

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 1887**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Wednesday, 5 October, 1887.*

Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill—report from select committee.—Motion for Adjournment—Delay in Furnishing Returns—Scrub Timber for Bridges.—Warwick to Thane's Creek Railway.—Cooneana Railway Bill—Report from select Committee.—Electoral Districts Bill—resumption of committee.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Local Government Act of 1878 Amendment Bill.—Valuation Bill.—Adjournment.

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

LADY BOWEN LYING-IN HOSPITAL  
LAND SALE BILL.

## REPORT FROM SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. W. BROOKES brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed; and, on the motion of Mr. W. BROOKES, the second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for tomorrow.

## MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

DELAY IN FURNISHING RETURNS.—SCRUB  
TIMBER FOR BRIDGES.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling the attention of Ministers to the fact that a return I moved for on the 27th July last has not yet been laid on the table. It was a return from the Lands Office concerning a number of grievances in my electorate which have been complained of, and which might possibly be explained by the papers I moved for. That was on the 27th July, and now we are well into October, which has allowed a very long time for the preparation of a return of that kind. I know, sir, that the papers are very voluminous; but I think that when a return of that character is moved for, where people are complaining of serious grievances which have existed for some years, it should be furnished with the least possible delay. I wish, therefore, to call the attention of Ministers to the fact that a return I moved for on the 27th July has not been furnished, and I now move the adjournment of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said: Mr. Speaker,—In answer to the hon. member I may say that I know something about the matter referred to. The correspondence called for by the hon. member for Wide Bay is very voluminous, and the material for it cannot be furnished by the Lands Office here only, but it has to be collected from the lands offices in Bundaberg, Maryborough, Gympie, and some others, I think. If I remember rightly, the return was in reference to correspondence connected with the Timber Regulations which extends over a considerable period, and additional clerical assistance has to be employed in the different lands offices to make copies of it. I saw one bundle of it—from Gympie, I think—but did not read it. I suppose the delay has been caused by the large amount of work that has to be done; that is the only explanation I can give.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—In connection with the matter referred to by the hon. member for Wide Bay as to the delay in preparing returns which have been ordered by this House to be laid on the table, I may refer to that which was called for by the hon. member

for Burke on about the 15th of last month, and which is waited for with very considerable interest, certainly by the Northern members. The return I refer to is one showing what expenditure from Loan Fund has taken place during the last twelve months in the different divisions of the colony.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith): Not within the last twelve months—altogether.

Mr. BLACK: Well, altogether; “out of the £10,000,000 loan” I think it is worded. I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is a matter of such extreme simplicity to the Treasury, that it could have been laid on the table of the House without any unnecessary delay, and I should like the Premier to give an explanation of the reason, and say whether we are likely to have that return within a short period.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I cannot give any explanation, on the spur of the moment, as to the cause of the delay. I can only inquire. There has been no unnecessary delay that I know of.

Mr. BAILEY, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—My only object in moving the adjournment of the House was to draw the attention of the Government to the question, because I think when the House does make an order it should be obeyed as soon as possible, and no unnecessary delay should take place in the departments. We do not make orders in this House without good reason, I believe, as a rule. Some orders of the House are practically disobeyed by the delay which takes place. With the permission of the House I will withdraw my motion.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the motion is withdrawn I wish to say something about a matter that has been brought under the notice of the House before. Hon. members may have read a letter which appeared in the *Courier* on Monday last, written by a gentleman calling himself an engineer, a Mr. Gardiner. I do not know whether he was ever employed in the Works Department, but I know there was once an officer of that name in it. He writes about the use of scrub timber on the Cairns railway—I think some members of the Government should have seen the letter or had their attention drawn to it—and he condemns the timber. On the same day I met a contractor who was employed in the Works Department in erecting buildings on the Hodgkinson, and he accosted me and said: “I see you have had the question of scrub timber being used on the Herberton railway before the House. I did my best to test the timber, and tested it, and it was bad. Finally I had to go to Brisbane to get timber.” He was many months and spent a lot of money in erecting those buildings, and he assured me that he did not think any timber in the scrub fit for building purposes. I would like to ask the Minister for Works—I know the House will give him permission to speak again—what steps he has taken to prevent the use of that timber, which is contrary to the specification. I say positively that there is no timber in that scrub that has been tested for railway purposes, and it is a disgrace to the Works Department to allow it to be used without being tested. It may prove worse than a disgrace, because it may be the means of some great calamity on the railway, because great strength is required in the superstructure of a bridge as well as in the piers or piles of the bridge, and none of that timber will bear any strain after a few months. I have seen it, after having been erected only a few months, breaking in two quite easily, like a carrot. It looks very well on the surface, but it will not stand exposure to the weather. I therefore ask

whether the Minister for Works has taken any steps to enforce the conditions of the specifications. If he has not I think this House should take steps to enforce them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—I have been in communication by wire with the Chief Engineer ever since the hon. member for Northern Downs brought the matter forward. On the 28th September I sent a telegram to the Chief Engineer to this effect:—

“What scrub timber is being used for bridgework Cairns railway. Give name local and botanical. Has it been tested by use on any other public work. If so when and where?”

To that the Chief Engineer replied on the same date—

“Two descriptions scrub timber approved out of thirty-two samples tested fourteen months ago namely hickory and satinwood. Never before used on railways to my knowledge but satisfactory proof of their durability and strength. Higher up mountain quality of other available kinds improves and will be found suitable for bridge work.”

I did not consider that sufficiently satisfactory, and I asked him on the 29th—

“For what parts of bridges have you used hickory or satinwood. Reply urgent.”

The reply of the Chief Engineer to that was:—

“Hickory is used for piles and girders. Satinwood is permitted but none has yet been used.”

I then wired to him as follows:—

“Is hickory used for piles and other timber under steel girders. See clause 84 of specification.”

To that he replied:—

“Neither hickory nor any other local timber has been or will be used for piles or any other work under steel girders. No timber but ironbark will be so used. Specification is being strictly adhered to. Full replies to your former telegrams have been wired through Commissioner and confirmed by post.”

I then wired to him—but have not a copy of the telegram—asking what test had been applied to the timber, and what proof he had of its durability, and the reply I received was this:—

“Re test for timbers strength indisputable in case of hickory and satinwood. Durability proved by logs known to have lain ten years on ground. Every expert in the district has been consulted on the subject. I certainly interpret clause 84 as giving me power to determine what timber shall be used and I have had twenty-six years’ experience in Queensland.”

There appears to be some doubt as to whether the Chief Engineer has power to determine the kind of timber to be used in truss bridges, but in girders he is tied down to the use of ironbark. In truss bridges the specifications do not determine what kind is to be used over the corbels, and it seems to be left to the Chief Engineer to use what he considers most suitable; but all the piles under steel girders are distinctly required to be of ironbark. It is a question as to whether the specification gives power to the Chief Engineer to substitute any local timber of good quality for ironbark in truss bridges; he is apparently not tied down, according to his interpretation of the specifications. I should interpret the 84th specification to mean that he is tied down to ironbark in all cases.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I have already interpreted it in that way.

The PREMIER: So did I when I read it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am only waiting for his letters to inform the House what timber has been used, how much, and on what bridges. I shall certainly require him to use ironbark wholly, with the exception that any substitute shall be exclusively cedar. As to the information with regard to the durability of hickory—that logs have been lying on the ground ten years—I do not put much faith in that; but there are some men who have lived in the district

long enough to know whether it is good durable timber or not. It is difficult, however, to find out by telegram how the Chief Engineer got his information.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I have heard satinwood condemned.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No satinwood has yet been used on the line; only hickory. He says that in some cases that has been used for piles, but he does not say to what extent. I expect full information by post.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### WARWICK TO THANE'S CREEK RAILWAY.

On the following notice of motion being called, "Mr. Dutton to move, that the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions, namely:—

"1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Warwick to Thane's Creek, in length 24 miles 50 chains 50 links, as laid upon the table of the House on the 23rd day of September, 1887.

"2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to postpone this motion till to-morrow.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not understand these constant postponements. This is part of a national railway promised four years ago; money has been voted for it, and it was passed by this House last year; but by some unfortunate mistake it was lost in the other Chamber. The late Minister for Works, Mr. Miles, promised distinctly to bring this line again before the House as soon as Parliament met. Had it not been for his unfortunate illness it would have been introduced here last July. A fortnight ago I asked the Premier to let us know when this line would be introduced, and he said in a week—that would be last week. It was introduced, and the discussion on it fixed for yesterday, then it was postponed till to-day, and now it is to be postponed again. I should like to know when these postponements will terminate. It is very likely that the session will not last very long, and it must be remembered that after passing this Chamber it has to go to the other Chamber, and that the other Chamber has to appoint a select committee to inquire into the merits of the line. That will take a lot of time again, and by that time the Parliament will close. I should like to know from the Government—I now speak more in sorrow than in anger—what they intend to do. If they do not wish to go on with the line, let them tell us at once, and we shall know what to do. I am one of those unassuming, quiet members who never say much, and never trouble the Government much; if we had bullied and worried like hon. members on the other side, very likely this matter would have advanced very much further. Let the Government say why it should be postponed day after day.

Mr. STEVENSON: What does it matter? It will be thrown out in the Upper House.

Mr. KATES: I have reason to think that it will not be thrown out in the Upper House.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It has not passed this House yet.

Mr. KATES: This motion has been put on the paper in a much more modified form this year than it was last year. It is not the Warwick to St. George line now; it is a branch line about twenty-five miles long, embracing first-class agricultural and mineral country.

The SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. member that he must not discuss beforehand a motion which is on the business paper. There is no question before the House.

Mr. KATES: I will move the adjournment of the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot put himself right in discussing a motion of which notice has been given by moving the adjournment of the House. The hon. member can move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of asking a question, but he must not discuss the Warwick to St. George railway when a motion on that subject is on the table.

Mr. KATES: I do not wish to break the rules of the House, and if I am not allowed to speak on this particular line it is no use my moving the adjournment of the House. I have nothing else to speak of.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will not think that I wish to prevent his discussing this question, but it is contrary to parliamentary practice for an hon. member, on a motion for the adjournment of the House, to discuss a question of which notice of motion has been already given and a date fixed for its discussion. The hon. member can, of course, move the adjournment of the House to ask a question of the Minister.

Mr. KATES: I want to know from the Government why this daily postponement should take place, and I shall conclude by moving the adjournment of the House. I know that my constituents are becoming very impatient; and I believe that the Government need not be ashamed or afraid of this line. This is a line, as I said before, embracing agricultural and mineral country. It is only from Warwick to Thane's Creek, a distance of twenty-five miles.

Mr. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. This is irregular, I think, according to your ruling.

The SPEAKER: Of course I cannot prevent the hon. member from discussing this question if he persists in speaking to it; it is a matter for the House itself to deal with. I can only say that it is contrary to all parliamentary practice for an hon. member, on a motion for the adjournment of the House, to discuss any question of which notice of motion has been already given. The hon. member is perfectly justified in moving the adjournment of the House to ask a Minister why a motion has been postponed, but it is quite contrary to parliamentary practice to discuss that motion.

Mr. KATES: Then I shall ask the question, When does the Government intend to bring this line before the House in real earnest? When are these postponements going to stop?

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I must claim for the Government the right to control the order of their own business in this House, and I refuse to concede to any member the right to insist that a matter in which he takes a particular interest should take precedence of all other business. If the Government are not fit to perform the function of determining in what order to bring in their own business they are certainly not fit to hold office. If any hon. member thinks we cannot be trusted to say in what order we shall go on with our business let him move a resolution to that effect, and if he can carry it, effect will be given to it immediately. I may say, sir, that I attach very great importance to the line of railway to which the hon. member has referred, but I attach more importance to the measure now before the House—the Redistribution Bill. It has been called for by the whole country.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

The PREMIER: I say it has been called for by the whole country, and by both sides of the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No. Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It was brought in in pursuance of as distinct a pledge as was ever given by a Government to any Parliament.

Mr. FOOTE: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Bundamba is not Parliament, although he does occupy a large space in his own estimation. Now, sir, everybody who knows anything at all about a Redistribution Bill knows that it takes a considerable time, even after the House has decided exactly what it is going to be, before the Bill can finally pass. Supposing we were to agree to-day to all the electorates and the number of members in each case, the Bill could not possibly leave this House for two or three weeks. Everybody knows that. Every Bill of the kind that I know of has been recommitted two or three times; the Bill of 1872 was recommitted over and over again. In any case, supposing there were no more than the necessary recommitments for mere formal alterations, it would be quite impossible for the Bill to leave here for a fortnight, and that would bring us well up to the end of this month. Then it has to pass through another House, and after that the electoral rolls have to be prepared, which will take a considerable time, and it is very important that the elections in the new electorates should take place at the earliest possible date. I therefore do not feel justified in keeping back a measure of that kind for something like a week in order to bring forward a local matter, of however great importance to the locality interested. That is the reason why it was not gone on with yesterday, and so I told the hon. member himself. I hoped it might have come on to-day; but I am unable to say when it will come on. It will come on at the earliest convenient opportunity. The Government are sincere in advocating it, and the hon. member does not assist his own cause by continually suggesting the insincerity of the Government.

Mr. FOOTE said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman says that the motions on the paper have been postponed in consequence of the Redistribution Bill being called for by all parts of the House. That is a statement to which I take objection. I am not aware that it has been called for by any part of the House, and I do not believe it has been asked for. I know that the Premier made a promise in that direction, but he made that promise without the measure being asked for. The hon. gentleman is very fond of legislation and of placing measures on the Statute-book, and he has brought forward a very elaborate Redistribution Bill—a Bill which at this stage of the colony's existence is by no means necessary. He says the member for Bundamba is not Parliament. I would also remind him that the Premier is not Parliament. The hon. gentleman may be Premier and director of the House so long as he holds that office, but he is by no means Parliament. He is simply one member, and a very important one in the office he now occupies, but he may not hold that office any longer than I hold my position as member for Bundamba. He may be in another part of the House and no longer able to dictate to this Chamber in the manner he has done lately.

The HON. G. THORN said: Mr. Speaker,—This extension of the Warwick railway is a very important matter, and I wonder that the Warwick members have not forced the hand of the Government long ago. We know very well that when the Redistribution Bill is passed Parliament is doomed. After that no other business can take place constitutionally. That

is the practice in this and the other colonies; no other business should be touched after the passing of a Redistribution Bill. I hold that the Government should press on the construction of the railway into Melbourne street and the line from Warwick to Thane's Creek. Those railways are part of the policy of the Government, and if they are not able to carry out their policy they ought to resign at once. Suppose the motions for the extension of the South Brisbane branch railway into Melbourne street, and for the railway from Warwick to Thane's Creek, pass this House, they will then have to go to the other Chamber. There they will have to lie on the table for a week or a fortnight, as that is required by one of the Standing Orders. Then they will have to be referred to a select committee and witnesses will have to be summoned and examined from different parts of the colony, some probably from Goondiwindi. In a Parliament like this, which is more than moribund—which is *in articulo mortis*—I think that if the Government intend to carry out their policy they ought to do so at once and no longer throw dust in the eyes of the people of South Brisbane and Warwick. I told the hon. member for Warwick a year ago that the Government were only throwing dust in his eyes, and that the interests of the people of Toowoomba are uppermost with the Government. I was not a member of the House at the time, but I noticed what was going on. What did the people of Toowoomba get? They not only got the plans of two of the worst lines of the colony passed by Parliament, but they also got tenders called for those lines, and they are now finished.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: What lines are those?

The HON. G. THORN: The Crow's Nest and Beauraraba lines. Those lines are two of the worst in the colony. I may say that without fear of contradiction. I can tell the Warwick members that the Government are only throwing dust in their eyes. I knew years ago that the Government never intended to carry their railway through.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—I think I can see the object of the Government in getting these lines postponed from day to day. They are very convenient to haul in recalcitrant members on the Redistribution Bill. They give the Government a pull over some members; they are pretty useful in that way. For my own part, I think the Redistribution Bill was not so universally sought after throughout the colony as the Premier has told us it was. There was a cry for additional representation for the Central and Northern divisions of the colony as against the supreme Metropolitan group. But that is not what the Redistribution Bill is going to accomplish. Under that measure, for every additional member the Northern and Central divisions get, the Southern division and the Metropolitan group will get one or two, and the representation will then be much more unequal than it is at present. However, I think I have fathomed the object of the Government in postponing the railways on the paper—railways in which I have no great faith—and that is that they will be very useful in controlling some members on the Redistribution Bill.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—I also agree with the previous speakers that there has been no great outcry in the country for the Redistribution Bill. If there has been I never heard it, and I travel about as much as most people, and generally keep my eyes open. I heard that there was a cry for some additional representation for the North,

and I think that probably the cry was justified ; but I never heard that Brisbane or the Downs, or any other part of the Southern division, asked for more members to represent them in Parliament. With regard to the railway from Warwick to Thane's Creek, I take a very great interest in that. When I was in Warwick, at the time of the recent election there, the construction of that line was considered a matter of very great importance by the people, and I am perfectly satisfied that the fact that the Government had previously promised in this House, and also to me before I went up to Warwick, that the plans of that railway would be laid on the table of the House immediately, carried the election. I would not have made that promise to the people of Warwick if I had not firmly believed that the plans would have been laid on the table the very first week the House met. For that reason I take a very great interest in the railway. It was promised last session by the late Minister for Works, and I am perfectly certain that if he were here now the line would be proceeded with.

Mr. STEVENSON said : Mr. Speaker,—I sympathise with the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates. It seems very hard lines, after all the promises that have been made in regard to the line he has mentioned, that it should be postponed. I told the hon. member at the beginning of the session that the Government were only throwing dust in his eyes. Last year they carried through this House a motion approving of the plans for a section of the railway from Warwick to St. George, and they could have carried it through the Upper House, as I have said before, if they had chosen to do so. It was purely a matter of arrangement with the hon. gentleman who wrote the letter to "My dear Pat." It was arranged that he should stay out of the House until the matter was disposed of.

Mr. KATES : No.

Mr. STEVENSON : It seems strange, then, that when the hon. gentleman was making his explanation in the Upper House in regard to the remarks made by myself he never alluded to that subject at all, and never explained why he stayed out of the House until the railway motion was rejected. I believe myself that the Government are not sincere in promising to make this railway, and I think that the postponement of the motion from day to day shows that. I sympathise with the hon. member for Darling Downs, but I have no sympathy with the railway itself.

Mr. ALLAN said : Mr. Speaker,—I assisted, about five years ago, in getting a survey of this line passed, and from that day to this it has been a matter of great consequence to the people of that part of the country that they should have that line gone on with. The money has been voted and the surveys made for the line from Warwick to Thane's Creek. I understood that the Minister for Works asked leave to postpone his motion to approve of the plans, and that the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, wished that the postponement should not be granted. I think it is right for the House not to postpone it. The matter has been very much discussed by the people of that part of the country. The railway will run through very good agricultural country, and also through good mineral land at Thane's Creek. Promises have been made to deputations, earlier in the session, over and over again, and those promises have been from time to time postponed until we are nearly sick of pressing for the performance of them.

The PREMIER : If you do not like to take my word you can go without it. Do I understand you to say that I have broken my word ?

Mr. ALLAN : No, I do not say that ; I say that we are sick of those constant postponements. Promises have been made from time to time that immediate action would be taken, and they have been so often postponed that I am beginning to be sick of the whole thing.

