded was £65. Then comes the case of J. F. Shelley—land resumed, 6 acres 2 roods 26 perches; claim, £233 10s.; award, £35. This was utterly inadequate for the damage done. A considerable amount of land was taken from him and his property was severed so that all the water was on one side of the railway line. In cases of that sort it entails considerable expense to drive the stock to water across the railway line, even if there is a gate handy. It is one man's work to do it; the stock must be watered at least once a day, and that occupies a considerable time and increases the expense of working the property. The amount of the award was only £35. Then David Yaun, on the Coomera, claimed £681 for 18½ acres taken from him in the township of Coomera. His property had a very valuable water frontage, and first-class evidence was given that land adjoining had been sold for a considerable time at the rate of £100 per acre for building purposes. By the way the line goes through his property it cuts it up into four or five different pieces, four out of five being completely severed from the water, which, of course, reduces the value of the land considerably. The amount awarded in his case was £150. The next case is that of J. Williamson, 1½ acre resumed, £66 10s. claimed. The road to water was completely closed by the construction of the railway, so that he was compelled to take his stock by a considerable detour to water; and not only that, but the road was closed so as to prevent the travelling public from getting to his place of business—a butcher's shop. They could only get to it by making a detour of about a mile, passing another butcher's shop on the way, so, of course, his business was ruined. Yet the arbitrator in this case considered there was no damage at all, and awarded £6 10s. Robert Wilson, in the township of Beenleigh, had 3 acres 2 roods 36 perches

taken from him. He claimed for damage and loss about £800, and considerable evidence was brought forward to prove that the claim was very moderate; but the evidence was totally ignored, and only £153 7s. 8d. was awarded for nearly 3½ acres in the centre of the township of Beenleigh. The last case I will mention now is that of W. K. Oxenford. He has a farm on the river where the main road crosses, and 10 acres 2 roods 7 perches were resumed. Now, sir, I have no hesitation in saying that this is amongst the most valuable land in Queensland, from one end to the other. If I were asked to show a person the best cultivated farm in the Logan district, I should take him without hesitation to Oxenford's farm. Persons travelling by in the coach always notice the high state of cultivation and fertility of that farm. Nearly 10½ acres were resumed, and, of course, that is a considerable portion of land to lose from any farm; and, in addition to that, he has been put to the expense of moving a lot of his buildings and machinery. An enormous embankment has been erected for railway purposes in the middle of the farm, and you can understand the damage that alone would cause when I explain that the farm is situated on a flat between the river and a ridge. In flood-times the water leaves the river, and skirts that portion of the farm which adjoins the ridge. During a heavy flood the whole flat is submerged, and in the middle of his farm there is this enormous embankment—I do not know how many feet high, but about 150 yards long; so that in addition to having his farm swamped by an ordinary flood, the water is thrown back for a considerable distance by the erection of that long dam or embankment. I do not intend to enlarge upon this dam, as I shall have occasion to refer to it again later on in the session, but I draw attention to it now in order to show the immense amount of damage suffered by this particular farm. The first offer made by the Railway Department as compensation for the resumption was £230. The arbitrator awarded the sum of £215 19s. It was proved in evidence that the land in that neighbourhood had been sold for £30 per acre. And yet the arbitrator only makes the small award of £215 19s. for 10½ acres. While admitting freely that the land has been improved by having a railway terminus there, still I think it is absurd on the face of it to say that in this case the owner does not deserve greater compensation than he has received. The main argument of the valuator was that the valuations of divisional boards had in many cases been increased by 50 per cent. The clerk of the divisional board of Nerang, however, proved that there had been no valuations made for the last four years, and that at the time the valuations were made they were made at a very low rate. In fact, I suppose that any member of this House who knows anything about agricultural districts is well aware that the land is rated at nothing like its full value. But in this case evidence was adduced proving that land in the same locality had been sold at the very high rate of £20 an acre, and yet the valuator only valued it at £5 per acre. The papers placed on the table of the House by the Minister in reference to these resumptions only contain a condensation of the evidence; the cross-examination of witnesses, which is very important in matters of this kind, being omitted. I may state that the valuator for the Railway Department takes notes of the evidence, that the lawyer from the Crown solicitor's office takes notes, and that the arbitrator also takes notes, and yet it is impossible for the House to get a complete report of the evidence taken in these cases. This is an instance in which I

think it may fairly be claimed that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. If the valuator makes an award of £500 or over, and the claimant is dissatisfied with his decision, he has the right of appeal, and may obtain redress in that way; but any man whose award is under £500 has no redress, if the amount is insufficient or unfair, except through Parliament. It is, I think, almost absurd to expect any ordinary individual to sit on all arbitration cases in all parts of the colony and give everyone fair play. It requires a man of legal training to sift the evidence brought forward, for in many cases the arbitrator has no personal knowledge of the value of the land upon which he has to adjudicate. There are very few men who are prepared and qualified to go over the whole of the country the arbitrator has to travel over, and correctly assess the value of land taken away for railway purposes. In these particular cases I rather imagine that the arbitrator mistook his position. Instead of being there as an arbitrator, in the proper sense of the word, he seemed to be there more as extra counsel for the Crown to try and disprove the evidence brought forward, and to make the cases as bad as he possibly could for the claimants, and to award as little as possible. I think that a very much fairer system of dealing with claims for compensation for land resumed for railway purposes would be that under the Public Works Resumption Act, by which the owner of the land has the right to nominate one arbitrator the Railway Department another, and the two arbitrators thus nominated appoint an umpire. If that system was adopted there would be a chance of the owner of the land getting a fair amount of compensation for the damage done to his property by the railway resumptions. If, however, that system is not adopted, and it is considered necessary to carry on the old system in connection with these arbitrations, then I think it is absolutely necessary to obtain a thoroughly qualified man for the position of arbitrator. From what I have seen of these cases, and from what I have heard, I think that a man who occupies that position should be quite qualified to occupy a seat on the bench as district court judge. He requires very much the same knowledge and ability, as evidence has to be sifted, the good to be taken from the bad, and a decision given that is fair to the parties concerned. There is not one of these cases in which that has taken place; the decisions have been unfair in the extreme, and there is no remedy for the claimants except through Parliament. It is too late to bring the matter forward this session; but if I am here next session I shall certainly bring the cases before the House and try to obtain redress.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—We have had a long and pathetic speech from the hon. member about the arbitration cases with respect to the land resumed for railway purposes in the Logan district. All that I can say is that I should be very glad to be relieved from the necessity of resuming any lands, but that can only be done by stopping railways. If they want to have a railway they ought not to complain of the resumption of land. The hon. member complains of the way in which the valuations are made. He says the arbitrator should accept the evidence of what he calls competent, reliable, and disinterested persons in the neighbourhood as to the value of the lands resumed. All I can say to that is that if the arbitrator does that, and accepts the value put upon the properties by the people brought forward by those who have to be paid for the land, it would be a very bad job for the Treasury. That kind of thing has been going on to a large extent. I have seen a good deal of it; the money

paid for land resumed for railway purposes has been something enormous. If hon. members will look at the answer I gave this afternoon to a question by the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Lumley Hill, they will see the amount paid for land resumed at Mount Perry for railway purposes. It was enough to buy up the fee-simple of the whole of Mount Perry. And the sum of £300 was paid for a post and telegraph site at Mount Perry. That is the very thing to stop railways altogether. What is the use of going on spending money in that way? The hon. member referred to a great many cases in which he said serious damage had been done, inasmuch as the land in one particular spot had been bought or sold at £20 or £30 per acre, and the land adjoining, through which the line passes, was valued at £5 an acre. I can find plenty of places where land may be worth £5 an acre, and other land ten yards away not worth more than 15s. an acre—ironbark and spotted-gum ridges. The hon. member also stated that in some cases the water had been cut off from the land. What would be the value of a place even if it had water, if it consisted of ironbark and spotted-gum ridges? If a man got £3 10s. an acre for land of that kind, he got more than it was worth; if I were valuing land of that description, I certainly should not give anything like that sum. If you were to ask any man to buy land out there at £1 per acre he would look at you aghast. If railways are to be carried out in those districts you must get at the value of the land from someone who is not directly interested in it; and I venture to say that if the hon. member for Logan himself wanted to purchase a piece of land on the Logan at its full market value, he would not select a man who had an interest in it to purchase it or determine the price for him. The hon. gentleman also said that a judge would make the best railway arbitrator. In my opinion a judge would be about the worst man who could possibly be appointed to such a situation. He would take the evidence of interested people all round, and he would say, "This is the evidence, and my finding must be in accordance with the evidence." The real duty of the arbitrator is to determine by his own judgment, after having heard the evidence brought before him, and not to depend entirely upon the evidence of men whose object is to get all they can out of the Government. It is quite possible that errors of judgment may be committed, and the judgment of valuers differs sometimes enormously as to the value of land. Even in Brisbane I have known them vary from 25 to 100 per cent. as to the value of town land—men who were supposed to be competent valuers too. I do not attach much value to the evidence that has been collected in any particular neighbourhood as to the actual value of land resumed for railway purposes. Local witnesses are interested in keeping up the value of land in their own neighbourhood; and unfortunately there is too great a tendency amongst people generally to take money out of the Government whenever they get a chance, and put it into the hands of private persons.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the very moderate and temperate speech of the hon. member for Logan might have been met in a different way by the Minister for Works. It did not seem to me at all necessary, because the hon. member for Logan brought before the House certain grievances with regard to railway arbitration, that the Minister for Works should get up and, going, I think, outside the power which even he possesses, threaten that he would stop all railways.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did nothing of the kind.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. gentleman said he had a very easy solution for it, and that was to stop the railways. One has to handle a delicate question indeed as to the Minister for Works and the Railway Arbitrator; but I think it will be the opinion of most hon. members who have read the report of the select committee on the Corser case that the Railway Arbitrator is utterly unfit for the position he holds. It is most improper, I do not hesitate to say, that a person so utterly incompetent for the position as Mr. Thompson is, should be clothed with the great authority he possesses. It is all very well for the Minister for Works to say that the amounts generally claimed for compensation are excessive, and are based on the testimony of interested witnesses. That may be so, or it may not; but I join issue with him when he says that the evidence of those interested witnesses should be altogether put on one side. I also join issue with him when he says that if those cases were heard before a judge it would result in improper decisions being given. A judge would not take the evidence on one side only; he would take the evidence on both sides, and decide the case on its merits. With regard to the Railway Arbitrator, judging from what we know about the Corser case, I am inclined to believe that he bases his decisions upon what the Railway Department wish him to award, and I am very much afraid that that state of affairs is very prevalent at the present time. Under existing circumstances, and after the expression of opinion given by the Minister for Works, I very much doubt whether any material benefit can be derived, owing to the position which the Railway Arbitrator holds to the Minister at the head of his department, because the Minister for Works appears to have arrived at some extraordinary ideas with regard to what compensation should be given, altogether irrespective of the nature of the land that may be resumed. He has indicated in his speech that he considers that many claimants for compensation for land resumed for railway purposes are actuated by a desire to get all they can out of the Government. I doubt that very much. I have not such a low opinion of human nature as to imagine that all men are actuated by that motive; and if the arbitrator is actuated by the same motives as the Minister for Works, I hardly think justice is likely to be given to any claimant, if that is the way in which compensation is to be awarded. The hon. member for Logan put his complaints and grievances in a very moderate and proper way before the House, and I think it should have received very different consideration from the Minister for Works than he gave to it. However, I trust that at a later period of the evening, or—as I do not see the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, in his place—at a later period of the session, we shall have an opportunity of discussing, on the Corser question, the conduct of the Railway Arbitrator. We shall then be able to judge for ourselves as to the wisdom of the decision he arrived at, or otherwise. The position which that gentleman occupies at the present time is an unfortunate one—a very unfortunate one—and I think that if he is to be provided for at all in the Government service it should be in some other department, where he will not be under the immediate control of so near a relative as the Minister for Works.

Mr. ADAMS said: Mr. Speaker,—I am extremely sorry that the Minister for Works went out of his way to depreciate the value of certain properties in and around Mount Perry. He said he had not the slightest doubt that the money that was paid for compensation there would buy the whole of Mount Perry. I think I showed the other day that the value of property

at Mount Perry is very great, and I say to-day that the value of property there has not depreciated. How was it that the Government had to pay compensation for land resumed for the purpose of erecting the railway station and the post and telegraph office? Some hon. members may not recollect the facts. A petition was sent down from Mount Perry asking the then Government to lay out and survey a township—

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Is there anyone living there now?

Mr. ADAMS: That petition was not heard of for many months, and the consequence was that when the Government would not survey a township at once, the people who owned the adjoining land surveyed a township called Fife Barnett, which was sold to the inhabitants of Mount Perry at that time; being a little nearer the mines. The result was that when the Government had actually surveyed their land and offered it for sale they could not find a purchaser, and the whole business portion of the place was taken down to Fife Barnett; and instead of the Government erecting the Government buildings on the Government township they had to buy back land at Fife Barnett from the then owners for that purpose. Therefore, I do not think it is just for the hon. gentleman to try and depreciate property in one place for the sake of—I hardly know what to term it—making out a good case for the Railway Arbitrator. I do not see because a man owns a piece of land, and a railway is taken there, that he should suffer because others are enhancing the value of their property all round him. I think everyone should be treated fairly, and that wherever land has been resumed in this way the owners should be not only remunerated irrespective of the land, but also for any damage that they may have sustained. I should not have risen had it not been for the hon. gentleman endeavouring to depreciate the value of property in my electorate. I think that if the hon. gentleman did not ramble about so much he would save a great deal of valuable time in this House.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—In reference to matters of this kind, now brought before the House by the hon. member for Logan in a very temperate and moderate way, I am inclined to think that the Government have gone from one extreme to the other, and that in endeavouring to avoid Scylla they have fallen into Charybdis. Certainly the late Government did make most enormous awards, as, for instance, in this very case of the value of land at Mount Perry. I should like the Government to try and sell the post and telegraph office there, and see what they would get for it. I fancy you might take away the post-office altogether; I do not suppose many letters go there, and I do not think there is much use for the 9 acres and 5 perches for which £918 was paid—nearly £100 per acre—and the useless refinery where the stuff was no good, not worth working.

Mr. ADAMS: What refinery was it?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I suppose it was a copper refinery. Was it? the hon. member ought to know more about it than I do. At any rate, there was no copper; there was brass, more likely. However, I do not know who the fortunate J. C. Smyth was who got the money. I do not know whether he is the gentleman who occupies a position in another Chamber, but I fancy I know the connection, and where the money went really. I recognise that in the distance. At the same time I do not see that because injustices have been perpetrated in the past and that the taxpayers of the colony have suffered, therefore the present Government are at all justified, in their ardent desire to protect the taxpayers in inflicting injustice

upon individuals. I think that individuals who have got really fair and legitimate claims should have those claims fairly and justly considered. I do not believe that the Railway Arbitrator is in the slightest degree competent to fulfil the office which he has to discharge. I do not think he knows anything at all about the business, and he was put into that position too late in life to learn anything of it. I look upon it as a business that requires a thorough apprenticeship and training; and that no man taken suddenly from another line of life altogether and put into this office is capable of discharging it with proper efficiency. I am quite sure that in my private business I would not entrust any of my land to him, either for the object of purchase—or at least I should like very much to be able to buy land at his price. I have no doubt it would be a good thing if one could do that. And I should sell at my own afterwards. I do not think the country is justified in employing him in that capacity. He cannot be expected to give satisfaction. I think it is unfair to the man himself to be put in the position he is in. Nobody can have any faith in his decisions. He has had no experience in the business, and I think the Government ought to appoint a competent man—not a judge; I do not think a judge would be the very best man for the position, but some man who has had thorough practical experience in relation to the selling of land and valuing it—who has been paid as a valuator. I am thoroughly aware that valuations differ very much, as the Minister for Works stated; but still there are men in Brisbane, men in this House, whose valuations you can rely upon to a very fair approximate extent. At any rate, whether their judgments are sound or not, the public believe in them. Generally, people who are both borrowing and lending money have faith in their valuations, because they pay for them, and the evidence of those men is taken as worth something. The award or appraisal of these men, who have had experience in that line, is sure to meet with a certain amount of respect, at all events. But at present the thing is a perfect farce. As far as I am personally concerned, I have often been twitted about being interested in some land along the Cleveland railway line. Well, I have been offered 1s. for 7 acres 4 roods—something like $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres—and I simply declined to take it.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: It will pay very well.

MR. LUMLEY HILL: I do not care whether it will or not. I bought the land before the railway was projected at all, and certainly I never advocated the railway. I consider that is my land, and I am not going to have it taken from me for 1s., I do not care what anybody says. Therefore, if the railway does not go there I shall be quite willing to accept the fiat of the Minister for Works and let it stop where it is. I am not going to have my land wrested from me, or accept 1s. for land which is worth certainly a good deal more than that. However, I had no intention of bringing this matter before the House. I do not care two pence whether the railway goes there or not. I can keep the land or sell it, but I am not going to submit to an injustice of that kind. I merely adduced it as an instance of the practice that is going on now, and of the sort of confiscation of people's property which the Government apparently appear to consider they can exercise with impunity.

MR. DICKSON said: Mr. Speaker,—There is no doubt that it is a very difficult matter to arrive at such an award in the matter of property as will satisfy the owner and also protect

the State. We all know that there is a disposition, a tendency at any rate, on the part of private proprietors to make the best bargains they can with the State. They think the State is in a position to give them a much larger price than they possibly would obtain from a private individual, and therefore I feel that, to a certain extent, the Government ought to be protected in their transactions with private individuals when they have to resume land for public purposes. But I feel that generally, as well as in the special cases referred to by the hon. member for Logan this evening, the matter is one that should receive more consideration than it does from those who are appointed by the Government to assist or investigate such cases. I do not think it was ever the intention of the Railway Act that property should be confiscated and that the proprietor should not receive compensation; in fact, that confiscation instead of compensation should ensue. I must say, from many transactions that have come under my notice in connection with land resumed for railway purposes, that there does seem to be a great tendency on the part of the Government officer to deal with all these claims in a rough-and-ready way, chiefly leaning towards protecting the interests of the State, without regard to the possible hardships that may be inflicted upon individuals; because, Mr. Speaker, a railway may pass through a man's property and very seriously injure it, while a proprietor on the other side of the road may have all the benefit of the unearned increment which that railway confers upon the district. Then, again, there is to be considered the direction in which a railway may pass through a man's property, the area of the land taken from him, and the quality and character of it and other matters in connection with such resumption, all of which should be very carefully taken into consideration. I must say that some cases that I have had an opportunity of inquiring into in connection with the Logan railway—the one to which the hon. member referred—showed, to my mind, great want of judgment on the part of the Railway Arbitrator in the award he tendered, and, indeed, I may say that they were, in many cases, to use a mild term, really eccentric. I do not think the gentleman who made those awards could have satisfied himself of the various conditions of the properties with which he dealt, and I believe that a very great deal of hardship has been inflicted upon the owners of those properties—injustice which I do not think any Government would desire to see committed in connection with the construction of railways. In building railways I do not think we ought to hold over landowners the threat of confiscating their property if they do not accede to the terms the Railway Department might dictate. There is no doubt a great deal of heartburning in regard to the manner in which lands are valued, and without saying that the award of a district court judge would be an improvement upon the present system, I do certainly think the Government ought to be able to find some board of assessors—experts—who would take the pains to inquire into the local conditions, and thereby arrive at more correct conclusions than have been done up to the present time. As I have already stated, it seems to me that the Government officer—possibly he is, for the moment, dressed in a little brief authority—takes too high-handed a part in the matter and ignores the reasonable representations of men who naturally think, although the railway may be a benefit to the district in which it is constructed, that they have no right to be selected as scapegoats for the benefit of their neighbours; and I must say that I think the Government do

