

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 20 OCTOBER 1887

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which is suitable for railway purposes, are Mr. Phillips; Mr. McGhie, the superintendent of maintenance in the Maryborough district; and Mr. Miller, who is superintendent of bridge-work on the Southern and Western Railway. The two latter gentlemen have had a great deal of experience in this matter, and Mr. Phillips has been appointed on account of his general knowledge of railways.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—In connection with the answer made I do not wish to move the adjournment of the House, but I should like to say that the commission should be instructed to inspect the Mourilyan railway. There is a plantation called the Mourilyan Sugar Plantation, and I think the commission should examine the manager and proprietors of the railway there, and ascertain what their experience of scrub timber for railway purposes is.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—The commission have been instructed, if they have time, to go on to Mourilyan. I believe the railway there should be inspected, as scrub timbers have been used on it, and the experience of the owners would be valuable.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to refer to this matter. The Minister for Works might get a great deal of information in Brisbane on this subject from Mr. Bashford, the contractor who laid down the Mourilyan line; from Mr. Gulland, of Ipswich, who is one of the proprietors; and from Mr. Nash, who is manager of the estate. The opinions of those gentlemen would be very valuable, and reliable information might be obtained from them as to the utter valuelessness of the scrub timber that was used on the Mourilyan line. It has been a constant source of trouble; not only the timber that was used for sleepers, but for culverts and bridges. It was anticipated in the first instance that this timber would be very satisfactory, but after two or three years' trial it has had to be renewed with a better description of timber. I cannot give any information about it except that timber which was supposed to last for several years has lasted for only about as many months.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to:—

By Mr. LUMLEY HILL—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a Return showing the amount of tin-ore shipped at the port of Cooktown for the twelve months up to and directly preceding 30th September last.

BRITISH NEW GUINEA (QUEENSLAND) BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time and passed.

The PREMIER moved that the Bill be transmitted to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I would like to ask the Premier a question in connection with this Bill. Of course I know I am rather out of order in doing so, as the Order of the Day was declared "formal." I did not wish to declare it "not formal." The Premier had an interview with Sir Henry Parkes I believe, on his return from England.

The PREMIER: Yes.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: At that interview I understand the position of New Guinea affairs, and the Bill which had been agreed to at the Imperial Conference, were

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 20 October, 1887.

Question without Notice—Timber for Railway Bridges.—Formal Motion.—British New Guinea (Queensland) Bill—third reading.—Question.—Motion for Adjournment.—Sale of Land at New Farm.—Claim of Mr. E. B. C. Corser—report from committee.—Cooneana Railway Bill—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

TIMBER FOR RAILWAY BRIDGES.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to ask the Minister for Works a question without notice; that is, if he can tell the House who are the gentlemen who have been appointed to visit Cairns to report upon the timber being used upon the construction of some of the bridges on the Cairns-Herberton railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said: Mr. Speaker,—The commission appointed to inquire into the question of bridge timber, or timber in the neighbourhood of Cairns

discussed. Now, is it not a fact that Sir Henry Parkes told the Premier on that occasion that New South Wales would agree to the passing of that Bill, and the extent of the subsidy or any alteration would have no effect upon their promise?

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I will answer the hon. gentleman's question. I should have liked to have got Sir Henry Parkes to say so; but all I could get him to say was that if I would communicate with him formally I should receive a formal answer. He left me with that hope in my mind, but I could get nothing definite from him.

Question put and passed.

QUESTION.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL asked the Minister for Works:—

What was the amount of money paid by the Government for the site of the court-house at Mount Perry, and to whom was the amount so paid?

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

The amount paid was £519 15s., and the money was paid to J. C. Smyth.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

SALE OF LAND AT NEW FARM.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to draw the attention of the Premier and the House to a matter, I think, of some importance, and I will conclude with the usual motion for the adjournment of the House. I notice that in another place yesterday the Hon. W. H. Walsh drew attention to the proposed sale of a block of land close to the boundaries of the city of Brisbane, and which, I think, every member of the House will agree it is desirable should be retained as one of the lungs of the city. This block of land is at New Farm, and has been used for some time as a review ground by the volunteers and Defence Force, and ought not to be sold. I am not certain what the Government think about it, but I am certain the citizens of Brisbane and its surroundings would be very glad if it could be reserved as a recreation ground for that neighbourhood of the city. That suburb is becoming very thickly populated, and there is no other portion of land in the district as suitable for preservation as a recreation ground or as a lung for the city. The adjoining block of land has been disposed of within the last few days. If the Government could see their way to secure this block of land, they would secure a boon not only for the citizens of Brisbane, but for those who may visit Brisbane. It is a well-known fact that the citizens of Brisbane and its neighbourhood have been deprived of lands that would have been suitable as lungs for the city, and it is doubly desirable that in a hot climate like this these open spaces for recreation should be preserved. I have no hesitation in saying that if this block of land at New Farm is sold there will be several hundreds of inhabitants settled upon it, and it is quite possible from its low position that it will become a very unhealthy portion of the city. But if it is left as it is—an open space for recreation, with the sea-breeze blowing across it—it will prove a most desirable possession to preserve for the public. I am not certain what amount would be necessary to purchase this land from the present holders, but I hope the Government will take the matter up and see if it cannot be secured for the people. Seeing that this matter was referred to in the Legislative Council, and as I have not had an opportunity of seeing the members of the Government upon it, I think it desirable to call attention to it here, and I hope it will be received