Mr. ANNEAR said : Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Stanley, Mr. Kellett, has just told the House that he has never heard that it is the wish of the people of this colony to have a new Redistribution Bill passed. In answer to that I can only say that he has not heard the wishes of a great many people. Wherever I have travelled it seemed to be thoroughly understood that a Redistribution Bill was to be brought in this session. More especially was that the case in Brisbane and throughout the populous districts of the colony ; and I think the Government are only doing their duty in fulfilling the promise made to the people through their representatives. There is no doubt that great inequalities exist at the present time in the representation of the electors. I would ask the hon. member for Darling Downs to think seriously of the question he has raised this evening, and if he does he will see that the Government are only doing their duty in pushing on with the Redistribution Bill before proceeding with any railways, plans of which are on the table at the present time. I would also ask that hon. member to consider his friends in this matter. I am one of his friends in the matter of this railway, and have no intention of deserting him. But that hon. member has no right, I am certain, to get up and charge the Government with insincerity. Up to the present time they have carried out their railway policy in all sincerity, and I was sorry to hear the hon. member—

Mr. KATES : I never charged the Government with insincerity.

The PREMIER : What did you do, then ?

Mr. KATES : I merely objected to these constant postponements.

The PREMIER : For two days ; from yesterday.

Mr. KATES : But very likely it will be postponed again to-morrow.

The PREMIER : Very likely it will now.

Mr. ANNEAR : Then, I ask the hon. member for Darling Downs not to be led away by such a speech as that which we have just heard from the hon. member for Normanby. That hon. member sympathises with him to-day ; where was his sympathy when the question came to a vote last year ? Where would it be now, if it again came to a vote ? He would do as he did before, and both speak and vote against it. I ask the hon. member to leave himself in the hands of his friends—of the friends who voted with him before and who will vote with him again.

Mr. ADAMS said : Mr. Speaker,—It has been perfectly understood, if not on the Darling Downs, throughout every other part of the colony, that a Redistribution Bill was absolutely necessary. That can be shown from the fact that in the electorate which I have the honour to represent, there are 2,700 electors, while other members represent a total of 512 only. There is one thing I take exception to in the speech of the hon. member for Maryborough, and that is that he should ask an hon. member to leave his question in the hands of his friends. Questions of this kind should not be treated as matters of friendship. We are here to legislate for the whole colony, and questions coming before us ought not to be decided on the principle of friendship, but on the principle of justice.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The junior member for Cook told the House that he had no faith in these lines. It is a well-known fact that that gentleman has little faith in anything, human or divine.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I have plenty of faith in some things.

Mr. MORGAN: The fact that he has no faith in either of these lines is no argument against them. They may be very good lines, notwithstanding that lack of faith which is characteristic of the man. He also told the House that these motions were kept back in order that they might be used to coerce the Darling Downs members, to compel them to support the measures of the present Government. But I will point out to you, sir—although you are, of course, well aware of it—that these very lines have been the cause of a schism in the Government ranks, and that that schism has been the cause—I assert it—of no definite action being taken with regard to either of them.

The PREMIER: It has not.

Mr. MORGAN: That is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, and I hold to it notwithstanding the Premier's denial. I assert that had it not been for the personal opposition offered to these lines by the members for the Toowoomba electorates—members who are supposed to be Government supporters—one or both of those lines would have been passed before to-day. That is my opinion, and all the surrounding circumstances warrant me in coming to that conclusion. We are told that this motion is to be postponed in order that progress may be made with the Redistribution of Seats Bill. I am quite prepared to concede that that is an important measure, that it has been called for by the country, and that the Government are entitled to great credit for having produced what I may term a just and equitable measure. But the position is this, Mr. Speaker: that if that measure once pass this House we may say good-by to the chance of any railways.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

The HON. G. THORN: Yes, I am certain of it; that has always been the case.

Mr. MORGAN: Although I am only a novice in politics, I am experienced enough to know that when once the House has given its assent to a measure of that nature, there must be an end to business of any importance. That is a truism, an axiom of political life which cannot be denied. This is the position, therefore, that we are in: if we allow the Redistribution of Seats Bill to become law, we may say good-by to our railways. The Premier says the motion has only been postponed for two days, because he does not want to delay an important measure like the Redistribution of Seats Bill for a week. But this railway question might have been disposed of in the course of a few hours' debate.

The PREMIER: Perhaps it might not have gone in the way you want it.

Mr. MORGAN: If it is much longer delayed it will not, as the hon. member for Fassifern pointed out, stand the ghost of a chance of passing the other Chamber. It was thrown out there last session, and I make no doubt they will throw it out again if it does not reach them before the end of the session, as was the case last year. The hon. member for Stanley, Mr. Kellett, told the House—and I daresay that what he said was perfectly correct—that he went up to the late election for Warwick, and told certain people there that he had had a distinct promise from the Government that those lines were going to be passed. I have no doubt that every word of that is true. But I may say this—and it

will probably be information to the House—that the Government made no communication whatever to me either on the subject of these railways or on that of the election itself. They never gave me any encouragement at all. In fact, I believe a prominent member of the Government, of the then Government, was led actually to believe that I was coming out in the Opposition interest, and he did not give me the slightest encouragement. I believe he even made efforts to induce men to come out in opposition to me, thinking I was a McIlwraithian—an Oppositionist—in disguise. I did not go out of my way to deceive him. I determined to enter Parliament to represent the views of the people of Warwick. I wanted a free hand, and I am very glad to say that I got a free hand to a pretty considerable extent. I did not come in here simply as a delegate to support the Government on condition that they would make these railways; and, in reply to the charge that has been so frequently levelled against Warwick, I have simply to say this: that the Warwick electorate has been returning Liberal members for the last seventeen or eighteen years. It was nothing new for them to return a Liberal member at the last election, a few months ago. I think it is due to the people of Warwick that it should be said here—said publicly—that the charge that Warwick was bribed by the promise of a railway is a baseless one, and reflects most unjustly upon a people who have always been faithful to one party, although I do not think they have got much in return for it. However, that is not the point, Mr. Speaker. What they got, or are likely to get, is not sufficient to justify them in supporting any particular party; but I, as the member for that constituency, believing that these railways are required—are really necessary—enter my protest now formally against these further delays. These railways were included in the famous £10,000,000 Loan Act four years ago; if they were not considered lines of importance they ought never to have been placed there, but the fact of their having been placed there is presumptive evidence that the Government regarded them as lines that ought to be made, and they ought to have lost no time in endeavouring to get them passed. It is a notable fact, Mr. Speaker, that every other line included in that Loan Bill has secured the assent of both Houses of Parliament; and why has exception been made in the case of these two?

Mr. ANNEN: It was not made by this House.

Mr. MORGAN: It was not made by this House, the hon. member for Maryborough says. I grant that it was not.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: They only got through by a shave.

Mr. MORGAN: They only got through by a shave, another member says. But a miss is as good as a mile, and I repeat my conviction that the fact that these railways have not received the assent of both branches of the Legislature is due to the schism in the ranks of the Government caused by the secession of yourself, Mr. Speaker, your colleague in the representation of Toowoomba, and the hon. member for Aubigny. That is my opinion; and, as I said before, I think the surrounding facts and circumstances warrant me in arriving at that conclusion. I again enter my protest against this delay, and I think Ministers and hon. members should clearly understand that my hon. friend Mr. Kates, and other hon. members who think with us, are fully alive to the fact that, if the Redistribution of Seats Bill become law, then the chances of these lines passing will be gone for some time to come.

Mr. ALAND said: Mr. Speaker,—There is a manliness of tone about the hon. member for Warwick that we must all admire, and which contrasts very favourably with the style adopted by some members when speaking upon this vexed question of the Warwick to St. George railway. I do not rise this afternoon to discuss the question of that railway or of the *via recta*, but I wish to protest against the remark made by the hon. member for Warwick, to the effect that it is at the instance of the members for Drayton and Toowoomba—because of the opposition which they have shown to this particular railway—that it has not passed this House. I do not think the circumstances of the case warrant any such assertion. Neither do I think the Government are in any way to blame for any action they may have taken in bringing this railway forward. The hon. member for Warwick has stated that all the Government programme except this particular railway has been brought before the House and carried through. In that he is mistaken. There are several items included in the £10,000,000 Loan Estimates which have not yet received the sanction of this House. Now, what did the Government do, sir? They brought down this railway last session, and they tried, tried as hardly as they possibly could, to get it passed. I resent, sir, the charge of insincerity that has been made.

Mr. MORGAN: I never uttered it.

Mr. ALAND: I say, Mr. Speaker, I resent the charge of insincerity that has been hurled against the Government in connection with this railway. If they had been insincere there was no necessity for their having brought it forward last session; and I maintain that if they were insincere there was no necessity for them to lay the plans upon the table of the House at the present time. I think they have shown their sincerity in this matter by bringing it down now as a line from Warwick to Thane's Creek, and I am not sure, sir, that if they had brought it down in the first instance in that way it would not have passed this House, and very likely have passed the Upper House also. But sir, I say again, I resent the charge of insincerity which has been made against the Government in this matter. I also resent the charge that it is at the instance of the members for Drayton and Toowoomba and Aubigny that the Government are insincere in connection with it. Now, really, Mr. Speaker, the House is presenting a very pretty spectacle. I am sure it is an object almost for the gods to look down upon with disgust. We have anything but a happy family; and whether the Warwick to St. George railway or the South Brisbane railway is passed or not, I think the quicker we get about our business the better. I feel persuaded of that, for a more lamentable state of things, I think, never before existed in any Parliament than has been exhibited in this House during the last few days.

Mr. PATTISON said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member who has just resumed his seat complimented the hon. member for Warwick upon his manly address. There, sir, I beg to differ from him, and I cannot conceive the reason for the compliment he endeavoured to pay that hon. member, seeing that nearly all his remarks were directed to the insincerity of the Government. That was the only view I could extract from his speech. But apart from that the first remark of the hon. member for Warwick was not in my opinion a manly one. You, sir, have to sit there in the chair as an impartial man, and I certainly think the hon. member was not doing the right thing to speak of you in the disparaging terms he did. If you had been upon the floor of the House, sir, you could have answered him, as you are

well capable of doing; but you are sitting there, as it were, with a muzzle on, and I say it was not a manly thing to give a blow to a man who is not in a position to give a blow back. Therefore I differ from the hon. member for Toowoomba. I say it is not a proper thing to do, and I cannot compliment the hon. member for Warwick upon his manly speech, as that hon. member has done. I suppose it was a little bit of butter he was throwing to him, thinking it would smooth matters down. To men who want to be manly, I say let them do to others as they would be done by. If the hon. the Speaker had been in the position of an ordinary member he would have answered the hon. member for Warwick as he is fully able to do, and as no doubt he will upon some future occasion. That in reply to the hon. member for Toowoomba. The other part of his speech I do not think requires very much answering. I only hope that the next time the hon. member speaks to compliment a man for doing a manly act he will have better grounds than he has on this occasion.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Warwick has stated that the hostility shown to this railway by the member for Toowoomba and that neighbourhood has been the cause of its being postponed. Well, I think it will be seen that that is not the only case of the kind, seeing that there is another railway equally as important as that from Warwick to Thane's Creek that has also been postponed, and no hostility whatever has yet been manifested towards it. I am one of those who believe that it is absolutely necessary to get the Redistribution Bill through as quickly as possible, and I have every confidence that the Government will not allow these two railways to lapse, but that they will use their utmost endeavours to pass them through. I think myself that it was with that view they were postponed from yesterday. We all know that we do not get a full House on Tuesday, as some country members do not get down, and perhaps the passing of these railways would have been jeopardised if they had been pushed on yesterday. I believe the Government see the necessity for these railways; that they will be useful works, and that they have every intention of pushing them through. I am, at all events, one of those who feel the importance of the South Brisbane line, not only to South Brisbane, but also to the whole of the district on the south side, and I have every confidence that the Government will push it through.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Speaker,—As a matter of personal explanation, I may remark that I have been told I said that the failure of the House to pass these lines was owing to dissensions in the Government. I made no assertion of the kind. What I did say was, "owing to dissensions in the Government ranks."

The PREMIER: Yes; not in the Government, but in the ranks—that is what you said.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not doubt the sincerity of the Government in the matter, but what I rose for was to point out the danger there was in allowing these lines to be delayed. We have been waiting for four years for this line—we have been most patiently waiting; and the adoption of the plans might have been moved in the beginning of July, when the House first met. There is a great deal of dissension—in fact, disorganisation—in the House in connection with the Redistribution Bill, and we do not know how long it will take to pass it. It may be a month or it may be six months, and, as has been pointed out by several hon. members, if that Bill should pass, it is very likely that none of the lines will be brought forward again. I think I am justified in calling the attention of the House to



this matter. Let the Government be more in earnest and bring the motions forward to-morrow or tell us definitely when they will be brought forward. If they do not wish to go on with them they should also let us know, and not let them hang on from month to month, from week to week, and from day to day, until we do not know what we are about. I beg to withdraw the motion.

The PREMIER: No.

Question put and negatived.

#### COONEANA RAILWAY BILL.

##### REPORT FROM SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. DONALDSON brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Cooneana Railway Bill, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed; and, on the motion of Mr. DONALDSON, the second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

##### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being called, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into committee to further consider the Bill.

Question—That clause 4 be amended by the substitution of the words “two members” for the words “one member” after the word “Bundamba” in the 13th line—put.

Mr. FOOTE said he wished to know if the Premier was prepared to grant the Bundamba electorate the justice to which it was entitled. The hon. gentleman had stated that there had been a great call for the Bill on all sides; but there was great difference of opinion on that point. The hon. gentleman might have been fully persuaded in his own mind that there was such a call made from the constituencies; but that was not the idea of the House. There was no doubting the fact that it had been usual, after a census had been taken, to pass a Redistribution Bill; but beyond that, for his own part, he was not aware of any influence by way of petition, or meetings held in the constituencies, or in any other way, which had been brought to bear to show that the Bill was necessary. It would have been quite sufficient to have passed an additional members Bill when the new House met, and that would have answered all the purposes for which the present Bill had been introduced, and which had entailed such a large amount of labour upon its framers. As he stated last night, if the Bill had been carried out in its integrity, they would have had nothing to say about it; they would have put up with it whether for weal or woe. But the Premier had commenced by making concessions, and he (Mr. Foote) and his party had a right to ask that concessions should be made to other electorates. And what was more, how many more concessions were to be made, and to what districts were they to be made? It was very possible that if he and others gave way on the present point—he did not know whether his party would give way, as he had not consulted them—as soon as that group of electorates was disposed of, they might see the same thing taking place again that took place on a previous evening when the Bill was before the Committee. First a very good case was made out for another member for the Darling Downs group, and that was readily acquiesced in by the Premier; then a case was made out for another member for the Central division, and a member was granted; but when they came to the West Moreton group, they found that parts had been taken from all sides to make up the complement of

other electorates, instead of the group receiving the additional representation to which it was entitled. It was of no use wasting time over the Bill if it was not going to be carried. The Premier should say what he intended to do with reference to the question of additional members, and if the Committee were not satisfied then would be the time to take a stand and block the Bill.

The PREMIER said it did not depend on him to say how many members should be granted; it rested with the Committee. Hon. members on all sides ought to work loyally together to make as good a measure as they could. They were not considering their own seats. He did not care two straws what would be the result to himself or the party he represented, but he wished the redistribution to be a fair one. The number of members depended on the Committee; but if anything unreasonable was done he would not be responsible for the Bill. He had not heard any arguments yet in favour of any more additional members, but he had no hesitation in saying that he was prepared to accede to a claim for additional representation in the case of Carpentaria in view of the information they had with regard to the population and prospects of Croydon; and he thought that was practically involved by a resolution come to last week by hon. members. He had no hesitation in saying also that he would be prepared to discuss the question as to whether the proposed new electoral district of Cook should have more representation; but he did not know of any other case in which anything like a plausible case could be put forward. The more he considered the matter the more he was satisfied that it would have been better to have adhered to the original plan of the Bill except in the case of Croydon. The measure would then have been about as perfect as it could be made.

Mr. SALKELD said that a Redistribution Bill brought forward after mature consideration by the Government, who had all the requisite information in their possession, was more likely to be right than a Bill amended here and there on the spur of the moment; and the proper course would be to recommit the Bill and make a fresh start. The West Moreton members did not object to give a member to Croydon, where the population was likely to be permanent; but they objected to the whole scheme of the Bill being suddenly altered by giving additional members to one or two groups here and there. If they did not recommit the measure and pass it as it originally stood, with the exception of an addition in the case of Croydon, there would be a great deal of trouble in getting it through.

Mr. GRIMES said that would be an excellent way of getting over the difficulty. It appeared that there were more difficulties to be encountered, unless they made a fresh start, because, even if they got over the difficulty in regard to Bundamba, others would crop up. A member for Croydon should be the only additional member added to the list.

Mr. FOOTE said that would satisfy the representatives of the West Moreton group.

Mr. BULCOCK said it struck him that it would be very much like repudiation on the part of the Government to make a fresh start after having agreed to certain additional members. If a mistake had been made, the only thing the Committee could do was to see that no further mistake was made.

Mr. KELLETT said it was very evident from the few remarks of the last speaker that the metropolitan constituents wanted to strengthen themselves, though they were quite strong enough

before. At first he was disposed to offer no opposition to the Bill, though he considered that West Moreton was treated very badly, and others thought so too—because he thought it would be better to pass it as it stood than attempt to alter the boundaries. Then it was considered that the North was entitled to more representation on account of the large population at Croydon. He did not think any hon. member objected to that; certainly a majority did not object. But at the very start additional members were given to other places, one to Dalby and another to Blackall; and it was not to be wondered at that the representatives of other districts should move for additional members. They thought possibly that in a large body they might get some gleams of intelligence that were not there now. The Government allowed the first member asked for to be put on, and the next to be put on, and it was naturally thought that where an even stronger case could be made out they would get one or two additional members. They thought that the Government had made up their minds in their wisdom to have a dozen or so more members, and so they kept quiet, thinking they were sure to get one, if not more. But it seemed they were mistaken, and that the Government meant to stop at a certain point, and then perhaps go on again. He knew that if they went on there would be an even greater stand made at the very next line, and still greater objection to the way the Bill stood; so he thought the wisest thing for the Government to do would be to recommit the Bill, start afresh, and let them know what they were likely to do.

The PREMIER: I have told you all I intend to do.

Mr. KELLETT said they should have been told before they started. They had no idea that the Government were not going to deal fairly with their friends.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Friends!

Mr. KELLETT: Yes; friends. They might have a bit of a tiff occasionally, but when it came to a fight they were very good friends.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Save me from my friends!

Mr. KELLETT said it would be far better to commence afresh and have an amicable settlement. If they went on as they were doing, it would give no satisfaction to anybody, and the Bill would take a long time to go through.