not desire that railway construction should proceed in that direction. I think the hon. member for Logan has done good service in mentioning these cases, and I have no doubt that when the Railway estimates come on for consideration something further will be said upon the matter. I commend it to the attention of the Minister for Works, and I think he should regard it in a much more favourable view than he has done, by threatening to remove the grievance by stopping railway construction. To my mind that is not the light in which this matter should be considered. I do not think there is any occasion for me to show much soreness in the matter, because I believe, in common with other hon. members, that the Government desire to do what is just towards those who have had the misfortune—I use the word advisedly—to have railways constructed through their property. I would like those to have the advantage, enjoyed by others in the same district, of benefiting by a railway close at hand, without having part of their property confiscated. I trust the matter will receive attention, and that the hon. Minister for Works will see that the Railway Arbitrator is instructed to take more fully into his consideration the circumstances in connection with land resumption for railway purposes, which may induce him to come to more equitable decisions.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—It has been said that the Railway Arbitrator is incompetent to do his work. It is not for me to say whether he is or is not; I do not express any opinion upon the subject. The only ground, so far as I have heard, for saying that the Railway Arbitrator is incompetent is, that he has given lower awards than people have claimed. A paper was called for by the hon. member, Mr. Salkeld, in connection with the amounts paid for land resumption at Southport, and I wish to call the attention of hon. members to it. There are columns showing the amounts claimed by owners as compensation, the amounts assessed by the railway valuator as compensation, and the amounts offered by the Commissioner for Railways as compensation. I will read a few of the items just as an illustration of the differences between the amount claimed and the amount offered by the Commissioner. In one case the sum claimed is £850, and the amount offered by the Commissioner was £602; and the Commissioner's offer was accepted. In the next £565 was claimed, and £440 was offered; the Commissioner's offer was accepted. In the next £230 was asked; £220 was offered, and the offer was accepted. In the next £1,000 was claimed; £663 was offered, and the offer was accepted. In the first case the amount claimed was £200, and £50 was offered, and yet that offer was accepted. It simply shows—and I particularly call attention to the fact—that people in most cases claim a great deal more than they think is the value of the land, and are willing to accept a very much smaller sum.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. H. Jordan) said: Mr. Speaker,—It has been stated by several hon. members that my hon. colleague the Minister for Works said he would stop all railway construction unless the people whose land was required for railway purposes were more moderate in their demands. I did not understand him to make this threat. I think that some injustice has been done the arbitrator. It has been stated, and one or two hon. members have repeated the statement, that he is altogether incompetent for the work which he has been appointed to do. It is very easy to say that any gentleman in the Government service is incompetent, but it strikes me that almost any gentleman of intelligence and education, who had been many years in the colony, and who knew something about the value of

land, would be competent for the duties which this gentleman has to fulfil. I think it is very unfair and too much to assert that he is incompetent for the position he occupies. I have some sympathy with the hon. member for Logan and with his constituents in the matter, inasmuch as I know many of those persons personally, and should be very sorry to think that any injustice had been done. I am willing to admit that it is possible that, in some of those cases brought before the House by the hon. member for Logan, some injustice may have been done; but if so it may perhaps be remedied. I think, however, there is a disposition on the part of some persons who have been very clamorous for railways to consider that the Government is fair game, and that it is a grand opportunity of getting a much larger price than they ever supposed they would get before there was any prospect of a railway being made. I know that even in the Logan district the value of land has been greatly enhanced, and was enhanced immediately it was known that the Government of the day were favourable to the construction of a railway in the locality; and I know that it has been the practice in many places for people to take into consideration the additional value that will be given to their land by the construction of a railway when sending in their claims for compensation for the land resumed; but I think that is hardly fair. Very likely a very absurd value is in some instances placed on land resumed for railway purposes. The hon. member for Logan said the arbitrator stated that the land was enhanced in value, but declined to state how or to what extent. I should suppose that any country land within thirty miles of the capital would be enhanced by a railway passing through, the terminus of which would be only a short distance from that land, because a person putting the land to its legitimate use—cultivating it—is thus enabled to get his produce to market. I do not think there should be anything like spoliation or confiscation in the resumptions; on the other hand, persons whose property is greatly enhanced in value by a railway should be moderate in their demands. Supposing that farmers generally—they are the class most interested in the construction of railways in the country districts—were to imitate the very moderate and excellent example set by the owners of lands between here and Cleveland, most of whom proffered the land required for railway purposes as a free gift to the Government if they could get the railway, there would be very much less difficulty in the matter of making railways than there is at present. I admit that injustice may have been done in some instances with respect to the resumptions on the Logan railway, and if so I hope that justice will be done in those cases; but I am satisfied that if the people there had acted on the principle adopted by the persons owning land between here and Cleveland, a very small amount would have satisfied them. The present Government have gone into a large railway policy, and made themselves very popular in so doing, but an effectual obstacle will be placed in their way if persons demand exorbitant prices for their land. We are all interested in the making of railways—making railways will settle the country and enable us to carry out agricultural settlement—and I think we should all take care to assist the Government in carrying out their railway policy, and not put obstacles in their way by demanding excessive prices for land required for railway purposes.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—I would not have spoken on this matter but for a remark of the Minister for Works, which showed that he entirely misunderstands the functions of the arbitrator. He told us in effect that the

arbitrator was not to be a judge but a valuer. That is quite contrary to the Act, because the Act makes the arbitrator a judge—he only values land in the sense that a judge values it. The appointment of arbitrator is regulated by the 5th section of the Act as follows:—

“It shall be lawful for the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, to appoint from time to time some fit and proper person as railway arbitrator, provided that such officer shall not be subject to the control or regulations of the Commissioner. Provided that no barrister or attorney shall be so appointed unless he shall have been in practice, or have held some judicial or legal office under the Crown two years immediately preceding such appointment.”

That section by itself shows that the arbitrator is a judge and not a valuer. The 10th section provides that the arbitrator is to hear and determine the matters brought before him by the parties themselves or their counsel or attorney, and examine the parties and witnesses upon oath. Then it goes on to say:—

“Provided that the arbitrator may call for his own guidance such evidence of professional persons or others as he may think fit.”

The Act as plainly as possible makes him neither more nor less than a judge. As soon as a dispute arises between a claimant and the Commissioner, the matter goes before the arbitrator, who takes the evidence brought before him on both sides and has to decide between the parties. He may go and look at the land—just like a judge and jury—and if he is in doubt he may call in professional evidence—the evidence of a valuer. Therefore, to say that a judge would not be so competent as the arbitrator is a mistake, because the arbitrator is neither more nor less than a judge. It is only a question as to whether you have a man capable of giving a correct opinion on the evidence brought before him. I deprecate the remark of the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, to the effect that the late Government paid large sums of money for compensation. If they were large sums, they were sums awarded by the arbitrator, a judicial officer appointed by the State; and the Government had no option but to pay them, any more than the present Government has in regard to any award made by the present arbitrator. It has been said that the late arbitrator was extravagant, and the present arbitrator is parsimonious; but we have not been in the position of these gentlemen, and do not know how they have decided. It may be that the present arbitrator takes an extreme view in the cases brought before him. But the main point is this: When the arbitrator makes up his award he has first of all to value the land resumed, then add to that a sum for damage, either by severance or other injury to the property; from that he has to take the value by which the land has been enhanced by making the railway through the land. At the same time, all the adjoining owners through whose land the railway does not go may participate in the enhancement, though they give nothing towards it; so that the owner whose land is resumed is punished twice over. I daresay that when it is understood that a railway is going to be made in a particular district the price of land goes up, but I do not think that in the particular cases mentioned by the hon. member for Logan the prices asked were exorbitant. The Minister for Lands is advertising a land sale ten or twelve miles from Brisbane—some flat, marshy land towards the sea-shore—land which can only be used for agricultural purposes—and he is asking £16 per acre. The Government are taking advantage of the increased value of land, and they cannot in fairness object to pay fair prices to persons whose land they resume for railway purposes. I think the hon. member has made out a very good case for reconsideration of those awards. The arbitrator

may have made a mistake. I would not say he has wilfully done wrong, but the system is bad. I would like to point out that one of the courts in the colony which gives most satisfaction is the appeal court on the goldfields, where the district court judge sits generally with two competent miners as assessors—men who understand the case. Those decisions are generally very satisfactory to the persons interested. There is no reason why an alteration should not be made whereby the arbitrator could call in as assessors two persons with special knowledge of the value in particular cases. The Admiralty Judges in England have the assistance of two nautical men, and other tribunals are framed on the same system. When you have a man skilled in weighing evidence and deciding between conflicting testimony, aided by technical knowledge, then you have a very good tribunal; and something of the same kind might be applied to railway arbitration. It must not be forgotten that the railway policy of the present Government, and probably of future Governments, is of a very large character, and there is a great deal more railway-making now than there was twenty years ago, when the first arbitrator was appointed. The work has increased a hundredfold, and will probably increase to a greater extent; so that the present system might very well be considered, and, I think, amended in some particulars.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad the hon. member for Logan has brought this matter before the House. I have had some experience of the arbitration court, having attended there two or three times myself, and I quite agree with what has fallen from the hon. member. I do not blame Mr. Thompson, but I do not consider that he has the knowledge to form the fair and reasonable conclusion which everyone expects from a gentleman occupying his position. The hon. Minister for Works spoke as if the value of the land was the only item to be considered in making a claim for resumption; but there are other things to be taken into account—severance, damage, consequential damage, and many others. For instance, if you get an occupation crossing allowed to take across your stock or your produce, there is a penalty attached if you fail to keep the gate closed and locked, and in many cases where farms are severed in this way there is a great increase in the expense of working. If I gave this House the capital value of some of the land which the Minister for Works has endeavoured to depreciate in this very district referred to by the hon. member for Logan, I should astonish hon. members. I am not going to do it, but I could prove it by returns. The hon. member for Cook, Mr. Lumley Hill, has referred to cases where 1s. has been offered. I know of one instance where a family was getting a living out of a dairy farm, and the railway cut them off from permanent water. To get that water for domestic purposes or for the use of their stock they had to go fully half-a-mile, and yet 1s. only was offered as compensation. I am happy to say that when the matter was put fairly before the Commissioner the award was increased considerably, because 1s. was absurd.

Mr. ALAND: Was not that a general circular sent to all the landowners?

Mr. BUCKLAND: Yes, it was; and I may state to this House that in answer to that circular upwards of seventeen and a-half miles of land was got for the nominal sum of 1s. on that railway. The balance will be paid for by valuation. Now, sir, there are claims that arise—and I am convinced that Mr. Thompson cannot see the cases—where farms are severed and water is cut off from grazing land, so that stock has

to be crossed at an occupation gate night and morning to get water. Surely a claim arises there. In making a valuation I have always put in such a claim, and shall in the future, but I find it is always very difficult to get any consideration for that claim. Reference has been made to the enhanced value of land in the district more particularly referred to, but I can assure this House that the value of land in that district during the last two years is not as good as it was at the time I speak of—two years ago. You cannot get anything like the value unless it is the very best scrub land that will grow lucerne. Of course, that is not the fault of the railway. I think the system under the Public Works Lands Resumption Act, which has been referred to, would be a far more reasonable way of arriving at a conclusion on these claims for railway resumption. I know several families who have worked hard to get a homestead around them, and then the railway has come and depreciated the value of their property. I do not think it is fair that when a railway goes through a man's property he should have to suffer all the damage, while his neighbour, who is not touched, receives all the benefit. I could refer to cases in the neighbourhood of the Logan, but as they are not yet settled I shall not bring them before the House. The cases referred to by the hon. member for Leichhardt were settled, not before the arbitrator, but before the Commissioner, and I should advise anyone who has a claim to have it settled, if possible, before the Commissioner, because I am sure that gentleman would take a much more sensible and a broader view of the case than the present Railway Arbitrator. I have nothing to say against the arbitrator personally, but I do not think he is fit for the position he occupies.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the individuals in whose interests the hon. member for Logan has introduced this matter have genuine grievances, and I am very sorry that the hon. member for Logan, after bringing up the matter in such a moderate straightforward way, should have been met as he has been met by the hon. Minister for Works this evening. I cannot see that it is the duty of the Minister, in standing by the appointment he has made to that office, to deal so harshly with those who mention grievances in this House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not make the appointment.

Mr. GRIMES: I have seen some of the awards and the claims sent in by the owners of the properties in the return that has been laid on the table of the House. I think that the claims sent in were very moderate in most instances, and that they certainly should have been met in a very different way from that in which they were met. It is very little use for any person to bring a claim before the arbitrator if the arbitrator is not to be guided in some measure by the evidence set before him. The Minister for Works claims that the arbitrator should use his own judgment. Possibly he should to a certain extent, but he should not set up his judgment against all the evidence that has been adduced in the case. I think that any hon. member who reads the evidence that has been given in many of the cases which have been brought under our notice this afternoon will see that the arbitrator gave an award directly contrary to the evidence. The Minister for Works contends that the evidence of persons who own land in a district where resumptions have been made should not be taken in valuing the land. I cannot agree with him in that opinion. For instance, in the case of farming land, who should be a better judge of its value than a farmer? A commission agent or valuator in Brisbane is not able to value a farm properly; they have very little

idea as to what can be returned from a certain portion of land resumed from a farm. Mention has been made this afternoon of one farm in the district of Coomera. I know that farm very well, and I can bear out the statement made by the hon. member for Logan with respect to it. It is a very highly cultivated farm, one of the best in the district. I have seen the damage done to that farm by the railway works, and I can say that what was paid to the claimant in that instance is under the value of the land, setting aside altogether the damage done to the farm by severance. The land is all cleared, and I believe a good portion was laid down in lucerne. I can state, from my own knowledge of the expense of clearing land of that character, that it could not have been cleared for less than £15 or £18 an acre, yet all that has been paid to him for severance and everything, is something like £20 an acre. At the same time land near that property, uncleared, unfenced, and unimproved in any way, is in demand at from £10 to £14 an acre. I know a piece of land there of some fifty or sixty acres for which £10 an acre has been refused. The railway goes through the best portion of Mr. Oxenford's farm in a diagonal direction, leaving a three-cornered piece of about twelve acres, as far as my memory serves me, which is an awkward piece for any farmer to cultivate. Every time he ploughs he has a deal of lost time, having short turns to go with his plough, and he cannot lay out his crops as he could if the land had been in its ordinary state. Again, the resumption is not simply a piece of land a chain wide through the farm; the department have taken three chains. An embankment was required there, and as there was not soil enough to make it the department took three chains wide, using two chains out of three for the purpose of getting soil for the embankment. That has thoroughly ruined the farm. I consider from my knowledge of farming that Mr. Oxenford would not have been more than fairly compensated if he received £400 for the damage done. We must bear in mind that when a man takes a farm and settles upon it he does so with the idea of making it his home; he calculates the amount of improvements required for working that farm properly, and very likely spends £800 or £1,000 in improvements on a farm of the area of that now under consideration. And if there is taken from him a large portion of his arable land, that diminishes the value of the whole of the improvements on the land, because he has not the full use of the improvements. I know another case down on the Logan where the claim sent in was most moderate. Nevertheless that claim has, I am told, been rejected, and a very much smaller sum than that asked has been offered by the department. It is the case of a sugar plantation, and the line passes right through it. Hon. members who know anything about growing sugar know very well that a plant for making sugar cannot be put up for less than about £30 an acre for the area of land cultivated. A person is obliged to have that plant and machinery for taking off the crop and converting it into sugar; and if the Government resume a portion of the land for the working of which the necessary machinery is provided, a serious loss is inflicted on the proprietor as long as he occupies the place, because he has a larger mill than he needs for the area under cultivation. That is a matter which is not taken into consideration by the arbitrator in his awards. I believe that the claims sent in for damage done to farms and sugar plantations is very often far below what the real damage is. I see no hope of doing away with these constant complaints about arbitration cases until there is a reform in the system itself. I look upon it as a bad system, seeing that a single individual is able under it to

make an award from which there is no appeal unless the amount is over £500. Why should not a person whose claim is under £500 have the right of appeal? Why should not a man who is awarded £300, or £10, if he feels that an injustice has been done him, have the right to appeal from the award of that one individual? I see no reason why claimants for small amounts should not be allowed to appeal from the arbitrator to the district court; or in the case of very small sums, to a court of petty sessions. I believe that in all cases over £500 there is the right of appeal to the Supreme Court. I think it is unfair to those who have their lands forcibly taken away from them for railway purposes that they should have to submit to the dictum of one individual, whose judgment is very often warped. I am glad that the hon. member for Logan has introduced this matter; it is high time it was introduced, and that some alteration was made in the system of arbitration.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—If this discussion on land resumed for railway purposes only shows the Government the necessity of having as many railway surveys carried out as possible, wherever railways are likely to be made, in order that they may resume land and save this enormous expense that is going on, it will have done some good. I notice, at page 83 of the report of the Commissioner for Railways, that there has been paid away in the southern part of Queensland, for land resumed for railway purposes alone, up to the end of 1886, no less a sum than £231,477. And that enormous expenditure is still going on. Now that the country is being opened up, and railways are being asked for in every direction, it should be the first duty of the Government to see that the land on all the possible routes is surveyed, and it will be found that the expense of the survey parties now will prove to be economy in years to come.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—This discussion will be useless unless there is some practical suggestion made. No one can blame the Government for what the arbitrator does if he acts according to the law. His duties are clearly laid down by the Act of 1872, which was read by the hon. member for Bowen, and in another Act which was passed in 1880, when the late Government was in office. By these two Acts his conduct is entirely regulated, so that whatever blame is attached to him for not giving full compensation for land resumed is the fault of the system, not of the Government, because the arbitrator must follow the law. Up to the time the late Government took office the complaints were all on the other side. The complaints then were that people got too much for their land—that they first petitioned to have a railway made, and as soon as they got the land resumed they put in absurd claims for compensation for land taken up. In one particular instance of a railway there was as much paid for compensation as we make railways for now. Between £2,000 and £3,000 a mile was paid for compensation between Brisbane and Ipswich, and we have made railways since then for that sum. Therefore, when the late Government came into office a law was introduced by which the proceedings of the Railway Arbitrator are regulated. If he has gone to the other extreme in enforcing this law he has made a mistake. But no good can come out of this discussion unless there is some alteration made in the law. The 8th section of the Act of 1880 says that—

“Every award made by the railway arbitrator shall set forth separately—

“(1.) The amount of damage found by him to be sustained by the owner or party interested in the land taken, used, or temporarily occupied for the purpose of the railway or tramway, or injuriously affected by the construction thereof.

“(2.) The amount by which the value of other land of such person or party is enhanced by the construction of the railway or tramway.”

It always happened, before this Act became law, that when a man had a large quantity of land, or several small parcels of land, and the Railway Commissioner resumed a certain portion of it, the Railway Commissioner had to pay a very large price for the land resumed, but there was no account taken of the enhanced value which the making of the railway gave to the land which the man held beyond the resumed part. Therefore this 2nd subsection was introduced. And it may happen that some of the cases mentioned by the hon. member for Logan may be explained in that way; the owners of the resumed land may, perhaps, have had other land which the making of the railway will enhance in value, and the Railway Arbitrator has taken account of it, as he was bound to do. The clause continues:—

“(3.) The amount by which the value of the land injuriously affected is enhanced in other respects by such construction.

“(4.) The net amount of compensation payable to such owner or party.”

I take it, that if we are going to do away with complaints, either from the Government that they are being absurdly fleeced by claimants for compensation for land resumed for railways or from people that they have been unjustly dealt with by the Railway Arbitrator, we must alter the whole system of the law. When a railway is made through a district it does not merely enhance the value of the land of the man who loses a certain portion—it enhances the value of the land on each side of it to a certain extent; and I therefore think that if we are going to alter the law, it should be done in the direction that all lands which are enhanced in value should be rated at a certain amount, and out of the moneys derived from that source payments should be made in compensation to those who lose by the making of railways. By that means the people would be dealt with fairly, and the Government would lose nothing. Any alteration of the law should be somewhat in that direction. This is not a new question. It was brought before the House some years ago by myself and others, and I think that if it were carried out we should hear no more of those complaints which were made, and properly made, by the hon. member for Logan; nor of the complaints which were made formerly by the Government, that the Government were robbed by people making absurd claims.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—Complaints have been rife for a considerable time with regard to awards for compensation made by the present Railway Arbitrator; and the hon. member for Logan is to be praised for bringing those complaints before the House, in order that we may have the matter thoroughly ventilated. I am not acquainted with the particular cases under notice; but from what has come within my own personal knowledge, I am convinced that the whole system is founded on a wrong basis. In one particular case which I watched, the Railway Arbitrator seemed to act as agent for the Government, and set aside all evidence. The case I refer to is that of Mr. Hartmann, of Toowoomba. A greater wrong could not be done to anyone than was done to him. So much was that the case, that whenever people are threatened to have their land resumed, they wish that the line may not go through it, because invariably they come off second-best. They would rather accept any offer they can get than have their case brought before the arbitrator. But the greatest wrong is, that in all cases where the award is below £500, there is no appeal possible. It is simply a law for the rich and not for the poor. As I said, evidence

has been deliberately set aside, and sums have been awarded as compensation far below what was offered for the land years ago. The hon. member for Townsville indicated the right way in which this could be altered. Certainly the Government are obliged to guard the Treasury against exorbitant demands, but why should those who own such lands suffer for the enhancement of the value of land all round? The best way to get over this difficulty would be to make all land affected in value—say, from one to two miles on each side—pay a certain rate towards compensation, and let all persons affected by the resumption, as well as by the railway rate, together appoint one assessor or valuator, and the Government appoint another, and I would appoint a Supreme Court judge umpire in case these two could not agree. There would be some justice in that. I have had some experience of railway resumptions in the old country, Germany and Prussia, which is considered a very autocratic country; but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that such star chamber arbitrary proceedings as we have here would not be suffered there for one moment. There is far more justice meted out in connection with railway resumptions there than in this colony.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No, no!