as favourably in this Chamber as it was received in another place. I would like to hear what the Premier has to say on the matter. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—So far as my individual opinion in this matter goes I have no hesitation in saying that for many reasons I think this land should be retained as an open space. First of all, because it is situated in a part of the city that is already thickly populated and likely to be more thickly populated, and where such an open space is very necessary. And another reason is that it is the only level piece of ground within, I think, ten miles of Brisbane, where as many as 1,000 men could be reviewed; and we may often have occasion to review as many as 1,000 men. I should be very glad if the Government could see their way to buy that land. They were approached on the subject some months ago, but for various reasons they could not then deal with it. One reason was that one of my then colleagues was one of the proprietors, and another was concerned in the sale of the land, and under those circumstances we did not feel justified in entertaining the question at all. That was an accidental circumstance which does not any longer exist; and if it were the unanimous desire of the House that the purchase should be made I should be very glad to advise my colleagues to buy the land. On the other hand, the purchase could not be made without the expenditure of a large sum of money, and I do not think the Government would be justified in spending that money without a tolerably unanimous expression of a desire on the part of the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Let the corporation buy it.

The PREMIER: The corporation have not the money to buy it, and besides it is beyond the municipality. Some wealthy man ought to buy it and present it to the community; but no man, I believe, who has the money is prepared to spend it for that purpose. I sincerely wish that the land could be acquired.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: How much would it cost?

The PREMIER: I believe they expect to get £50,000 for it by auction. I do not think they will get as much as that; and the Government could acquire it, I have no doubt, for less than that. I believe the land is to be sold on Saturday, and if the Government are to do anything they must do it at once. Ordinarily the Government are not justified in spending money without the sanction of Parliament, and I should certainly not feel justified in advising my colleagues to agree to such a thing unless it were clear that Parliament considered it ought to be done. I am quite aware that things of that kind have sometimes been done, and the approval of Parliament asked afterwards, but that is not a correct position to take up. There is an extremely strong case in favour of purchasing this land, because as a matter of fact it is unique in its situation and character.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: How much is there?

The PREMIER: About fifty acres, and I believe it is valued at £1,000 an acre, subdivided. My hon. colleague, the Postmaster-General, in consequence of something that took place in another place yesterday, was waited upon by a gentleman who made him an offer which would enable the Government to acquire it for considerably less than that. If I remember rightly, it was offered to the Government for £40,000. I am not sure that that is not too much. However, as I say, it is the only level open space remaining near Brisbane, and that is the most important thing in it. I do not think

I can say any more on the subject. I think my hon. friend the member for Fortitude Valley was quite right in introducing the subject, and if the House generally approve of the purchase, the Government will be prepared to undertake the responsibility of buying the land; but I do not think the Government would be justified in incurring a liability of £40,000 or thereabouts unless we were clear that it was the general desire of the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—There can be no doubt that it would be a very great benefit to Brisbane—to that portion of Brisbane, at any rate—if this land were secured by the Government; but there are many objections to that course. If this principle be affirmed with regard to Brisbane, it cannot cease there; it must be applied to every large centre of population in the colony. Then, even taking Brisbane itself, as the town spreads many other parts will require recreation grounds and parks as well as that particular locality. But the best reason of all, to my mind, against the proposal is that the Government have not got the money, and we cannot afford it. It is as much as we can do to scratch along as we are without buying land at an enormous cost for parks. If land is desired as a recreation ground for the people of Brisbane, it can be got further out of town where it can be approached by railway, at a very much less cost than this. This land is exceptionally valuable, and therefore an exceptionally high price is naturally asked for it. Having regard to all the surroundings, I do not think the Premier can hope, and I do not think he did hope, for any unanimous expression of opinion in favour of this purchase. As regards the question of reserves, what has been the action of the present Government themselves? They have sold every scrap of land they could lay their hands on in the towns. On the one hand they make away with the property of the people—portion of the lungs of the city—and now it is suggested that we should spend £40,000 in purchasing land for a public reserve. The position is utterly inconsistent. I would certainly not be one to agree to this purchase being made.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the question brought before the House by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley is about the severest commentary that could be made on the action of the Government in trying to sell the reserves in all the townships all over the colony. But now the people of Brisbane feel the want of a reserve so much that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley asks if the Government could not by some means get this land back for the recreation of the people. Now, wherever there has been a piece of land to be sold in any town, even in Brisbane, the Government have sold it, even at the railway station, where every inch of ground within the railway fence will be required within a few years. I am extremely sorry that there is so little land reserved; it is the fault of previous Governments, and of the people themselves, who did not look after their own interests in time. It is, to a great extent, the fault of those who had charge of the city—the municipal council; they have always been too complacent with the Government for the time being, forgetting the interests of the people. Now, although I disapprove of the action of the Government in selling those reserves, still I think some way out of this might be found. Would the people who own this land not take Government debentures in payment? Someone says No; I do not know why; I think they might take Government debentures; it would be a greater security, anyhow, than putting