The Hon. G. THORN said he would like to hear the hon. member for Townsville, the leader of the Northern party in the House, say how many additional members he wanted. He did not know whether the hon. member would demand five or six; most likely he would not be prepared to accept one, or even two. He would very much like to hear the hon. member's opinion. He would say again that he did not object to the basis of the Bill, but only to the carving out of the boundaries. The Premier must not think he was the only member of the House who could carve out boundaries for a Bill of that kind; there were plenty of members in the Chamber quite as competent as himself to do it, and to give greater identity of interests than that Bill provided. His (Mr. Thorn's) great objection was to the cribbing or filching from the West Moreton group of electorates in order to make good other electorates; and to add insult to injury now it was proposed to give additional members to other districts, thus lessening the influence of the West Moreton group to an extent that was not correct according to the basis the Premier went on in framing the Bill. He hoped the hon. member for Townsville would give them an

inkling of what he wanted, and then, perhaps, they would get through business a little more quickly; they might, perhaps, even get the Bill through committee that night.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that if they carried into the discussion the spirit that actuated the hon. member for Fassfern they certainly would make a nice Bill of it. He suspected that the hon. member's boundaries would be something like the garrulous inanities with which he continually flooded the House. The hon. member had talked the other evening as if his life and soul depended on a little corner in the ranges—Blackbutt Ranges he thought the hon. member called them—though the hon. member did not even know how many people there were there, nor what they were doing, nor exactly where the place was. That was the hon. gentleman who thought he could plan a Redistribution Bill. No doubt he could do it very well so far as his own electorate was concerned, by shutting out the parts where those opposed to him lived, and drawing in little corners in favour of him. That was the hon. member's idea of redistribution; he had no idea superior to that, and never had since he (Mr. Dutton) knew anything of him in politics. Dodging was the hon. member's idea of the way things should be carried out by a Government. As for the possibility of taking a general view of the interests and requirements of the whole colony it was utterly beyond the hon. member's capacity—outside his nature—so he was certainly not likely to sympathise with the efforts of the Government to bring in a Bill of this kind, entirely free from any party or local prejudices whatever. He (Mr. Dutton) rather regretted that the Premier had given way the other afternoon, though he did not think it was a matter of very great importance. It meant the addition of two or three members, and he did not think it was altogether desirable, from the point of view of numbers alone. As to why that part should have received any consideration, it was rather a feeling of sentiment or prejudice than anything else in those who contended for it. He did not think the arguments of the hon. member for Dalby or the leader of the Opposition had anything in them. Those districts had already been very fairly treated in the Bill. He was not present at the conclusion of the debate or he should certainly have attempted to answer the arguments that had been brought forward in that case. He thought the arrangement that had been come to was rather a mistake, but he did not think it was worthy of so serious consideration as to throw the Bill out or make it impossible because somebody else had not still greater advantages. If they were to be actuated by small petty feelings of that kind it would be impossible to get through any measure. They should go on the principle of give-and-take, and let the giving and taking be in something like fair proportion. The members for the West Moreton group as a whole could not say that they had been unfairly treated. The mere fact of having a corner cut off in the ranges near Aubigny was not worthy of a moment's consideration. Would the people there care whether they recorded their votes for Aubigny or for the West Moreton group? They would find their interests as carefully served by the member for Aubigny as by a member for the West Moreton group. Hon. members of that Committee did not think their duties were exclusively confined to the small districts they represented; they were capable of taking a wider view of things than that. That miserable parochialism was the greatest bane to any Legislative Assembly, and hon. members should rise superior to it, and feel that they could as worthily represent a constituency on the Gulf of Carpentaria as a

metropolitan one. He, at all events, felt that he could as honestly look after the interests of the furthest north constituency in Queensland as of that in which he resided himself. He trusted that feeling would prevail among the more sensible members of the Committee, and that they would allow the measure to pass, making it as fair as they could as they proceeded, within the limits laid down by the Premier.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that from what he knew, he thought it was unfortunate that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, in bringing forward a Redistribution Bill, had introduced a Bill containing so many members, because the hon. gentleman must have known that unless he was made of adamant he would be compelled to give way and increase the number of members in some places. The Bill as introduced gave an electoral representation of sixty-eight members for a population of one-third of a million. It was a delicate matter to talk about the Parliament of a neighbouring colony, but he (Mr. Macrossan) might say that the hon. gentleman knew as well as he did that owing to the large number of members elected in New South Wales it was impossible to get a good House in that colony.

The PREMIER: I do not think that is the reason at all.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that was supposed to be the reason, even by members of that House themselves. There was a strong feeling in the New South Wales Assembly that if the number of members could be reduced, which was a difficult matter to do when once it had been increased, and brought down by fifty to the complement of Victoria, the colony would gain in advanced legislation, and he (Mr. Macrossan) believed that was correct. He had sat in the gallery of the House there on several occasions, and he had been sorry to see some of the men elected, simply because the number was too large for a small population. There were many good and able men in the House, but they were outnumbered by the others. He contended that in the Bill before the Committee the Premier was making the same mistake as had been made in New South Wales. An increase had already been made in the representation, and now, of course, the hon. gentleman must make further increases. Up to the present they had reached seventy members, which was a larger number for a population of a little over one-third of a million, as 122 members in New South Wales for a population of a million. Queensland would therefore actually suffer from the same disease in the next Parliament as they were now suffering from in New South Wales. He did not think any mistake had been made in giving another member to the Central district, on account of the increase in the population at Mount Morgan. He did not see how that could have been avoided. Every member of the Committee and everybody outside knew that a very large increase in population had taken place in that part of the Central districts since the census was taken in May last year; and that increase would not only be permanent, but was likely to be doubled or trebled during the next two or three years—certainly before another Redistribution Bill was passed; so that the Government could not do anything else than give that district another member. Whether they did right in giving another member to the Southern division, he did not pretend to say. It was a difficult matter for a person in charge of a Redistribution Bill to begin to increase the number of members or alter the boundaries of electorates he himself had laid down. If he once began to do that he must continue it. He (Mr. Macrossan) thought a mistake had been made in that direction,

and that the Premier, before he brought in the Bill, should have considered the increase of population in the different parts of the colony since the census, and have framed the measure according to those increases, and then there would have been no demand for any increase in the representation after the Bill had been tabled. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Fassfern that there were other members in that Committee as well as the Premier who could redistribute the electorates. He did not suppose the Premier possessed all the knowledge and all the skill in a matter of that kind, or in any other matter, and he was quite certain that there were members who, if they had to frame a redistribution scheme, would not have made any increase in the number of members. He believed that a decrease in the number of members would suit the country far better than an increase, and that fifty members would represent the colony far better and in a more wholesome way than the number they were going to have under that Bill. As to the demand of the hon. member for Fassfern that he should tell him how many members he was going to ask for the North, he would simply say that when the proposal now under consideration was disposed of he would give that information to the Committee.

The PREMIER said he did not know that it was worth while now discussing whether the number of members should be increased; but as a matter of curiosity he would like to see somebody engaged in redistributing the electorates in a colony like Queensland without increasing the number of members. When they considered how many electorates would have to be disfranchised in order to give fair representation to all parts of the country, what extraordinary combinations would have to be made, and what diverse interests would have to be taken into account, he thought the gentleman who undertook the task would find that it was impossible. He did not think that the character of the New South Wales Assembly was owing in any degree to the number of members, but believed that it was due to other circumstances altogether. In his opinion it was rather a poor compliment to pay the colony to say that they had not a sufficient number of suitable persons in the community from whom to choose ten or a dozen more members of Parliament. He believed he could lay his hand on ten or a dozen persons well qualified for that position, and he was sure there were a great many people who thought so themselves. He was sure that in every part of the colony to which it was proposed to give an additional member there were men of varied shades of opinion who, if elected, would do no discredit to the House. He did not think it necessary to say anything more as to the reasons for giving an additional member to the Southern pastoral districts and the Central district. He had given his reasons before, and could only repeat what he had already said. He thought that no serious injustice would have been done if that had not been done; but to his mind the arguments preponderated in favour of the course he had adopted. It was rather hard, seeing that not one member on his side of the Committee had said a single word against what was proposed or offered any opposition to it, seeing that it was really done with their consent, they should now say that a serious injury had been done. He thought the Government were entitled to expect their support.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he quite agreed with the hon. gentleman that they would not have much difficulty in finding ten or a dozen persons properly qualified to represent the additional electorates. But had those persons

the leisure or inclination? He could lay his hand on many men in Northern Queensland who would make good representatives, but they had neither the time nor the means to come down to Brisbane and attend Parliament. It would be very hard to find the fourteen members under that Bill.

The PREMIER: There are plenty in the South.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he believed the hon. gentleman had that in view when he framed the Bill. They could be represented by members like the hon. member for Kennedy, who was a purely Southern member, with Southern interests.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that theoretically he quite agreed with the hon. member for Townsville, but practically he saw many difficulties which a Premier would meet with in attempting to reduce the number of members of the House. He did not think there would be a sufficient number of patriotic members capable of giving themselves the "happy despatch," more especially since, owing to certain action taken by the present Parliament, they had, in addition to political position, been provided with a certain amount of emolument. That seemed to him the main reason why it would not be very likely that either that or any other House would be inclined to reduce the number of its members.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: It has been done before.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Where there was payment of members?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes.

Mr. SALKELD said he was absent from the Committee when the other extra seat was given; but, seeing that that had been done, hon. members, no doubt, did not see why the Government should not be just as willing to oblige their friends as their opponents. That was very likely the reason why they did not interfere on that occasion—that there would be an increase all along the line. However, if they relied upon that, they were, as it now appeared, mistaken.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that he also was not present when an additional member was given for Mount Morgan; had he been he should no doubt have approved of it. Several hon. members last night expressed their preference for the Bill in its original form. For his part, he was highly pleased with the Bill when he saw it; he thought that though it might be altered it could not be improved. But when he saw members granted here and there, entirely away from the original lines of the Bill, he felt himself placed in a very different position with regard to it, and that West Moreton was entitled to have the same redress granted to it as other parts which had the same grievance. It would be well for the Premier to consider whether it would not be better to withdraw the Bill and recommit it. It would save a great deal of time, and give much more general satisfaction to hon. members. Much more progress would be made by sticking to the Bill as originally introduced, with perhaps the addition of a member for Croydon, and another for Cook, than by attempting to force it through the Committee in the way the Premier was doing.

Mr. FOOTE said that, although the West Moreton members did not intend to recede from the position they had taken up, he intended to make a motion which would perhaps simplify matters somewhat. The Premier was exceedingly obstinate, especially as he knew he had a majority strong enough to defeat them; and no doubt as soon as the vote had been taken he would be anxious to listen to anything the hon. member for Townsville (Mr. Macrossan) might

have to say. It was possible that the hon. gentleman's heart would become soft and tender, and that he would receive what that hon. member had to suggest with the same kind feeling that he displayed when those additional members were asked for the other evening. It was his (Mr. Foote's) intention, and he believed it was the intention of those who were with him, that unless they could get something like fair play they would do their best to block the Bill, whatever might become of it. Whatever opinion might be held of them on account of their action would not influence them in the slightest degree. What he proposed to do now was to postpone his motion with reference to two members for Bundamba until after the consideration of the next line, "Burke, one member." The hon. member for Townsville refused to say how many extra members he wanted for the North, and when that question was settled they would be able to see what position West Moreton stood in, and to act accordingly.

The PREMIER said that that suggestion could not be carried out in accordance with the rules of the Committee. The hon. member might withdraw his amendment and move it again afterwards.

Mr. FOOTE: When?

Mr. MOREHEAD: I would suggest that he omit it altogether.

The PREMIER said it could be brought forward again on the recommitment of the clause. He had already pointed out that it would be necessary to recommit the Bill probably twice, certainly once, in order to put Dalby in its proper place, and make other changes. The hon. member would have plenty of opportunities, when he saw how far those weak concessions, as he considered them, were carried, to decide whether he ought to block the Bill or let it go.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Premier was perfectly right in saying that the Bill would have to be recommitted, but it would be recommitted for a special purpose, not for a general amendment of it.

The PREMIER: This clause will have to be recommitted entirely.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: But only for special purposes; each subsection to be amended will have to be specified, beyond which no interference will be allowed.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he took it, from what had fallen from the members of the West Moreton group, that their desire was not to give a second member to Bundamba, but an additional member to the group.

Mr. FOOTE: That is so.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that in that case Bundamba might go, and then the great secret of Burke would be revealed by the hon. member for Townsville. There were five other electorates in the West Moreton group yet to be disposed of, and the question could be raised upon any of them, so that there would be no necessity to wait for the recommitment of the Bill.

Mr. WHITE: Rub out Chinchilla and put Dalby in in its stead, and then there will be no more bother about it.

The HON. G. THORN said the question might be raised on the line "Stanley." He might inform the Minister for Works that he had the interests of the whole colony at heart as well as the interests of the West Moreton group of electorates.

Mr. FOOTE said the question might be raised on Fassifern. They should have to serve the Government as Paddy served his steed; the rope must not be too long. He wanted to know what were the intentions of the hon. member for

Townsville, Mr. Macrossan. If the North were going to have additional members conceded to them, then he and those hon. members who were with him were not going to give way; but if the Government kept them confined within proper limits, then it was possible the Bill might go through, because in that case he considered the Government would do one of two things—either recommit the Bill to undo the mischief that had been done in the two cases already referred to, or by the time they had got that far they would be sufficiently softened down as to be enabled to give West Moreton the member they had so improperly taken away. He would, therefore, with the permission of the Committee, withdraw his amendment with reference to Bundamba.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member for Fassifern would now have his wish. He would know the number of members he (Mr. Macrossan) was going to ask for, not for the North, but for Burke, which was only a portion of the North. He need scarcely tell hon. members that the population of Burke had increased considerably since the census was taken.

The PREMIER: Considerably decreased.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the electorate of Burke as it stood at present had considerably increased since the census was taken, on the 1st of May last year.

The PREMIER: That is right.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman insinuated by his interjection that the present electorate of Burke on the Bill had decreased.

The PREMIER: Yes; very considerably.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said, in that he differed from the hon. gentleman, because he (Mr. Macrossan) had got information as well as he had. He would give hon. members first the population of the district as far as it could be ascertained from gentlemen who were there at present in official positions. He had numerous telegrams, received from gentlemen resident on Croydon in answer to telegrams that were sent there. The first was from a gentleman named Harris, the editor of a newspaper, who said:—"Telegram mislaid; low computation place adult male population 7,000; excuse delay." The next was from Mr. Blaxland, who used to be called Colonel Blaxland; he was not certain that he was not Colonel Blaxland still. At any rate, he was mining registrar and clerk of petty sessions on Croydon Gold Field, and certainly ought to know something about the population. He said: "Warden Towner estimates population of the field at 6,500; but butchers, judging from beasts killed weekly, estimate population at 8,000." That was dated the 23rd September, and agreed with the previous telegram, which said, "Adult male population 7,000." Then they had one from Mr. Cribb, the police magistrate of the goldfield, who, on the same date, said, "Adult population Croydon Gold Field between 5,000 and 6,000." They had another from the present warden, Mr. Towner, who said, "Estimate total population Croydon now at 6,500, number left last few weeks. Butchers over-estimate population; large quantities beef wasted. Male adults, 5,700." That was the lowest estimate of all the telegrams he had read, and he should take that as the basis upon which he was going to ask for two members for Croydon—5,700 adult males. The gross population would be about 1,000 more than that. On the 1st May last year, when the census was taken, the total population in the census district of Burke, which included Croydon, was 697,

and the adult male population was 619; so that if they deducted that 619 from the 5,700, which was the population on the field now, it would still leave 5,000 more than was put down on the tables accompanying the Bill for the district of Carpentaria. Carpentaria, according to those tables, contained 1,115 adult males. If they put the 5,100 additional adult males since the census was taken to that it would make the total adult male population 6,215 for the district of Carpentaria. Now, he knew it would be a very difficult thing to disarrange the boundaries as they were laid down at present in the schedule of the Bill, and for that reason he intended to ask for two members for the goldfield of Croydon by itself. That would be two members for a district containing 5,700 adult males at the lowest computation of the telegrams he had just read; and he thought hon. members would agree with him that one member was not too much for 2,700 adult males. That was the number each member would have, dividing the present adult male population in Croydon by two. There would be no other electorate in the whole colony that would contain the same proportion of adult males for each member by nearly 1,000. Therefore he thought, putting aside, as far as that portion of the colony was concerned, the question of close population, that district was entitled to two members owing to the large number of adult males it contained, the gross population being nearly 7,000. Now, when they compared the gross population of several districts with the gross population of Croydon, they would find that even upon that basis Croydon would be very little under the general basis of the Bill. If they took Charters Towers Gold Field, it had 8,342, with two members, according to the Bill. If they took Mackay, it had 7,491, according to the Bill, for two members. That was gross population; it had a very much less total adult male population. If they took the Central division, Rockhampton was certainly a thousand or two higher. If they went further south they would find, in districts which of course were nearer the metropolis, and should not be represented, even according to the admission of the leader of the Government, in the same degree as districts in the extreme North, that some of them which were allotted two members according to the Bill had very little in excess of the gross population of the Croydon Gold Field, for which he asked two members. Ipswich had a total population of 8,974, but it had an adult male population of 2,191, a smaller number than he asked for one member. If they took Drayton and Toowoomba they would find that there was a gross population of 9,290, and an adult male population of only 1,900, or nearly 1,000 less for two members than he asked for one on the Croydon. He did not put forward that scheme for Croydon alone; he put it forward on the basis that the northern part of the colony would be under-represented by the Bill, in having only fourteen members. He claimed it as much for the whole of the North as he did for Croydon in particular. Hon. members would want to know what he would do with the rest of Carpentaria as he would take Croydon from it. He proposed that the goldfield of Croydon should be the electorate of Croydon having two members, being entirely with the electorate of Carpentaria as proposed in the Bill. That would leave Carpentaria too small for one member to be allotted to it, because at present it had only 1,115 male adults in the population, and if they took 615 out of that, the number in Carpentaria at the time the census was taken—all the increase having gone to Croydon—they would only have 500 male adults left there, with a gross population of 1,200. What he proposed to do was this:

he would put the electorate of Carpentaria in along with the electorate of Burke, which had a gross population of 2,335, both together making a population of nearly 4,600, and a male adult population of 2,500, or nearly 2,600, and give Burke two members. That would be giving Croydon two members, and throwing Burke and Carpentaria in together. By that means no boundaries would need to be altered; Croydon would be an electorate within the electorate of Burke, which would surround it. He thought that the Premier would thoroughly agree with that proposition. He would not go into the general question of an increase to the Northern division unless his proposal was rejected; but he wished to hear what the Premier had to say on the subject. He hoped the hon. gentleman would agree with him, that 5,700 adult males did require at least two members to represent them.

The PREMIER said if the 5,000 adult males at Croydon could be regarded as the definitely settled population of that district he would concede at once that they would be entitled to two members. But he thought to do so now would be quite premature in passing a Bill which would remain in force, he presumed, for ten years.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: For five years.