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am afraid we are drifting back to the state of things that existed before 1872, when a Bill was brought in by Mr. Walsh, then Minister for Works in Sir Arthur Palmer's Government, on the subject. At that time claims for resumption were assessed by the ordinary process of arbitration, and the Bill was to provide for the appointment of a single arbitrator who would not be an advocate for either party. That Bill was opposed on the ground that the old arbitration system was a better one; and so it was for the claimant, I believe. When the Public Works Resumption Act of 1878 was brought in the result of the Act of 1872 had already been to cut down and reduce exorbitant claims so much that a number of people said they would stand it no longer. They insisted upon going back to the old arbitration system. Under that system the public Treasury was fleeced to a great extent, consciously or unconsciously. There seems to be an irresistible inclination on the part of people who are dealing with the Government to try and get as much out of them as possible. I think we shall see in a few days a very admirable illustration of the way in which this is carried on. A man bought a whole property for £1,000 after notice of resumption, and then when a small fraction in a corner of it was wanted for railway purposes he sent in a claim for £3,000. That is the sort of thing that is often done, and then they appeal to the House to give them the money.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is the unearned increment.

The PREMIER: He bought the property after notice of resumption—at least after it was known that the railway was to be made, whether formal notice had been given or not. And in these cases the hon. member for Logan says he must appeal to this House. I do not think this House is a good tribunal to deal with matters of this kind. I quite agree that the law should be altered, and altered in a good many respects. In one particular I think a very useful alteration might be made. That is, that in the case of a proposed line of railway the Government should be able to make a valuation and give notice of resumptions without being bound to take the land, as I believe they are bound to do when they have once given notice; and that if they found the claims too great they should not be bound to go on with the construction of

the line. Under the present system people clamour for railways, and as soon as notice of resumption is given, they send in such claims that it is difficult for the Government to construct the line at all. I believe the present Railway Act is, on the whole, a good one, if the arbitrator does his duty in accordance with what is there laid down. Another very useful alteration is that just suggested by the hon. member for Rosewood. I hear it was suggested before that by the hon. member for Townsville, and it is something like one he proposed some years ago. I believe that system could be carried out easily enough by adopting the scheme we adopted in the Agricultural Drainage Act, by which those who derive the benefit of the work are made to bear to the cost. I think the same thing might be done in connection with our railways. I do not think we should then have so many demands for railways. A good many people would want to know what they would have to pay before they clamoured for a railway. I am sure it would be possible to adopt those two amendments in the law. They are perfectly reasonable in themselves. The alteration would relieve the Treasury of a considerable burden, and would do injustice to nobody.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—I am glad to hear from the hon. the Premier that there is a probability of something being done in the direction he has indicated. I do not know that there is any good in a discussion of this kind, except it leads to an alteration of the law as it stands at present. I believe hon. members know of many cases in which people have not been rightly dealt with under the present system. I myself know several cases of apparent hardship, but as they are to come before the Railway Arbitrator I shall not refer to them now. But I would point out that there is a widespread feeling of distrust and dissatisfaction with the manner in which railway arbitration is conducted at present. In fact, many people prefer, rather than to go arbitration, to accept whatever the Commissioner offers them. In cases of small amount they have no alternative but to accept what the Railway Arbitrator awards them, and in several cases I know he has awarded less than the Commissioner had offered. In one case he awarded nothing at all, although the Commissioner had offered to give something. I do not know the Railway Arbitrator; I never saw him in my life to my knowledge, but I have heard a great number of serious complaints as to his decisions. Of course, I am not in a position to say whether they are just or not, but I feel persuaded that some of them are. Another matter bearing, perhaps, on this subject is this: A great deal of damage is sometimes done to property, not only by the land being taken away, but by roads being closed, and the only means of access to land available for building sites being railway gates. It would be far cheaper in the long run and in every way for the Railway Department to construct over-road bridges in such cases. It would save the cost of gates, the gatekeeper's cottage, and also the expense of keeping a gatekeeper there for ever. I know some cases where a perfect hardship has been done in that way. The land is valuable almost entirely for building sites, and was bought for that purpose, but in consequence of people having to go through railway gates and over a level crossing, they prefer to pay a fair and proper rent in some other place where they would not have the anxiety and fear of accidents occurring. I think such cases deserve consideration. I shall be very glad to see a Bill brought in embodying the amendments that have been suggested; and if this debate results in that it will not have been in vain.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—I am glad to hear this matter brought up again, and hope that it will be the means of doing some good. I was not present when the hon. member for Logan stated the cases he knew of, but about this time last year I brought forward one or two cases that were, to my mind, as glaring cases of incapacity as, I think, any man could be guilty of. I do not know this Railway Arbitrator—I have never seen him; but I had full particulars of the two cases I brought up, and they were not denied in any way. I have no doubt that the man thoroughly neglected his work. If he had wished to learn his duty, he could have done so by the evidence he has obtained; he has not done so, and the same thing is going on now. What I said then, and what hon. members may say now, will not be of any benefit. No matter what hon. members may say or bring before this House, no notice is taken of it. It is waste of time bringing up these matters. Last session it was as plain as possible to me, and this evening hon. members have all agreed that this man is incapable for the work and does not act in a fair and impartial way. No man who has had any dealing with him says that he acts fairly. If it were only one or two who said so, it is possible that they might be mistaken or led away; but all hon. members are of the same opinion—they say the man is unfit for his work. I am perfectly satisfied that he does not know anything about the valuation of land, and, what is more, he will not learn.

Mr. STEVENS, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker, —I shall not take up much of the time of the House in replying, chiefly because the Minister for Works has given me nothing to reply to. What I have to complain of on the part of the Government this evening is that they have taken no trouble, either by looking through papers or by any other means, to ascertain whether the statements I have made are correct or not—whether the men I have referred to have been hardly treated or not. Now, the Minister for Lands said that in many cases throughout the country, properties have been purchased by certain parties as soon as it was known that the land would be required for a railway, and then largely increased the value attached to them. In all the cases I have mentioned, the land had been bought long before the land along the line of railway was resumed, and in many cases years before it was even anticipated there would be a line of railway through that part of the country. The hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Scott, referred to some cases at Southport, in which the claimants had accepted the offers of the Commissioner for Railways, and that the amounts offered were much smaller than the amounts claimed. The hon. member said that proved that the amounts asked were exorbitant, but it proved nothing of the kind. It proves this, to my mind, and to those who know anything about the cases, that the claimants accepted sums of money, knowing very well that it was utterly useless trying to get any more. Others are so disgusted at the treatment they have met with that they will not accept the award of the Railway Arbitrator. Some hon. members misunderstood me when I referred to the judge. I did not say, or I did not intend to say, that a judge should be appointed arbitrator. I believe I said what I meant to say, and that was, that I believed the man who is appointed arbitrator requires the same qualifications as a judge. He should be able to sift evidence and retain what is good, and leave out that which is worthless, and be able to arrive at an impartial decision as regards the cases before him. Of course, someone has to suffer in these resumptions for railway purposes, and it is very hard that the owners of land should

be compelled to suffer for the general advantage of the district. Taking it upon the broad ground that these railways are constituted for the general good of the colony, fair amounts for compensation should be paid to claimants by the country generally. Railways are constructed for the benefit of a district, and the persons who lose their land should be paid a fair price for it by the district. In setting forth my case this afternoon I purposely kept back all kinds of sentiment or colouring, and put it as calmly as I could before the House, so that I should not be accused of having made extraordinary statements. But I must admit that I was rather surprised at the way in which the hon. Minister for Works replied, when he inferred that the claimants in these cases, with myself as connected with them, were outrageous robbers. That was the impression conveyed to my mind. He did not state that these cases were all bad cases, and he did not defend his arbitrator on any fair ground; but he built up some specious case about an ironbark ridge not worth £3 10s. per acre, and that is the reason why all these men's claims are wrong. There is no argument in that. Although the hon. Minister for Works denied having made any statement in regard to stopping railways, he conveyed the impression to the mind of every hon. member that he would stop these claims all through the country by stopping all the railway works. The hon. gentleman has known for some time that I intended to bring this matter before the House, because I told him so not later than yesterday. I told him that I was going to bring it up this afternoon, in order that he might have an opportunity of conferring with his arbitrator, and of looking up papers, so that he might have a defence. Perhaps the withdrawal of the men from the trial survey to the Tweed had something to do with the stopping of railway works in the districts where they are not satisfied with the awards of the Railway Arbitrator. It may be that or it may be something else. When the hon. gentleman was appointed Minister for Works he cut down the staff in all directions—dismissed surveyors and other officers—and then, finding a general election approaching, and that some district which had been badly used for years past, and had had a railway dangled under its nose for years, must be satisfied, he transfers the surveyors from the survey of a more important line—one that we know will not be a first-class paying line until it is continued—to some other district.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was done before I took the office.

Mr. STEVENS: These men were not removed before you took the office.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They ought to have been, at all events.

Mr. STEVENS: It suggests itself in this light to my mind: that the hon. gentleman finds the electors of Cleveland are not at all satisfied with the way in which they have been treated, and at the last moment he sends surveyors to try to pacify them in some way. Then it is quite possible that the surveyors will be sent to survey some other line. The two lines have been dangled before the electors of Cleveland for three or four years, and now, perhaps, there is to be another line. To do this the Government take the surveyors away from a line which the late Minister for Works said, over and over again, he regarded as being one of the best paying lines in Queensland, and that he expected that within twelve months from the time it was completed, there would be a dozen trains a day running on it. The present Minister for Works, for the reasons I have intimated, perhaps, means this as part of the intimidation.

The PREMIER: Nonsense!

Mr. STEVENS: It is very little use the Premier saying "Nonsense," when the hon. Minister for Works has threatened that he would cease the construction of the Logan line.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did not.

Mr. STEVENS: The hon. gentleman said if he had his way he would stop these claims by stopping railway construction. Those are not his exact words, but that is the gist of what the hon. gentleman said. If he thinks I am to be deterred from bringing the cases of any of my constituents or anything of general interest to the colony before the House by any threat of that sort, he is mistaken. I do not think I was ever driven in that direction in my life; and I am not going to commence now. The cases I have referred to will stand on their own bottom; they do not require any further argument from me. I have been pleased, and so will the unfortunate sufferers, at the warm way in which their case has been taken up this afternoon. I think the debate will cause a change in the law, and that was my chief object. I knew I could obtain no redress at the present time for these unfortunate men, but I hope there will be a speedy change in the law; so that if sufferers at the present time get no redress a great deal of suffering may be prevented in the future.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton) said: Mr. Speaker,—I take this opportunity of drawing the attention of the hon. member for Northern Downs to some remarks he made last night in speaking on the Electoral Districts Bill. He is reported to have said:—

"He might mention that Burrandowan, Hawkwood, and the Auburn, and all that part of the Burnett were anxious to be attached to the Northern Downs electorate. They sent in a petition to that effect some time ago."

When he made that remark I thought he had fallen into an error, because if such a petition had been sent in I should have heard something about it. After the debate was over I saw two gentlemen from the district he referred to and they said that no petition had ever been got up for that purpose. I therefore wish to ask the hon. member whether those are the words he meant to use last night?

Mr. NELSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very much obliged to the Colonial Secretary for drawing attention to this matter, which I should have done myself if he had not. The whole matter was a mere slip of the tongue, and I did make the mistake to which he refers; but it does not alter the effect of the argument I was using. I was attempting to show that this part of the Burnett was naturally connected with Northern Downs, and in order to prove that, I intended to state that a petition had been sent in asking that the district should be joined to the Wambo Division; but by mistake I used the words "Northern Downs electorate" instead of "Wambo Division." The argument remains good, as showing that the interests of the two districts are identical. I am sure that none of the Colonial Secretary's constituents wish him to cease to represent them, and it would be highly improbable that those people would petition to be joined to an electorate which was about to be extinguished.

Question put and negatived.

LADY BOWEN HOSPITAL LAND SALE BILL.

PERMISSION TO EXAMINE A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. W. BROOKES said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House I should like to move a formal motion in reference to a

message to the Legislative Council asking permission for the select committee of this House on this Bill to examine a member of the other House. I move that the following message be sent to the Legislative Council:—

"MR. PRESIDENT,

"The Legislative Assembly having appointed a select committee to consider and report upon the Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill, and that committee being desirous to examine the hon. J. S. Turner in reference thereto, beg to request that the Legislative Council will give leave to their said member to attend accordingly on such day and days as shall be arranged between him and the said Committee."

I do not think the House will offer any opposition to that, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and passed.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER said: I have to report to the House that I have received the following messages from the Legislative Council:—

DIVISIONAL BOARDS BILL.

"MR. SPEAKER,

"The Legislative Council have this day agreed to a Bill intituled 'A Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to local government outside the boundaries of municipalities,' with the amendments indicated by the accompanying schedule, in which amendments the Legislative Council requests the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"A. H. PALMER,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,

"20th September, 1887."

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the message be taken into consideration to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

BUNDABERG SCHOOL OF ARTS LAND SALE BILL.

"MR. SPEAKER,

"The Legislative Council having this day agreed to a Bill intituled 'A Bill to enable the trustees of three allotments of land in the town of Bundaberg, granted for the purposes of a school of arts, to sell or mortgage the same or any part or portion thereof, together with the buildings erected thereon, and to devote the proceeds to the building of a new school of arts,' beg now to return the same to the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

"A. H. PALMER,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chambers,

"29th September, 1887."

VALUATION BILL.

"MR. SPEAKER,

"The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly relative to the amendment made by the Legislative Council in the Valuation Bill, beg now to intimate that they agree to the amendments made by the Legislative Assembly on their amendment.

"A. H. PALMER,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chambers,

"29th September, 1887."

REPORT OF REFRESHMENT ROOMS COMMITTEE.

On notice of motion No. 3 being called—

"Mr. Black to move,—That the report of the Refreshment Rooms Committee be adopted"—

Mr. ALAND said: Mr. Speaker,—I called out "Not formal" just now when you called this motion, because the hon. member for Mackay was not present, and I know he wants to make some alteration, with the consent of the House, in the recommendations of the committee,

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in making any remarks.

Mr. ALAND: I merely wish to explain why I would ask the House to postpone the motion until to-morrow. I want to explain my position to the House. Mr. Black has not authorised me to act on his behalf, but as one of the members of the Refreshment Rooms Committee I know he wanted to go on with the matter this afternoon.

Mr. NORTON: Do you want to postpone it till to-morrow?

Mr. ALAND: Mr. Black has not asked me to do so; but I will give a fresh notice in his name for to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to further consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MARINE FORCE.

The PREMIER, in moving that there be granted a sum of £12,541 for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Marine Force, said there was an additional drill instructor on the staff, and there was a small increase of £105 for rations on the "Gayundah." Under the heading "Naval Brigade" there was a considerable increase—fifty-four—in the number of men, but there was a diminution in the amount asked for in consequence of the reduction of the number of days on which it was proposed to call the men out. The whole vote was nearly the same as last year. He would be glad to give any information hon. members wished to obtain. There were two companies of the Naval Brigade in Brisbane with 2 officers and 100 men; Rockhampton, 3 officers and 50 men; Maryborough, 3 officers and 50 men; Townsville, 3 officers and 50 men; and it was proposed to make provision for a company at Cooktown, and a company at Cairns. The Naval Brigade contained a particularly good class of men, who did their work very well in every place where a company was established.

Mr. NORTON said that during last session they had been informed that the colonial gunboat "Gayundah" had been allowed to fly the white ensign, and they were led to believe that there was some great advantage to be derived from that. Since the prorogation of Parliament some difficulty had taken place between one of the officers of the "Gayundah" and some tradesmen of Brisbane, and he thought the matter was one which ought to be looked into in the interests of tradespeople. As far as he recollected the affair, the officer of the law was prevented from going on board to serve an execution on that officer—he thought it was a bailiff who was sent after him. At any rate he knew that as the boat went from the shore on one side, the officer saw it coming, and slipped out on the other side of the vessel in another boat, and made over to South Brisbane. Having arrived there, he made off up the street, and was followed by the bailiff, or whoever he was, and a long chase ensued, in which the officer of the law eventually won. That was an important matter.

The PREMIER: When was this?

Mr. NORTON said he thought it had occurred during the recess. The hon. gentleman might have been in England when it happened, but the hon. member for Enoggera would remember the circumstances. After that had occurred, the tradesmen took some action, and they found that they were unable to do anything, because the vessel was flying the white ensign, and consequently they could not board the vessel.

He did not know how the whole affair was settled, but he was quite sure the hon. member for Enoggera could give them some information, as the Premier was not aware of the fact. It had created a great deal of scandal, and was a disgrace to the colony, and not only that, but it was a great injustice to the tradespeople. He thought the officer was Lieutenant Hesketh, and that after he had run up bills his creditors were not able to get at him. There had, he believed, been a court-martial held, and the officer had been dismissed; if the Premier had not heard of the affair before, it was quite time he should do so. He had mentioned the matter, as he wished to know whether the white ensign protected debtors who happened to be employed on the vessel from the law, because if it did it was very undesirable that the vessel should fly it.

The PREMIER said he had never heard of the affair before. He had thought that he had read all the Brisbane papers while he was away.

Mr. NORTON: You must have missed one.

The PREMIER said he had never heard of the incident, but he was quite safe in saying that the white ensign did not protect officers from the law.

Mr. NORTON: It seems to do so.

The PREMIER said it did not, and if any officer of the "Gayundah," which was a Queensland ship, attempted to make use of such privilege, he would very soon cease to be an officer of the ship.

Mr. NORTON said he believed the officer was detained a prisoner, and that a court-martial could not be held until two of Her Majesty's vessels came to Brisbane, because there were not enough officers here of the right grade to form a court.

The PREMIER said that officers of the Imperial Navy were amenable to the law of England as well as anyone else, and he supposed that the officers of the "Gayundah" were amenable to the law of this country as well as any other person.

Mr. NORTON said the matter was not tried in the ordinary courts of the colony, but the officer was detained on board his vessel until a sufficient number of officers came here to try the case by court-martial.

The PREMIER said the difficulty did not arise from flying the white ensign. There must be a certain number of officers of equal rank to try an officer by court-martial, and there were not sufficient in the service of the colony. That was one of the disadvantages of having a very small service. Where there was a large number of officers, of course they could always get sufficient to form a court-martial. Where there was only one ship there were no other officers except the officers of that ship, and they could not try one another. That was one of the disadvantages of having a very small fleet, and one of the advantages of having that fleet attached to a larger fleet, where a requisite number of officers could be found.

Mr. NORTON said in that case, if the small fleet of this colony were not attached to a larger fleet, the gentleman he had referred to could not be dealt with at all. If that were so, he thought they had better introduce some system by which the ordinary course of law should be made to apply to naval officers.

The PREMIER: What do you mean?

Mr. NORTON said he meant that naval officers should be treated in exactly the same way as civilians. He was sure the creditors of that officer did not see why he should not be so treated.

The PREMIER said the hon. member was mixing up the difficulty of trying an officer by court-martial and the question of the liability of a naval officer to civil process. They were two entirely distinct things. As far as liability to civil process was concerned a naval officer was entirely liable the same as anybody else, but as to trying an officer by court-martial before dismissing him from the service, that could only be done by a sufficient number of officers of equal rank; it was another question altogether.

Mr. NORTON said, if that were the case he thought the law in that instance must have been imperfectly administered, because, from his recollection of the affair, the creditors wished to take action against the officer, but were debarred from doing so.

The PREMIER: There must have been some mistake.

Mr. NORTON said if it was a mistake it was desirable that they should know it. But perhaps the hon. member for Enoggera, who was acting for the Premier at the time, could explain the matter better than he could, as he had forgotten some of the circumstances.

Mr. DICKSON said there did appear in the Press at the time some amusing story about private creditors having sent a bailiff to arrest one of the officers of the "Gayundah." There was a very amusing account of a chase, an escape, and a capture. The circumstances attending that civil process were never laid before the Government, and he therefore did not know whether the civil process was set at defiance by the white ensign or not. However, a very much larger question than that was involved in the discussion of the vote—namely, that, as had been shown during the recess, when an officer of the "Gayundah" rendered himself amenable to a court-martial they were at present unable under the Defence Act to try that officer, and therefore he could only be tried by Imperial officers under the Naval Discipline Act. That necessitated the arrival of one or two of Her Majesty's ships in this port for the purpose of trying the case; and although there were advantages in having a vessel like the "Gayundah" attached to the admiral's squadron for the purpose of exercise and discipline, yet it did seem absurd that the colony, which bore the expense of the salaries of the officers, should have no voice in punishing them or discharging them, if such should be necessary. The matter was one which might fairly be inquired into. It was considered desirable—and he was not averse to that view of the subject—that the vessel should be attached to the Admiral's squadron, so that she might be under proper discipline, and not allowed to rust in harbour. They had not had much service from her up to the present time, with the exception of flying the white ensign. Seeing that a very serious difficulty indeed did arise lately in connection with the discipline of the ship and her crew, he thought it might well be considered whether the colony should not manage the vessel on their own account. She might then be converted to some profitable use. The Premier might be able to inform the Committee what his views were on the question as to still maintaining her in connection with the Admiral's squadron.