it up to auction. Then the Government might recoup themselves by another process. There is a piece of ground at present in Sydney almost a waste, which is about to be reclaimed by the New South Wales Government. A portion of it is going to be sold for villa residences, and the expectation there is that the amount received for these sites will recoup the Government for the expense they are at in reclaiming the whole of the rest of the land. Now, could not something of the same kind be done with these fifty acres? Could not a road be made round the land, and sites for villa residences sold on the road fronting what would be a public park? The money derived from that would go a very long way towards recouping the Government for the expense they would be at. I think that is worth considering. I am quite sure that this House would be very pleased to do anything, not only for Brisbane, but for every town in the colony, to get more and more land for the people for recreation and health. I think the Government would be quite justified in trying something of that kind.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, has, I think, pointed out the correct way by which this land can be purchased at a very easy rate. The Government need not, however, sell a portion of the land to raise the amount required for its purchase; they might lease it on a building lease with frontages to the main road, and by that means they would provide sufficient funds to pay the interest and redemption on the purchase money. I am certain that this being jubilee year there are very few hon. members who will object to the Government entering into arrangements for the purchase of this land in order to make it a public reserve for all time. As I have said they might deal with it in the way suggested by the hon. member for Townsville, except that they might instead of selling part of the land let it on building leases for twenty-five or fifty years, and I am quite sure that by this means they would secure the money necessary to meet both interest and principal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—I will not express any opinion with regard to the desirability or otherwise of the Government purchasing this land, but I rise to challenge the statement made by the hon. member for Townsville that the Government have been selling, or have sold, every reserve they could lay their hands upon about Brisbane. I deny that. The Government never sold a single reserve in the neighbourhood of Brisbane. There have been sold isolated lots, that have not brought the upset price when put up to auction before, and Government lands which were valueless from the fact of their being swamps, and also land in the immediate neighbourhood of large areas reserved for public purposes, as in the neighbourhood of Victoria Park. Small lots of land of that character, not exceeding one or two acres, have been cut up and sold by the Government because they could only be utilised in that way, but there has not been one reserve that has been left as a reserve with the intention of dedicating it to the use of the public, cut up and sold in the neighbourhood of Brisbane or anywhere else.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What about the land at the railway station, in Roma street?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not going to express any opinion about that, because it was not the effect of my action. That land was sold because it was the opinion of the railway authorities that it was not required, and it was not a reserve dedicated for public recreation in any sense. It may have been a mistake from other points of view that it was sold, but I am not

going to contest that point. The land was reserved for railway purposes, and the railway authorities did not consider it was necessary to retain it for those purposes. Whether they were correct or not I am not going to say. I certainly would not have taken action in the matter if I had not been prompted to it by the Treasurer and the then Minister for Works. If the Treasurer had asked me to sell the Botanic Gardens I daresay I should have sold them too, but I would never have done so by my own action. As to the proposition of the hon. member for Townsville, that this land at New Farm should be bought by the Government, that a road should be run round it, and that a portion of the property should be sold for villa residences, I doubt very much whether that can be done. The amount asked for the land is as much, or almost as much, as could be obtained for it by subdividing it and selling it in small lots. If there is any margin of profit, depend upon it the men who own the land are all there to make use of it.

Mr. W. BROOKES said: Mr. Speaker,—I am entirely opposed to the proposition of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, and I fancy the hon. member for Townsville is not very familiar with the ground. From what I can understand, it is entirely unsuitable to be dealt with in the manner suggested by the hon. member for Townsville. I think it is quite unsuitable to be laid out in the way he mentioned; but even if it were suitable, I think it is very undesirable that the Government should go into any speculation of the kind. There is, however, another objection that weighs with me, and that is that the land is in an out-of-the-way place. Although it is near town it has not those facilities of access necessary for large numbers of people at holiday times. As the leader of the Opposition has very well said, it is probable that more eligible places could be found within reach of the trams and railways. It is a very long way to this ground. To get there one has to go the whole length of New Farm road, and it is not a very level road. I do not think that under any circumstances it can be made a popular place of resort, nor is there any prospect that it is likely to be made so if purchased by the Government. Our experience in connection with Victoria Park does not cause a very lively spirit of hope to rise in my mind. Although Victoria Park is really in a very central position, surrounded on all sides by population, and accessible by railway, tram, and omnibus, it still remains a "howling wilderness." Surely, before we can discuss such a proposition as to buy fifty acres of land in what I consider an out-of-the-way place for people to get to, we had better try to make improvements on the land we have got. If, however, we are to go further afield I am sure there are more eligible places than this within easy reach of the population, by railway and tram—and they will be the cheap means of conveyance, not omnibuses. If these places are within half-an-hour by railway or omnibus they will be suitable. There is too much truth in what has been said with respect to the desire of the Government to rake in all the money they can for every little piece of land in the vicinity of Brisbane. I do not like the way the present Minister for Works has put it. The hon. gentleman says that he would have sold the Gardens if the Treasurer had asked him. That is a very remarkable statement, which I should rather not have heard from the Minister for Works. It strikes me that if a Minister for Lands were in possession of those far-reaching views he should have, he would say, "It does not matter whether the Premier, the Postmaster-General, and the Treasurer, all come in a body and ask me to sell the Gardens, I will not sell them." I think a Minister for