The PREMIER said: What reason had they for supposing that the Croydon Gold Field would in twelve months' time, or in two years' time, be larger than Gympie or Charters Towers? No sound reason could be given at all. If it could, he was sure they would be all glad to give it the additional representation that it was entitled to. But they were dealing with a matter of uncertainty—a matter of conjecture. He had stated all that at considerable length before, and did not think it necessary to repeat it. He would ask hon. members to compare the alleged population of Croydon with the actual population of Charters Towers and Gympie. The population of Charters Towers Gold Field—that was, close around the town—was 8,342 total, and 2,769 adult males. The Kennedy, including Ravenswood and the rest of that mining district, contained only 3,600 total population, and 1,482 male adults; that was, that the whole mining district of that part of the colony contained a total population of under 12,000 people, and a male adult population of just over 4,000. No Parliament would be justified, with the facts they had before them historically in regard to new goldfields, in dealing with Croydon in the manner suggested. He was prepared, as he had said before, to give an additional member to Carpentaria, and he thought that was a very liberal offer indeed to make. It was not an offer by the Government, but it was a liberal thing for the Committee to offer to do, considering the uncertainty that was still attached to the population of that part of the colony. They could not take away a member except at the end of a Parliament. If two members were elected, they could not disfranchise one of them; but when a vacancy occurred, of course Parliament could order no writ to be issued, and that would have the desired effect. As for the contingency of Croydon becoming larger than Charters Towers, he did not think any but the most sanguine people could expect that within the next two or three years it would become as large a place as Charters Towers. The two members proposed to be given to the district would be sufficient for the time. It was better not to make Croydon Gold Field a separate electorate of itself, for the reason that they did not exactly know where the population would be. Reefs were found there in most unlikely places, where nobody expected to find them, and they could not be at all sure that the present boundaries were the right ones. Very likely they would require to be altered, whereas there

was no doubt that the Gregory Range, which formed the north-eastern boundary, would continue to do so. At the same time it was convenient to include the town of Normanton. All trade with Croydon went through Normanton; their interests in no way conflicted. Normanton was practically the port of Croydon, and, of course, also for part of the pastoral district of Burke. Another reason was that the two electorates together would not be entitled to two members each. The electoral district of Burke, at the time the census was taken, contained a total population of 2,335, and of adult males 2,063. But that included the Woolgar district, which contained 250 total population and 194 adult male population. It was well known that most of the Woolgar people had gone to Croydon, and that there were only between 50 and 100 people there now. That was nearly 200 to come off the total population, and 150 off the adult male population.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: How have you ascertained the population of Woolgar?

The PREMIER: By telegram from the warden at Georgetown on Saturday. It also included the railway works which were being constructed then near Hughenden, on which the present population consisted of about three lengthsmen. The population included in the 3,335 on those railway works was 337 and the adult males 109. So that was 537 to come off the total population of 3,335, and 250 off the adult male population of 2,063. In addition to that the population included the census district of Cloncurry, which contained a total population of 582, and an adult male population of 337. It was well known that the population there had largely decreased since the census; and he thought they might certainly take off 300 from the total population, and the same from the adult male population. That would reduce the total population of Burke by over 800, and the adult male population by 500, and would give nearly the population of the electorate of Burke at the present time. The total population would be under 2,500, and the adult male population not more than 1,500. That was about the actual fact with respect to Burke as proposed in the Bill. He was prepared to move that Carpentaria should have two members, but he was not prepared to give Croydon two members and Burke two members.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Premier had asked what there was to justify the belief that in two or three years the Croydon Gold Field would have a larger population than either Charters Towers or Gympie; and he would give some reasons for that belief. Neither on Gympie nor on Charters Towers were there half the number of prospecting areas applied for, taken up, and registered, that there had been at Croydon, and that showed that the number of distinct reefs on Croydon was more than double the number on either of the other two. There were 500 prospecting areas registered on Croydon, and 300 others applied for. Even now on Gympie, with all the discoveries there, the number of reefs was not one-third the number of those already known and being worked on Croydon. Gympie was a very small field—it could be dropped into the city of Brisbane—whereas Croydon was 4,800 or 4,900 square miles in extent, with reefs all over the district. The Charters Towers Gold Field was practically confined to Charters Towers proper. He thought that what he had said was a sufficient answer to the objection that the population was small; and when the Croydon railway was commenced the population would be more than double. As

the diminution of population in Burke, he thought the Premier made some slight mistakes. He said the population of the Woolgar included the navvies.

The PREMIER: I said the population of Burke as given in the census tables included them; but I gave Woolgar separately.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not know whether the Premier had any information from any official source as to the increase of population at Normanton; but if not, he had, and would give it to him. He had a telegram from Mr. Colles, the mayor of Normanton, dated the 26th September, which he did not think it necessary to read before, but he would read it now:—

"I estimate the present population of the town of Normanton at 1,200."

What was the population at the time the census was taken?

The PREMIER: 786.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the population of Normanton was almost double what it was when the census was taken. And he was quite confident from his own knowledge of the working of goldfields that though people had gone from Woolgarto Croydon, and probably some from Cloncurry, though not so many, they would go back to Woolgar. If they did not go back others from the South would go to take their places. The great increase of the population of Croydon had been from the southern part of the colony and from the Southern colonies, more especially from New South Wales, and there had been an increase also from the Northern Territory of Australia. No doubt there had been an increase also from some of the neighbouring goldfields, but Etheridge had more than doubled its population since Croydon was opened.

The PREMIER: No; it is almost stationary.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, looking at the census tables taken last year and comparing them with the information they had from Etheridge, it certainly showed that the population of Etheridge had increased; and he did not see how it could be otherwise, for Etheridge was quite as good a field as Croydon. When men got to Croydon, which was half-way to Etheridge from Normanton, and were disappointed—and there were always men disappointed on every new goldfield—they went on to the other field ahead of them. He knew that from his own experience, and every member of the Committee who had any experience of mining knew it also. Nine-tenths of the men who were disappointed and left Croydon would go on to Etheridge. The places of the men who went from Croydon would be filled up by people coming from the South. Every steamer that left Brisbane was taking men to Croydon, so that that there would be no real diminution of the population there, but the population of the district generally would be increased. It might be true that in certain portions of the district the population had decreased, but it certainly would not continue. As to the population being a settled population, he had no more doubt—he was not saying this for the purpose of getting members—he had no more doubt about the permanency of Croydon than about that of Gympie or Charters Towers. A field of that extent, having such large reefs—4 feet, 5 feet, and 9 feet—main bodies of stone—crushing 2, 5, and 10 ounces to the ton, must be a permanent field. There had been no such example of a reefing field that he knew of in Australia. Even the reefing fields of Victoria were not of greater extent, did not contain as many reefs, or richer reefs, or larger reefs on an average than Croydon had shown up to the present. They

knew from telegrams which the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hamilton, had received that shafts were down over 200 feet within less than two years from the declaration of the goldfield, and on block claims, showing the confidence that the miners themselves had in the permanence of the field. A block claim, as he had stated before, was one outside a claim taken up on the line of reef, sunk with the intention of finding the reef at a greater depth outside the other claims. There were many of those block claims taken up, so that the miners themselves had certainly confidence in the permanency of the field. He (Mr. Macrossan) could not accept the proposition to have a member for Carpentaria, which included the district outside Croydon. He wanted the miners of Croydon to have their own member—a mining member, who would look after the interests of the miners of Croydon and of the miners of the whole of Queensland. He did not want him to be a squatter. The district outside Croydon could be attached to Burke, where the representative might very properly be a squatter, because the pastoral interest was very much larger outside Croydon in the present electorate of Burke than the mining interest, with the exception of Etheridge. He hoped the Premier would agree to that proposition, which was a very reasonable one. There was not the slightest fear, in case of a vacancy occurring in the representation of Croydon, supposing it had two members, of the Speaker not having to issue a writ. They had heard that talk about the goldfields in Queensland ever since Queensland became a separate colony; in fact, he himself was deterred for years from coming to Queensland by the reports—first, that Queensland was a place where nobody could live; secondly, that the gold was not permanent—that there was nothing but surface gold. That was the report about Queensland twenty years ago, and thousands were deterred from coming in those times on that account. The idea prevailed still in the minds of many prominent members of the community. There was as much reason to believe in the permanency of Croydon and the goldfields of Queensland generally as in the permanency of the goldfields of Victoria, which had been proved to be permanent to depths approaching 2,000 feet. Why should they doubt the mineral riches of Queensland, and throw cold water on the idea themselves? It was a most unpatriotic thing, especially as there was no warrant for it. The Premier should certainly not have alleged as a reason for not giving two members to Croydon that the contingency might arise two or three years hence of there not being sufficient men in Croydon for two members to represent. He (Mr. Macrossan) believed that when the railway reached there in three years' time there would be sufficient men in Croydon for three or four members. It could not be otherwise, and the prosperity and increase of population which would attach to Croydon would also attach to Etheridge, which was as grand a goldfield as there was in the whole of Australia. It had been kept back simply through its distance from the seaport and the want of easy means of communication. He knew lots of miners who would have gone to Etheridge years ago but for the difficulty of getting there, and when they got there, the difficulty of getting stone crushed, through capitalists having the same difficulty in getting machinery there. He hoped the hon. gentleman would agree to his proposition; he was quite certain no objection would be taken to it by the Committee. He felt sure that hon. members on both sides saw the justice of the claim he made in favour of Croydon. He believed there was no goldfield in the colony

more entitled to two members than Croydon was at the present time, and that it would be so two years hence, he was certain.

Mr. PALMER said that the Premier had just now, in reply to the hon. member for Townsville—

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Mr. Fraser,—I beg to call attention to the state of the Committee.

Quorum formed.

Mr. PALMER said that just now the Premier, in reply to the hon. member for Townsville (Mr. Macrossan), said that he was doubtful about the permanence of the Croydon Gold Field. The hon. member for Townsville had taken the lead in that matter from circumstances which he (Mr. Palmer) thought would be patent to every member of the Committee—from his position in the Committee as the oldest Northern member, as the leader of the Northern section of members, from his undoubted ability, and, furthermore, from the fact that he was an old miner. He thought it was the hon. member's duty to take the lead, and it was his (Mr. Palmer's) wish that he should do so. He also thought that as member for the district it was his (Mr. Palmer's) privilege to follow after the Premier had spoken. The Premier had said that he was doubtful of the permanence of the field, but the hon. member had almost admitted last week that he had very little doubt about the future prospects of Croydon, and that was shown by his agreeing to the resolutions regarding a railway to that field. The Premier asked, "Can we show that Croydon is likely to remain an increasing field?" Well, he (Mr. Palmer) thought every inducement to that belief which it was possible for any field to possess Croydon possessed in an extreme degree, and it had shown that it would not only be a permanent field, but a largely increasing one, from the fact that there was no field in which capitalists had been so willing to lay out such large sums of money, with so little knowledge of it, as on Croydon. They saw capitalists from all the colonies of Australia freely laying out tens of thousands of pounds all at once in machinery, investing in reefs, and in everything that went to make it a permanent field. With regard to the block claims, to which the hon. member for Townsville had alluded, a great many of those block claims had bottomed within the last week, and they had found the reefs increasing in width, in extent, and in richness. That was at once a positive proof of Croydon being a really permanent field. He was informed that Charters Towers was six years working before any block claim was bottomed. Now, he did not know how many block claims had reached bottom on Croydon, but he knew there were several had bottomed within the last week, with the result, as he had said, that they showed an increasing richness—the reefs showing better at that depth than they had done upon the prospecting reefs. He thought also that as the field, while still so young, showed such prospects, it would be just as well if the Government looked a little ahead, and not at what the field actually was now. They should think of what it might be in eighteen months or two years, as he did not suppose there would be another Redistribution Bill passed within the next ten years; and under those circumstances, as Croydon might have a population of 10,000 in two years, he thought they would not be fairly dealt with unless the proposition of the hon. member for Townsville, that the field should have two members, was acceded to. Taking the lowest estimate, read out by the hon. member for Townsville, of the population, it would be 5,700 adult males. That was the estimate formed by a gentleman lately on the field, although those

who had been longer there gave a much higher estimate; but, taking that estimate of 5,700 adult males, that would be 2,850 for each member, which was more than Charters Towers had now. In fact Charters Towers had only 2,769. Gympie had two members, and had only 2,659 adult males for the two members, whereas in the case of Croydon the number was 5,700. As apportioned now, Normanton and Croydon had a member between them; that was scarcely fair to the mining field, even though the interests of the shipping port might not be altogether dissimilar to those of Croydon. The interests of Townsville and Charters Towers were not dissimilar, yet the electorates were divided and each had its own representative; and it was the same with regard to Maryborough and Gympie. There would, therefore, be nothing unusual in having Croydon cut off and made a separate electorate from Normanton, its natural shipping port. The Premier had also stated that the increase in the population of Croydon had been made at the expense of other parts of the Burke. He (Mr. Palmer) had no reason to suppose that that was the case; the increase, judging from the number of passengers by the steamers, was largely from New South Wales and the southern parts of Queensland. There might, perhaps, be a small exodus from Cloncurry and other parts, but certainly not to the extent stated by the Premier. He did not understand how the hon. gentleman arrived at the figures he had quoted, or what there was to indicate that Cloncurry and Etheridge were reduced so much in population. He believed as a matter of fact, that Etheridge had increased in population, for the simple reason that there had lately been a large influx of English capital into that field which was now being distributed, and other English companies were still going on to the field. He looked forward to a very great future for Etheridge, and that was one reason why he advocated the line to Croydon, because every mile nearer Croydon was a mile nearer to the mining field on the Etheridge. Possibly Cloncurry had not increased, but he did not think it had actually gone back as far as the hon. gentleman said it had, so that it was not fair to say that the population of the rest of the Burke electorate was reduced because the people had all gone to Croydon. He had received a telegram dated the 27th September, from Mr. C. F. Gardiner, chairman of the Progress Association of Croydon, with regard to the representation of that field, which he would read to the Committee. It was as follows:—

"At a meeting held last evening over 1,000 adults were present, although only called yesterday afternoon. The following resolutions were carried unanimously:—

"First resolution.—'That this meeting heartily approves of the promise made by Messrs. Palmer, Hamilton, and Macrossan to endeavour to obtain additional representation for the Croydon Gold Field to that provided by the present Redistribution Bill, as it considers that on a population basis Croydon is entitled to at least two members, there being fully 5,000 adult males at present on the field, with every probability of a large and rapid increase.'

"Second resolution.—'That in the opinion of all the experts who have visited Croydon there is every probability, amounting almost to a certainty, of its being permanent, and supporting a large population for many years to come.'

"Third resolution.—'That this meeting protests most energetically against the studied and continuous neglect of the Government in attending to the just wants and requirements of the Croydon miners.'

"Fourth resolution.—'That the foregoing resolutions be wired to Messrs. Palmer, Hamilton, and Macrossan, together with the thanks of the meeting for the promise they have made to assist Mr. Palmer in his efforts to obtain due recognition for Croydon in the Redistribution Bill.'



"The meeting was enthusiastic, the speakers being cheered at any allusion made *re* want of attention of the Government."

Perhaps the Premier was not aware of the extent of that large field, where 1,000 miners could be congregated at twenty-four hours' notice. There were other camps almost as large as that centre at Croydon. There was what they called Tabletop—a place twelve miles away—which was the centre of another outlying district, including Laycock's; and right away to the Georgetown road, down to Green Creek, there was nothing but a succession of reefing districts. That was to the north of Croydon. Then to the south there were the King of Croydon Reef and what they called the Moonstone, which were mining centres with their surrounding reefing districts. It would be almost impossible to make an accurate estimate of the population of that field, as the people were scattered over so many miles of country. Wherever one went there were people living in the bush in little villages; they were scattered over an area of country from thirty to forty miles in length and about twenty-five miles in width. It spoke volumes for the field when men were to be found carrying on mining in that way, especially when they considered the scarcity of tools and the dearth of provisions. From what it was now they were perfectly justified in presuming that the population would continue to increase, and that the field would be permanent. It was stated that evening by the Premier that the population of Normanton was 1,200.

The PREMIER: It is, according to the census.

Mr. PALMER said he was very much surprised at that statement, because he thought that at a moderate estimate the population was between 2,000 and 3,000. They must consider the number of carriers in the district. There were about 150 teams on the road, and a great number of the men driving those teams, with their families and assistants, were frequently in the township of Normanton at one time, and made up a very large population. Taking Normanton into consideration with Croydon one member was a very poor offer to make; and he felt certain that when the Premier had carefully weighed the arguments of the hon. member for Townsville he would come to the conclusion that it was entitled to two members. Indeed, before long it would be entitled to more than two members. The field was nearly 5,000 square miles in extent, and had great prospects before it. The Etheridge Gold Field was larger in extent, but was not so thickly populated. Taking all those facts into consideration the Premier would be quite justified in granting to Croydon the two members asked for. It was no more than had been granted to Gympie or Charters Towers, fields which had been in existence for a great number of years; and in his opinion before very long the Croydon field would be a greater gold-producing centre than either of those places. He said that from personal experience of the field, having been over a great extent of it. Gympie, again, was nearer to the centre of government, and its wants could be attended to much more easily than Croydon. The same might be said of Charters Towers, which, as well as Gympie, had railway communication with the seaboard. Charters Towers was nearer to the capital than Croydon could possibly be even with a railway. Therefore, he held that they were not making any unjust demand in asking the Premier to give to the Croydon Gold Field two members.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he was anxious to take an early part in the debate on that question, because the proposed redistribution affected the district he represented most materially. A lot of country had been taken off Burke and

thrown into Cook. He was at a loss to understand why the hon. member for Burke, within whose province Croydon was, did not open the discussion, being so directly interested in it, but allowed the hon. member for Townsville to get up and speak twice before he had anything to say. He took that opportunity to state emphatically that he did not recognise the hon. member for Townsville as the supreme head of the Northern representation—not for one moment. He had a vivid recollection of what took place when that hon. member got up a Northern combination before, and of which he was at the head, and he knew what the results of that combination were. The hon. member was a very clever, a very able, and a very eloquent man. Like a good many of his countrymen he had licked the blarney stone, but if he thought he was going to be the Parnell of the House and establish a third party leading the whole of the North by the nose, he (Mr. Hill) thought that when the hon. member went to the North he would find himself very much mistaken, and that he would not be allowed to be anything of the kind. He did not for one moment recognise that hon. member in the capacity of the dictator of the North, the general arranger of all differences. He fully endorsed all that had fallen from both that member and the hon. member for Burke as to the certainty of the mineral future of Croydon and also of Etheridge. There was an almost unlimited extent of highly auriferous country there, which only wanted men and money to develop it, and he considered that it most badly needed representation, owing to its undeveloped wealth, to the revenue derived from it, and to its distance from the seat of government. It was a place which most badly needed additional representation. But he could see from the disposition of the overwhelming majority of the Committee, and especially of the Southern members, that the North was not likely to get that full measure of justice which it deserved. His idea, therefore, was that the Government could not certainly withhold two members from the Croydon and Etheridge Gold Fields combined. Those two fields had a community of interests; they were in a direct line, one with the other, and the railway which went to Croydon would have to go on to Etheridge, and would probably get there before the line from Herberton met it, as the country was the easiest possible for railway-making. A division of that kind, leaving the Cook electorate as it was before; giving two members to the Etheridge and Croydon Gold Fields combined, and leaving Burke, with Normanton and Cloncurry and the pastoral interests there, to be dealt with as a separate electorate with a community of interests, would be far better than the arrangement proposed by the Government, or even than that proposed by the hon. member for Townsville, and much more likely to pass. Indeed, he saw very little chance of the amendment being carried. As to the question of population, he believed that if another census were taken now it would reveal the fact that some of the Southern districts had decreased in population, owing to the bread-winners of families having gone to the Croydon Gold Field in the endeavour to obtain for themselves an independence there. On the adult male basis, according to the tables before them, the Southern districts were over-represented. As to the North, they had very little information of a reliable nature; but he was perfectly certain, having interviewed people who had lately come from Croydon, that the statement that there were already between 7,000 and 8,000 persons on the field at Croydon alone was not a bit exaggerated; and he believed that if two members were asked for, for the Etheridge and Croydon, which had distinctly identical interests, the Com-

mittee would be willing to accord them. It was distinctly a gold-mining community, the whole of it. The proposed district of Woothakata would be a most unwieldy one, with a population whose interests were conflicting, and who went to different ports, some to one side and some to the other, with all kinds of mining interests, conflicting with each other. A considerable portion of the district abounded in silver and tin, and the other portion was gold-bearing. If that electorate were divided in the way he suggested—giving two members to Croydon and Etheridge, and restoring to Burke that which naturally belonged to it—there would be a gold-mining community on one side, and on the other side, with the exception of the Hodgkinson, there would be principally a silver and tin mining community. He considered that the Cook electorate as it stood on the original plan required additional representation, without having a portion of the Burke district, which was utterly disconnected from it in every way, thrown into it. Therefore he intended to move as an amendment that the Etheridge and Croydon Gold Fields and the surrounding districts should have two members. It was only a matter of seventy or eighty miles as the crow flew between Croydon and Etheridge, not so much. By road it was about 100 miles, and if the Premier would undertake to make an electorate of those two districts, and shape the lines of division, in which he (Mr. Hill) would assist him as much as he could, he believed the Committee would see the force of granting two members to that important gold-mining community without hesitation.