The PREMIER said that all the papers relating to the gunboat "Gayundah" serving under the Admiralty had been laid on the table of the House from time to time. The correspondence began in October, 1884, before the ships had arrived. They were ordered, he thought, in 1882, by the preceding Government. When they arrived, the question arose, what was to be done with them? Before they actually reached the

colony, on the 23rd October, 1884, he wrote the following letter to His Excellency the Governor, which was laid on the table of the House in 1885:—

"Colonial Secretary's Office,
Brisbane, 23rd October, 1884.

"SIR,

"Your Excellency is aware that the two gunboats, 'Paluma' and 'Gayundah,' ordered by this Government, have lately been launched, and that the 'Paluma' has been placed at the disposition of the Admiralty for surveying purposes.

"In considering the uses to which the 'Gayundah' should be put, the Government have been impressed with the idea that her usefulness would, from every point of view, be impaired if she should be permitted to be unemployed for considerable periods of time. Her active services are not likely to be continuously required, although it will probably be desirable that she should be available for conveying the Governor of the colony, or Ministers, on official journeys of special importance, as well as for occasional visits to the outlying islands in Torres Straits which are under the jurisdiction of Queensland, and other similar services that may from time to time suggest themselves. She should also be available for the annual training of the Naval Defence Force which it is intended to establish.

"Allowing, however, for these uses, the Government are of opinion that the 'Gayundah' might, with mutual advantage to Her Majesty's Imperial Government and that of this colony, be employed, when not specially required for colonial services, for the general purposes of the Australian squadron, and under the direction of the Admiral commanding the Australian Station.

"They do not anticipate that any particular difficulty would be found to arise if the ship were attached to that squadron with the understanding that she should be detached from time to time, at the request of the Governor, and made available for the local and special services to which I have referred.

"I have, therefore, the honour to request that Your Excellency will be good enough to offer the services of the 'Gayundah' to the Admiralty, through the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, under the provisions of the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865, and on the basis of the conditions above stated.

"The acceptance of this offer would, I hope, tend to initiate a system of united action on the part of the Imperial and Colonial Governments for the purposes of colonial defence, while it would also tend to greatly increase the efficiency of colonial ships of war when called upon for active service, and would, moreover, incidentally confer upon the ships and their officers a larger prestige and influence.

"I have, etc.,

"S. W. GRIFFITH.

"His Excellency Sir Anthony Musgrave, K.C.M.G.,
Governor."

He would observe upon that letter that there could be no doubt that a ship lying always in harbour without any work to do was not likely to improve either her hull or her machinery, and certainly not the men employed on board of her. It was desirable that she should be occasionally at sea. Although the "Gayundah" in time of war would be a most important adjunct to the defence of Moreton Bay, still her use in time of peace was practically only for the training of the Naval Defence Force, without which training a force of that kind could not be properly trained at all. Then some other correspondence passed, and that letter of his was sent by His Excellency to the Secretary of State. A question arose as to whether she could be taken by the Admiralty or not. Further correspondence passed, which was laid on the table in the same session of 1885. Then an Order in Council was made by Her Majesty authorising the Admiralty to accept the services of the "Gayundah." That was sent here in a despatch dated the 21st July, 1885. Further correspondence was laid on the table of the House in the same year, stating in effect that a warrant had been issued authorising the vessel to fly the blue ensign, and also stating that the admiral on

the station had been requested to report as to the best practical use to which the "Gayundah" could be put. Other papers were laid on the table of the House in 1886, showing the correspondence that had taken place on the point whether it should be the blue ensign or the white ensign. He need not call the attention of hon. members to the fact that a ship wearing the white ensign was entitled to be considered as a ship of war wherever she might be. Without it colonial war-ships had no authority whatever except in their own waters; and as soon as they got three miles beyond the coast they were simply private ships, and the officers ceased to be officers, and had no more control than the captain of a merchant ship. It was a very serious thing for the vessels to be crippled in any work outside Queensland waters, and he thought it would be very undesirable that a ship maintained at the expense of the "Gayundah" should cease to be a war-ship, and become merely a private yacht as soon as she was three miles beyond the coast, which she must necessarily do in going anywhere by sea. The Admiral's report as to the best use to which the "Gayundah" could be put was not written until the 11th November, 1886. That report, by Admiral Tryon, had not yet been laid on the table, and was as follows:—

" 'Nelson,' at Melbourne.
"11th November, 1886.

"SIR,

"Referring to their Lordships' letter of 4th August, 1885, and to that of 30th November, 1885, as to my arranging for the useful employ of 'Gayundah' in concert with the Government of Queensland.

"2. Having considered the capabilities of that vessel and the services she was designed to render—namely, coastal and harbour defence—and having corresponded with the Government of Queensland on the subject, that vessel has been in the main employed this season visiting the several ports between Brisbane and Thursday Island, familiarising the officers and crew with the waters within the Barrier Reef, but above all, embarking and training the several naval brigades which exist at different ports.

"3. At this time Queensland possesses no other vessel suited for the above purpose, nor any other means of training these corps to modern guns. Without the aid of this vessel these corps would lapse into a semi-military, semi-naval state, which should be avoided.

"4. Whether from an Imperial or local point of view, I can devise no more important work for 'Gayundah.' The performance of the above sketched duties will secure the maintenance of the vessel in a condition of efficiency ready for any other service.

"It would be a pity to divert her from those duties save some exceptional call for her services is made, to meet which she always would be held ready.

"5. Referring to their Lordships' letter of 22nd July, 1886, No. 178, 1610, granting the white ensign and pendant to that vessel, her services being duly accepted, I see no reason why the 'Gayundah' should be diverted from the present task on which she is so usefully employed.

"From time to time it can be varied by the Commander-in-Chief acting in concert with the Government of Queensland. The vessel, acting on the lines sanctioned by the Commander-in-Chief, would not be diverted from those lines without his being previously informed by His Excellency the Governor or by the officer in command.

"6. Under this proposal all the responsibility with the cost for the maintenance of the vessel in every respect would remain unchanged—namely, with the Government of the colony—and with it would be also the discipline of the ship, which would be maintained under the existing Queensland Act."

That was a mistake on the part of the Admiral.

"7. The member responsible to Parliament for the state of the forces, for the efficiency of the naval brigades and for her equipment and maintenance, would still be able to direct her movements to suit the most convenient time and periods for conducting the drills. The vessel would be open to inspection by the Commander-in-Chief or by any senior officer, and her relations to the ships of the squadron would be much as is the case with ships of the first reserve, the gunnery ships,

and the training ships at home, to the fleet at large; and I venture to think that the spirit of their Lordships' wishes will be met, as also will be the local requirements to which I attach a very great importance."

That was forwarded to the Admiralty, who approved of the suggestions, and then the correspondence was sent out to the Governor here. Those were the lines upon which the "Gayundah" had been employed. During the last two or three months she had not been out of port, for reasons which had been satisfactorily explained. Those were the functions she had to perform. It was necessary, if she was to be of any use at all when required in time of war, that the men should be acquainted with the coast, and that her hull and machinery should be kept in an efficient state fit for going to sea. Moreover, if they were to have naval brigades on the coast, they should have opportunities of drill and training from time to time. Those were, he understood, the objects with which she was originally ordered by the predecessors of the present Government, and those were the duties in which she had been employed since the present Government had had charge of her.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Committee would require a little more information than the Chief Secretary had given with regard to that vote before they passed it. They had heard from the hon. gentleman in his last remarks that the "Gayundah" had to perform certain duties, amongst others to carry the Governor about the coast when necessary. He did not think she had done that.

The PREMIER: I had not seen her when I wrote that letter.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, surely if she was safe enough to take the Naval Brigade about, she was safe enough to take the Governor about. He, as Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, should take as much risk as any sailor in the colony. If she was not safe for the Governor she was not safe for a sailor.

The PREMIER: She is safe enough.

Mr. MOREHEAD said yes, and he should think she was fast enough. Amongst other things she was to be made use of in the annual training of the Naval Brigade. Had she been used for that purpose?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: If so, how often and how many of the Naval Brigade had been trained by her?

The PREMIER: The Naval Brigade at every port.

Mr. MOREHEAD: And for what time?

The PREMIER: A few days.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the bulk of her time was spent in getting her patent paint dirty in Garden Reach, then going into dock and getting cleaned, and then going down to Garden Reach and getting dirty again, and so on. He believed she had been once in action; they only knew that from the indirect statement of the Commandant of the land forces, and on that occasion she appeared to have exhibited what might not be inappropriately termed misdirected energy, because, according to the report of the Commandant, that vessel, which was intended to defend the port, actually destroyed, on paper, some of their defenders. Possibly there might be some jealousy between the two departments, the river and land departments. At any rate they knew that from the report of the Commandant. He (Mr. Morehead) did not know why they should not have a report from the officer, whom he might not inappropriately term "the admiral"—the local

admiral—as well as from the local general. They had no official report as to the outgoings or incomings, or general conduct of the “Gayundah” during the last twelve months, but they had one from the Commandant of the land forces. Now, there seemed to be a matter of some considerable importance, more importance than the Premier attached to it, between flying the white flag and flying the blue. That was proved pretty clearly in the case of Lieutenant Hesketh, and within the last few days they had another case in which he supposed an underworked and overpaid member of the Marine Defence Force landed at Kangaroo Point and selected as the object of his attack no less a person than the town clerk. They had heard how that man, Hazlewood, was found at a late hour in an advanced state of, let them hope, intoxication on the premises of the town clerk, and on proceeding to remove him, that gentleman was subjected to a brutal assault. And what was the outcome of it? Was that man treated as any other man would have been who had committed an assault: taken before the police magistrate and probably committed for trial, or, at any rate, committed to gaol for six months? No; he was taken possession of by the white flag brigade, who discovered, apparently, that he was guilty of an offence against naval discipline. He was taken on board the ship; he (Mr. Morehead) believed his grog was stopped; at all events it was so stated in the report that that was part of the very heavy punishment he received. He was also ordered to stand on the lee side of the ship, to smoke only at certain intervals, and to expectorate into the river only on that side of the vessel. That, or something like it, was the punishment imposed upon him. If he had been an ordinary citizen of Brisbane he would have been subjected to very severe punishment indeed, but he was taken possession of by the white flag men and removed into the vessel lying in mid-stream. That was one advantage an individual possessed from being under the white flag; but it was a distinct disadvantage to those who happened to be under the blue or the red flag. They would certainly get the worst of it if that was the way in which justice was to be administered by those white flag men.

THE PREMIER: You ought to know the practice before you talk like that.

MR. MOREHEAD said the practice was the facts he had stated. That was the practice as far as it was known to those who were not in the inner circle or ring. He knew no more about it than any other member of the Committee. They knew that the outrage had been committed, and that certain punishment was reported as having been imposed.

THE PREMIER: Not for that.

MR. MOREHEAD said, for some breach of naval discipline—for being on shore without leave.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Marshall refused to prosecute.

MR. MOREHEAD: If Mr. Marshall did refuse to prosecute that did not do away with the assault. He (Mr. Morehead) might have his watch stolen, and he might refuse to prosecute, but that did not make the theft any the less.

THE PREMIER: Captain Wright is not a police officer.

MR. MOREHEAD: He did not say he was; he sincerely hoped he was not. And that Mr. Hazlewood—he supposed he must call him “Mr.”—being in the force—instead of being prosecuted criminally for a gross outrage against the civil rights of a subject, was taken by the naval authorities and punished for being on shore without leave. He thought it was time that that naval force

was brought to a close one way or another, either by abolishing the vote altogether, or laying up the “Gayundah” in ordinary, which could be done at a very small cost. He believed that the whole staff required to work her could be easily supplied within a few days. They found that while the vessel was at the Garden Reach it required eight stokers, amongst other men, to look after her, at a cost of £708 per annum. They were permanently engaged, and to do what? To drift her down to Moreton Bay once in three or four months, and he supposed at about the same intervals to get up steam to take her into the dock, and get steam up to get her out again. He supposed stokers were not difficult to obtain, even at a few hours’ notice; certainly he did not think it could be argued that eight stokers should be kept constantly on board. Also, in regard to the payments they made in the higher grades of the service—assuming that the stokers, although very well paid, occupied a subordinate position—they found that the commander received a salary of £600 a year, and, by a very proper provision attached to the estimate, having regard particularly to the fact that the “Gayundah” did not go to sea very often, he was supplied with a residence on shore, at the rate of £120 per year, making altogether £720. That house allowance was very proper, because in summer it must be intolerably hot in the “Gayundah” lying in that almost breezeless reach of the river, and it showed the kindness of the Committee in the past, and which would probably be continued in the future; and it reflected great credit upon them. Then there was the lieutenant-instructor, who did not live on board the ship; he had an allowance to live on shore; and the torpedo-artificer was in the same position. Let hon. members examine that well-ordered household from beginning to end and see the small village they had lying within a quarter of a mile of that House. What must the pay of that family be? There was a commander who lived on shore, a senior lieutenant, a chief engineer, and an assistant engineer, a gunner and instructor, a master-at-arms, a ship-steward, a ward-room steward, a captain’s servant, a chief boatswain’s mate, eight stokers, a carpenter, a quartermaster, a cook, two second-class petty officers, an armourer, twelve seamen, a painter, a ward-room officers’ servant, and six boys, at an expense of £4,422 per annum. Was it to be supposed for a moment, that even if the financial position of the colony was better than it was, they would sit down and submit to such an expenditure as that? What did they get for it? So far as he made out, nothing at all. There was a great deal to be said in favour of keeping a defence force—a land force—on reasonable terms; or terms such as he suggested the other night although the Committee thought otherwise, but what he had mentioned was only part of the expense of their marine force. If they looked further on they would see there was an amount for rations—£1,200—to be added to the £4,422. The lieutenant-instructor, he saw, received £300 a year, and the clerk to senior naval officer and paymaster to Marine Force received £200. The surgeon received £100, and he should like to know who got that pay. There could not be a surgeon on board the ship.

THE PREMIER: He does not live on board.

MR. MOREHEAD said he supposed it was some Brisbane doctor who had received it; he assumed so. Then there was a messenger and office-keeper—did he live on board the ship? The torpedo artificer received £200 a year, and five drill instructors £500 a year.

THE HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The torpedo artificer has a house on shore.

The PREMIER: I suppose the torpedoes ought to look after themselves.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had expressed no opinion that the torpedoes ought to look after themselves; but he had no doubt that they were as well able to look after themselves as the torpedo artificer was able to look after them. He dared say that practically they did look after themselves. He would again ask whether such an expenditure was not, under any circumstances, monstrous? Every member of the Committee knew what the "Gayundah" did and what they got out of her; and they must all admit that the expenditure was extravagant and wasteful in the extreme. The amount contributed towards the Naval Brigade was comparatively small, and it would be noticed that nearly the whole of the vote went towards the "white flag." It went to support a vessel which was only a hybrid after all—which was not absolutely under the control of the Colonial Government; in fact, being under the white flag, it was liable to be taken by the Imperial Government whenever it suited them.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, practically it was so.

The PREMIER: It is not so.

Mr. MOREHEAD said when he saw the white flag flying from that ship, and saw the officers going about in the Imperial uniform—

The PREMIER: They do not. You don't know a uniform when you see it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did; at any rate he knew the hon. gentleman's. He had not forgotten it, but believed he would be able to recognise it from one end of Queen street to the other; so that the hon. gentleman's assertion that he did not know a uniform when he saw it must be limited, so far as the direction which he had indicated went. His own impulse would be to knock the whole thing on the head—to vote for the excision of the whole amount.

The PREMIER: Move it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he knew the Chairman's experience, as well as his own, was long enough to make them aware that it was quite within his province to move it, even without the permission of the dictator. He knew he could move it, and perhaps he would move it. As he had said, his first impulse would be to wipe the whole vote out, if possible; but he afterwards considered that they should only leave enough of the vote to enable them to lay up the "Gayundah" in ordinary, with a sufficient number of men, including the torpedo artificer, if they chose, to look after her and keep her in proper order. He did not think the Premier could justify the way in which money had been spent in regard to the "Gayundah" during the last twelve months. If he could, he could do more than he gave him credit for.

The PREMIER said it was a serious matter and deserved to be dealt with seriously, and not in the frivolous manner in which it had been by the leader of the Opposition. It was not a matter of play. He did not ask for the money for the "Gayundah" as an idle toy to be kept for the amusement of those on board. The Committee had to deal with a serious business. From that point of view he asked the Committee to deal with it. If they thought they might accept the frivolous views of the hon. member opposite, which would be laughed at by anyone with the most elementary notion of naval affairs, they could do so; but if they thought otherwise, he hoped they would give heed to what he said, and seriously deal with the matter. The hon. member referred to the case of Hazlewood just now; but the Government

could not guarantee that any man on the "Gayundah," or any member of the Police Force, or any member of the Civil Service would not break the law. Whoever he was, however, he was equally amenable to the law. Hazlewood assaulted Mr. Marshall, and Mr. Marshall informed Captain Wright, who asked him whether he was going to prosecute Hazlewood, because, if so, he would not interfere till the man had been dealt with by the civil authorities. That was the rule of the service. Mr. Marshall informed Captain Wright that he did not intend to put the civil authorities in motion, and Captain Wright dealt with the man in the only way open to him. The injured person declined to prosecute him, and Captain Wright dealt with him as severely as he could. He could not deal with him for the assault, but he gave him the severest sentence he could for being absent without leave and returning drunk and unfit for duty. As he said before, the injured person declined to prosecute, yet the hon. member opposite said the whole fault was with the Defence Force. That was a specimen of the arguments the hon. member offered for the serious consideration of a serious Parliament. He thought the man ought to have been punished by the civil authorities, and he did not know why Mr. Marshall would not prosecute him.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Mr. Marshall denies that statement.

The PREMIER said he had his information from a report addressed to him by Captain Wright the day before yesterday, but he should be glad to hear Mr. Marshall's version. Captain Wright gave him the information, without being asked, in consequence of a statement which appeared in the *Telegraph*; and he said that the statement was particularly unfair, as the reporter called at his office and he took the trouble to explain the whole matter. Of course a number of persons tried to run down the "Gayundah," the Defence Force, or anything else. Let them get all the glory they could from making themselves ridiculous in that way; but let the Committee deal with the matter seriously. Was it to be dealt with on the ground that Mr. Marshall did not prosecute Hazlewood? How many gaps were there in the argument? A man on the "Gayundah" committed an assault; the person assaulted declined to prosecute; therefore let the Committee abolish the Naval Defence Force. What were the missing gaps in the argument? The hon. member for Balonne had supplied none of them. Then the hon. member referred to the number of persons on the ship. He (the Premier) did not profess to be an authority as to how many people it took to keep a ship going when in commission; but he knew that the ship contained valuable machinery, not only machinery for moving her, but also most valuable guns and implements of war, which could not be looked after by people not acquainted with them. He dared say the hon. member for Balonne might send one of his officeboys to look after them, but the result would be that in a week they would be absolutely useless. The men employed to keep them in order must not be taken on board to-day and sent away to-morrow; they must be men who not only understood the ship and the implements of war on board, but men whose services could be relied on in case of trouble. Some hon. members seemed to think that a defence force by land or sea could be got up by simply putting an advertisement in the paper saying, "Wanted, so many men"—as if there were plenty of skilled men wandering about the country who could be got just whenever they were wanted. He admitted that when the estimate was submitted to him as the

lowest necessary sum, he thought it was a great deal too large, and he consulted Admiral Tryon on the matter, pointing out that he thought a smaller staff might be employed when the ship was practically in reserve, and extra men could be engaged when she went to sea; but Admiral Tryon gave him sound reasons for coming to the conclusion that it was not so. He therefore reluctantly came to the conclusion that the amount set down was the least expenditure that would keep the vessel efficient. Of course the hon. member for Balonne knew better than Admiral Tryon, but he (the Premier) did not profess to know better than Admiral Tryon, who was a very economical officer; and when he received Admiral Tryon's assurance as to what was absolutely necessary, he proposed it as the establishment of the "Gayundah." The present proposal was the same as that made two years ago. If hon. members thought they could run the "Gayundah" on different principles, or without men, let them try; it was no particular pleasure to him to have charge of the Defence Force or any other branch of the Government service at the present time. The "Gayundah" had been lying in harbour a great deal too much lately, but there were reasons for that.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What are they?

The PREMIER said he did not think it necessary to explain. He wanted information from Captain Wright, which he could not give when away from port, and the "Gayundah" was kept in port on that account. Hon. members complained of the want of economy, yet they said the vessel should be kept at sea. Then there would be a large consumption of coal to pay for, besides the wages of the men.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes; but the men would not be demoralised.

The PREMIER said he agreed that the vessel should not be kept in port, and the arrangements he approved of some time ago in conjunction with Admiral Tryon were that she should be continually moving about and very little in port. The instructions given were in accordance with the letter the Admiral wrote to the Admiralty, and those instructions were carried out last year, but not so fully during the present year.