Lands should have sufficient individuality to say "If you insist upon that you will have to do it without me; I will have no part or lot in the matter." But that is not what the hon. gentleman did. I must confess that he was not very severely tempted, but I do think it is remarkable that he should say that if the Colonial Treasurer were to state that it was necessary, he would put even such a piece of land as the Botanic Gardens in the market. We know very well that long ago it was proposed to sell the Government House and Gardens, and build a Custom-house there with wharves all round. What an insane project that would be in the opinion of anyone who wishes to give this city any artistic beauty! However, I wish to confine my remarks to the proposition now before the House; and I may say that in my opinion the price is too high, the land is unsuitable, and I am afraid it would be unwise to have 1,000 men of the Defence Force manœuvring in a place so near the town, where there are so many private houses and so many servant-girls. I am decidedly opposed to the proposition.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Speaker,—It is perhaps fortunate that Victoria Park is in the hands of trustees, because a Minister who offered, on the recommendation of a colleague, to sell a portion of the railway station, and who was prepared to put up the Botanic Gardens for sale if his colleagues had pressed him to do so, might also, but for the fact of its being in the hands of trustees, have sold a portion or even the whole of Victoria Park. I do not believe in this proposition one bit. It would no doubt be a very nice thing to have the land as a reserve, but I do not see that the Government are now called upon to purchase it from the syndicate who are offering it for sale. There are other places almost as convenient for the city—certainly as convenient of access, and quite as suitable for military manœuvring, and of as large or larger areas as that particular place. Travelling on the South Brisbane Railway recently I passed through some very fine land, more than fifty acres in extent, of much more easy access from the city, excellently suited for manœuvring purposes, which could be purchased for a great deal less than £1,000 an acre. But I cannot see the force of this generosity on the part of the Government. It was only the other day that I put in an application on behalf of some of my constituents for a grant of land—all the land suitable for the purpose having been sold—for a school of arts. A gentleman had bought one lot in a convenient place, and all the Government were asked to do was to repay the purchaser the sum of £26 which he had given for it; and they refused. That was at Mount Morgan. Surely it was rather absurd for a Government, which had refused an application for a few pounds for such a purpose at Mount Morgan, to now come forward and say they were ready to pay £40,000 to acquire a piece of land for the city of Brisbane. I am altogether opposed to the idea. If it should be considered necessary that a portion of land should be obtained as a reserve for military manœuvring, it would be better to go further away—either on the South Brisbane line, or at Indooroopilly, or below the racecourse—where suitable land can be purchased at a far lower rate. As to selling reserved lands, I do not know what reserved lands have been sold, but I know that some lands have been sold that ought to have been reserved. There was, for instance, a piece of land in the neighbourhood of Milton, which was sold about a couple of years ago in small allotments, and is now being thickly settled. All the land there lying back from the river, except a small piece about what is called the Milton drain, is being thickly built over. That small piece, one would have thought, might have been

reserved. The portion of the police paddock which was sold would have made a good reserve. That, as we all know, was sold to provide the money to pay for the drain, although I think enough had been obtained in that way when we voted a large sum for that purpose last year. The Minister for Works spoke about having sold little pieces of land outlying on swamps, and such like. Swamps, though not fit to sell for building purposes, make very good reserves; and the great cry in this part of the country has been that private persons cut up these swamps and sell them as sites for residences. It seems that the Government have been doing the same thing. It would be far better for the Government to reserve these swamps than to sell them for people to live upon at the risk of their health and probably of their lives.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. H. Jordan) said: Mr. Speaker,—I would remind the hon. member for Port Curtis that the land he referred to at Mount Morgan did not belong to the Government. The application made was that the Government should repurchase it.