Mr. HAMILTON said he thought the reasons given by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, in favour of his proposition were irrefutable. And he might say that the whole of the Northern members, at any rate those of them who had the interests of the North at heart, were quite at one with that hon. member on the matter. Taking the basis of population, either adult or general population, Croydon was clearly entitled to two members. At present they were dealing with Croydon; the Cook electorate could be dealt with when the time came, and the boundaries could be arranged. On Croydon, even taking the lowest estimate the hon. member for Townsville had read from the telegrams received from Mr. Blaxland, Mr. Cribb, and Mr. Towner, the adult white male population was 5,700, which would give 2,850 per member.

Mr. FOOTE rose to a point of order. He said he understood that the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Lumley Hill, had moved an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. member stated his intention of doing so, but had not formally moved it.

Mr. HAMILTON said, as he had stated, there were 5,700 white adult males on Croydon, which would give 2,850 for each of the two members proposed, and, comparing that with other electorates nearer the capital, he found that one had 1,440, another 1,444, and on the Darling Downs the average was 1,000 odd. And yet on Croydon the proportion per member would be 2,850. Then, taking the general population basis, he noticed that in the Bulloo the number of men, women, and children entitled to return one member was 2,163; on the Gregory it was 2,067, and on the Mitchell 2,654. Therefore, they only asked that the 2,150 white adult males on Croydon should be accorded the same privilege as was granted to about 2,000 men, women, and children in other portions of the colony. It had been said that Croydon was not definitely settled. That was urged as an objection by the Premier, who wished to know what reason there was for sup-

posing that Croydon would be larger or as large as Charters Towers or Gympie, in the course of a year or two. But he (Mr. Hamilton) failed to see what reason there was for supposing that it would not be as large as those fields. At Gympie he noticed the adult male population per member was 1,329, as against 2,850 on Croydon; and the general population of Gympie, which was entitled to two members, was 9,747. But that was very much larger than the proportion on the Darling Downs, and, in fact, most other places in the colony. He could not help noticing the fact that even in the South, according to the Premier, it required a larger general population to return members for gold-fields than it did anywhere else. The permanency of Croydon was already assured. There was not a single goldfield in the colony that, after having been developed to such an extent as Croydon was, had not turned out a success. Why, taking the amount of work done now, if gold was not found a single inch deeper than they had gone, on Croydon there would be work for the next eight or ten years for the large population there was on the field at present. He had read the other evening a telegram showing that reefs had proved payable at a depth of 240 feet, and he had been shown a letter by a friend that day that he had received from Croydon, dated, "No. 3 King Croydon," in which he supposed the writer was a shareholder, which said:—

"Now, about Croydon. It is still looking up, for they are getting good gold every day in the deep ground. The last sensation is the Moonstone block. They have struck gold, estimated to go 12 oz. to the ton, 400 feet away from the cap, and about 90 or 100 feet from the surface. Of course this has put a little heart into those who are sinking other block claims."

It then went on to refer to other reefs. At any rate they had struck the reef at 100 feet on the perpendicular, and had followed it about 400 feet on the underlie, and got magnificent gold at that depth. On Gympie, although it was one of the most flourishing goldfields in the colony, and had a large number of payable claims, he believed there were only two claims in which payable gold had been got at a depth over 600 feet; and yet in that case at Croydon gold had been struck, certainly not on the perpendicular, but on the underlie, and they had followed the reef 400 feet. In fact, there was ample proof that if they did not get gold an inch deeper than they had yet gone there was work on that field for the next eight or ten years for the population now there. And look at the area! The payable auriferous area of Gympie was two or three square miles, but about Croydon the auriferous area appeared to extend over 4,000 square miles. Was not that an immense difference? It had been said as an argument in reply to the proposition of the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, that when Croydon was taken out of the proposed districts of Burke and Carpentaria those electorates would not be entitled to two members. It was urged by the Premier that Etheridge was practically deserted. But that was not the opinion of Mr. Sheaffe, with whom he had a conversation a few days since. There were over 1,100 men on that field, and that did not look like being practically deserted. Moreover, the large increase which had taken place in another part of that electorate—Normanton—more than made up for the decrease which had taken place on Etheridge. Not sufficient reasons had been given in opposition to the proposal of the hon. member for Townsville that Croydon should have two members. It had been shown that it was entitled to two members either on the basis of total population or upon that of the male adult population. Then as to development, the field had been working for two

years, and more work had been done there—he referred to easy sinking—in two years than had been done on any other field in the colony in the same time. There was not one single reefing field in the colony that had not been proved one way or the other within two years.

Mr. MELLOR said, in reference to the certainty of the population at Croydon, he did not see that anything had been shown that would reduce it to a certainty. He remembered when Gympie had from 15,000 to 20,000 people on it.

Mr. HAMILTON: That was on the alluvial workings.

Mr. MELLOR said of course Gympie had not maintained that population. There was still a good large population there; but they knew that any goldfield was not a certainty. There was a great deal of excitement in regard to Croydon at present, and he should be sorry indeed to deprive any mining community of its due representation, or say a word against it. In fact, he thought they should lean towards representing mining communities more than others, but at the same time it had been pointed out by the Premier that in future if additional representation was necessary it could be provided.

Mr. HAMILTON: Do the same towards Gympie. The same argument holds good.

Mr. MELLOR said in regard to Gympie, the people of the Wide Bay district were perfectly satisfied with the Bill; but if they looked forward to an increase of population they could show that that district ought to have more representation than was set down in the Bill. There was no doubt the mining industry in that district was remarkably prosperous, and the population was increasing very fast, and had increased very much since the census had been taken. Fresh coalfields were being discovered on the Burrum, and the population there had increased since the census had been taken. Then there was Kilkivan, where the population had also very much increased since the census had been taken; and there was now a large population at Eidswoold. He believed the population at Gympie at the present time was quite as large as at the time the census was taken, although many people had gone to Croydon. He should be very glad to see fair representation given to Croydon, but he thought more was being asked for than hon. members could expect to receive.

Mr. BLACK said if there were any parts of the colony which were entitled to consideration under the Bill, they were the parts that were far distant from the capital; he referred especially to the Northern districts. It was always understood that in giving additional representation, that matter would have been taken into consideration, and he confessed that he was somewhat astonished when the Bill was introduced to find, that although the Northern interests had been taken into consideration to a greater extent than had been the case before, still they did not receive that consideration which he maintained parts of the colony far distant from Brisbane were entitled to. They all knew the difficulty there was in getting local representatives for the far North—men thoroughly identified with their constituencies—to come and spend their time in Brisbane. No doubt Northern members were handicapped severely on that account. There was a great distance to travel, and also absence from the interests which every hon. member must have—that was, his private interests. A member must necessarily suffer considerable loss by his absence from them, and if there was any part of the colony which was entitled to greater consideration than another, it was the extreme Northern part. Notwithstanding that the Northern division was

supposed to get four additional members, he failed to see why the importance of that part of the colony should not be considered equal, at all events, to that of the Central division. If anything, the Committee should concede a little more to the northern parts of the colony for the reason he had pointed out. If they took the Central division they would find that there was an additional member added there. There was now one member to every 1,165 adult males, and he was quite prepared to admit that the reasons which were urged for reinstating the Blackall electorate, were perfectly sound and justifiable. He was glad that that electorate had been reinstated; but he claimed that the North had certainly equal claims to favourable consideration; upon that basis the Northern division would be entitled to seventeen members. That was without taking into consideration the very remarkable increase in the population of the North, which the hon. member for Townsville had referred to—namely, at Croydon. Entirely independent of that increase, hon. members would see that on the same basis of representation which they had accorded to the Central division, the North would be entitled to seventeen members. No reason had been shown why the Northern division should not have that consideration now that they had an opportunity of meting out justice to all parts of the colony. Then he would refer to the position of the Northern divisions as compared with the Darling Downs group. He did not think that any member who had been any time in the House would say that the Darling Downs group were unable to get efficient representatives. Their proximity to Brisbane would always enable them to get gentlemen able to devote a considerable portion of their time to their parliamentary duties. It was not a matter of the same heavy loss to them, in absenting themselves from their constituencies, as Northern members had undoubtedly to suffer. They now had nine members, one for every 944 adult males, as against one for every 1,399 in the northern part of the colony; that was without taking into consideration the known increase of population at Croydon. If the Darling Downs group, with all its facilities for attending Parliament, were entitled to one member for every 944 adult males, surely a part of the colony labouring under such disadvantages of long standing as the North, was entitled to more than one member for every 1,399 adult males. Taking the basis of the Darling Downs group—he did not say that the Darling Downs group was over-represented—the Northern division would be entitled to between twenty and twenty-one members. It must be admitted that the progress of Queensland as a whole was in the direction of the more northern parts of the colony.

The PREMIER: And southern.

Mr. BLACK said he was very glad to be assured that the whole of the colony was progressing. He could speak from his own knowledge of the progress of the North, where many thousands of pounds were being spent for the purpose of developing the mineral wealth; and he knew that in no other part of the colony was that development proceeding at a more rapid pace than in the extreme North. The calculations he had made showed that the Northern division was entitled to seventeen members on the basis of the Central division, or to twenty members on the same basis of representation as the Darling Downs. He did not say where additional representation should be given, but he maintained that the hon. member for Townsville, in claiming two members for Croydon, had only asked the Committee to concede what they had already conceded in the case of the two groups to which he had referred. He

would not now discuss the question as to whether a Redistribution Bill or an Additional Members Bill would have been preferable—they had to take what was offered—but he claimed that the North, especially in view of the additions in other cases, was entitled to more representation than was accorded to it in the Bill. And, notwithstanding the promise of a member for Croydon and the implied promise of another member for Cook, he still claimed that the Northern division was entitled to more. And if the North received the justice to which it was entitled in that particular case, as demanded by the hon. member for Townsville, it would tend to remove one of the grievances the North had complained of for a very long time; but adding six members to the North, while giving seven additional members to the South, would certainly not tend to that balance of representation that ought to prevail throughout the colony. He cordially endorsed the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville, and he hoped no side issues would be raised in connection with other electorates when the hon. member for Cook proposed an alteration with respect to that electorate, which also required more consideration. He claimed four additional members for the North.

The PREMIER: Do you mean eight additional members altogether?

Mr. BLACK: Yes; and no part of the colony was more entitled to an excess, if anything, of representation, than the Northern division.

The PREMIER: Why?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: It is so far away, and there is such a difficulty in getting here.

Mr. BLACK said the hon. member for Cook had really given the reason. The rate at which settlement was progressing, the difficulty of access to Brisbane, the sacrifice of time to which Northern representatives were subjected—all those matters should be taken into consideration; and if anything, he would repeat, the Northern division was entitled to over-representation, rather than under-representation at the present time.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he quite agreed with the statement, that if any place in the colony should be over-represented it was the North.

The PREMIER: I cannot see that at all.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the most distant part of the colony was entitled to better representation than the electorates in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis; and the hon. gentleman admitted that in his Bill.

The PREMIER: It gets two for one as the Bill stands.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yet the hon. member said he could not see it! According to the tables supplied by the hon. member himself, the North was under-represented compared with other groups. He did not take any single electorate in the North and compare it with any single electorate in the South.

The PREMIER: Nor do I.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, taking the whole of the Northern electorates and the population as given in the tables, the North was still under-represented in comparison with the other groups—with the exception of the Metropolitan group, which, it was admitted, should not be represented on the same basis as the other groups. That was the contention of the hon. member for Mackay, and it was a contention which, he believed, could not be upset. The hon. member for Mackay also stated that the population of the North was increasing faster in proportion than that of the South; but the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government denied that.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that last week, during one of the debates, reference was made to the same question, and the Premier admitted that at one time the population of the North increased more rapidly than that of the South, but that now the South was getting ahead of the North by two to one. If he meant that two immigrants from Great Britain arrived in the South by the British-India Company's steamers for every immigrant who landed in the North, he (Mr. Macrossan) admitted that; but that did not prove that the population in the South was increasing in the proportion of two to one, as compared with the North. The census returns showed the proportionate increase of population; and it showed that in the North it was very much in excess of what it was in the South. The hon. member shook his head, but he would quote the hon. member's own statistics and see if he could not make him swallow what he had put on the table for the information of hon. members. It was a preliminary statement of the census for the year 1886, taken on the 1st day of May. He supposed the hon. gentleman would admit that to be an authentic document. Turning to page 16, they would find Table No. 5:—

"Census districts arranged in groups showing total population according to the census of 1881 and 1886, respectively; also, the numerical increase or decrease."

The groups were—Northern division, Central division, and Southern division; the Southern division, of course, including everything south of the Central district. In 1881 the population of the Northern division, leaving out odd numbers, was 35,000; and in 1886 it was 62,000.

The PREMIER: Including Chinese and kanakas.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said there had been an increase of Chinese and kanakas in the South as well as in the North. The Chinese had actually decreased in the North. It was not many years since there were more Chinese in one electorate in the North than there were now in the whole colony. At one time the electorate of Cook contained 17,000 Chinese, and according to the last returns there were only 10,000 in the colony, and they were decreasing—decreasing more in the North than in the South, because they had worked out the Northern shallow alluvial fields, and had to go elsewhere to find employment. The population of the Central district, in round numbers, was 27,000 in 1881, and 38,000 in 1886; and of the Southern division, 150,000 in 1881, and 221,000 in 1886. That was to say, the population had increased in the Northern district at the rate of 77½ per cent., in the Central district at the rate of 40 per cent., and in the Southern district at the rate of 46½ per cent. He would ask any hon. member of the Committee which had the largest increase. The hon. gentleman had told them that there was a time when the North was increasing faster proportionately than the South, but that that time had gone past. It had not gone past according to that census, and he was certain that since the census the increase had been still greater, owing to large numbers who had gone to Croydon, to Bloomfield, and the Annan Tin Fields. The hon. gentleman forgot them.

The PREMIER: No, he did not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had given sufficient reasons for claiming the number of members they wanted for the North—the actual population there at present, the more rapid rate of increase of population that was going on there than in the South—and going on partly at the expense of the South; and then there was another item which had been left out

of consideration, but which he would bring in now—the amount of revenue derived from the North in proportion to other parts of the colony. The hon. gentleman knew that the year before last—the year ending June, 1886—the proportion of revenue obtained from the Customs in the northern part of the colony was 24 and a fraction per cent. of the total obtained from the whole colony, and last year—the year ending last June—the total taxation received in the North from Customs and Excise was 25·14 per cent., actually more than one-quarter of that of the whole colony. On the basis, then, of representation by taxation they would be entitled to one-quarter of the representation, and they were not claiming that—they were claiming between one-quarter and one-fifth, leaving a large margin, which by the time the next redistribution came about would probably bring them down to between one-fifth and one-sixth, as they were at present. Population would go on increasing more rapidly in the North than in the South, so that five years hence, when another Redistribution Bill was brought in, the representation of the North would be just upon the same basis as regarded the rest of the colony as it was at present. There were certain other arguments which might be used and which probably would be used if the Premier was determined that they should not have what they asked. In the meantime, as he had not formally moved what he had intimated, he would move that Croydon should have two members, and that Burke and Carpentaria should be combined and have two members—that was an increase of two members altogether for that portion. He would now move that after the word “Burke” the words “one member” be omitted, with the view of inserting the words “two members.” Then, when that was disposed of, he would move that “Croydon, two members” be inserted between Burke and the next line.

The PREMIER said he did not propose to argue over again what had been argued so often. He could add very little to what he had said before, and he did not think it necessary to go over the old ground. They had heard all those arguments before about proportionate increase of population. He had no doubt that some of the districts of the colony had increased 500 per cent. since the last census.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : Which place ?

The PREMIER said that Croydon had increased probably 5,000 per cent. since the census of 1881, perhaps 10,000 per cent.—he supposed there was about one person there in 1881. The total increase in the northern part of the colony was quite small compared with the increase in the South during the period between 1881 and 1886, according to the figures the hon. gentleman had read.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : They are your own census tables.

The PREMIER said the census tables were quite right, but 75 per cent. on 100 was a very different thing from 75 per cent. on 500. The fact was that the southern portion of the colony was increasing its population more rapidly than the northern portion.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : Proportionately not so.

The PREMIER : Perhaps not. Of course the smaller the population of the North the greater was the proportionate increase. He was quite sure that if he proposed to give the North ten members the hon. gentleman would offer just the same arguments to bring the number up to fifteen.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : Try it.

The PREMIER said, in fact, he was inclined to think the hon. member would not be satisfied with anything he proposed. The more reasonable the proposal, he believed, the more would the hon. member be dissatisfied with it. He was very much inclined to think that was the position the hon. member took up. The hon. member was almost as angry over the proposal to give an additional member, and the expression on his (the Premier's) part, of his willingness to discuss granting another, as he was at the Bill as it originally stood. He supposed the hon. member would be still more angry if they proposed to give five additional members. The Government were prepared to do what was right and fair to all parts of the colony, and not to only one part, and he hoped all hon. members of the Committee would assist the Government in doing that. It was a very difficult task, and he had the right to claim the assistance of all hon. members to carry it out. He had said they could not accept the population of Croydon as 5,000 for all time. Anyone who knew anything of the early history of goldfields must know that half of that number would not be there for very long—that 2,500 of them would not remain there, but would go somewhere else. They all knew that half the early population of the goldfields was a floating one. He said that without wishing to say anything disparaging to that goldfield; but they all knew that to be the case on all the Australian goldfields. It was an idle supposition to believe that the present population on Croydon was a fixed population. The Government were willing to give an extra member to that district, but the hon. member for Townsville wanted four members for the present district of Burke, which had one member. The Etheridge must be taken into consideration in dealing with that question, and first of all he would say—he quoted the hon. member for Townsville as his authority—that the Etheridge was as large a goldfield as Croydon. It had as many reefs, and he would venture to say there had been as many prospecting areas on the Etheridge as on Croydon at the present time.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : No, not nearly.

The PREMIER : There have been as many.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : Where ?

The PREMIER : On the Etheridge.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : When ?

The PREMIER : At various times.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : Never !

The PREMIER said he ventured to say there had been as many, and in talking of the Etheridge he included the Gilbert. What was the population of the Gilbert ?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL : Do you mean up by the Woolgar ?

The PREMIER said the population of the Gilbert was nearly as large at one time as that of Croydon was now; and how many were there now ? At one time the Gilbert was supposed to be one of the greatest goldfields in the colony, and there had been a very large population there, and on the Etheridge also. The Etheridge was quite as large a goldfield as Croydon, and probably it was as rich, but the means of access were so bad that it was not worked much, and the total population by the census was 800.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : There are 1,100 there now.