Mr. NORTON said that a few minutes ago he referred to an incident of an unpleasant kind, and since he made the statement he had been told on reliable authority that Lieutenant Hesketh did not attempt to get ashore to avoid the bailiff, but went in his own boat to meet the bailiff, so as to receive the warrant in the boat instead of on board the "Gayundah" before his own men. He was very glad to make that explanation, because he should be very sorry to do an injustice to anyone. So far as he had seen, there had never been anything in print contradicting the statement that was commonly circulated in the papers, to the effect that that officer had tried to escape to the shore. He was informed that that was not correct; and he was also informed, on the same authority, that since Lieutenant Hesketh left the service he was engaged in employment at which he was very poorly paid, but that, notwithstanding his low pay, he was sending down to Brisbane a portion of his earnings to be paid to his creditors here. He (Mr. Norton) felt bound to mention that, after referring to the matter as he had done. He was very glad to have received the information, and to be able to show that that gentleman, since he left the service, had acted in a manner so creditable to himself.

Mr. McMASTER said he was inclined to think that the Premier had been misinformed as to the town clerk, Mr. Marshall, refusing to

prosecute the man Hazlewood. Captain Wright must have forgotten a conversation he had had with Mr. Marshall on the following morning. He believed Mr. Marshall was well known to every member of the Committee as a quiet, inoffensive, peaceable citizen, respected by everyone who knew him. He (Mr. McMaster) had been intimately acquainted with him for over sixteen years, during most of which time he had been town clerk, and a more truthful man he did not know. He had had several conversations with him on the matter, and his account of the matter was that the next morning he came across the ferry with Captain Wright and made a complaint about that cowardly fellow who had been crawling about his house between 10 and 11 at night looking in at his bedroom window or trying to open it. Captain Wright was astonished and said the man ought to have been on watch at the time, and the conversation ended thus: Captain Wright said, "You leave him to me; I will see that he is punished, and when he comes out of gaol I shall dismiss him, because there is no difficulty now in getting recruits. It is not like it was during the war scare; it is easy to get men now, and this man will be dismissed." Mr. Marshall had not refused to prosecute, and he (Mr. McMaster) was very much inclined to think that Mr. Marshall would still put the law in force. To show that Mr. Marshall intended to follow the matter up, he had a letter written by Captain Wright to Mr. Marshall, in reply to one from Mr. Marshall to Captain Wright. It read thus:—

"DEAR SIR,

"I regret that, owing to ill-health, I have been unable to answer your letter of 14th September earlier."

The letter was dated 21st September; the assault took place a fortnight previously.

"The man Hazlewood was awarded 14 days' 10A (Admiralty punishment), 30 days' leave and 2 days' pay stopped."

Mr. Marshall was somewhat at a loss, like himself (Mr. McMaster), to understand what that 14 days' 10A meant.

"Owing to his previous good character—there being no offences registered against him in the defaulters' book—I did not send him to prison; and the man was so informed."

What was he informed? That he was not sent to prison? That showed that Mr. Marshall intended to follow it up.

The PREMIER: It shows nothing of the kind.

Mr. McMASTER said he had had several conversations with Mr. Marshall on the matter, because the city might have lost a very valuable citizen in Mr. Marshall through that coward. Mr. Marshall's face was black and blue for ten days, and had his assailant got a little distance away when he struck him with that stone he might have killed him. There was not much of the soldier about that man; he was a mean coward. Mr. Marshall, not having heard that the man was punished, wrote to Captain Wright to ascertain what was being done in the matter—if nothing had been done Mr. Marshall intended to take the case up himself—and what he had read was the reply. Now, he (Mr. McMaster) was certain that Mr. Marshall was not going to allow the only punishment given to that man to be to stand on one side of the vessel with a man looking at him taking his food. He did not know whether the man got grog; he certainly should not. He ought to be dismissed at once, at all events as soon as he had served his time in prison. He (Mr. McMaster) did not consider that he had received any punishment; it might be punishment for the Admiralty, but it was not the punishment the police magistrate would give him.

The man was to have thirty days' leave stopped—he supposed that meant he was not to go ashore at Kangaroo Point for thirty days and crawl about anyone's house between 10 and 11 o'clock at night. After that was over he (Mr. McMaster) would not trust him anywhere even on the north side. "Owing to his previous good character" was mentioned as a reason for the lenient sentence; very likely Captain Wright did not know anything against him before, and had Mr. Marshall not given information very likely nothing would have been recorded against the man to this day. It was time something should be done with those men who were lying there idle. They had heard a good deal about the crew of that vessel. Two men of war had to come up here to see if a respectable citizen could get a debt that was owing to him.

The PREMIER: Where did you hear that?

Mr. McMASTER said he had seen it in the newspapers.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The Press always tells the truth!

Mr. McMASTER said it was supposed to tell a portion of the truth at all events. He understood that that man could not be tried because he was in the service of the Imperial Government, and they had been told that night that a writ had been served on him in the boat. It was a debt, and he refused to pay it, and in order to try his case—according to that No. 10A, he presumed—they had to wait till two men-of-war came from Sydney to try him, as there was only one vessel here. He was not versed in Admiralty affairs, but he did not see why people here should be set at defiance by men whom they paid to defend them. He was quite sure that Mr. Marshall had not refused to prosecute that man, and had only taken no action on the promise of Captain Wright to punish him, but he (Mr. McMaster) did not call what had been done punishment.

The PREMIER said he had given the hon. member for Fortitude Valley credit for more sense than to believe any such stuff as he had been told—that two men-of-war had come to make a person in Queensland pay his debts.

Mr. McMASTER: No; to try him.

The PREMIER said he was quite sure that the hon. member's own common sense must have told him that the person who gave him that information was trying to play a practical joke upon him.

Mr. McMASTER: I saw it in the papers.

The PREMIER said it might have been in the papers, but it was, he supposed, in a comic paper.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It was in your paper—the *Telegraph*.

Mr. McMASTER: I saw the vessels here myself.

The PREMIER said that if someone told the hon. member that those vessels had come to cause an eclipse of the moon he surely would not believe it and say, when it was doubted, "Why, I saw the ships here." That was not a very good kind of argument, and one that he did not expect to hear from the hon. member for Fortitude Valley; but that was the sort of argument he had just used. Lieutenant Hesketh had been charged with conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, which was a very serious charge, and one which could only be tried by a court-martial. There were not enough officers of the same rank in the Queensland force to try him, and, as he had pointed out, that was one of the disadvantages of having a small fleet—they could not get sufficient officers of rank to try him.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Let us get some more.

The PREMIER said that the hon. member wanted to have none at all. Lieutenant Hesketh had been tried for that offence, and, he was sorry to say, found guilty; but it would take more than two men-of-war to make a man pay his debts who had not the money. Now, with regard to Hazlewood's case—

Mr. MOREHEAD: What is his rank?

The PREMIER said he was an able-bodied seaman. He would read Captain Wright's statement of the occurrence:—

"Two or three weeks ago I happened to cross in the steam ferry with Mr. Marshall, who told me that the previous night he had been assaulted by one of the men belonging to the 'Gayundah,' who was trespassing on his property. I promised to inquire into the case, and the result was that I found W. Hazlewood, A.B., had committed the assault; and further, that he was improperly absent from the ship, and returned on board drunk.

"I communicated with Mr. Marshall, informing him of these facts, pointing out that the matter of assault was beyond my jurisdiction, and one with which I could not deal; but that Hazlewood, for having 'broken out of the ship and returned drunk and unfit for duty,' had rendered himself liable to imprisonment under the Naval Discipline Act.

"I wished to ascertain if Mr. Marshall intended to prosecute Hazlewood in a civil court for assault, as in that case his breach of naval law would not have been considered until after he had been dealt with by the civil authorities.

"Mr. Marshall having expressed his intention of leaving the case for me to deal with, the man was accordingly charged before me with the offences above mentioned, and awarded fourteen days' No. 10A (Admiralty punishment), two days' pay stopped."

That amounted to a fine of 8s.—

"and confined to the ship for thirty days. Hazlewood had no previous offence recorded against him."

Mr. MOREHEAD: How long has he been in the service?

The PREMIER said he did not know. He was still liable to be prosecuted criminally in the civil courts, as distinguished from the naval court, and no doubt would be punished according to his deserts. The newspapers had thought that they had a fine story, and had made the most of it.

Mr. McMASTER: I have it in writing.

The PREMIER said it was one of those sensational things that got into the newspapers, but there was nothing in it except that the man had committed an assault and had not been punished. Whose duty was it to punish him? It was not Captain Wright's duty.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Yours.

The PREMIER said he declined to do that sort of thing.

Mr. McMASTER said he thought that Committee should punish him by cutting off his screw. He had not been so far wrong after all when he had said that those two men-of-war had to come up to try Lieutenant Hesketh by court-martial. They had come to try him for a breach of discipline on board the ship, and he took it that his crime was in connection with the non-payment of his debts. He could not have been a gentleman, or he would not have got into debt.

The PREMIER: It had nothing to do with recovering the money.

Mr. McMASTER said it was the same thing. The Premier had said they had not to pay for those vessels coming up, but someone in England had. Those vessels had come from Sydney to Moreton Bay, and he had seen them there himself, and he contended that they had come to hold a court-martial upon that individual, who would not pay his debts, and therefore did not act like a gentleman. He still said that, with regard to Hazlewood, Mr. Marshall did not refuse to prosecute, and the letter written by Captain

Wright did not indicate that he had asked Mr. Marshall to prosecute, or in the event of his not doing so that he, Captain Wright, would take it in hand himself. Mr. Marshall had written to ask if Captain Wright was going to do anything or not, and he believed, even yet, Mr. Marshall intended prosecuting the man. He believed that Mr. Marshall and Captain Wright had met in the steam punt coming across from Kangaroo Point in the morning and Mr. Marshall lodged a complaint; and that he fully intended to follow it up was shown by the fact that he wrote a letter on the 14th instant, about a fortnight after the assault, asking what had been done, to which he got a reply on the 21st. He did not wish the Premier to prosecute, but if Captain Wright did not punish the man, Mr. Marshall would see what the police magistrate would do.

Mr. ALAND said he thought there was one thing in connection with the subject that had not been made sufficiently clear. They were told that two men-of-war had come from Sydney to try Lieutenant Hesketh; but what was it they came up to try him for? Was it to try him for having incurred a debt with some tradesman in Brisbane? That was a point which had not been cleared up. His opinion was that those men-of-war had not come up for any such purpose, but that they had come up to try Lieutenant Hesketh for some breach of discipline or unbecoming conduct committed by him on board the "Gayundah." The tradesman in Brisbane had got his remedy against him for the debt, and from what the hon. member for Port Curtis had stated, Lieutenant Hesketh had acknowledged his debt. He presumed a summons was served upon him, and judgment given against him in the petty debts court, and the debt had since been paid by Lieutenant Hesketh, as any gentleman would pay it. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley insisted that those vessels had come from Sydney in order to try Lieutenant Hesketh because he did not pay his debts to some tradesmen in Brisbane, but he (Mr. Aland) did not think they had come up for anything of the sort.

Mr. DICKSON said that was to a certain extent a side-issue of the main question which had not yet been answered, and it was this—To what court or tribunal were those on that vessel amenable in case of any insubordination on board? The men-of-war had come up, not, it was true, to investigate any obligations due by Lieutenant Hesketh to the tradesmen of Brisbane, but to hold a court-martial on certain charges preferred against him by the senior naval officer, which charges were based upon irregularities committed by Lieutenant Hesketh on board the ship. It had nothing to do with his transactions with the tradespeople of Brisbane. They were charges formulated by the senior naval officer against Lieutenant Hesketh, on the ground that he had been guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Can you tell us what the conduct was?

Mr. DICKSON said the offence was connected with financial transactions entered into with the paymaster on board the vessel, in borrowing money from the steward. That was an offence against the naval discipline of the ship, as the charge was preferred by the senior naval officer, and there being no tribunal within the colony under the Defence Act to try that officer, and as the vessel was flying the white ensign, under the Naval Discipline Act it was necessary to constitute a tribunal, that two war-ships should come to Brisbane. The broad question, to his mind, was whether it was desirable that that state of things should con-

tinue—that they who were the paymasters of the vessel could not take the law into their own hands and frame such regulations as would enable them to punish any such irregularities, so that they should not be dependent on the Imperial authorities. They must not forget that Admiral Tryon was very reluctant to interfere in the matter, and that he at first declined to recognise Imperial responsibilities. While on that subject he would say that he would not mind so much if the Imperial authorities used the vessel more than they did. He would like to hear the Premier state at some future time why she had been allowed to remain for the last three months in the Brisbane River. That could not be beneficial to the ship or tend to the efficiency of the crew. The matter was by no means a light one; he regarded it very seriously. Before he left the Treasury he instructed the Auditor-General to prepare a return showing the relative expenditure on the "Gayundah" and "Paluma." That had been done, and would be found in the report of the Auditor-General. He did not know whether hon. members had read it, but the table was full of information. As hon. members were aware, they received a contribution from the Admiralty on account of the "Paluma's" services in surveying the eastern coast of the colony, and that, of course, reduced the expenditure. During three years the cost to the colony, and for navigation to Brisbane, and working expenses of the "Paluma," was £3,277. That was, of course, giving credit to the Imperial contribution on account of surveying. The cost of the "Gayundah" for the same period was no less than £21,041; that included £3,277 for navigation to Brisbane. Those figures were very instructive, and furnished them with food for reflection at the present time. They were paying a considerable amount of money for the "Gayundah," to keep her in the state of efficiency he presumed she was in now, and they seemed to have no direct control over the vessel, and, so far, the Admiralty had shown no willingness to recognise their responsibility in connection with her. At least, he meant that Admiral Tryon had not done so. He did not know what Admiral Fairfax would do, and would like to learn from the Premier whether Admiral Fairfax had been addressed on the subject with a view to making her a little more serviceable than she had been under Admiral Tryon. If she could be utilised by the Imperial authorities to keep her in an efficient condition he had no wish to break the present arrangement.

The PREMIER said that in replying to the hon. member he would refer first to the relative cost of the "Paluma" and "Gayundah." They had £7,500 for the cost of the "Paluma," and as they were credited with £2,500 a year by the Imperial Government for her hire, that was of course a set-off against the expenditure of Queensland. They must, therefore, add £7,500 to the figures quoted by the hon. member for Enoggera, which, he thought, were about £6,000, before they got the actual figures. Add £7,500 to that and they got about £14,000. The rest of the difference was made up by the difference between colonial rates of pay and English rates of pay. The men on the "Paluma" were paid at English rates, and those on the "Gayundah" were paid at colonial rates, which he thought were about treble the former, and that made up the difference. That was one of the matters that must always be considered in thinking of a colonial navy. If people insisted upon having their own vessels not manned by the Admiralty they must pay colonial rates of pay, which were double or treble the Admiralty rates. That was where the difference of expenditure came in, and the matter was one that it would be proper to discuss when the

time arrived for considering the advantage of having an additional squadron here manned by the Admiralty. That would make a very great difference in pay alone, besides incidental expenses.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: A little more than double.

The PREMIER said it would be more than double; the difference would be very great indeed. The hon. member for Enoggera also stated that the Admiralty seemed to have control of her. He (the Premier) read just now the arrangements proposed by Admiral Tryon and accepted by the Government. The ship was to be employed ordinarily in cruising on the coast to make the officers and men familiar with the coast, especially with the Barrier Reef and those waters, with which it was necessary they should be familiar if they were to be of any use in time of war, or a visit from a hostile ship; and she was also to visit the different ports of the colony where naval brigades were established, to give them training. He did not know how she was employed during the first six months; he believed she went as far north as Cooktown. At any rate she went to Townsville and Maryborough and Rockhampton, so that she had been employed in those duties. During the last two or three months the vessel had been in Brisbane. As to the inquiry of the hon. member respecting Admiral Fairfax, he was not at present in a position to give him any information, as he had had no opportunity of communicating with the Admiral. It was expected the Admiral, who had been absent from Sydney for a considerable time, would be here in about ten days, and he (the Premier) would be glad to have an interview with him, and ascertain whether he thought it was desirable to carry on the present arrangement or make another. He (the Premier) would, however, point out to the Committee that if the colony had a ship of that kind they could not always keep her going about. She ought, of course, to go about from place to place where naval brigades were established, to give them training, so that they might not be merely semi-military and semi-naval men, of no use on shipboard. The "Gayundah" was only a nucleus; they had armament for a number of other vessels, but they could not keep the other vessels, although they could keep the armament ready to put on board them when required. The men had to be trained, and that could only be done by having a ship to train them in. That was the use to which the "Gayundah" was put. They could not have a ship of that kind at every port, on account of the enormous expense it would entail. He attached the greatest importance to the naval brigade; for a coast like theirs there was no doubt that the naval line of defence was a very important one. Every place could not, of course, be defended, but when they remembered what one gun mounted on a barge did in a war in South America, where it was the means of keeping at bay a whole fleet, they would see how necessary it was that the naval force should be trained to the use of guns. But it was necessary to give them an opportunity of gaining that knowledge, and it was of the highest importance that there should be a ship for purposes of that kind. The hon. member talked about the expenses of the "Gayundah"; of course she did not return anything, in one sense, but she was necessary if the colony was to have a naval force at all. They could not expect to defend Moreton Bay without a ship like that. She was built expressly for that purpose, and it had been stated by the best authorities that she and her sister ship the "Paluma" were the best ships for such a purpose that had ever been designed. For their size,

weight, speed, and armament, they were two of the best ships afloat. They had the "Gayundah," and now, because some sailor aboard of her had been drunk they were told that they ought to get rid of her.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had heard nothing said by any member more condemnatory of the "Gayundah" than what the Premier had himself said. The Premier had told them what the "Gayundah" should be. The question was, was she what she should be? or had she ever been what she should be?

The PREMIER: She has been.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Not for the last twelve months.

The PREMIER: She was for a part of last year, at any rate.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that for twelve months she had only been to sea once, and then no further than Townsville. If that was sufficient to make the officers and men acquainted with the coast, especially with the Barrier Reef—which probably they did not see—he would leave it to hon. members to say.

The PREMIER: I do not believe it is.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: How could the naval brigades at the different ports gain experience and discipline; how could they gain any benefit at all under the system which had been followed for the past twelve months? The hon. gentleman admitted that she had not been out of port for that time.

The PREMIER: She has been at Maryborough, Rockhampton, and Townsville, at any rate.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said she had been once there, but not certainly during the last three or four months. She had been confined to the Brisbane River, where her officers and crew enjoyed all the gaieties and attention which were given generally to naval and military men. But so far as naval drill and discipline were concerned, both ship and crew were going to the bad. If a vessel of the Imperial Navy were kept in port for twelve months, no matter how well disciplined the crew and officers might be, both officers and men would become demoralised.

The PREMIER: I quite agree with that.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman, while condemning the action of the men under his control, defended the vote from which they were paid. He did not know what the leader of the Opposition intended to do, but if he proposed to omit the entire vote for the "Gayundah" he should certainly support him. Although he would not support a motion to omit the vote for naval brigades, or the instructors of naval brigades, he would lay up the "Gayundah" for twelve months, by which time they could get officers able to make her what she ought to be, and what she had not been for twelve months. At present she was only an expensive toy, and she would rapidly become worse than a toy, because when the necessity for using her for serious purposes arose, it would be found that they had been relying on a broken reed. They must have some one in charge of the "Gayundah" whom they could place confidence in, which was not the case at present. It would not cost much to lay up the "Gayundah" in harbour. When vessels in the Imperial navy were laid up everything was covered up to prevent them from being injured by the weather, and there was a ship-keeper or two put on board. As to the value of the guns on board the "Gayundah" he knew nothing, although it could be easily found out on referring to the Auditor-General's report, which showed that the total cost of the equipment—which, of

course, meant something more than the guns—amounted to £3,000. She could easily be laid up for twelve months in Garden Reach, and then with new officers she might be made into something more than a toy—into an actual defence, when necessary, and as a means of training men who would be their actual defenders when necessity arose. There were six companies of naval brigades, most of the men of which, he supposed, had passed their lives at sea. They would be able to man the “Gayundah,” whose ship’s company was put down at fifty-three men, including three officers, one lieutenant, and two sub-lieutenants.

The PREMIER: How would you move her about?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not propose to move her about; laying up was not moving about. He would have her laid up in Garden Reach where she was now, anchored head and stern, housed over, and two or three men on board to keep her in condition, for twelve months. In the meantime they would be able to consider what they should do towards getting men who would do their duty to the country from which they received their pay.

The PREMIER: How will the naval brigades be trained in the meantime?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: How have they been trained during the last twelve months?

The PREMIER: Last year the “Gayundah” was continually employed.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Not during the last twelve months.

The PREMIER said she had not left port since his return from England, for reasons for which he was prepared to accept the responsibility. He wanted certain information from Captain Wright before allowing the ship to leave port, and that information was not yet forthcoming.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: But she has been in port at least four months.