Mr. NORTON: For £26, the amount which the Government received for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A piece of land only about half a quarter of a mile distant was offered by the Government, and it was objected to on the ground that it was too far from Mount Morgan. I simply wish to remind the hon. member of that fact. No doubt if there had been a more suitable piece of land belonging to the Government it would have been placed at the disposal of the trustees of the proposed school of arts. With reference to this proposition, when I heard of it it struck me as very absurd that the country should pay £40,000 for this piece of land, so remote from the centre of the town. To expend so large a sum for the acquisition of such a property for such a purpose seems to me somewhat quixotic in the present state of things when we have not a very full Treasury. As to its suitability for the military movements of the Defence Force, it is unnecessary for me to say anything, as the Chief Secretary has spoken on that point. It has been a matter of regret to me for the last twenty-five or thirty years that we have not had a good Building Act in this great city, and that we have not reserved large portions of land for public purposes—for the purpose of maintaining the health of the citizens. We have been sadly remiss in that direction, and every Government has neglected this very important matter. It was my duty in 1875 to call attention to the large mortality in the registry district of Brisbane, which was nearly double the mortality of the colony taken as a whole. It had been a very unhealthy season in the neighbourhood of the metropolis. During that year the mortality of the whole colony was at the rate of 15 per 1,000, while in the registry district of Brisbane the mortality was over 29 per 1,000. I attributed that to the fact that we had no proper reserves, that our streets were too narrow, that persons were allowed to cut up land into little bits, and that we were having a city composed of narrow lanes and back slums; and I added that little or no attention was being paid to those matters. When I formerly had the honour of a seat in this House, I, on several occasions, opposed the idea of allowing reserves to be used for public purposes, and only recently I have had to refuse requests made to me for the use of portions of reserves in this city for public purposes, such as for markets, schools, and so on. I have set my face against that. I shall never be a consenting party to take in any part of the reserves that have been left to us, miserably

small as they are, for any other public purpose whatever. I think it is a great pity indeed that the land round about our great railway terminus has been occupied so much as it has been for railway and other purposes, when it might have been utilised for the benefit of the whole city, for healthful and recreative purposes. It is very near the centre of the city, and it is very much to be regretted that it has been occupied for railway and other public purposes to the extent it has been. But in the present state of the finances I do not think we should be justified in spending £40,000 for this purpose.

Mr. SHERIDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Any hon. member who knows New Farm must at once conclude that it is an exceedingly valuable piece of land. It is an extensive tract; it has river frontage nearly all round, with deep water admirably adapted for wharves, and there is no doubt that it is destined to carry a very dense population. When it is so occupied by people and by commerce is the time the necessity for a reserve will be most felt, and then, sir, this reserve could not be purchased for three or four times the amount it has been stated it can be obtained for now. We see that only a few weeks ago in Adelaide they purchased a large tract of land for a reserve in the neighbourhood of the city. In New South Wales they have been and are still purchasing tracts of land all round, in nearly every town in the colony, as reserves for the purpose of giving health to the inhabitants. £40,000 does not seem to me a very large sum for the Government to invest in order to secure the health and comfort and pleasure of the people, and I am sure that no matter how hard up they may be, they would have no difficulty in obtaining that amount. I feel certain that if that land, which is so admirably adapted for a reserve, is allowed to be sold it will cost a great deal more money in the future. There are many ways in which the Government could find £40,000 to pay for this land and thus provide lungs for the people, for I say again that the neighbourhood of New Farm is destined to be a very densely populated place. It is very suitable for buildings, it possesses access to the river, and is very valuable for commercial purposes. I do hope sir, that the Government will find means for purchasing this very necessary reserve.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—The difficulty here is "the sinews of war." It would be very nice to have this piece of land, but where is the money to come from to pay for it? I know the land very well, and think it would be perfectly useless without the piece adjoining is also purchased. Fifty acres would make a nice park, but it would not be big enough to manœuvre a considerable body of men on. We should want double that area. There is another forty acres alongside, belonging to somebody else, which would probably have to be bought as well, and perhaps it is the best land. But if land is wanted for military purposes I can tell the Government where they can get plenty. If they would extend the racecourse railway two or three miles down towards the sea they would find thousands of acres there which they could get at a reasonable price. I have no interest there myself: I do not own any land there. I am speaking of a place called Martin's Farm, which is a large open space, clear of trees, about three miles below the Hamilton on the left-hand side. There are hundreds of acres there quite flat, and I believe it could be got for very little more than £100 an acre. Then there is Crown land further on towards Nudgee, thousands of acres. The whole Nudgee beach is reserved for recreation purposes, but there is more suitable land on this side of that reservation.

And that is not the only place. There are others on the South Brisbane line, and on the Ipswich line, further away; and with regard to land for military purposes it is better to go a little further away where there is railway communication, and where you can get plenty of land much cheaper, than close to the city. With regard to the dispute about selling reserves, perhaps the statement of the Minister for Lands is correct—that the Government have not sold reserves; but they have sold a good many pieces of land that were capable of being utilised as reserves, and which were most valuable. I believe the whole of that land at the railway station will have to be bought back again. If the South Brisbane line is brought into connection with the main Southern and Western line in the city, probably it will have to come over the river at a point just below where the ice-works are and run into the present station in Roma street, and then all that land which has been recently sold will be required and will have to be resumed and paid for. There is another place where land has been sold lately where there was really no necessity for it, that is on Magnetic Island, Townsville. The reserve there, which was the only place, perhaps, where the people could get out of town seaward and enjoy the sea-breezes with the advantage of shade and water, has been sold to the extent of £7,000 or £8,000 worth, and of course it is not the worst portion that has been sold. I do not see how we are going to approve of this proposition in the present state of the finances. We have been told that at the end of the year there will be no appreciable diminution in the deficit, and unless the Government see their way to lend the money to the local board in which this property is situated and let them buy it, I do not see how it is to be done. Of course we should very much like to see the purchase effected, but I am afraid it would not be just at the present time to do it.