The PREMIER said it had a total population of 807, and an adult male population of 517, at the time of the census, and the warden was of opinion that at present there were about 900 altogether in the several townships, which, with

a floating population of about 200, would give a total of about 1,100. Inspector Douglas, who was in charge of the Etheridge police district, was of opinion that the number was overstated, and was not more than 1,000. So that from the 1st of May, 1886, when the census was taken, to the present there had not been an increase of more than 250 or 300, while a good many, he believed, had gone away, and had not gone back. That point was left out of consideration altogether. One of the difficulties in dealing with the case, as in many others, was the question of boundaries—as to where they should put a place like the Etheridge. It was a great district by itself, and must be treated as a whole; but it could not have a member all to itself, and must be attached either to the Burke district, of which it now formed a part, that was, to Croydon with or without Normanton, or it must be attached to some electorate on the eastern seaboard. The question was, which was the right side to attach it to?

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: There is no communication with the east at all.

The PREMIER said, at any rate, the people on the eastern seaboard claimed that the Etheridge did belong to them. There was rather strong competition between two ports on that seaboard as to which should get the trade—Townsville or Cairns. The junior member for Townsville was not present, but the hon. member for Musgrave was, and he was sure that hon. gentleman would tell them that the trade went to Townsville, or that they claimed it did. They all knew the people of Herberton were continually claiming that the Etheridge belonged to them, and they wanted a coach service established for mail communication between Herberton and the Etheridge. That was the first question—whether the Etheridge should be attached to the Croydon Gold Field. Then another question arose as to whether Normanton also was to be attached to Croydon. That was a matter which had been very carefully considered by the Government, and for many reasons it had seemed desirable to join the Croydon and Etheridge fields together. But then there would be the remainder of Burke in the west, the population of which would not be large enough to entitle it to two members. From the information the Government now had, it appeared to be better to take Etheridge away from the eastern seaboard, but it could not be done without diminishing the population of some of the electorates there.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Oh!

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Cook might say "Oh!" Of course he said population had nothing to do with it, but only area.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I did not say so.

The PREMIER said the area of his electorate was large enough for any number of electorates. The Government did not recognise the basis of adult male population, although hon. members assumed that to be the basis of the Bill. Let it be distinctly understood that the Government did not recognise that basis; that Bill was not framed on that principle, and he was not prepared to accept any Bill framed on that basis. There never had been an attempt to introduce any measure framed on that principle, and he did not think it likely there ever would be.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: It was recognised in 1872.

The PREMIER said it had not been—he was in the House in 1872.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I know you were.

The PREMIER said he remembered taking a very active part in discussing that measure, and he had succeeded in getting an additional member, and he had had the honour of first obtaining the new seat. The question was, if Etheridge and Croydon were put together, would the Burke be entitled to two members, and Croydon and Etheridge to two also? The population would be about the same whether Croydon was joined to Normanton or to the Etheridge. He believed it would be more convenient to join the Etheridge to the mining districts to the east rather than to the west.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I do not.

The PREMIER said, of course, the hon. member did not think so. He did not think any proposal could be made with which the hon. member would agree. That was his disposition when he got into that frame of mind.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: It is my district, and I ought to have some means of judging in matters concerning it.

The PREMIER said it was a difficult question. If they joined the Etheridge to Croydon they might fairly say that that mining electorate should return two members, but then the remainder of Burke would certainly not be large enough to have two members; and on the other hand, on the eastern seaboard there would be some extremely small electorates. He thought it would be a more unfair division of the population and interests than the one proposed by the Bill.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought it was to be regretted that the Premier should make such a statement as he had commenced with in the speech he had just concluded: that nothing would satisfy the hon. member for Townsville, and that if ten members were offered the hon. member would ask for fifteen. He did not think that was at all a fair way of dealing with the arguments of the hon. member for Townsville. That hon. gentleman had given reasons for the demands he had made. The hon. member, he considered, had made out a very good case, and certainly nothing that fell from the hon. member for Townsville could justify the Premier in stating that the position taken up by the hon. member was unreasonable. All that he understood the member for Townsville to say was that he wanted justice meted out to the North. That was a debatable question, and the Premier had a right to discuss it, but he had no right to say that the hon. member was so unreasonable that if he was offered a certain number of members he would ask for 50 per cent. more.

The PREMIER: He has carried that on during the whole session.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Premier was looking through peculiar spectacles that session. He was sure that no hon. member could say that the member for Townsville had said or done anything unreasonable during the session unless trying to get justice done had annoyed the Premier so much as to lead him to express such an opinion. Now, with regard to the representation of the North it had been admitted by the Premier that there had been an accession of adult male population of something like 5,000 people at Croydon since the census tables had been compiled. Well, admitting that there was that accession of 5,000 adult males, what did they find? They found that the North was certainly entitled to all that the hon. member for Townsville asked. Now, the quota of adult males, 1,929, in the North required to return a member was larger than any of the other quotas excepting the Metropolitan group. It was larger than Wide Bay and Burnett, larger than the Central division, larger than Darling Downs, West Moreton or East Moreton, but the latter

included a large number of electorates attached to the city. The Premier continually harped upon one reason for not granting the demands made—that Croydon had not been proved a permanent centre of population. That, he (Mr. Morehead) admitted at once was to a certain extent a reasonable contention, but how could the hon. gentleman reconcile that statement with the fact that the other evening he practically voted for a railway to Croydon. If the hon. gentleman and his supporters had had any doubt about the permanence of Croydon, was he justified in voting as he did?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Most distinctly not.

The PREMIER: A place might be permanent with a population of 5,000 adult males.

Mr. MOREHEAD said if there were 5,000 men, women, and children, would that justify the construction of a railway at the cost of a quarter of a million?

The PREMIER: If it were a goldfield like Charters Towers it would.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was dealing with what the hon. gentleman said the other night. Would a population of 5,000 men, women, and children justify the construction of such a line of railway?

The PREMIER: You proposed a railway much more costly for a smaller population.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was not dealing with what had been; he was dealing with the present action of the Premier. He was perfectly willing to have his actions reviewed, but in the meantime he was the reviewer and not the reviewed. The hon. gentleman and his colleagues to a man voted for a railway to Croydon, on the ground that there would be a permanent settlement at that place, and now he gave as a reason why he would not take the proposed increase of representation into consideration that the population might not be permanent—probably might consist of “wandering diggers.” They had had that night a great deal more information on the subject of population than they had had on a previous evening, when the railway to Croydon was under consideration and was practically agreed to. The information given led them to believe that the population of Croydon was a permanent population; at any rate the Government had voted for the railway, and the Premier himself had given an estimate of the population at something like 5,000 people. He (Mr. Morehead) said that they ought, and had always in the past, given special consideration to those localities which were far away from the seat of government, more especially to the localities where they knew that the development went on rapidly. On some of the goldfields of the North they found that population came and went, but it had not gone from the North, but had moved to other fields, where the work had been more remunerative or prospecting easier. Those fields, which had been partially abandoned, would in the future be centres of large populations. They were not worked out or exhausted. They were goldfields that in the future would pay wonderfully well, but in the meantime the population in the North was so sparse that thousands of diggers, speculators, and miners went to that portion of the colony where work was more remunerative, and where they could more rapidly amass money. It, however, was not to be contended that those fields which had been partially left were therefore worthless. He was told that some of the richest goldfields in the colony were lying partially undeveloped by reason of the difficulty of access, and the high rates of wages that ruled some few years ago. Therefore, when

they found those large accessions to the population of the North, even though Croydon should not be the absolute mine of wealth that many miners thought it might be, it would be the means of developing not only itself, but many other goldfields which had been left partially developed, and therefore deserved consideration. When they remembered the great and inexhaustible wealth of the North and the undeveloped state of the country, they ought to give fair and full representation to the outlying districts. He had always believed and thought that that measure was brought in to relieve the disabilities which the North was suffering from, or which it believed it was suffering from—and he shared their belief to a very great extent—of under-representation in that Chamber, and he considered the proposal made by the hon. member for Townsville was a most moderate one, and one that ought fairly to be considered. He took it that every member of that Committee was desirous that the South should continue to live in amity and friendship with the North. No member of the Committee would desire that such a thing as territorial separation should take place if it could be avoided; and, assuming that to be the opinion of the Committee, would they not be unwise to do anything to injure or to hamper the representation of the North? He would ask hon. members to look at the map. Look at the position of Brisbane in the far south-east corner of the colony, and look at the enormous tract of country above the line where separation was proposed, and then consider if they would not be doing wrong if they did not give fair concessions to those outlying portions of their vast territory? He held that they did. He thought the hon. member for Townsville, when he looked back on that proposition and what he had got, might well say, in the words of Lord Clive, that he “wondered at his own moderation.”

The PREMIER said the hon. member spoke as if they were not dealing with the matter for the next five years. No Parliament had ever been asked to frame a Redistribution Bill on conjecture and make a law that they could not alter for five years, for that was what it practically amounted to, as they could not turn a man out when once he was in the House. The hon. member asked how were the Government justified in voting for a resolution in favour of a railway to Croydon if they were not satisfied that there would be a permanent population of 5,000 adult males at Croydon?

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

The PREMIER: What would be the permanent population of Croydon? That was the conjecture. It was idle to say that it was not a conjecture. An hon. member might feel certain in his own mind, from what he saw at the present time, that the population would be permanent, but it was after all nothing more than a more or less probable conjecture. He thought that if, in three or four years' time, Croydon was as prosperous a goldfield as Charters Towers was now, they would have great reason to congratulate themselves. He hoped that it would be, and even more prosperous; he sincerely hoped so. If it was, then it would at most be entitled to another member. But to maintain that those people who were there now were a permanent population was simply throwing dust in the eyes of those who knew anything about it. Everybody knew that the first population on a goldfield was a floating population.

Mr. DONALDSON: On an alluvial field.

The PREMIER: On reefing fields too.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member might say "No," but that was the fact. What had become of the people on the Gilbert or the Etheridge? Where were they?

Mr. HAMILTON: The Gilbert was not a reefing field. That showed the hon. gentleman knew nothing about it.

The PREMIER: I venture to say that I do know something about it, and all the assertions of hon. members on the other side will not alter the facts.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The Gilbert was an alluvial field.

The PREMIER said he knew there was an alluvial goldfield on the Gilbert. It was also supposed to be a reefing field. But hon. members opposite wished them in effect to understand that Croydon was the first reefing field that had ever been found in the colony. What absurd nonsense! But if it was the first reefing field found in the colony, then they had no experience to guide them in that matter. It was either the first, or it was not. If it was not then they had the experience of previous fields that the present population was a floating population, although he hoped and trusted that as large a population would be permanent. If, on the other hand, it was the first reefing field, they had no experience to guide them in the matter, and were certainly not justified in making a law which would last for years, on the assumption that it must be a permanent population. Of course the Government could not, on any principle of fair play to the rest of the colony, agree to the proposal of the member for Townsville, which was really to give two extra members to Burke.

Mr. KATES said the great contention appeared to him to be as to whether Croydon would be a permanent goldfield. Hon. members opposite said there were 5,000 people there, and that the number was likely to increase. Hon. members on his side, however, said it was possible that the number would decrease; that in twelve months' time it might not be more than one-half of 5,000. He would suggest that the Bill be allowed to stand as it was proposed by the Government, and if next year it was found that the goldfield was established on a sound basis, as he hoped it would be, then they could give an additional member to Croydon. That could easily be done, as it had already been done during the present Parliament, when they gave two additional members to the North.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he took very great interest in that matter, as it was really the key-stone of Northern representation. He was anxious to see that part of the Burke, which had been added on to the Cook electorate, given back to the Burke, as he could assure the Committee that, being on the western side of the range, it legitimately belonged to the Burke. The distance as the crow flew was rather shorter to Cairns, but at present the communication was mainly with Normanton, and if the proposed railway were constructed it would be entirely with Normanton. At the present time the only coach running to Georgetown was from Normanton *via* Croydon, and it did the journey in five days, stopping one day in Croydon. He and other Northern members had been continually twitted with not giving reasons why the North should have, not a bare representation on the adult male population basis, but a really excessive one in comparison with the electorates near the capital. The Premier thought he could lay down the electorates on mathematical lines on a purely population basis. He did not agree with the hon. gentleman in that. The hon. gentleman might not think that he (Mr. Hill) was a true Liberal. He would

quote the words of a greater Liberal than the hon. gentleman was—the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone. The extract was from a speech delivered by that statesman in his Midlothian campaign in 1879 when he was in the zenith of his power.

Mr. ALAND: Did the House of Commons agree to it?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he did not know whether the House of Commons agreed to it or not, but the following were Mr. Gladstone's opinions, which he thought would commend themselves to any man of ordinary intelligence, who had a decent sense of fair play and justice to far-away electors:—

"Now, gentlemen, besides the consideration of population, which I think to be the main one, and besides the consideration of revenue, which also has some importance, there is another element that enters into the equitable examination of the question, and that is the element of distance. A small number of representatives are more effective when they are close to the seat of government than when they are far from the seat of government."

Could any member of the Committee deny that? That had been proved to them from year to year. Often the far-away representatives could at best afford to spend not more than one-half the session in Parliament, and they did not go in for bunches or log-rolling. Mr. Gladstone continued:—

"On that account it is that London and the metropolitan district, with their vast population of four millions, or one-sixth of the whole population of England and Wales, do not influence the return of more than between thirty and forty members, which would only be about one-twelfth or one-thirteenth of the population of England and Wales. It is thus recognised that nearness is a reason for having a more limited number of members, and consequently that distance constitutes a claim for a larger number of members than the population would warrant."

The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, interjected, "Did the House of Commons agree to Mr. Gladstone's utterance on that occasion?" It had always been recognised that the representation of the metropolis should be as one to four in the districts outside it; and that was why he claimed for the outside districts larger representation in proportion to the population than for the Metropolitan group; and he thought that any man of sense would agree with him that he had good reasons for claiming additional representation on those grounds.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You have already got it.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said they had not got it. They were not so well represented on the population basis as the Darling Downs district, which was within a day's journey of the capital. If the metropolitan representatives could only see beyond their noses they would see the advantage of getting people representing those far-off districts to live in Brisbane, and to inform them as to the wants and requirements and capabilities of those districts. Men who came to Brisbane representing distant constituencies, as he had done, became more or less interested, directly or indirectly, with the city of Brisbane, and there was therefore no fear of Brisbane suffering from any lack of attention in the Legislature. It was those outside districts which the overwhelming majority of town representatives knew nothing about, and which led to their being neglected. They suffered in prosperity, because they were not sufficiently represented in Parliament. He looked upon that first Northern item—giving two members to Burke and two to Croydon—as the keystone of the whole of the subdivisions, and he thought the request of the hon. member for Townsville was not an unreasonable one. He could not see any fairness or equity in having the Etheridge Gold Field put into the



Cook district. There was at present no community of interests between them, and it would be much better that the goldfields of Croydon and Etheridge should constitute a separate electorate returning two members, and that was what he intended to move. He did not bring it up as a side issue, because he considered there was ample material in the Cook district, as it now existed, for additional representation. Taking Cairns, with the Russell and Mulgrave Rivers; Herberton proper, then Port Douglas, with tin mines adjacent; the Mossman and the Daintree Rivers, and the Hodgkinson Gold Field; those possessed a community of interests. Cooktown and Maytown, with the Annan River Tin Mines, were also entitled to a member. He did not say that they were all mathematically exact in their proportion of population, but he did say that it would be an advantage to the colony at large that those districts should be fully represented in the House. Even if represented as he suggested, they would be represented inefficiently; but he was not insatiable or irreconcilable in any way. He did not intend to ask for anything which he thought he had not a reasonable chance of getting, and he did not think the people of the South, if they saw the matter in its true light, would think there was anything unreasonable in the requests that were being made. It would be an advantage to the colony as a whole. Taking the line which divided the Southern from the Central and Northern divisions, it would be seen that, even with the additional members proposed to be given by the Bill as it stood, the Northern and Central divisions would be in a worse position than before with regard to the balance of voting power. In fact, they would be in a great deal worse position. He did not want to sow the seeds of enmity, or to encourage it in any way, between the North and South. He wanted to smooth matters down and conciliate the North as much as possible, and make it an ally of the South, and he could not see what possible harm would be done to the House by having several additional Northern members in it. It would add to the knowledge and information of hon. members if they had people there representing the best interests of the colony who knew something beyond the gutters of the streets of Brisbane, and it would be a very good thing indeed for that Assembly. He trusted the Premier would not lose his temper and accuse people, and say they were unreasonable, and could not argue, and gave no reasons, and tell them that nothing would satisfy them.

The PREMIER: That is perfectly true.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: It is perfectly untrue.

The PREMIER: Whenever the Government oppose anything, they are made to appear as if they are actually refusing something which ought to be given without question.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the Premier was now simply declining to give a fair and adequate amount of representation to the North. Without saying more he would move an amendment on the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville, that after the words "Burke, two members," the words "Croydon and Etheridge Gold Fields, two members," be inserted. He had had hopes that the Premier would have supported him in his amendment, and he hoped still—

Mr. BULCOCK: You have faith.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had not much faith in the idea of justice that representatives of metropolitan constituencies entertained towards the North. He was certainly wanting in faith in that, but he still hoped the Premier would see his way to support him in his

amendment. He was sure that it was only a fair and reasonable request. The Ministry could not plead that the Etheridge was not a permanent field. It had been subjected to the test of years and years, and the only thing that had kept it back from becoming a much more populous and much more wealth-producing place than it was, was its extreme remoteness, the difficulties of transit, and the cost of carriage. Those causes had retarded its development; still it had made good progress; it was a great source of wealth to the colony, and when the railway got there he believed it would go ahead with immense strides. He thought there could be no question about the ultimate permanency of both the Croydon and Etheridge Gold Fields.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. junior member for Cook had given them a repeated dose of Mr. Gladstone's opinions on the subject of representation. There was a certain imaginary or real individual who was said to always quote Scripture to suit himself.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: The devil!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And he was rather surprised that the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, should have quoted any of Mr. Gladstone's opinions as gospel, for he expected that there was very little in common between the political views of Mr. Gladstone and those of the hon. member. However, no matter what Mr. Gladstone's opinion might be on the subject he (Mr. Dutton) had formed his own opinion, irrespective of Mr. Gladstone or anybody else. They had simply to deal with matters as suited their own requirements and the peculiarities of their own country, and were quite as capable of forming a sound opinion upon them as any of the old world politicians, however eminent they might be. The contention of the hon. member for Cook, in support of his amendment and on several previous occasions, had been that the hidden riches of his district—not people—deserved representation. The hidden riches of the earth which had yet to be brought to light required representation in that House in order to develop them. He (Mr. Dutton) believed that if those districts never sent a member to that House it would not affect the mining population of the North very much. The North would be quite as prosperous without them as with them. He believed it would have very little effect upon them, because even Southern members were always quite prepared to do anything they could to assist the miners of the North in their legitimate demands. He was certain that he would never be backward in doing so, nor had he seen any tendency or any expression of opinion or feeling that would be detrimental to the interests of the miners of the North upon any occasion. That evening the hon. the leader of the Opposition had twitted the Government with seeming inconsistency in refusing to accept the dictum of the hon. member for Townsville as to the absolute certainty of the permanency of the Croydon Gold Field. Well, he (Mr. Dutton) was very sanguine as to the future of Croydon, but still he was not disposed to accept that hon. member's assertions of its permanency as absolute facts. The prosperity and continuance of Croydon as a rich reefing field had yet to be determined, and that time alone could determine. The hon. member might be right; he (Mr. Dutton) believed he was, but still they must have time to determine that question. The hon. gentleman went on to say that if the Government were not confident as to the permanency of the field, why did they so readily approve of the diversion of a sum of money that had been voted for a railway from Normanton to Cloncurry for one to Croydon.