The PREMIER said he had not been back four months, and she might have been in port six months, as far as he knew. As soon as certain facts came to his notice he took the necessary steps to get the information; he had called upon Captain Wright for a report, which he had not received, so far. But all that was irrespective of the merits of the question—whether they should keep up a ship like the “Gayundah” or not. He was not prepared to say that during the last six months the management of the “Gayundah” had been satisfactory. He was not at all prepared to say so, but he believed it was not the fault of the system, but of the men in charge of her. He did not think anyone could be more discontented than he was with many things he had noticed during the last few months. But the question was, Were they going to do things by fits and starts, and because they did not like an officer destroy the system, and when they got somebody else they liked, start again? He did not understand that fitful way of doing business. One day they would have a commissioner of police, next day they would not. This year they would have an Auditor-General; next year they would not. He supposed that it was to prevent the evil of caprice of that kind that the Auditor-General and the Judges were placed upon a different footing from other public officers—because if some member did not like the occupant of the office, he would vote against the salary. In that way Parliament might step in and stop any branch of the public service. He asked hon. members to take a broader view of the question. He was responsible for the management of the “Gayundah” during the year, although he did

not know what it had been during all that period; and even supposing there had been some mismanagement he did not know that that was a sufficient reason for abolishing the system and throwing the whole thing into confusion. That was what it amounted to. The question was not whether they were pleased with Captain Wright or Lieutenant Hesketh, but was it desirable to have a training-ship of that kind in commission. That was the question; and that she had not been performing duty for three months was no reason for abolishing her altogether.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier was dragging all sorts of extraneous subjects into the discussion. He had asked him (Mr. Morehead) if he would take charge of the “Gayundah,” and said if he would not, would his office-boy do so. Then he had brought in the position of the Judges, and said they might as well refuse to have a judge because they did not like him. He (Mr. Morehead) did not know that anyone had expressed a like or dislike to any officer of the “Gayundah,” except possibly the Premier himself. They had to deal with a much bigger question than the petty petulance of the Premier. He thought the suggestion of the hon. member for Townsville a very proper one, by which there would be an actual saving of about £6,000, at the same time leaving the naval brigade unimpaired; and a considerable margin to provide for the unforeseen event of having to man the “Gayundah” if necessary. The men were very good men, but they had been badly treated as far as training was concerned, and very much neglected by the present Government. The Premier admitted that during the last twelve months that had been so. He thought, with the hon. member for Townsville, that there was no necessity to move the ship unless some extraordinary cause arose. They could easily get a crew out of the numerous Government steamers, the “Otter” and the small fleet the Government had so largely increased during their tenure of power. They could get plenty of seamen from them when they were wanted, and could easily make up any shortcomings from the naval brigade. If they took the amount set down for the “Gayundah,” £4,422, house allowance to senior naval officer, £120, clerk to senior naval officer and paymaster to marine force, £200, and rations £1,200, surgeon, £100—he did not know what his duties were; he had asked, but got no response—drill-instructors, messenger, and office-keeper, torpedo artificer, and all items after that, leaving full provision for any exigency that was likely to arise, it would allow a reduction in the whole vote of £5,947, and would not materially impair the efficiency of the force. If the necessity arose for the “Gayundah” being called into active service, there would be plenty of material left, after making these reductions, to put her in a very good state of efficiency; that was, assuming that the lieutenant instructor was a competent, able man, capable of being relied upon in an emergency. Besides, if an emergency did occur, with the exception of the engineers, who must be provided for, a senior lieutenant could unquestionably be got from the Imperial ships on the station, and there would be no necessity for keeping seamen or stokers, who could very easily be obtained when required. A ship’s steward, the captain’s servant, and, in fact, almost every item under the head of “Gayundah” could be supplied at a very few days’ notice, and at the same time they could effect a very material reduction in the estimate. He hoped hon. members would look at it in that light. If they did they would see that the Government had scope enough to deal with the question. And, so far as the “Gayundah” was concerned, he thought she would be

much better off if she remained where she was for twelve months. He would like to know how many days during the four years they had had that vessel, she had taken out the naval brigade for training purposes. The Premier himself had admitted that last year had been one of supreme neglect.

The PREMIER: I do not.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman admitted that it was a period of neglect, and said he was responsible for it. He was always bringing in his responsibility, and having done so seemed to think there was nothing more to be said about it. He said, "It's my fault," and that was to be the end of it. In the same way he asked hon. members on that side of the Committee if they would like to take command of the "Gayundah" themselves. That was a childish way of talking, unworthy of the hon. gentleman; because if he was really in earnest in retrenching there was no better opportunity than in connection with the "Gayundah."

The PREMIER said the hon. member might not care for the information; but, as a matter of fact, the men on board the "Gayundah" were under a three years' engagement. He would again point out that it was impossible to get men trained to serve on board a man-of-war at a few days' notice. The hon. gentleman talked of the question as if it were merely the manning of a ferry-boat, instead of a man-of-war. The hon. gentleman, who seemed to think that he knew as much, or more, about the matter as he (the Premier) did, had approached it *à priori*, like a man who had suddenly come here from another planet, who heard there were ships employed, but not knowing anything about the nature of ships, at once assumed supreme superiority over all other persons who were conversant with those things. It was like the case of the celebrated English statesman, who felt himself competent to take charge of the Channel fleet at a moment's notice.

Mr. MOREHEAD: An abler statesman than you are!

The PREMIER said he was also a great deal abler statesman than the hon. gentleman opposite, who seemed to think that he could provide a crew for fighting ships by putting an advertisement in a newspaper. That, he (the Premier) could not do. He hoped hon. members would recognise the fact that if they were to have properly drilled and trained men in that branch of the service they must have the means of drilling them. If there was any defect in the administration let them punish the people who were responsible for the administration, but that was no reason for abolishing the system.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said there would be no difficulty in getting a crew for the "Gayundah" in the event of the necessity arising. He was sure that at least one-half of the naval brigade were as competent as the men at present on board the "Gayundah." They were all good seamen, many of whom had spent, perhaps, twenty years at sea, so that, as he had said, there would be no difficulty in that respect in time of necessity.

The PREMIER: Those men are wanted for other ships.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said they were talking about the "Gayundah" at present. He presumed that they depended upon the Imperial Government for their real defence, as, if they depended upon their own gunboats and barges and punts they would be making a great mistake. As for talking about the "Gayundah" being able to defend them, he was very much afraid of it. There need be no difficulty in

getting sailors. Sailors were plentiful; there were hundreds of them in the interior upon the gold-fields, many of them old men-of-war's men.

The PREMIER: Could they fight the guns?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes.

The PREMIER: Do they understand how to work these guns?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Probably.

The PREMIER: I am certain they do not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: You may be certain, but I am not.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows nothing at all about it.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he knew something about it, and he did not suppose the hon. Premier had much more knowledge of naval or military matters than he had when he went away. Amongst all the multifarious duties the hon. gentleman attended to at home, did he undergo a course of naval and military discipline so as to qualify him to be Commander-in-Chief, and to tell everybody who spoke upon the subject that he knew nothing about it? He thought the Premier did not have quite time enough for that. Probably he mixed in the society of men with cocked hats, but that would not make him a military man. They all knew that seamen might be obtained at a week's notice—men to man more ships than they could raise. There were five or six crews in the naval brigades, of which there were six companies of fifty-three men each. He presumed those men were qualified; if they were not it was the fault of the men who had had them in training. Probably there were some of them even better qualified than the men now on board the "Gayundah," seeing the way the men had been going on during the last twelve months. It must be an extraordinary piece of information which the Premier could not get in three months. Since his return he had not been able to get any information as to why the "Gayundah" had been lying idle in the stream. The Commander had been in Brisbane all the time; surely he had not been away in the moon. In regard to the engagements the Premier said those men were under, they all knew they were under engagement; but unless a second one had been entered into, that engagement must be very near its termination. They had before them returns for 1884-5, 1885-6, and 1886-7, that was three years, and now they were in 1887-8. He thought the hon. gentleman would find the engagements terminated some time that year. There would be no difficulty in finding men, and in getting an officer to take command, from one of the Imperial ships on the coast immediately if required, as suggested by the leader of the Opposition. If that hon. member moved an amendment he would certainly support him.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he failed to understand the arguments of the hon. member for Townsville. That gentleman said that the Premier had described what the "Gayundah" ought to do and where she ought to be, and what her work should be, complained that she was not doing her work, and yet demanded that she should be laid up in ordinary. He says the "Gayundah" ought to be employed in becoming acquainted with the Queensland waters and the intricacies of the Barrier Reef, and training the naval brigades in the various parts of the colony; and yet he wishes her to be laid up. With singular inconsistency the hon. member for Townsville argued that because she had not been doing that particular work during the last three or four months, she ought not to do any more—that she should be laid up in ordinary. The hon. member also said

that they had sailors enough on the diggings. He supposed that meant that the officers on board ought to be dismissed, keeping only men enough on board to keep the guns in proper order. The hon. member complained on one hand that the "Gayundah" had not been doing her work, and on the other hand he insisted that she should be laid up in ordinary and do nothing at all. He could not follow that argument at all. The ship was well constructed, and her armament was good and complete, and she was economically managed, as they had been told by the Premier, who went very carefully into those matters with Admiral Tryon; and they then thought there was no unnecessary expense. The leader of the Opposition could make fun of anything in the world; he could convulse the Committee with laughter upon the most solemn occasion, and he (Mr. Jordan) had listened to him just now with very great amusement. But he lamented that when serious matters of that kind were before the Committee relating to the defence of the colony, and as to what they should do in case they had in reality what they had in imagination a year or two ago—hon. members would remember the scare about the Russians, one Saturday morning when the wires had been cut, and they did not know what they should hear next; when there was a panic in the city and everybody trembled, and asked what the Government were doing to defend the city—that was a very serious matter, and the comicalities of the leader of the Opposition were never more out of place than they had been whilst he was talking so very cleverly and amusingly upon that very grave and important question. Many persons held the opinion that they could do without their volunteers and soldiers; but they could not do without a marine force. He had heard it very seriously stated that their marine force was the most important line of defence, and they had two ships which were constructed at very great expense, but were economically managed; there were not more officers than were necessary, and they knew what their duties were. All that had been very clearly explained by the Premier, and admitted by the hon. member for Townsville. Yet it had been contended by the leader of the Opposition, very cleverly assisted by the hon. member for Townsville, that the "Gayundah" could not do what she was fitted out for, and that she should be laid up in ordinary. The hon. member for Townsville was generally very serious, treated things very logically, and did not waste the time of the Committee, as he was very sorry to say the hon. leader of the Opposition sometimes did by his witticisms. The hon. member for Townsville was running a tilt at the "Gayundah," and knew very well that he was only endeavouring to back up the attack made by the leader of the Opposition, which he was doing very feebly and illogically, considering his great ability.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he wanted to lay the "Gayundah" up for a year, in reality, and save the expense of keeping her laid up as she was now. She had been laid up in ordinary four months already, and there was no telling how much longer she would lie in Garden Reach. If the Government at the end of twelve months chose to do so, they could put her into commission again, and let those on board make acquaintance with Queensland waters, which they had not done up to the present time, with the exception of one voyage up north. The captain took her into Mourilyan Harbour and got on a rock, and for that reason condemned the harbour—a harbour that the biggest vessels could enter and leave easily. Dozens of shipmasters, though they did not wear epaulettes, had taken their vessels in and out of Mourilyan

Harbour and never made a complaint. He must congratulate the Premier on having at last got one of his colleagues to defend his Estimates relating to the defence of the colony. During the whole of the evening, and for the last two nights, not one of his colleagues had assisted the Premier; whether it was his fault or not he did not pretend to say. Perhaps he had told them to leave the Defence Force to him, but had just now unmuzzled one of his colleagues. He congratulated the Minister for Lands on getting up to do his little best in defence of the Premier.

The PREMIER said he should like to know what sort of officers and men the hon. member for Townsville expected to get on a ship, when they understood that their tenure of office depended on the whim of Parliament—that the ship was liable to be put out of commission one year and into commission the next—that they would cease to hold office as soon as Parliament had an economical fit, or as soon as they offended members of Parliament, and then when there was plenty of money to spend they could go on board again. A defence force could not be maintained on those conditions in any part of the world.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had been accused by the Minister for Lands and Water with turning every solemn object to ridicule. Had he ever attempted to turn the Minister for Lands to ridicule?

The PREMIER: What are you doing now?

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman had talked a great deal about the war scare; but the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, had read a letter showing that seamen could be got cheaper now than there was no war scare, and therefore there would be no difficulty in filling up vacancies on the "Gayundah." The Premier stated that they could not get officers to accept employment if their tenure of office depended on the whim of the Committee. The whim of the Committee on the present occasion was to lay by a useless vessel for a time and curtail an expenditure they could not afford. If those were whims, he was afraid they would last as long as representative government lasted. He thought very liberal provision was made under the estimate even with the reduction he had suggested a short time ago, and he intended to move that reduction; but before doing so, he would refer to one or two items on which he wanted to get some information. Was there a senior lieutenant?

The PREMIER: None has been appointed in place of Lieutenant Hesketh.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Then this estimate contains a misrepresentation on the face of it.

The PREMIER: It gives the staff of the "Gayundah."

Mr. MOREHEAD: The senior lieutenant does not exist.

The PREMIER: None has been appointed, but there must be a staff.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Suppose there was no commander and no senior lieutenant?

The PREMIER: Then we should have to get them. How can you get a senior lieutenant if there is no salary?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would go further back. The late senior lieutenant was got rid of four or five months ago, and the appointment had not been filled up since then. He supposed the "Gayundah" had kept just as quiet in the Garden Reach as before.

The PREMIER: She is shorthanded.

Mr. MOREHEAD: With eight stokers? She could not be short-handed in that direction. He would ask whether the whole of the staff except the senior lieutenant had been kept out during those four months.

The PREMIER: Yes; so far as I know.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member thought he made a point with regard to officers and men being under agreement. Would he tell the Committee when Captain Wright's engagement terminated?

The PREMIER: Only the men are under agreement.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he noticed that Captain Wright's appointment was dated 30th March, 1885, and he took it that the bulk of those on board were pretty much in the same position so far as engagement was concerned, so that there was very little in that point. Following up what he had said, he begged to move that the estimate of £12,541 be reduced by the sum of £5,947. That reduction included all the items under the heading "Gayundah," besides £120 house allowance to senior naval officer, £200 allowance for clerk to senior naval officer and paymaster to Marine Force, and the amount for rations.

Mr. McMASTER said he would like to correct the hon. leader of the Opposition. What the hon. member had referred to was not in Captain Wright's letter, but was a conversation which took place between Captain Wright and Mr. Marshall. While he was on his feet he would remind the hon. leader of the Opposition that if he carried his amendment the "Gayundah" would probably become a total loss.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What nonsense! The Imperial ships are laid up regularly.

Mr. McMASTER said he believed she would rot much sooner if she were laid up than if she had men to take care of her. The hon. leader of the Opposition was a member of the Government who ordered those gunboats, and if they were white elephants he was responsible to some extent.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is on account of mismanagement.

Mr. McMASTER said he did not think it was so altogether. If they were of no use they ought to be sold. There must be valuable guns to be kept in order, and if they took away the officers and men the vessels would suffer and be less fit than now for defence purposes. It would be far better to sell them altogether than injure the property that, with the assistance of the hon. leader of the Opposition, had been purchased at so high a figure.

The PREMIER said it would be as well to understand one another. The hon. leader of the Opposition told the Committee that he understood the subject a great deal better than the Government.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He did not; but I believe he does.

The PREMIER: The hon. member understood it better than the Admiral. The hon. member knew what a ship like the "Gayundah" could be kept up for. He (the Premier), with the best information at his disposal, told the Committee that if they laid up the "Gayundah," as proposed, in twelve months time she would deteriorate to a very great extent. He was sorry he had not at hand all the correspondence that was laid before the Imperial Conference, because one of the points raised there on the part of the Admiralty was as to the difference between the cost of a ship laid up and a ship in full commission. Ordinary persons would be inclined to suppose

that there was a very great difference indeed; but the difference, if his memory did not deceive him, was not more than 30 per cent. If they laid this ship up now and retained a sufficient number of men to keep her efficient, they would not reduce the expenditure much more than 30 per cent. That was the information he had, and that was the information he laid before the Committee. If the Committee preferred to take the opinion of the hon. member for Balonne, who knew nothing at all about it so far as they were aware, let them do so. The hon. member spoke *à priori*. He knew everything about it, but he gave them no basis for his knowledge. He (the Premier) did not profess to know anything but what he was told by good authority. The proposal made by the hon. member, if carried, would have the effect of rendering the vessel useless, and no one knew it better than the hon. member himself.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That is not the case.

The PREMIER: It would render the vessel useless; it would break the engagement with all the men, and the Government would have to pay them compensation for turning them adrift.

Mr. MOREHEAD: They will all get into gaol.

The PREMIER said the Government would have to get rid of those they had brought from England; there was one at £300 a year, another at £180. Some of them were under engagement for a fixed term, and would have to be paid compensation. The hon. member asked that they should take away the money even for doing that. He asked them to repudiate their bargain, to render this valuable engine of war useless, so that in twelve months' time she would deteriorate to an extent a great deal more than the saving on that vote; and in the meantime he desired to destroy the administration of the naval brigade by taking away the salaries of the officers who taught them their business.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No.

The PREMIER: Yes, he did. The hon. member did not know what he was doing, and he was telling the hon. member. The hon. member did not care what he was doing; he was like a child putting a stick into a piece of valuable machinery; he did not care what the consequences were.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Now you are very angry.

The PREMIER said he had felt really humiliated that evening when he listened to the hon. member, to think that an hon. member who was entrusted by a number of gentlemen in that House with the honourable position of leader of the Opposition should have spoken on a subject of that kind as he had done. It was humiliating to the colony that such statements and arguments should have been used by a gentleman holding that position. If they had come from any member of the House he would have been sorry, but coming from a man who aspired to a leading position in the colony it was absolutely humiliating to the whole colony, and so would anyone say who read the debate in to-morrow morning's paper, or who heard the arguments adduced. Had the hon. member said that they could not afford to have a training ship, and could not afford a marine force at all, they could have met him fairly on that ground. Was it desirable that they should have a floating battery, as the "Gayundah" really was?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: You said she was a toy.

The PREMIER said what he had said was that if she was a toy they ought not to vote any money for her. He asked the money for her not as a toy, but as a floating battery, without which their defence would be incomplete. That was what he said she was.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: That is what you said she should be.

The PREMIER: Yes, that was what he said she should be. What did the hon. member mean? Was that the reason for the amendment? Did they mean by that amendment to censure the Government for not properly administering that branch of the service for the last six months?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Twelve months.

The PREMIER said hon. members opposite differed. The hon. member for Townsville wished for the amendment by way of censuring the Government for their administration of the department. Of course, if it were carried from that point of view the Government would know what to do. They distinctly said, "The Government cannot manage this department, so we will take the money away." He (the Premier) could not speak as to the first six months of the year, but for the last three months there were very good reasons, as nearly every hon. member knew, why the "Gayundah" had not been to sea. He did not want to mention them there, but he was perfectly willing to tell any hon. member privately what the reasons were.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I have not the slightest idea.

The PREMIER: Was the amendment moved by way of punishing the Government for not sending her to sea during the last three months when they could not do it?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Why could not the Government do it? We know nothing about it.

The PREMIER: Or was it with the intention of destroying that branch of the force altogether? If hon. members thought that the hon. member for Balonne knew a great deal more about the matter than the Government did, let them affirm it by resolution. Certainly he did not feel disposed to be humiliated by being told day after day that it was the hon. member for Balonne who knew all about those things, and that the Government knew nothing about the business of the country.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier had done him the honour of saying he felt very sorry not only for him (Mr. Morehead), but also for the Opposition, who honoured him by their confidence. He could return the compliment, and tell the hon. gentleman that he felt deeply sorry for him, and for the Government, that had not the confidence of their supporters. The humiliation was to see the leader of a great party dragged in the dirt, as the hon. gentleman had been, night after night—knowing that nearly every evening of the session he courted defeat, knowing that the other night on the Defence vote he only scraped through by a majority of one, after touting personally all round the House to try and get it passed.

The PREMIER: That statement is not correct.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he intended to try all he could to reduce the monstrosity of extravagant expenditure of the Government, which had plunged the colony into its present financial difficulties. He cared nothing for the sneers of the hon. gentleman. Perhaps he knew as much about this subject as the hon. gentleman, although he might not have dined with the Duke of Cambridge or shaken hands with Lord Charles Beresford. He did not know that one or the other could have made the Premier either a military or a naval authority; although he admitted that the hon. gentleman thought he was an authority on every possible subject under the sun, he (Mr. Morehead)

was there, as other members of the Committee were, to see, as far as they could, that the money of the colony was not wasted; and that he would do so far as his lights led him. Whether his knowledge of naval or military matters was great or little he did not know, nor did he express an opinion on the subject. He believed that a reduction could be made in that vote in the way indicated by the hon. member for Townsville. They had not the imperialistic ideas on the subject that the hon. gentleman had. They knew that the hon. gentleman had come from the other side of the world with changed ideas on political matters, not only in connection with this colony, but in connection with the colonies and Great Britain. Since the hon. gentleman had come back they had seen great changes in his views. He (Mr. Morehead) was there as a representative of the people, and had as much right to express his views on any question that affected the people as the hon. gentleman or any other member of the Committee. He would be the last to check liberty of speech, but he felt bound to protest against the arrogance of the Premier.