Mr. McMASTER, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I am not altogether disappointed at the manner in which my suggestion has been received. It has not been met with any strong opposition. I may say that although the Hon. Mr. Walsh brought the question before the other House, I have been talking about it for several years. I brought it under the notice of the Government two years ago, and was then met in the same manner that I have been on this occasion—that there were monetary difficulties in the way. I did not rise for the purpose of requesting the Government to secure this block of land for military purposes alone; that was only an additional argument for securing it. I pointed out that it was desirable that this place should be kept open as a lung of the city, to promote the health of the citizens, and that it was the only place at present where the volunteers resorted to when there was a review, being so convenient to the town. I certainly was not prepared for the opposition of the junior member for North Brisbane. I think he has not seen the land for some time, and that he does not know exactly the means of access to it. There is a line of tramway going within a few yards of it up Brunswick street. There is also a line of 'buses running up James street close to it, and when that street is continued a little further and made passable through the Kingsholme Estate, I believe it is intended to extend the tram line there; so that it will be accessible from these two approaches by tram. My reason for calling attention to the matter is not so much in view of securing the land for recreation purposes by people going out of town as for a means of preserving the health of the citizens living in the neighbourhood. It must be remembered that the Stratton Estate has been completely built on; it is a swampy district, and by-and-by, if this

land is sold and built on—which no doubt it will be if the Government do not step in and try and secure it—the whole of that district, from Breakfast Creek through Fortitude Valley up to New Farm, will not have a solitary acre of land available for recreation purposes. The Government are the custodians of the health of the people, and that the purchasing of this land would preserve health there is no doubt. It is not for the purpose of speculation, although I consider the proposition of the hon. member for Townsville is a good one, and ought not to be lost sight of. I am aware, from hearsay, that the Treasury is very low, but I can point out where the Government can get the necessary funds. Let them sell a portion of the reserve in the ranges in the Enoggera district. They have a large tract of land there at no great distance from the city, and I have no doubt a railway will go out in that district before many years. Now, the leader of the Opposition has said the same thing should be done for other towns. Certainly I would go in for reserving parks in every town in the colony; and I think it is to be regretted that our Governments—not this Government in particular—have not been careful to reserve parks about the different towns. I have no objection to South Brisbane having a park. There ought to be one on the South Brisbane line, but that would be of no use to the people of this district. It is all very well for the junior member for South Brisbane to talk as he did. He is close to Victoria Park, and has not to go far afield to get his recreation. That park is very unsightly at present, but there is a day coming when it will be a very nice place. The hon. member is also close to the Acclimatisation Society's grounds. I am surprised at the position he takes up. He has got all he wants, but opposes a proposition for giving people in other districts similar benefits. He ought to assist us in procuring the lungs for that district which would be likely to preserve the health of the people. I hope still that the Government will not allow this property to be disposed of in small allotments. Kingsholme Estate has been cut up and built upon. A large number of houses have gone up there within the last two years. This land will no doubt be built upon, and then there will not be a single piece of land in the whole district available to be set apart for recreation purposes. The opposition to this purchase has been very faint. Every hon. member who has spoken has admitted the necessity of the purchase.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I have not.

Mr. McMASTER: The leader of the Opposition admitted that it was desirable to purchase the land, but the opposition is on account of want of money. There has been no strong feeling shown against the proposition, and I hope still that the Government will see their way to endeavour to negotiate with the proprietors of the land, and prevent it from being sold in small allotments. If they have not the money now they can buy the land on terms, and I hope also that the suggestion of the hon. member for Townsville will not be overlooked. I beg to withdraw the motion.

Mr. BULCOCK said: Mr. Speaker,—I must confess that I have no objection to the purchase of this land if the Government can find the wherewithal to purchase it, but I have been somewhat amused to hear the hon. member for Fortitude Valley find fault with the junior member for North Brisbane because, having got a reserve himself, he opposed this purchase.

Mr. McMASTER: I did not say that was the reason.

Mr. BULCOCK: That was the intimation. Now, to accomplish this purchase, the hon. member has suggested that a reserve in the Enoggera district should be sold. That is not very consistent, and as one of the members for Enoggera I object to such a proposal. The electors of Enoggera are looking forward to having a railway at no distant date, and the proceeds of the sale of the land the hon. member mentioned would, it is said, be sufficient to defray the cost. I object to a reserve for Fortitude Valley being purchased by the sacrifice of a reserve in Enoggera.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

CLAIM OF MR. E. B. C. CORSER.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read—

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Fraser) said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to present the committee's report on the claim of Mr. E. B. C. Corser.

The resolution having been read by the Clerk,

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the report be now adopted, and that the resolution be amended by the omission of the words "as recommended by the said committee."

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that amendment must be moved by another hon. member, or that the hon. member must get the leave of the House to amend it. The leave of the House will be given, no doubt.