But putting Croydon on one side altogether; if it ceased to exist next year, there would still be ample justification for making a line of railway in that direction. He believed it was generally admitted by everyone that there was an immensely rich district lying between Croydon and Herberton, which only needed a railway to be properly developed. So that if Croydon ceased altogether there would be, as he had said, ample justification for the construction of a railway there to enable the immense reefing district known to exist there to be thoroughly tested and developed by capital and men who were willing to undertake the work. It had been admitted all round that that could not be done until they had more ample means of access to that district, and he believed that a railway was the only way in which they could get access to that country, because ordinary road-making was practically out of the question. The hon. member for Cook had contended that there should be two members for that district, cutting off a portion of the Cairns district, as he understood that hon. member, making another independent electorate embracing the whole of the Etheridge, Woolgar, and Croydon, and giving it two members. That might ultimately be done, but they should be assured that they were established goldfields before it was done. On the Etheridge there had only been a little tinkering up to the present time, but probably when the railway got to Croydon the Etheridge would begin to be established, and would probably be able to demand representation as an established goldfield. As to Croydon, he quite recognised the fact that that goldfield was entitled, as the Premier had stated, to return one member, and if it sprung rapidly into further prosperity and assured permanency it would have no difficulty in getting additional representation; but at the present time there could hardly be any justification for saying that it was entitled to two members. There was no population there even now to justify that representation. He, and he believed hon. members on the other side of the Committee, had never yet contended that adult male population alone was the true basis of representation. He entirely dissented from the opinion entertained by some members that women and children should be left out in the calculation altogether. He maintained that they were deserving of representation everywhere. He did not care where they were, whether it was in the far North or in other portions of the colony, the same principle should apply to them as to the other portions of the community. To contend that a member who represented, say, 1,500 or even 2,000 persons in the extreme North, was not as capable of representing them as a member who represented 2,000 people in any southern portion of the colony, he could not understand. If the hon. member for Cook thought that he was not as capable of representing 2,000 persons in his constituency as any member representing the same number in or around the metropolis of Brisbane, then he placed very much lower value upon himself than he (Mr. Dutton) fancied he did. To argue that because people lived in a distant part of the colony they, therefore, required greater representation, was simply to admit that those who represented them were incapable of doing so. That was the only effect of the argument.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: They cannot always be here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, they ought to be. Men had no right to become representatives if they could not be in the House to attend to their duties.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: They cannot get here.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said then they ought not to undertake the duties they could not perform. He maintained that if a man could not give up the whole of his time to the duties of that House when it was in session, he should not undertake the responsibility and duty of representing a constituency anywhere, either in the far North or near the metropolis. He should always contend that population wherever it might be—whether men, women, or children—was equally entitled to representation, and he maintained also that they could be as effectually represented by men residing in Brisbane, as the constituencies of the metropolis; and if they were not, it was owing entirely to the inefficiency of the men who represented them, and not to the fact that they had not sufficient members in that House.

Mr. PHILP said he thought that the contention of the hon. member for Townsville was open to a compromise. Several hon. members had contended that the Etheridge and Croydon Gold Fields should be represented together, and he thought they ought to be at present. Nearly the whole of the trade of the Etheridge was done in the Gulf ports; only a little was done at Townsville. No trade was done at Cairns from the Etheridge. A few passengers occasionally went that way, and he knew it was the desire of the Etheridge people to get communication with Cairns, which was the nearest port on the eastern seaboard, but until the railway was a long way past Herberton there would be very little, if any, definite trade going into Cairns. If the Etheridge and Croydon were put together and returned two members, there would be ample population in the rest of Carpentaria and in Burke to return two others. Woothakata at present comprised the whole of the Etheridge Gold Field, Thornborough, and all the mining fields about Herberton, and he thought that the Herberton Tin Fields and Thornborough were fully entitled to members for themselves. The distance from Herberton to the Etheridge was about 160 miles over country quite unsettled; in fact, it would be unsafe for a candidate to ride through that country without some assistance. It was only the other day that the manager of a station there was nearly killed by the blacks. At present they had no community of interests. The Herberton people were entirely a tin and silver producing community, and the Etheridge was entirely a goldfield. The Etheridge and Croydon were fairly entitled to two members. The former had been a goldfield for the last seventeen years. Certainly it suffered very much from the continuous rushes to all the later fields, but at the present time it was turning out nearly as much gold as Croydon. The last escort from the Etheridge was within a few hundred ounces of that from Croydon. He knew the population was not so large, but still the Etheridge was an approved goldfield. He did not think sufficient importance was given to the mining industry of the colony. There were only some four members representing entirely mining constituencies—that was, two members for Charters Towers, including Ravenswood, and two members for Gympie. Last year the total exports from their mining fields were valued at £1,500,000 sterling. The total exports of the colony were only £4,200,000, showing that the mines produced more than one-third of the total exports of the colony. Of course he did not contend that they should have one-third of the representation. Far from it; but certainly they ought to have more than four members. They all knew they were working under a very bad mining law, and if any hon. member brought forward a Mining Bill, few members in the Committee would know anything about it. They wanted a few more mining

members, who would bring practical experience to bear upon the subject, and help them to get a really good Mining Bill, so that they might be relieved of the enormous law cases there were all over the colony in relation to new mines. That was all beside the question; but really, when a community of miners exported one-third of the total exports of the whole colony, they were entitled to more than four members. Under the new Bill they would get about seven members; but he thought they ought to have ten at least. It was really an important industry, and in a few years it would be the most important they had in the colony, so they ought to do something to encourage it. It was only last week that a large majority of members agreed to build a railway to Croydon, and if the House agreed that it was necessary to build a railway there the Committee might fairly give that field and the field adjoining some share in the representation of the colony. The Premier said that if Croydon were taken from Carpentaria, and Normanton from the rest of Burke, there would not be sufficient population left to return two members. He would ask the Premier to bear in mind that, when the census was taken in May last, the great pastoral industry in the Burke was employing very few men. The drought had hardly broken up.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. PHILP said at that time there was no shearing going on in that part of the colony, and they knew that during shearing-time large numbers of men were engaged. Again, since the census was taken, the population of Normanton had increased by 500. He hoped the hon. member for Townsville would see his way clear to withdraw his motion and propose as an amendment that they should give two members to the Etheridge and Croydon, and two members to Burke.

The PREMIER said the question before the Committee was that Burke should have two members, and he understood that that would be followed by a proposal that Burke with the rest of Carpentaria should have two members also. As he had said, one of the matters which was most carefully considered was whether it would be desirable to join the Croydon to the Etheridge or to Normanton; but he did not think it made much difference which it was joined to. The Government were willing to give two members to the Croydon Gold Field with Normanton, or with the Etheridge; but he did not see that the remainder of Burke was entitled to two members. If, however, that was done, and the Croydon and Etheridge received two members and Burke received two members, the Cook district must abandon the idea of getting another member.

Mr. HAMILTON: No.

The PREMIER: Let them understand one another. He was prepared to concede two additional members to the North in addition to those proposed in the Bill; but he was not prepared to agree to anything more. That was an extremely fair proposal, and he had some doubt as to whether he was justified as a representative of the whole colony in conceding so much.

The HON. G. THORN: It is two now.

The PREMIER said he heard an hon. member saying it was two now. He was saying what he said when he first got up to speak that afternoon. He said that if the Etheridge were taken from the eastern seaboard, what was left on the eastern seaboard was certainly not entitled to two members. That was the view the Government took, and the view he should ask the Committee to affirm.

The HON. G. THORN said the Premier said he was not prepared to grant two members. He said he would consider another one; but he did not wish to grant it.

Mr. DICKSON said his hon. friend the member for Fassifern was making a mistake. He had always understood from the Premier that since two members had been given to the Downs and the Central district, on reconsideration he would be prepared to give one member to Croydon and one member to Carpentaria. That was two more for the North, and he (Mr. Dickson) thought that was a liberal concession. He must certainly say he did not see how the hon. gentleman could very well accede to the demands made all round the Committee for further representation without completely destroying the symmetry of the Bill. So far as they had gone the two members that had been given, were given with a view of restoring the electoral power which was withdrawn under the provisions of the Bill as it originally stood. As he had already stated, it was wise to restore that power which had been so long vested in those districts to the original position. The same argument did not apply to the North, notwithstanding the forcible arguments of the hon. member for Townsville. The North was clearly provided in the Bill with a large amount of additional representation. The number in the Northern division had been increased from ten to fourteen; in other words, the Bill which originally provided for nine additional members now made provision for eleven additional members, four of whom were for the North; and if two more were granted, out of thirteen additional members, six would belong to the North. So that, though the Northern members might not get all they desired, they got a large additional amount of representation, and if Croydon turned out to be a permanent field with a largely increased population there would be nothing to prevent an additional member being given to it. The Government had shown a desire to do justice to the North, and Northern members would be jeopardising their own interests if they did not accept the offer made by the Government, because the present proposals were being keenly watched, and if more than six additional members were granted to the North there would be so much pressure exercised by other members in the matter of additional members that the Bill would become so cumbersome that it would have to be withdrawn. He did not think Northern members wished the Bill to be shelved, because half a loaf was better than no bread, and if they could increase their electoral power by six members that would be a great deal better than having the Bill shelved.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: We do not want to shelve the Bill. That seems to be the desire of some members on your side.

Mr. DICKSON said he should be sorry, after the measure had been so fully discussed, to see it made so cumbersome and the scheme of representation so disturbed as to necessitate its withdrawal. According to the Bill the quota of population for all the constituencies outside the metropolitan was a total population of 4,854, and an adult male population of 1,363; but in the North, with fourteen members, the quota—which would be considerably reduced by giving two more members—would be a total population of 3,477, and an adult male population of 1,399. The total population with sixty-eight members, excluding the metropolitan constituencies, gave a quota of 4,854 total population, and 1,363 adult male population.

Mr. BLACK: That includes the metropolitan constituencies.

Mr. DICKSON said the hon. member was correct.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: You will have to change your argument now.

Mr. DICKSON said he maintained his position that the quota for the North, even with fourteen members, was 3,477 total and 1,399 adult male population, as against the quota of 4,854 total and 1,363 adult male population in the South. And the quota in the North would be reduced by raising the number of members from fourteen to sixteen. As he said before, he thought the Northern members would do well to be satisfied with two more members in addition to those originally provided for in the Bill.

Mr. HAMILTON said they had been threatened with a probability of the Bill being shelved if they did not accept the slight concession offered and be satisfied. Northern members had no desire to shelve the Bill, but they wished to have what was fair. As the Bill stood, even if the North received two additional members, that part of the colony would be in a comparatively worse position than it was before, because as many additional members had been granted to the South; whilst the population of the North had increased in a far greater ratio than that of the South. He thought the Premier might have met the hon. member for Townsville in a more conciliatory spirit. The spirit in which he met the hon. member would enable the North to form an opinion as to the amount of justice they were likely to receive. In answer to the hon. member for Townsville's request the Premier said that the Northern members would not be satisfied if ten additional members were given to the North. It was time enough, he thought, to object to the giving ten additional members when Northern members asked for them. The Premier also said that the permanency of the Croydon Gold Field had not been established; but evidence had been brought forward to show that the population was large and the field of a decidedly permanent character, and it was of no use to fly in the face of facts. He intended to support the proposition of the hon. member for Townsville, which most Northern members had agreed to support. It had been stated that Cook would not be allowed to have an additional member. Cook was entitled to one additional member at the least, and if any attempt were made to deprive that electorate of what it was entitled to he thought it would be a long time before the Bill got through committee. Hon. members had been warned that Croydon might become deserted like other fields; but he would point out that in most of those other cases the fields were not deserted because they were valueless, but on account of the want of assistance by way of communication and otherwise which they should have obtained from the Government. Some of those fields were actually coming to the front at the present time—the Palmer, for instance, contained one of the richest fields ever discovered in the colony. At Maytown, recently, crushings had taken place, giving 80 oz. to the ton, and one mine there was floated for a large sum in London the other day. The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, proposed that the Etheridge should be included with Croydon; but Croydon was large enough to have two members without the inclusion of the Etheridge. As to the statement that the Etheridge was turning out as much gold at present as Croydon, that might possibly be the case, but it was due to the fact that whereas there was a sufficient amount of machinery at the Etheridge to supply all wants, there was not one-fourth the machinery required at Croydon, though some was being taken there from the Etheridge. There were thousands of tons of auriferous quartz waiting to be crushed at Croy-

don, and if they had four times the machinery there which they had at present it could all be employed, and then Croydon might turn out four times as much gold as was being turned out there at present. He was sorry to hear the hon. member for Wide Bay, Mr. Mellor, express himself as he did with respect to the additional members now asked for. It should be remembered that it was immaterial to miners from what part of the colony they got the precious metals, and therefore all the mining members should assist the mining interest to secure adequate representation, no matter in what part of the colony it was being prosecuted. The hon. member stated that on one occasion there were 15,000 adult males at Gympie. That was hardly correct, as he believed the greatest number there at one time was 12,000; but even supposing the number was 15,000 it was rather a disingenuous argument to found on that that the large population at Croydon might decrease considerably in a very short time, because the hon. member must know that at the time there was so large a population of adult males in Gympie they subsisted on alluvial mining. Every miner knew that that alluvial would be very shortly worked out, and there were never 15,000 or half that number of men engaged upon the reefs at Gympie. The miners at that time did not as a rule believe in the permanency of the reefs at Gympie, and they only slowly and gradually ascertained the mineral wealth of the Gympie reefs.

Mr. SMYTH: Quartz-mining was new to the colony then.

Mr. HAMILTON said that was so, and the miners at that time did not believe that Gympie would become the valuable reefing country it had since proved to be. There were more miners engaged in reefing at Gympie at the present time than ever there were before, and year after year they were increasing. The Premier stated that if in five years' time Croydon had as large a population as it had now, it would then be entitled to the additional members asked for. But five years was a long time in the history of a goldfield, and unless good reason could be shown for supposing that the population of Croydon would decrease, he did not see why it was not as much entitled to two members as Gympie was now. The hon. member for Wide Bay said no goldfield was a certainty. That might be, but if it was an argument at all, it could be applied to the refusal to give Gympie an additional member, because Gympie was no more a certainty than Croydon. He was open to correction, but he did not believe that gold had yet been got in the third bed of slate at Gympie; and that being the case, it was just probable that Gympie would be worked out in a few years' time, or before Croydon. He hoped, however, that gold would be found in the third bed of slate at Gympie, just as he hoped the Croydon field would be found to be permanent. The Premier had stated that the representation in the North was two to one of that in the South, but the hon. gentleman's own statistics would show that to be incorrect, whether on the adult male or the general population basis. The hon. gentleman also stated that the percentage of increase in the South was greater than in the North; but on looking at the figures he found the reverse was the case. Taking the group comprising Somerset, Cook, Cairns, Palmer, Woothakata, Etheridge, Cardwell, and Herberton, it would be found that during the years from 1881 to 1886 the population there had increased by 40 per cent. Whereas the group comprising Darling Downs North—subdivision 2, Darling Downs Central, Darling Downs East, and

Darling Downs West—Dalby, Drayton, and Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, and Highfields, during the same year had only increased by 12 per cent. That was a proof that instead of increasing in greater proportion than the northern portion of the colony, the South actually increased its population in a less proportion than the North. The hon. gentleman further stated that the influx in the North arose from the number of Chinese, but that again was incorrect, and the census tables proved it. Many years ago the population of Chinese in the Cook district alone was about 17,000, and yet, according to the census, while the white population was greatly increasing, as he had shown, the number of Chinese was reduced to 3,374. The Minister for Works, in opposing the suggestion, said the adult male population was not the proper basis to go upon, and that the general population was the proper basis. He admitted that the adult male population was not the only basis to go by any more than the general population was; but he thought an adult male was entitled to greater representation than an infant three months old. He found that by the Premier's own figures Croydon was entitled to two members, because, on the lowest computation, the population of the place was 5,700, and that would give 2,350 to each member. He found also that the Bulloo and Gregory, with a general population—men, women, and children—of 2,362 and 2,067 respectively, were entitled to return two members. Surely if that number of men, women, and children was sufficient to return two members an equal number of adult males should be entitled to return two members at Croydon.

Mr. BULCOCK: What about the Metropolitan group?

Mr. HAMILTON said it was admitted that no single constituency in Queensland was represented on the same basis as the metropolitan constituencies. If the Premier was in earnest he would see the request they made was a modest one, and no argument had been adduced to prove that it was not. The hon. gentleman had given one argument in support of his contention that Croydon might not prove to be a permanent field by instancing several other fields, which he stated were just as populous at one time as Croydon was now, and which appeared to have as good prospects on one occasion. But the hon. gentleman was very unfortunate in the selections he made. The hon. gentleman mentioned Gilberton, and stated that there were as many prospecting areas granted for Gilberton as for Croydon; but the fact was that there were not as many prospecting areas granted for Gilberton, Woolgar, and Etheridge together as were granted for Croydon. If the Premier would fairly meet the objections of the hon. member for Townsville he would do more to do away with the desire for separation than anything he had done during the present Parliament.

Mr. SMYTH said he had not intended to speak, but his electorate had been referred to several times that night. The hon. member who had just sat down had compared it to Croydon Gold Field, and had said there were no more signs of permanency at Gympie than at Croydon. It was twenty years that month since Gympie Gold Field was opened, and about nineteen years of that had been devoted to quartz-mining. At the present time some of those mines were only just starting, whereas others had four or five years' work open, and the mining industry in Queensland had a future before it equal to any other mining community in Australia. He did not like to hear his constituency spoken lightly of.

Mr. HAMILTON: I had no such intention.

Mr. SMYTH said the Croydon Gold Field promised to be one of the grandest goldfields in Australia, and he was glad of it; but there were cases where a mining district had taken a great spurt and fallen away very suddenly. Where was there a field in Queensland which had opened with greater promise than the Hodgkinson? That field now had become very nearly depopulated. He must say that he did not think Croydon would fall off in that way. It might seem strange for him as a mining member to vote against the hon. members for Townsville and Cook, but he intended to vote with the Premier on that question. He would vote with the miners on any question which would assist the mining industry, but when additional representation was given he thought it was a fair thing to take it thankfully. The constituency he represented was a mining constituency, and while three constituencies in the colony which had only about 1,400 voters had had two members each, his district, with 1,500 or 1,600 on the roll for years, had been at the disadvantage of only having one. They were now going to get two, but the boundaries were extended so that they would have 2,600 or 2,700 voters. He thought, looking at the Bill, that it could not be very much improved. He thought nearly every constituency in the colony had been well looked after, and the Bill must have been very carefully thought out. It would give satisfaction to the electors throughout the colony, if it did not to all the members of the House.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said that, from the tone of argument adopted by the Government and some of their supporters, it would seem as if the North were asking a very unfair thing indeed. It appeared to be forgotten that seven additional members had been added to the Southern division, and all they claimed for the North was that they also should have seven additional members. The Central and Northern groups combined were in a minority of seventeen as compared with the Southern and Metropolitan group. The Minister for Works had adopted a high falutin style about members who were not prepared to sacrifice the whole of their time in coming to the House to represent their constituencies. Now, there was not in the colony a large number of affluent men who could afford to spend five or six months of the year away from their business, even if they got two guineas a day to assist them, so that in many cases the Northern constituencies had to come to Brisbane and get Brisbane lawyers to represent them. There was the hon. member for Bowen, Mr. Chubb—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And the member for Cook.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he was not a lawyer, and he had only become a resident of Brisbane since he represented Cook. Then there was the member for Kennedy, the Attorney-General; he was another Brisbane lawyer.