The PREMIER said he would just reply to a statement that had been repeated for about the tenth time that session, but which he had never yet taken notice of. He had been accused of having imperialistic notions, and the statement had been made so often that he supposed somebody would begin to believe it. It was only one of those epithets which, he said at an early period of the session, he was frequently the victim of. It was not even original; it was coined for the hon. gentleman by some of his (the Premier's) well-known detractors, and the hon. gentleman picked it up, and it sounded so well that he repeated it at every convenient opportunity. He (the Premier) had said nothing since he came back from England to indicate the slightest change in his political views since his return.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: You may not think so.

The PREMIER said he did not look to the hon. member for Townsville for his character; it was well known what the hon. gentleman thought of him—that was, that whatever he did was wrong; that he was actuated by the worst motives, and was entirely wrong. As to that stuff about imperialistic notions, he had advocated precisely the same things before he went. Whatever he had stated since his return he had said before, and it had been tacitly accepted by the whole of that Committee; and there was nothing he has said in England on behalf of the colony, that had not been tacitly approved of by the Committee more than twelve months before he went away.

Mr. KELLETT said he objected to the manner in which the Premier received any proposal to reduce an over-estimate. The hon. gentleman regarded any proposal for a reduction as a vote of censure, and looked around and frowned at his supporters, as he could do in a very ugly way sometimes. That was not a fair way of dealing with the Estimates. Since he (Mr. Kellett) had been in the House he had seen Estimates reduced from time to time, but he had not heard before that an act of that kind was a vote of censure. He did not pretend to know as much as Admiral Tryon, or as much as the Premier thought he knew about naval matters, but he believed he had a little common sense, and that a reduction could be made in that vote. He believed it was the opinion of the people of the metropolis, and the majority of the people of the colony, that that vote was most useless and extravagant expenditure. He had been asked, day after day and month after month, what they received in return for that outlay. The "Gayundah" was lying in the reach

of the river doing nothing: what was the use of her there? If she were travelling about they might understand that she was of some service to the colony. They were told that they could not reduce that estimate, because in doing so they would ruin the ship. He thought it was not necessary to keep an engineer on board. Cleaners were all that were needed and some men to keep the arms in good order; that was all that was necessary, if the vessel was to remain in the Brisbane River. He noticed that there was an amount on the vote for eight stokers. Well, he believed he could get stokers enough to-morrow morning in half-an-hour to man a dozen of those ships. He did not see any reason why she should be kept in Brisbane for three months, and he did not think he should take that long to find out what was wrong with the Commander. He thought three days ought to be sufficient for that. He understood that all that naval officer had to do was to draw cheques when he wanted anything. He only heard that the other day. It seemed to him a monstrous thing that officers in the service should be allowed to draw cheques for an unlimited amount, and have them honoured. If that were the practice it was time it was stopped. He thought it was advisable to reduce the expenditure in some way, and that they might very fairly begin with that vote. That was his opinion, and he believed it was an opinion that was shared by the public generally. He did not know whether the amount was the proper amount by which to reduce the vote.

The PREMIER: If you take that off, you will make the whole concern a farce.

Mr. KELLETT said he did not think the hon. gentleman would have much difficulty in getting the boat manned if he wanted her in a hurry. He knew the hon. gentleman had not had much time to study the Estimates since his return from England, and therefore he could not know as much on any estimate as he seemed to think he did. Of course he did not like to see the Estimates reduced, but that was no reason why he should censure those members who had supported him well ever since he had been in office, when they endeavoured to effect retrenchment in the public expenditure.

The PREMIER said he would just say one word in reply to the hon. member. He quite agreed with the hon. member that it would be a very unfair thing for him to do what the hon. member accused him of doing. But what were the facts? A vote was brought forward and he (the Premier) pointed out that to keep the system efficient it was necessary that a certain sum should be voted. Some hon. members said, "No; that is not necessary." They knew a great deal more about the matter than the Government did; the Government did not understand their business; and to emphasise that opinion they proposed a reduction in the estimate, which, if the Government did understand their business, would turn the whole concern into a farce. How, then, could he take any other course than he had adopted? Hon. members might just as well take the Registrar-General's Department, and propose to omit all the salaries except the Registrar-General's; or the Real Property Office, and say they should omit the salaries of the Registrar and Master of Titles, the Deputy Registrar, and the Chief Clerk. Or they might take the Supreme Court, and strike out the salaries of all the officers, and then tell the Government to carry on the administration of justice. They wished to place on the Government the responsibility of conducting a department, and yet proposed to take away the means of conducting that department. He could only take that as it was meant—as a distinct challenge of the competency of the Government. He could only take it in one way.

Mr. KELLETT said he did not think the hon. gentleman's argument was fair. They knew he argued very well, but he said they might just as well cut off the salary of the Registrar-General as reduce that vote. That was nothing less than an absurdity. He was sorry to say that, but he could not find a better word at the moment. The Registrar-General had certain duties to perform every day, and was performing them, and he and his officers must be at their offices. The "Gayundah" officers were doing no duty, and that was why they objected to the ship lying idle.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said when he was in office he learnt one thing—if he wanted to get his Estimates through, to keep his temper. The hon. gentleman should take that advice, as he wanted it badly. Whether he had become imperialistic or not, at all events he had certainly become imperious. He hoped the hon. gentleman would not take any reduction of his Estimates as a vote of censure.

The PREMIER: I take it as it is meant.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The hon. gentleman could take it as he pleased, but he should not show how he took it. He might think what he liked, but should not lose his temper. The hon. gentleman said everything he did he (Mr. Macrossan) condemned; but he knew better than that. He knew there were many things he had done and was doing that he (Mr. Macrossan) approved of. He believed the hon. gentleman had made great mistakes; but, notwithstanding, there were many things the Premier did which he approved of; but he was not going to approve of things which he did not approve of, simply to gain the hon. gentleman's goodwill. The hon. gentleman spoke with authority when he spoke in that House, and he stated that every member of the Committee knew why the "Gayundah" had been laid up for four months, and that there were sufficient and satisfactory reasons. Since then he (Mr. Macrossan) had taken the trouble to go round to members and find out what they knew, but not a single man present, or the members who had gone out since the Premier spoke, unless it was the leader of the Opposition, knew what those reasons were. He agreed with the hon. member for Stanley that three months was sufficient time in which to find out the reasons why that vessel had been laid up so long, and how did they know how many more months it would take to find out those reasons? The complaint was that the vessel was absolutely doing nothing, and they were paying the full expense of keeping up a vessel of that kind. They wanted to have the vessel do nothing and not pay for her. He agreed with the member for Stanley that the Premier's comparison with that case and dispensing with the services of the Registrar-General was an absurdity. If the Registrar-General refused to do his work for four months they would be entitled to reduce his salary. That was the position they had taken up. They were there to discuss the Estimates, and reduce them if they thought they were in excess of what they ought to be. Of course when the Government framed them they no doubt thought in their own minds that every penny was wanted, and that the Government could not be carried on with less money, but other Governments had had their Estimates reduced, and had carried on the business. The country would not break down if the "Gayundah" was laid up, and if the whole vote was wiped out the country would flourish as much as usual, and the administration go on. He thought it was not fair of the Premier to treat that as a party question, and to state that the leader of the Opposition had brought forward the motion as a vote of censure upon the Government.

Mr. SALKELD said he certainly agreed with the remarks of the last speaker with reference to the Government treating any reduction of their Estimates as a vote of censure. That was not a fair position to take up. He voted the other night for a reduction, but it was not with the intention of putting the Government out of office. If they went out it was not his business. He took exception to the remark of the Premier when he said that the maintenance of the Defence and Naval Forces should not be dependent upon a vote of Parliament. When the hon. gentleman came to consider the question he would see that they must be dependent upon an annual vote, and in order to insure that in England the Mutiny Act was passed every year; so that the standing army could not be kept up without the assistance of Parliament. He maintained that Parliament ought to have control of all officers and their salaries. He had been informed that the trouble over a certain officer who had been discussed freely of late was owing to the fact that he had a five years' engagement and could not be discharged without compensation, and that accounted for a great deal of his imperious manner. If he could have been dismissed at a month's notice they would have had far less friction than they had had with that officer. He had just heard incidentally that the naval officers were engaged for a term. If they were, the engagements would have to be carried out, or the country pay the piper; but he said those engagements should not be made for a term of years, and in the future officers should be brought out here, their expenses paid, and if they did not suit then their expenses paid back home again; but they should not be put in positions in which they were independent of the will of Parliament. He wished to refer to another matter. The leader of the Opposition, he thought, was not quite fair to the Chief Secretary when making what he must term some of his insulting remarks. The hon. member of late had been very insulting to the head of the Government. He was very sorry to hear it, and he wondered that no notice had been taken of it up to the present time. He had referred to the hon. gentleman dining with the Duke of Cambridge and shaking hands with Lord Charles Beresford, and that he had contracted imperial notions since his visit home. He (Mr. Salkeld) did not know that the Premier had shown any indication of that, and he fancied the leader of the Opposition was sore, because when he was at home he was not shown the same amount of attention. The hon. member evidently felt sore, for if he was not he would not allude to the Premier in the terms he had done. He hoped those references would be dropped in future. The Premier seemed to be afraid that the Committee were going to do something foolish. He need not be afraid of that. The leader of the Opposition tried, of course, to score points against the Government, but it did not follow that hon. members on the Government side were going to play into his hands to do anything foolish or rash. He believed the discussion raised this year and on previous occasions on that question was not thrown away, and would bear good fruit. The Premier said that many hon. members knew the reasons for the "Gayundah" being in port, but he had never met anyone who knew anything about it. He believed that the more important part of the defence of the colony would be at sea. If they were to defend this colony and the other colonies successfully from a European foe—the only one that would be likely to attack them—their defence would be at sea. They would have to guard their coaling stations completely, because it was well known that vessels of war without coal were completely helpless in the hands of a very inferior force supplied with steam power. He was not prepared for sweeping

away the vote, but he believed there was a great deal of extravagance in connection with it. He believed the Australian colonies were looked upon by a certain class of people at home as a grand exploiting ground for good fat billets. The Premier made a remark about the British Admiralty carefully scrutinising their expenditure; but it was admitted by all but the Admiralty themselves and the Imperial Government that it was one of the most extravagantly managed departments in the service.

The PREMIER: Not on the ships; not afloat.

Mr. SALKELD said there was the greatest waste of money in that department, greater than in any other department of the Imperial service.

The PREMIER: On shore there may be, but not afloat.

Mr. SALKELD said that what he asserted had been admitted recently in the Press, and also in the Imperial Parliament. The bribery and corruption that took place in connection with that department was notorious; untold sums had in past years been completely wasted on it, and there were very grave doubts now as to the efficiency of the British Navy; in spite of all the money that had been expended on it. The Imperial naval officers were, therefore, very unfit persons to teach them economy in expenditure.

Mr. CHUBB said that what hon. members on his side complained of was that for the last four or five months the "Gayundah" had been lying in the Garden Reach doing nothing, and they did not know and could not find out how long that was going to continue. As the hon. member for Townsville had said, no one on that side of the Committee knew, or could even guess, the reason why the ship was in port so long. It was a monstrous thing to suppose that they should have an efficient ship lying useless in port and no one able to say how much longer she would remain there. The Premier had given them no assurance on the subject, nor did he tell them how long it would take to bring that officer to book if he was to be brought to book. It was for that reason, hon. members thought that voting that money would be useless waste if the expenditure was to go on as it had gone on for the last four or five months.

Mr. NORTON said he could not understand upon what grounds the Premier regarded the motion as a vote of censure. The hon. gentlemen should certainly take a different view of it from his experience of last week. When the leader of the Opposition moved his amendment upon the previous vote, the hon. gentleman said he accepted that as a distinct challenge of the competency of the Government to conduct that part of the public business. The hon. gentleman must have seen from the division that was taken that the Committee did not regard it in that light. A few members on the Government side treated the amendment as a vote of censure, and made excuses for voting with the Government after having expressed their intention to vote for the amendment; but several members refused to treat it as a vote of censure. With those facts before his eyes, the Premier ought not to treat the present amendment as a vote of censure. He (Mr. Norton) did not regard it as a vote of censure, nor did the leader of the Opposition intend it as such. It was only within the last two or three hours that he knew it was the intention of the leader of the Opposition to move an amendment. Since the discussion had come on the hon. member for Townsville said he was prepared to move an amendment if the leader of the Opposition would not; so that the Premier must see there was no concert on the part of the Opposition which

would lead him to believe a vote of censure was intended. He would point to the effect of the hon. gentleman's own argument. Because the leader of the Opposition proposed that a certain reduction should be made in the vote the hon. gentleman accepted it as a challenge that the Government were not competent to conduct that department of the public business; but if the leader of the Opposition proposed a reduction in the amount of the salary of a clerk in a Government office was the hon. gentleman going to accept that as a challenge of the competency of the Government? They must give the hon. gentleman credit for having reduced the Estimates as far as he could, but if every reduction proposed by the leader of the Opposition was to be treated as a vote of censure, the leader of the Opposition could propose no reduction whatever.

The PREMIER: That would be absurd, of course. What I say is that a motion of this kind can only be taken in one way.

Mr. NORTON said the hon. gentleman was supposed to employ a certain number of clerks in his office, and in hard times like the present he was supposed to have no more than he could do without. Suppose the leader of the Opposition were to propose to reduce the staff by one clerk, the hon. gentleman might say that because it would throw the affairs of the office into a state of confusion he should treat it as a vote of want of confidence.

The PREMIER: The remedy would then be to make the others work harder. Suppose you deprived me of all my clerks, what then?

Mr. NORTON said if it was proposed to deprive the hon. gentleman of all his clerks, he would no doubt be able to satisfy a majority of the House that he could not do without them.

The PREMIER: But if the motion was carried, what would be my alternative?

Mr. NORTON said there was no chance of such a motion being carried. He was sorry the hon. gentleman looked at it in that light. It seemed as if he wished to treat the amendment not merely as a vote of censure, but to compel the members on his own side to pass the vote at any cost. Hon. members on both sides had good reason to complain that the "Gayundah" in her present condition was perfectly useless; they were paying their money away for nothing. The hon. gentleman said there was some information he wanted to get from Captain Wright. What that information was he (Mr. Norton) did not know, but no doubt it was something very important if it took him weeks to get. But supposing Captain Wright refused to give the information, what would be done with him?

The PREMIER: What is ordinarily done in such cases?

Mr. NORTON said he was quite satisfied that that branch of the service was less unpopular than the other. He believed the bulk of the people thought that the Naval Defence Force, if properly managed, would be more useful than the Land Defence Force. At the same time they might just as well be without it altogether, because they were getting no good whatever from it. He did not know what the officers did; they seemed to go about the town pretty much as they pleased, and complaints were common that the naval brigade did not get the advantage of any training. Instead of getting some advantage from the ships they were getting none whatever.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he was not a great military authority, either on land or on water. He was a layman in the matter. Still, by put-

ting two and two together it struck him very forcibly that the whole of the discussion had been very much like thrashing empty straw, or shooting wide of the mark. If the discussion proved anything, it proved that the two gunboats were two white elephants; and Sir Thomas McLlwraith was the father of them, and Sir Samuel Griffith was the godfather of them, and neither of them had any reason to sing, "It's nice to be a father." Although he was not in the secret as to why the gunboats had been laid up for the last three months, he believed he could let the cat out of the bag.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, no! Don't! It might scratch!

Mr. ISAMBERT said that if he let the cat out of the bag there would be no danger; hon. members could escape. If there was anything to be deprecated in the discussion it was the semi-comical manner in which the leader of the Opposition had treated that very serious subject. The leader of the Opposition ought to understand that the most important person in the House, next to the leader of the Government, was the leader of the Opposition. He was even more important than all the rest of the Ministers together. Her Majesty's Government was carried on, so far as Parliament was concerned, by the Premier of the colony and the leader of the Opposition, and the present leader of the Opposition ought to treat matters of such importance a little more gravely. If the colony had ever felt the loss of Sir Thomas McLlwraith it had been during the present session; and he was certain that if Sir Thomas McLlwraith still occupied his seat in the House as leader of the Opposition he would not have allowed such flippant opposition to arise as it had pained them to listen to that evening. No matter how much opposed he might have been to the leader of the Government he would not have condescended to such trifling, childish, spiteful actions for the sole purpose of stultifying the Government. As hon. members would remember, when Sir Thomas McLlwraith brought forward the scheme of those two gunboats, in which he was ably supported by the present leader of the Government, he (Mr. Isambert) denounced the scheme. He told the House that they would be a white elephant, that all they would be good for would be to go down the Bay schnapper-fishing. And from what he had now heard it seemed that they were not fit even for going schnapper-fishing in. They were not certainly good enough for fighting, although they might be very useful as floating batteries. When the vote was before the House in 1882, he said they ought to commence their Naval Defence Force with fast-going steamers, despatch boats, easily handled, and travelling at the rate of twenty or twenty-five knots an hour; and not with such clumsy, ugly boats which could not steam more than eight or nine knots an hour; so slow that they could not go fast enough to run away from a man-of-war; so small that they were of little use, and so deep that they must keep in the open channel, and could not go into one of the Northern harbours without touching the bottom. They had heard that one of those two boats had great difficulty in accomplishing the journey out, on the ground that those "white elephants" were such voracious animals. They were too expensive to maintain; they cost such an amount for fuel that they could not be kept in active service except at ruinous expense. Hon. members had probably heard of the "Jumna," which had accomplished her second journey here; and on her first journey, he had read in the papers, and had also been told by one of her engineers, that although she was the biggest steamer that had ever reached

Brisbane, yet she consumed less coal than any in the British-India fleet. Those gunboats might be right in construction, but the machinery was ancient.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. ISAMBERT said it was too expensive. He believed he could send an engineer on board who could point out where the fault lay. In having a permanent staff of men for those boats—not officers, who were necessary, but men—they were simply continuing the evil of the British naval service. They had no business to engage a permanent staff of men. It meant too much red-tapism, too much imperialism. They ought to make their naval service more popular, and organise it more in accordance with their democratic institutions—make it more useful and more extensive. Let them pay a certain subsidy to the steamers plying on the coast, and make it a *sine quâ non* that the staff of men required on the gunboats should be exchangeable with those steamers, and as soon as they were properly drilled they should go back to the steamers again. The gunboats should be manned by the men from those steamers—not all at once, but in batches, so that the whole of the sailors in the steamers running along their coast would be ready drilled, and in time of danger they would have an ample supply of well-trained sailors—not a mere handful of men who were trained on board one ship, and who seemed to have nothing else to do but to go ashore and make mischief. The country had a right to expect from the companies that plied along the coast, and had the benefit of their trade, that they should also be useful in time of war. They required defence, and should also be used as instruments of defence in time of danger. In that way they would have not only those two gunboats—those two white elephants—but every man on board those steamers well trained and used to military command, so that they could meet an enemy if one came to their shores—which might happen any day. They must not look at that contingency from their own narrow point of view. They were subject to all the dangers that the British Empire was exposed to. Any moment that Great Britain was involved in difficulties Australia would also be involved. If the vote were reduced as proposed by the amendment of the hon. leader of the Opposition, it would be tantamount to destroying the whole thing, and he should not vote for it. He would sooner vote for the rejection of the whole sum than for the proposed amendment, which would make the force wholly useless. If those boats were not proper ones, let them get suitable ones, and have value for their money, and not stultify the whole concern. The hon. member for Townsville had found fault with the Premier for showing temper. Well, he (Mr. Isambert) had discovered a certain trait in the Premier too, and that was that, instead of displaying temper, he was only surprised that he could stand the large amount of petty nagging that hon. members indulged in. He had often wondered how he showed so much patience as he always did; that was what surprised him. He hoped hon. members would look at the matter from a common-sense point of view, and not in such a flippant narrow-minded way.

Mr. ANNEAR said they had been discussing, since he had been in the Committee that evening, the gunboat "Gayundah," as if that were the only portion of their navy; but they had a great many other ships in their navy far more useless than the "Gayundah." He wished to ask the Premier on whose recommendation the five barges, which were being constructed for the Harbours and Rivers Department, were altered from barges into composite boats to carry a gun?

The PREMIER said he could not say at that moment on whose advice it was. Did the hon. gentleman mean, who supplied the designs?

Mr. ANNEAR said he wished to know on whose recommendation they were altered from their first design to their present design?

The PREMIER said that he had made a recommendation, and was advised by Captain Wright, and by the Admiral when here, and also by Major-General Steward. He had never heard anybody dispute before that the course adopted was the proper one. Those vessels would be most formidable for purposes of defence in time of invasion. If the hon. gentleman had read what had happened in the way of defending coasts by gun-barges he would see that those were practically most formidable ships. In Victoria a great deal of money had been spent in that way.