The SPEAKER: I intended to ask the House whether they consented to the amendment of the hon. member. No doubt the resolution is not correct in its present form. The select committee have not recommended £1,500 as compensation. Does the House consent to the hon. member moving an amendment to the resolution?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said: Yes, I object. The proposition of the hon. member should be put to the House separately, and not connected with the original motion, which is the adoption of the report. The report was not adopted.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the report be adopted.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I take it that is the report without the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; the hon. member could not make any alteration without the consent of the House, and the consent of the House not having been obtained, the question now is—"That the report be adopted."

Mr. FERGUSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I understand that, if the report is adopted without the proposed amendment in the resolution, the matter will stand as it was at first and amount to nothing. The Government will not be bound to pay the money, as I understand it, if the report is adopted without the amendment.

The SPEAKER: I must inform the House that if the report is adopted as now brought up by the Chairman of Committees it will be my duty to present it to His Excellency the Governor in the ordinary way.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—The Committee of the Whole House was appointed to consider certain resolutions. The first was that the report of the select committee be adopted. That resolution has not been adopted by the Committee of the House, and is not now reported to the House. The second resolution referred to the Committee of the House was that an address should be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that pro-

vision should be made for the payment of £2,359 16s., as recommended by the select committee. The Committee of the House reduced the amount, which they wished the address to cover, to £1,500, but omitted to strike out the words "as recommended by the said committee," as contained in the second resolution submitted to the Committee of the House. The resolution brought up from the Committee of the House is not a true resolution, because it speaks of £1,500 as the amount recommended by the select committee. It is purely an accidental and verbal error, and the words "as recommended by the said committee" ought to be struck out. I move that the report be amended by the omission of the words "as recommended by the said committee" from the resolution.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—Last night the Premier was a great stickler for the forms of the House, and yet this afternoon he proposes to amend a resolution which the hon. member who introduced it had full time to put in proper order. The hon. member might postpone the matter until to-morrow.

The PREMIER: He will not be able to alter it then.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He can give fresh notice of it. If hon. members who have the matter so much at heart as the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, has, make such blunders, they should correct them themselves. I am perfectly certain that if the mistake were made on this side of the House we should not have had the Premier so ready with an amendment of the error as he is in this case.

Mr. BULCOCK: Oh, yes, you would!

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am certain from my experience that we should not. The hon. member for Enoggera looks at the matter from that side of the House while I look at it from this, and that makes all the difference. I object to this amendment, because I do not wish to assist in any way in what I consider an iniquitous settlement of these claims, and I shall do all I can to prevent the settlement of the claims as agreed to by the Committee of this House. Holding these views I have a perfect right to object to the action taken by the Premier in this case, and which is not usual, as the hon. gentleman must himself admit.

The PREMIER: It is only a formal amendment of a verbal error.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears to me that the motion as put may as well refer to the Committee of the House as to the select committee, and therefore I think the amendment is unnecessary.

The PREMIER: No, no; it refers to the select committee.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the resolution—put and negatived.

Question—That the report as amended be adopted—put and passed.

COONEANA RAILWAY BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. DONALDSON, the House went into committee to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1—"Interpretation"—

Mr. DICKSON said he would ask the hon. member in charge of this Bill whether he had given any consideration to the suggestions made during the debate on the second reading as to the privileges proposed to be conferred on the

Cooneana Company by the Bill? With reference to a proposal to insert a clause giving the Government power of resumption, the hon. member for Bowen had argued that no such provision was contained in any other similar Bill, and that it would be better to leave the matter until a general Bill was introduced dealing with the acquisition by the State of private railways. However, he (Mr. Dickson) thought they could not begin too soon, because the more Bills that were passed the larger would be the vested interests, and the difficulty of approaching the matter would be increased when the State deemed that the question should be entered upon. He thought that in this case the State should have the power of purchasing, because he foresaw that, with the development of the mining industry, the opening up of mines beyond the one in question would be facilitated by the Government purchasing the line and extending it. The second question which had been raised was as to the time that should be given the company to construct the railway. Three years had been asked, but that, he thought, was too long. The unsatisfactory position of the Urangan syndicate had been alluded to, and while he did not blame the Government for having at the time granted the facilities they did to people who appeared to exhibit *bona fides* in the matter of private railway construction, still he believed that had those facilities not been given, the Urangan railway would now be an accomplished fact. They ought to be guided by that experience, and be careful how they gave such powers to a private company. The line was a very small one, and ought to be constructed within very much less than three years. The time had been asked, perhaps, with a view to enable others, not at present interested in the formation of the company, to construct the line; but, having regard primarily to the interests of the State, he thought they should both restrict the time within which the privilege could be exercised, and give the State power to acquire the railway at a reasonable price.

Mr. DONALDSON said of course he was entirely in the hands of the Committee in this matter. He failed to see that the State should claim a privilege in the present case which they had not reserved in any other case where a similar Bill had passed. He thought the better plan would be to bring in a Bill hereafter, of general application, giving the Government power to purchase private lines. He did not know the views on that point of those interested in the line, but he thought that if any clause were inserted tending to lessen their powers the line would not be constructed. With regard to the time that had been mentioned, no time was specified in the Bill, and the select committee had thought it better to limit the time to three years. It was entirely with the Committee to say whether that was too long or not; he would be disposed to accept a modification in that respect. He failed, however, to see the justice of inserting a condition in that Bill which had not been inserted in any previous Bill that had passed the House.