Mr. HAMILTON: He is no lawyer.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the Northern constituencies were a little tired of Brisbane lawyers, and there were not so many in the House now as when he first entered it. At that time there were eleven of the legal fraternity out of fifty-five members. The Northern members now were merely asking a fair thing. The South was to get seven additional members, and surely the North should get the same.

The PREMIER: Why?

Mr. W. BROOKES: Breed up.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had no doubt they would very soon breed up. The Premier had threatened to chuck the Bill out if he did not get what he wanted. Well, if they were not to get

what they were fairly entitled to, he (Mr. Hill) would rather see the Bill chucked out, and let the elections be held with the present electoral divisions. Those crude divisions had been laid down by the Premier without consulting any of his supporters. He was certain none of the Northern members had been consulted—he spoke for himself, at all events, and if he was not it was not likely than any hon. members on the other side were. The members who, from their position in the House, might reasonably be supposed to know something about the proper divisions of the districts were never consulted at all; the Premier marked the districts out on his own responsibility, trying to abide by certain hard-and-fast lines of relative numbers. If the Premier succeeded in carrying the division, and allowed only one member to Burke, he supposed they would have to accept it, but he gave the hon. gentleman notice that there would be considerable debate before the Bill got very much further. He really did think that if the Premier would look at the question fairly, and take into consideration that he had added seven members to the southern part of the colony—a small portion of the colony which, he granted, was thickly populated—he should have no hesitation in granting at least seven additional members to the northern part of the colony, which certainly was the most progressive.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not hold with a great deal that had fallen from the hon. gentleman who had just sat down. He did not think that any member of the House wished to make a farce or burlesque of the Bill.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I did not say I did.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. gentleman did not say so in so many words, but the proposal he indicated would have that effect. Probably he did not quite understand what might be deduced from the statements and arguments he made use of. He (Mr. Morehead) thought, however—he was not speaking with any authority from the Northern members—but he thought that a compromise might fairly be effected. He thought that if three members were given to the Northern group it would be rather below than above what they really had a right to demand, and as he was sure that the bulk of the Committee was desirous of settling the matter as fairly as a vexed question such as that could be settled, it would be well if some arrangement could be come to. He had not sufficient technical knowledge to indicate where the boundaries or divisions of the districts should be.

The PREMIER: It could not be done fairly.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought it could; otherwise he would not advocate it. He had always been a representative of a Southern or Central constituency, and his sympathies must, to a great extent, be with the southern part of the colony; but at the same time he was desirous, as he hoped every member of the Committee was, to do what was right to the North. It was the young part of the colony. It might be called their big baby. Perhaps it was crying for something more than it ought to get, but it was a portion of the colony that he should be very sorry to see in any way ill-treated. He thought if the hon. member for Townsville would accept a compromise, such as he had suggested to the Premier, and if the Premier could see his way to adopt it, it would be a solution of a vexed question, and after all could do no very great harm. If there was any inequality and not sufficient population to justify the increase it would be justified very soon, judging by the present rate of progress of the northern part of the colony. He was sure that most of them were

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anxious to get the Bill passed, and even if there were a few inequalities in the divisions it would be better to have the Bill passed than to imperil its passing by straining at gnats.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member for Gympie appeared to think that he wished to disparage Gympie, but he had no such desire. He had simply compared the prospects of Gympie with Croydon. The hon. member stated that Gympie had been at work twenty years. Well, as nothing had been got below 600 feet, yet it was evident that a great deal of work must have been done, and the reefs partially worked out. At Croydon, which was a very large field extending over several thousand square miles, no greater depth than 300 feet had been reached, but it had been proved to that depth, and that was a fair indication that it had many years of permanency before it.

Mr. McWHANNELL said from the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition he seemed inclined to come to some compromise with regard to the Northern representation; but he would like to point out the adult population which was required to return six members in the Western pastoral group. In the electorate of Barcoo 1,791, Bulloo 1,440, Burke 2,063, Gregory 1,444, Mitchell 1,578, and Warrego 1,849. Now, as the Darling Downs group had been extended to take in a portion of the Warrego, it would reduce the electors in the Warrego electorate very considerably, and he thought that the Western pastoral group was in one sense entitled to another member. The Burke was one of those electorates, and he thought it would be a very fair thing for the Premier to give an additional member to the Burke district. If he wanted to enlarge the Burke district he could do it very easily, as there was a decided community of interests between it and other districts adjoining—for instance, the northern part of the Mitchell electorate. All the traffic and trade came down to Townsville. In the electorate that he had the honour to represent, their interests were in sympathy with the North. The whole of the traffic of the eastern part of the district came to Townsville, and the traffic from the western part went to Normanton and Burketown respectively. Now, the Burke had still a very large population, even with Normanton added, and the population could be made up from the other districts adjoining, if necessary. At the same time he believed that the electors of Gregory preferred that the electorate should remain as it was at the present time, providing that a second member was given to the Burke district. The Premier must bear in mind that there was a great scarcity of Northern pastoral representatives in the House.

The PREMIER: They generally get a very good share of what is going.

Mr. McWHANNELL said he did not think they got quite as much as the South. They certainly did not get as much as they ought to get by that Bill, nor anything like as much as the Darling Downs or West Moreton, or other districts got. He thought, looking at the question fairly, and considering that there was a large population at Cloncurry—even though a few had migrated to Croydon, still they had their homes at Cloncurry, and would, at no very distant date, return there—that the matter might be remedied by the Premier giving an additional member to the Western pastoral group. The hon. gentleman must acknowledge that there was a scarcity of pastoral representatives in the House, and he might fairly grant that concession.

The PREMIER said the proposal he had made was a very reasonable one indeed, and he hoped hon. members would accept it. He was

bound to guard the interests of the whole colony and not of one particular district only. Some hon. members appeared to think that they were justified in regarding only their own particular districts. It would be perfectly impossible to grant such concessions as were asked; if he did every other district would be looking forward to similar concessions. For what had been done up to the present time he had given reasons, and he had also given reasons why two extra members should be given to the North; whether that should be done by taking the Etheridge from the eastern side, or leaving it where it was, and giving one member to the eastern and one to the western district, was a question for consideration. Perhaps it would be better for the Etheridge to be joined on to Croydon, as proposed. He was prepared to accept that proposal, though that gave the district even more than it was entitled to on the basis of population.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said that, as far as he was concerned as a representative of the Cook district, he would be satisfied with three members for Cook. He thought it was fully entitled to that representation. If they could only get anything like fair play for the North he was quite prepared to assist the Premier in every way that he could. But the hon. gentleman must remember that he had given seven additional members to the Southern electorates. He (Mr. Hill) did not see why the voting power should not be kept equal, at all events, to what it was before the Bill was introduced, even though there was a larger population in the South. If, instead of a Redistribution Bill, a measure had been brought in providing for a few additional members, he was quite sure that the claims of the North would have been recognised, and that those additional members would have been awarded to the North. As it was, Dalby just got its finger in the pie and got additional representation. Then other members, instead of going on broad lines, began a scramble for additional representation for other electorates. For his own part, he decidedly considered that the Etheridge and Croydon Gold Fields should be formed into one district, as they had a concordance of interests. That district should return two members. It was for the Committee to decide whether the balance of the Burke district should return one or two members, but he thought it well worthy to return two.

The PREMIER said he did not think it was desirable to give Burke two members in any case. They might give Burke one member, and call the other part of the electorate "Cloncurry" or "Hughenden," whichever might be the more convenient name. He thought that "Cloncurry" would probably be the better name. Of course, the country along the eastern side of the Gulf, which was included in the district of Carpentaria, had nothing to do with Croydon. He thought it would be convenient to divide the electorate so as to make the census districts of Cloncurry and Hughenden form one pastoral district. The boundaries would, however, require adjustment. The remainder of Burke—that was the shore of the Gulf, and extending on the west to the south-west of Cloncurry—should form another district, to be called "Burke." He thought that would be a good division, and if the suggestion he made were accepted, he would propose it, and give the weight of the Government to carrying it into effect. The Cook electorate, on the eastern side, would stand as now proposed, and Cairns and Woothakata would have to be remodelled, Cairns being the seaboard part of the Cairns district, with probably the table-land on the top of the range. He knew that would please the people there very much. Woothakata would then consist of Port Douglas, the Hodgkinson, and the Herberton Tin Fields. He knew that

would suit the people there, as he had had communications from various parts of that district, suggesting some similar division. As he understood most hon. members who were familiar with the district thought that would be a better arrangement, he was prepared to accept the proposal, and had pointed out the way in which effect could be given to it. He was not making that suggestion on the spur of the moment, but had considered it several weeks ago, and had fully considered the several combinations it would involve.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the last communication he had from the Cairns people on the subject was a telegram dated 4th October, which was as follows:—

"Had numerous calls upon me concerning boundaries Cairns electorate. General desire people is that Point Cooper south of the mouth rivers Russell Mulgrave then west to Main Divide including watershed Barron thence north to past Granite Creek thence east to Double Island should be the boundaries for Cairns electorate. This would take in Russell and Mulgrave rivers' selectors who are virtually Cairns people also Carlington Atherton and Granite Creek townships. This would take in the Barron valley with the police district of Cairns. All the places are purely agricultural and have direct interests with Cairns. The population in the area is fully 5,000 souls three-fifths of whom are male adults. General desire here also not to be tacked on to Port Douglas who would always have conflicting interests with Cairns proper."

The Port Douglas people had not the slightest wish to be tacked on to the Cairns people. He had had a good many telegrams from them on the subject, but at that late hour he would not trouble the Committee with reading them. They were all unanimous in not wishing to be appended to Cairns. The two places unfortunately had conflicting and competing interests, and they did not wish to be boxed up in one electorate together. There was plenty of room, as the Premier had pointed out, to keep them separate in a way which the hon. gentleman had not thought of on his first idea of the subject.

The PREMIER: All those ideas and plans were very fully considered.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Considered by men who were unacquainted with either the people or the district.

The PREMIER: I consider I know as much about them as you do.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he did not think so, and could not accept the assertion. He had had a cruise around there two or three times, with considerable expenditure of trouble and labour, and he thought he had kept himself pretty well posted in the wants of the district since he had been its representative. The Premier, no doubt, knew something about it; but he had forty or fifty electorates to look after, while he (Mr. Hill) had only one. He could not, therefore, keep himself in touch with any individual constituency especially one so far away, as the representative himself could. He claimed, therefore, that he was in more intimate touch with his constituency, and knew more about its position, than even the Premier. He was well contented to accept the suggestion of the Premier, which was really his own, especially as he never asked for anything that was unreasonable.

Mr. CHUBB said he wished the Premier would see his way to give a little more consideration to the suggestion of the leader of the Opposition. The hon. member for Townsville asked for four additional Northern members; the Premier was willing to give two; and the leader of the Opposition suggested three, which was a fair ground for arriving at a compromise. The figures cited by the hon. member for Townsville showed that on the adult male population basis the North was entitled to fully four additional members. Adding 5,000, which was the adult male population of Croydon, would bring the



average up to 1,399 for seventeen members, leaving 800 and odd over, and there were at least 1,000 more who had not been taken into consideration. He hoped the suggestion of the leader of the Opposition would be taken into consideration.

Mr. HAMILTON said he considered the suggestion of the Premier was hardly fair to the Cook electorate. The population had greatly increased since the census was taken, and it was certainly entitled to an additional member.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that after all the discussion they had had, and after the declaration of the intentions of the Government, and considering also the compromise proposed by the leader of the Opposition, he thought it would be advisable to adjourn, so as to give Northern members an opportunity of consulting on the question. There was another point on which he wished to say a word. The Premier had accused the Northern members, and more especially himself, as being irreconcilable, in a very ill-natured, ill-mannered speech, which was unbecoming a man occupying his position and having his dignity also. Since the hon. gentleman had been at the head of the Government he had never been troubled with obstruction from that side of the House, and he forgot, probably, the line which he used to take when he himself was in opposition, the vile language he used, and the amount of obstruction to which he subjected the then Government. That had never been returned to him in the slightest degree, nor would it be as far as he was concerned. And yet the hon. gentleman said that if even ten additional members were offered to the North they would not be content; they would want more. No such disposition had ever been shown by any of the Northern members, nor would it be, but they certainly were justified in objecting to two additional members when on any basis that might be suggested they were entitled to more. In estimating the population which had been brought into the North since the census was taken, he had simply confined himself to the increase in the Burke district—the old Burke electorate. He had said nothing of the increase elsewhere, which was well known to almost every member of the Committee. He did not say a word about the increase in the tin-miners on the Annan and Bloomfield, in which places there were not 100 between the two at the time the census was taken, whilst there were now from 900 to 1,000. He had said nothing in reference to the increase of navvies in the Cairns district, where there were about 1,000 men at the present time, although there was not one of them there when the census was taken. He had said nothing of those facts, but had simply confined himself to the increase of population that had taken place through the discovery of the Croydon Gold Field. Hon. members should take those matters into consideration in calculating the number of members for the whole group. He did not claim members for any particular electorate. Hon. members on both sides of the Committee knew very well that he claimed additional representation for the whole group, because the hon. gentleman himself had arranged the whole colony into groups composed of different electorates. It was only for the group he (Mr. Macrossan) had contended. If he had mentioned the increase of population in the whole group, instead of making it 25,000 adult males, as was stated by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, it would have been over 27,000; so that the hon. the Premier, in making such rash statements had gone far beyond what was discreet, and he thought he had done it for a purpose. He had known the hon. gentleman on several occasions to make strange statements in that Committee, with

the intention and purpose of inflaming the mind of his own supporters. Now, hon. members on that side wished the matter to be discussed calmly and fairly, and he thought it was about time the Chairman left the chair, and let them come to the discussion to-morrow in a better frame of mind. In the meantime Northern members would have an opportunity of consulting together, because they were at one upon the interests of the whole group. They did not quarrel amongst themselves because, say, Bowen had only 1,000 adult males and Cook had 2,000. They did not complain of that, but took the representation of the whole group into consideration. They wanted to be able to consult together and see what conclusion they would come to. If they came to the conclusion that they must accept the proposition of the Premier, of course they would do so, but they could not accept it that night. He would just reply to the statement the hon. gentleman had made to the effect that they were irreconcilable, and that in everything the Government did they tried to show that they were not doing what was right. Now, if they had that idea they should simply have protested against the number of members given to the North, and have accepted them—accepted them under protest. Then they would have had a splendid opportunity of telling the people of the North how they were under-represented in that House, and by whose means they were under-represented. But they did not wish to do that. They simply wished and tried to get the representation the people of the North were entitled to, and to let them know when they went to the North that they had got what they were justly entitled to. He hoped the hon. the Premier in future, during the discussion on the Bill, would not lose his temper and make rash statements such as he had made, and he trusted also that he would move the Chairman out of the chair.

The PREMIER said when he accused hon. members opposite, and the hon. member for Townsville in particular, with being irreconcilable, and trying to make it always appear when the Government were endeavouring to do justice to the North that still they were trying to do injustice to it, he said so because he thought so. He could not draw any other inference from what had taken place during the present session. No matter what the Government did for the purpose of acceding to the claims of the North they had always been met with the statement that it was a hollow mockery—that they were playing with the North. That had been done over and over again, and he confessed that although he had a tolerably large share of patience, he did lose it when their earnest, honest endeavours were met in that way, and he was not ashamed if he got angry sometimes under such circumstances. With regard to the increase of population, he was quite aware that the hon. member for Townsville had in his speech referred only to the increase of population in the Burke district. He was also aware that there had been an increase of population on the eastern side of that part of the colony. He had pointed that out when moving the first reading of the Bill, and it had been allowed for in forming the electorates. Cairns and Woothakata, as proposed, had a comparatively small population as disclosed by the census, but he had pointed out that the population of Cairns had increased largely and was still increasing, and he also gave reasons for supposing that other increases would take place. Then they had been told that the population had been increased by tin-miners on the Bloomfield and Annan. Where did they come from?

Mr. HAMILTON : South,



The PREMIER said they were asked to believe that whenever there was an accretion of numbers in any Northern district they came from other parts of the colony, but it was well known that they did not. They were chiefly miners who came from other parts of the district, and that must be taken into consideration. He did not wish to press the matter to a conclusion that night, but was quite prepared, if Northern members wished to consult upon the subject, to give them an opportunity of doing so. But he must impress upon hon. members that the Government were bound to consider the interests of the whole colony, and that in giving the North two additional members they had gone quite as far as they were justified in doing. He believed that to do otherwise would be doing a great injustice, and he was not quite sure that in making even that concession they were not doing a great injustice to other parts of the colony. Still, he had said he was prepared to do so, and he would stick to what he said, but he should certainly not be prepared to give way any further.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he hoped the debate would be adjourned, and that they should have a sketch map prepared showing a rough outline of the proposed alteration.

The PREMIER: I will show it to you to-morrow if you come to my office.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would be very happy to do so. As regarded the increased population on the eastern coast; since the census had been taken he had received a communication from Cooktown showing that the approximate increase in that district, by taking the passengers in and out, was over 2,000 persons, or about 1,300 adults. Again, it was stated that on the tin-fields of Bloomfield and the surrounding district, extending about 300 miles, there was a considerable increase, and there was also an increase by nearly 300 railway workers. That statement came from a resident of Cooktown, and he believed the figures were quite reliable; at any rate they could be checked to see if they were correct. Some hon. members might shake their heads and disbelieve that there had been that increase in the North, but they were members who had never been there and knew nothing whatever of its capabilities.

Mr. GRIMES: All nonsense!

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: The hon. member for Oxley said it was all nonsense, but he had never been much beyond Oxley, as far as he (Mr. Hill) was aware, and knew nothing of what was going on in the North, or other parts of the colony. What the North asked for was only an equitable concession, and he hoped it would be granted.

The PREMIER said the increase of population of the colony since the census had been taken was about 50,000. They had heard that additional representation was required for an increase of 10,000 in the North, but what about the additional representation required for the other 40,000?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Where did you get your figures from?

The PREMIER said he thought the hon. member must have forgotten the annual returns. The population at the time of the census was, if he was not mistaken, 300,000. There had been an estimated increase of about 35,000 up to the end of the year, and from then up to the present time probably it had increased by another 35,000; but he had taken it at only 50,000. He moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would refer the hon. gentleman to the statistics. If he read both statistics carefully he would find

that there was a great blunder. He would find that the gentleman who made the estimate took no account of the real population at all in the past. He went completely over it and took his own estimate, which he made the previous year, and which was a blunder. That was continued from year to year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he trusted that when the Premier came down to-morrow he would be in a little better temper. If he was angry with his own supporters it was no reason why he should pour out the vials of his wrath on the Opposition. He was certainly very discourteous to the hon. member for Townsville; but taking into consideration the annoyance he was subjected to night after night, he (Mr. Morehead) sympathised with him deeply. He hoped, at any rate, that if the Premier were exasperated with those who were the cause of his annoyance, he would not be so with the Opposition.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

## MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1878 AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from the Legislative Council, returning this Bill with the amendments indicated in the accompanying schedule, in which they requested the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the message of the Legislative Council be taken into consideration to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

### VALUATION BILL.

The SPEAKER also announced that he had received a message from the Legislative Council intimating that the Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, relative to two clerical errors in the Valuation Bill, concur in the amendments made by the Assembly.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. It is proposed to go on with the Electoral Districts Bill as the first Government business to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-two minutes past 10 o'clock.