Mr. ANNEAR said they might be very formidable in time of war, but he was going to show the Committee that they were very expensive in time of peace. Whoever was responsible for the alteration of those barges from the original design was unworthy, in his opinion, to be named with engineers, or with any man in the colony who knew anything of naval warfare. When those barges were first contracted for, the tender was accepted of the firm who had made the other barges in the colony, at a certain rate of speed on a certain consumption of coal, and which had proved to be effective, and in every way in accordance with their contract; and he was sure that if those five barges, which were being constructed at a cost of something like £80,000, had been left in the hands of the Chief Engineer of the Harbours and Rivers Department, they would have been as effective as the first barges that were constructed in the colony.

The PREMIER: What is wrong with them?

Mr. ANNEAR said he would tell the hon. gentleman what was wrong. He had not intruded much in that Committee, but he should do so now. He thought when they saw retrenchment taking place, and the whole colony almost come to a standstill because there was a fear abroad that the revenue had not been coming in as it should be, they should not incur any extra expense. Those barges were altered, and what was the result? Under the first specification they were to have a speed of ten knots on a consumption of three and a-half tons of coal a day; but, since they had been altered, and had guns placed upon them, they would only steam six knots on a consumption of seven tons of coal per day. Now, on an average, at the very least they ought to do four trips a day in attending the dredges, and the alteration had made a difference of 1d. per cubic yard in excess of the original design. At four trips a day that amounted to £5 16s. 8d. per day for each barge, or £29 per week of five days each, making nearly £1,500 a year increase each. The cost of the alteration was £17,000. He thought the people of the colony should know about that piece of extravagance. In his opinion the person who made the recommendation to the Government knew very little about it. In the first place, the barges had two boilers each, which could be fired by one man, and only one engineer was needed. Now, each barge had four boilers, in order that they might all be below the water line, and it took three firemen and two engineers to work them. He ventured to say that in the summer-time the men would not be able to fire them at all, because there were eight fires and only five feet space between them, from the face of one boiler to the face of the other.

The CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. member's attention to the fact that he is not dealing with the subject before the Committee.

Mr. ANNEAR said he was informed that the whole vote for the Marine Force was under discussion. If he were wrong he would submit to the Chairman's ruling. The looking after of the guns on those barges came within the vote. He had referred to this question when before his constituents, and believed that a great injustice had been done to the taxpayers by the alterations to those barges. They were made for taking the silt out of their rivers so that ships might come up; and spending money over them in the way he had stated was a perfect farce, and it was very nearly time it came to an end. So far as the "Gayundah" and the other gunboat were concerned, there was something to be said in their favour, as they were serviceable for naval defence. But what was the use of those barges? Two of his constituents were very nearly killed on board one of them at the review at Lytton, through the inefficiency of the guns. The officers, especially in connection with the naval defences, were very inefficient as regards construction. In regard to those barges he knew, and defied contradiction, that they cost the people of the colony an extra £1,500 a year each.

The PREMIER said the hon. member must have exaggerated the figures a good deal, or rather his informant had. Of course, they could not have a fighting vessel with its boilers exposed to shot. It was no use doing that. As a matter of fact they would now be very efficient fighting vessels indeed; but he could not understand why the speed should have been reduced. There must have been some mistake about that. They were designed by the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, and the alterations were designed by him also, and he would be very much surprised if that gentleman's calculations were so far out and the speed reduced as was stated. The information given by the hon. member for Maryborough as to their cost was quite new to him, and he thought the hon. member must be mistaken. They must not forget that Maryborough and Rockhampton were places which had called out for some means of defence, and they wanted companies of the naval brigade. What was the use of them without those vessels? They could not fight swimming. They must have some kind of floating gun-carriage, and they could not build special men-of-war for those ports. To utilise the vessels employed in the harbour seemed a most economical way, and he was surprised if they had cost so much as the hon. gentleman said.

Mr. FOXTON said he could confirm what the hon. member had said in some measure.

Mr. STEVENSON: What hon. member are you referring to?

Mr. FOXTON: Mind your own business. He was not speaking from his own personal knowledge, but from information he had received from a thoroughly reliable source. He believed that the speed of those vessels had been very considerably reduced in consequence of the method of construction of the boilers. Why it should be so he did not know. He was informed of it just before the last encampment. During the encampment there was a naval review or sham-fight in which the "Gayundah" and two or more of those vessels took part, and it must have been patent to everyone who watched the manoeuvres that the "Gayundah" could steam something like three knots to their one. They came up by Luggage Point pretty well together; but by the time they had arrived off the Lytton fort there was a considerable distance between them. He was also informed that it would be almost impossible, except at very great personal inconvenience

and hardship, for the engineers and firemen to work those vessels in the summer-time. Unlike the hon. member for Maryborough, he did not attach any particular blame to anybody in the matter, because he considered that the arming of those barges was an excellent plan, even if it had cost a little money. Still he thought it was as well that any defects that might have been discovered should be rectified.

Mr. STEVENSON said he was sure the Premier must feel obliged to the hon. member for the information he had just given, because nobody knew what he was talking about. He did not even say what member he referred to when speaking of an hon. member. He said he had been informed of certain things, but nobody knew where he got his information, or whether it was reliable. When he was asked what hon. member he referred to, he replied, "Mind your own business." If he did not let hon. members know what he was talking about, how were they to rely on the information he gave?

Mr. FOXTON said he was not in any way responsible for the lack of brains the hon. member might be labouring under or for his density. When he wished to tell the hon. member for Normanby who his informant was he would tell him, but not till then; and any impertinent interjections made by the hon. member in the meantime would be treated by him with contempt.

Mr. STEVENSON said they could therefore take the hon. member's speech to mean simply nothing, and treat it with contempt.

Mr. MURPHY said it was a pity that hon. members could not keep their tempers and reply to one another with equanimity. He thought the hon. member for Carnarvon had made one of the most ungentlemanly remarks he had ever heard used in that Chamber, and he thought the hon. member ought to have been called to order by the Chairman.

Mr. FOXTON: Which remark?

Mr. MURPHY: The remark made to the hon. member for Normanby. It was a pity that hon. members could not discuss such a grave question without losing their tempers. The question interjected by the hon. member for Normanby was a very reasonable one, because he, for one, did not know whether the hon. member was referring to the Premier or to the hon. member for Maryborough, and he was not astonished at the hon. member for Normanby taking up the matter so warmly. He was going to support the Government in regard to the vote as he did with regard to the land force, and he considered the marine force of much more importance to the colony than even the land force, because it was the first line of defence. It was no argument to say that because the administration was bad, and the ship had been kept in the river when she should have been at sea, therefore the vote should be reduced. That did not show that the system was bad, but that the administration was bad, and he did not see why the force should be wiped out simply because it was badly administered. He hoped that the narrow majority with which the Government carried the vote for the land force would show them that it was absolutely essential to inquire into the administration of the forces, and that it must not be allowed to be slummed over by the officers in charge. So long as the colony was connected with the British Empire, so long would it be necessary to provide means of defence. It was idle to buy ships and then lay them up in ordinary, because they would rot when laid up in ordinary faster than when engaged in active service.

It was well known that the boilers of men-of-war, after being laid up in ordinary, were found to be most defective, and that they would not even go through the strain of a naval review without some of the machinery breaking down. If the "Gayundah" were laid up for twelve months, and there were a war scare at the end of that time, it would be found on taking the vessel out that her boilers were out of order, and her guns would go off at the wrong end. And if the men who manned the boats were got rid of now they could not be collected again when they were wanted. As he said on a previous occasion, they would then be in the position of the Victorian Government after dismissing their permanent force—they would have given anything to get the men back again when the scare came, but the men would not go back because the Government had broken faith with them, and might do so again. If there was anything wrong about the gentleman commanding the "Gayundah," he hoped the Premier would have no mercy on him; if he had made a mistake, or had not been doing his duty, he hoped the Premier would show him no favour, but get rid of him at once. It would be a bad precedent, however, to get rid of the capable men now, because they could not be got back when they were wanted; besides, England was bound to be involved in war, sooner or later, and Queensland, as part of the Empire, was bound to bear its part of the burden.

Mr. ADAMS said he quite agreed with the hon. member who last spoke that there had been maladministration; and if the administration had been such that the vessel had been laid up for three or four months, how did the Committee know that she was not going to remain there three or four months longer? He should vote for the amendment.

Question—That £6,594 only be granted—put, and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 12.

■ Messrs. Black, Stevenson, Morehead, Adams, Philp, Pattison, Macrossan, Norton, Ferguson, Donaldson, Lalor, and Thorn.

NOES, 21.

■ Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Rutledge, Jordan, Dutton, Moreton, Bailey, W. Brookes, Buckland, Isambert, White, Bulcock, Wakefield, Mellor, Dickson, Sheridan, S. W. Brooks, McMaster, Annear, Grimes, Foxton, and Murphy.

Question resolved in the negative.

Pairs :—For the amendment : Messrs. Jessop and Nelson. Against : Messrs. Allan and Morgan.

Question—That £12,541 be granted—put.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not rise to move any further amendment on the vote. Both he and other hon. members on his side had refrained from pressing a question with regard to remarks which had fallen from the Premier in connection, as they assumed, with the commander of the "Gayundah"—they had purposely avoided pressing the question before the division was settled, in order that it might not prejudice the case of that gentleman in the eyes of any member of the Committee. Now, he thought it should be divulged to the Committee what had been the cause of the long detention of that vessel. It must be something very serious, and he thought the sooner the explanation was made the better, both for the Committee and the gentleman over whom that charge seemed to hang.

The PREMIER said he would give the Committee the information. About two months ago various statements were made as to the manner in which the funds of that branch of the Defence Force were expended, and he arranged

with his colleague the Treasurer for a full investigation into the accounts of that department. It took the Audit Office more than a month to make up the accounts, and he did not get the report until the 16th of this month. The result was that he gave Captain Wright an opportunity for an explanation, and required that certain amounts which, as he considered, had been paid improperly, should be repaid to the Treasury. That was what had happened since he had been here. The matter came under his notice very shortly after he arrived, but he did not get the report till lately. It was a very voluminous document, and he had not had time to read it all himself yet. So far as certain amounts which ought to be repaid were concerned, they were dealt with the day he got the report.

Mr. BLACK said he had not occupied the time of the Committee at all that evening, but before the final question was put he would like to make a few remarks upon the general position the Government had been taking up in connection with the Estimates. It had been pretty well admitted by the Committee, and he certainly thought the opinion was endorsed by the country outside, that the necessity for retrenchment had never been more pressing than it was at the present time. They knew perfectly well that if the Estimates were carried out on the scale laid on the table by the Government, and assuming that the expenditure was only what the Government anticipated, there would be a deficiency of between £30,000 and £70,000, and they on that side thought—he at any rate thought—that they were justified, without in any way hampering the proper administration of the different departments, in endeavouring to make some reasonable reductions. Now, they had had the Defence Force under discussion for two nights, and that night they had had the Naval Defence under discussion, and on both occasions they had endeavoured, not at all for the purpose of embarrassing the Government, to get some reduction in those very large items, amounting together to something like £50,000. The Government, however, had thought fit to take up a position which he did not think had ever been taken up before. When any attempt was made by the Opposition to reduce a vote on the Estimates, the Premier at once declared that he would accept it as a challenge of his competency to carry on the government of the country, and, in that way, he endeavoured to carry his Estimates by making it really a party question. It was tantamount to saying, "If the Committee will not grant this vote as proposed by me—and I consider I know better than anyone else—we shall resign." It was not at all fair to that Committee and was not fair to the country. What was the use of coming there night after night to criticise the Estimates when they were told that no reductions would be allowed? The Premier said that evening that he felt actually humiliated because he had been criticised.

The PREMIER : No.

Mr. BLACK : Yes. The hon. gentleman said that he felt humiliated at the idea of members on the opposite side of the Committee daring to criticise what he had carefully studied, and what he considered would be for the welfare of the country.

The PREMIER : I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. BLACK : The hon. gentleman did say so.

The PREMIER : I used the word "humiliated."

Mr. BLACK : At being criticised by the Committee. There was no doubt the hon. gentleman had a certain amount of ability of a certain sort, but when they considered that the intentions of the hon. gentleman, as expressed during

the last three or four years, had really never been realised, he thought they had just cause to consider very carefully anything fresh that he might propose to the Committee. He (Mr. Black) wished to point out that they were not to reduce any items in those Estimates, and any proposal to reduce them was to be made a party question. They must adopt one of two courses, either pass them *in globo*, or do what would be more objectionable—namely, resort to stonewalling. He would like the Premier to give some explanation as to the spirit in which he wished the Estimates to be discussed in the future. He, for his part, declined to waste his time and the time of the country unnecessarily, in discussing items capable of reduction, when the Premier made the proposals to reduce them party questions, and told them they were either to accept the items as they were, or turn out the Government. He considered it was taking a very unfair advantage of the Committee for the Premier to have wasted the last three nights by inciting a discussion, and then to take the stand that he had taken that evening.

The PREMIER said it was rather too much to accuse him of wasting time the last three nights. The remarks of the hon. gentleman reminded him of the old story about the wolf and the lamb. The hon. gentleman misunderstood, or affected to misunderstand, the position the Government had taken up with respect to the Estimates. He (the Premier) hoped that they would have the various items discussed, and reduced, if it could be shown that reduction was necessary. But an attack could be made on the Government on the Estimates as well as in any other way. Members came forward and made a proposal with the view of throwing a department into confusion.

Mr. MOREHEAD: We never said so.

The PREMIER said if they made such a reduction as had been proposed it would have that effect if the Government understood their business. He hoped he would never be in the position of a Government he had seen in a neighbouring colony, where they allowed a committee to sit outside, frame new estimates, and then come in and carry the reductions. He would never be a member of a Government that did that. The Government were, of course, the servants of the House, but they were bound, to a certain extent, to lead the House. It was a degrading position for any Government to be in, to be bound to carry on the government of the country where a majority of the House dictated the conditions on which they were to conduct the business. When a Government found themselves in such a position that the House, or any party in the House, said they must carry on the government of an important department on conditions which they conceived to be impossible, they were bound in honour to say so. That was the only reasonable and honourable position any Ministry could take up. He entirely deprecated making those things party questions unless it was absolutely necessary. The hon. member asked what course the Government intended to pursue with regard to the rest of the Estimates. He (the Premier) hoped that every item would be discussed on its merits. But if the hon. gentleman proposed to omit all the Customs vote, for instance, and could carry the motion, they would let him carry on the government. He dared say that there were some minor items on which reductions might be made, but those could be dealt with when they came to them. He had not in the slightest degree taken up any position that would not be taken up by any gentleman who understood his position and was jealous of his honour.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman had stated that he would never be a member of a Government like that in a neighbouring colony, which allowed a committee to frame new estimates; but the position the hon. gentleman had placed his supporters in was far more degrading, because in making those party questions he actually made the gentlemen who supported him vote against their consciences.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government Benches: Name, name!

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: We know it.

The PREMIER: I think a great many on the other side vote against their consciences on party questions.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said when members on his side of the Committee did not agree with what was done by the Opposition, they went over to the other side. The Premier had referred to the "Gayundah." He (Mr. Macrossan) wanted to know when that vessel was going to sea? Was she to remain in the Garden Reach until something was cleared up respecting the commander's character? There should be some other officer on board capable of taking the "Gayundah" out to sea, to allow the naval brigade to have that training they were entitled to get. He believed there were other gentlemen in the service besides Commander Wright who could do that; but if there were not, they could easily be obtained in the other colonies. The amount that they were asked to vote for the land and marine forces was the same as that granted last year, and the estimates for last year were exceeded by £4,650.

The PREMIER: No, they were not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said they were, and it was shown by the report of the Auditor-General. If hon. members would look at the "Abstract of Orders in Council, authorising expenditure on account of the financial year 1886-7 in anticipation of legislative sanction," under the head of "Consolidated Revenue" they would find that the amount for the Defence Force was £4,150, and that for the Marine Force £500, which made £4,650.

The PREMIER said he had stated several times already that there was a saving in other branches of the service which would more than cover the amount to which the hon. member referred. He could give the savings, but the hon. member had gone away and apparently did not want to know them.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman took a high and dignified view of his position as regarded the duty of the Government with respect to the Estimates. Did he take the same dignified position with regard to his financial policy? It was only a few weeks ago that he cast his financial policy to the four winds of heaven, and he had since held office, as he admitted, at the wish of his supporters. Was that a dignified position for the head of the Government to occupy?

Mr. W. BROOKES said it was rather late in the evening for them to be bandying those recriminatory remarks. He thought they might as well go home. But he would just say a word or two in reply to the hon. member for Townsville. The hon. member stated that the position occupied by the supporters of the Government was degrading. Now, he would like to know what the hon. gentleman meant by that. They did not feel at all degraded by supporting the Government. Take his own case as an illustration. He did not know whether it would be the same as the case of other

hon. members on that side, but he spoke for himself—himself only—with reference to those two votes for the land and sea forces. He really should have very much wished to have had a reduction on them both, and he was prepared to hear from the leader of the Opposition some good solid, substantial reasons, which might have induced him to vote for the reduction. But to his astonishment he found that, although he knew nothing whatever either of naval or military matters, yet he knew quite as much as the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What did you say your opinion was outside the House?

Mr. W. BROOKES said the speeches of the leader of the Opposition had been singularly devoid of any point that could take hold of a man of common sense. He had not used a single substantial argument, and a great many of his remarks had been of an extremely flippant and frivolous character. If the Premier was too dignified, the leader of the Opposition was too much the other thing.

Mr. MOREHEAD: And what position do you occupy?

Mr. W. BROOKES said, with reference to what had fallen from the hon. member for Mackay, he might say that they were only at the very beginning of the Estimates. They had on that side voted for the Defence estimate, supported by good, solid reasons, set out by the Premier, that if they did not vote as they had done the efficiency of both land and sea forces would have been so impaired as to render them valueless, and still they would have been hampered with a very considerable expense.

Mr. NORTON: We know all about that.

Mr. W. BROOKES said some people knew too much.

Mr. PATTISON: You are one of them.

Mr. W. BROOKES said some people knew a great deal less than they thought they knew. Now, why should the Premier be accused of making every discussion on the Estimates a party question? The hon. gentleman had done nothing of the kind.

Mr. STEVENSON: He has admitted he has.

Mr. W. BROOKES said, what the Premier had stated had been simply this: that if the Committee reduced the vote for the Permanent Defence Force, the Volunteer Force, or for the Marine Force, it would be impossible for the Government to carry on those departments, and he had gone so far as to say that if the Opposition side of the Committee pursued that policy, the Opposition side of the Committee had better undertake the affairs of government altogether. He could endorse the remark made by the Premier—he was of that opinion too; but still he was quite sure of this—that when the colony found such a gentleman as the hon. leader of the Opposition at the head of affairs it would very soon want a change.

Mr. PATTISON: Try it.

Mr. NORTON: You cannot do worse than you have done.

Mr. W. BROOKES said he had no objection to the Opposition trying their hand at it; but they would take the opinion of the colony.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You take the opinion of Brisbane.

Mr. W. BROOKES said, of course, he was not a prophet.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You tried it once.

Mr. W. BROOKES said he was always willing to take the opinion of Brisbane, or any other place.

Mr. STEVENSON: You like Brisbane very much.

Mr. W. BROOKES said he did not like the kind of talk they had had. It interrupted business, prevented the easy passage of business, and detracted considerably from the dignity which ought to characterise the debates of Parliament.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You are dignified.

Mr. DICKSON said, before the debate closed he wished to say a word or two. Throughout the debate there had been an impression created by the Premier which he desired to clear up. The hon. gentleman had expressed the opinion that the opposition to the vote was in consequence of the "Gayundah" having been allowed to lie idle during his absence from the colony in England.

The PREMIER: I said during the last three months.

Mr. DICKSON said he would give the Premier an opportunity of relieving him of that impression, but his remarks did convey the idea that in consequence of negligent supervision, caused by his absence from the colony during the first six months of the year, the vessel was detained here. The fact was that during the early part of the year she was detained by stress of weather, and hon. members would remember the floods that took place; and afterwards, on account of Lieutenant Hesketh's affair, he having been arrested and awaiting a competent tribunal to hold an inquiry. Immediately he was tried the "Gayundah" went to Townsville and exercised the naval brigade, then returned to Brisbane, subsequently called at Maryborough to bring the naval brigade down to the encampment at Lytton. So that it would be seen that the vessel was not entirely idle during the first six months of the year. He felt that the odium attaching to the non-employment of the boat had been cast upon him, and he should be glad to have that impression cleared up.

The PREMIER said such a thing had not occurred to his mind, and he was sorry to have conveyed that impression. He did not intend to convey any such impression, because he had no such impression. He said that the reason some hon. members gave for wishing to reduce the vote was, that the "Gayundah" had been lying idle for the last three months. He said she had been north once in the last six months, but he did not know whether she had been more than once.

Question—That the sum of £12,541 be granted for the Marine Force—put and passed.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that leave of absence had been granted to the Hon. J. S. Turner to attend and give evidence before the select committee appointed to inquire into the Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill—if he thought fit.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. It is proposed to put Supply at the head of the paper to-morrow.

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