Mr. THORN said he quite agreed with the hon. member that that Bill should not be made different from any other Bill. He wished to point out that he knew of two railway lines which had been built across main roads without any Act of Parliament at all, one of them three or four years ago, and another within three or four months. He would like to know what would be done in those cases; would the Government tear up the lines? He would point out that in some districts the Government themselves made the lines to mines; as, for instance, the Burrum; he presumed the people of Burrum were lacking in enterprise. Then, again, the

Government had made lines to sugar plantations or mills in the district represented by the hon. member for Mackay; he did not think they had acted unwisely in doing so. He would like to hear from the Attorney-General how people were dealt with who built railways across main roads without an Act of Parliament. He had no doubt these people would very quickly make the railway if the Bill passed, and he hoped it would pass in its present shape without amendments.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said that if railways were built, and locomotives run upon them so as to create a public nuisance, it would be the business of the Attorney-General to interfere.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not think the hon. member for Enoggera had made out a case for treating that Bill differently from any other railway Bill. He did not see why any restriction should be put on the construction of that railway more than any other railway they had passed. It was intended to develop what he believed was a very good mine, where a great deal of money had been already expended, and where he believed a very much larger expenditure was intended. With regard to the period asked for the construction of the line, he did not think three years was too long; for, anomalous as it might appear, the shortness of the line tended to increase the length of time required for its construction, because a large contractor would not take up a matter of that sort and complete it as expeditiously as a larger job. He was told only the other day, though he did not know whether it was correct, that Mr. Bashford had taken more than twelve months to construct a railway of a somewhat similar character.

Mr. FOOTE: It is quite correct.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not think that the majority of hon. members would trammel in any way honest people who desired to develop what he hoped would be a valuable property.

Mr. CHUBB said he was very glad to find that hon. members generally took the view that he expressed when the Bill was in its second stage, in opposition to those expressed by the hon. member for Enoggera, Mr. Dickson; but while he (Mr. Chubb) admitted now, as he did then, that it was desirable that the Government should have the necessary power to purchase that railway, he thought that should be given them by a general enactment. He would point out that the 5th section of the Bill contained plenty of safeguards for running the railway. The Commissioner for Railways had to approve of the plans for carrying out the works, the conditions under which goods should be carried, the prescribing of regulations, the making of by-laws, and the enforcement of penalties. The Commissioner had also to regulate the resumption of land required for making the line, and the payment of compensation. The Government would have running powers which might be settled by arbitration if the company and Commissioner did not agree upon terms. The Governor in Council might revise and reduce the tolls, and they had ample powers for protecting the public. He had no authority for saying it, but he believed that the company would be very glad if the Government would make the railway; they were not burning to make the railway. But they had a property which they wished to develop, and it was necessary in making a railway to it to go through the lands of private persons, for which they required statutory authority. He thought it was probable they could get the consent of the owners of those lands. If so, they need not necessarily come to Parliament for authority to make the line; but then they would, as

had been pointed out, be in this position, that if it became a public nuisance they would be liable to be pulled up and stopped, and they therefore thought it better to get the sanction of Parliament to construct the railway. With regard to the time allowed for the construction of the line, the Committee would recollect that they gave the Urangan Railway Company three years, but stipulated that they should commence the line within a certain time. They were to pay a deposit, which was to be forfeited if the line was not commenced within the specified period. He saw by the correspondence which had been laid on the table that the Government were willing to allow the company twelve months' extension of time before forfeiting the deposit. Surely, then, the time asked for in the present case was reasonable. The evidence taken by the select committee showed that the extent of the property was 1,781 acres, "all proved coal property"; that it was the intention of the company to work the property; that it was necessary that a branch line should be constructed to connect with the main trunk railway in order to get their coal to market; that the proprietors of the land through which the proposed railway would pass were all in favour of it; and that there was a probability of the line being extended beyond the present proposed terminus. Then the witness was asked:—

"By Mr. Cardew: In arranging for the route of this line, have you studied the interests of those other coal proprietors whom you mentioned? Yes. It passes through their properties.

"In taking a route to suit them as well as yourself? Yes; all the properties that are abutting on or near to it can use the line just as well as the Cooneana people. They have the same facilities.

"By the Chairman: You have made an agreement to give them rights to run on the line as well as yourself? They will have running rights.

"By Mr. Wakefield: Is there any arrangement to manufacture iron? Yes; it is an iron company, as there is ironstone on the property."

And later on, in answer to Mr. Wakefield, the witness said:—

"There is nothing in the Bill to bind the company to any time. It is intended to go on with the line almost immediately; although, as a matter of fact, it is proposed to re-form the company at home. If a company is not formed in England, the present proprietary propose to construct the line.

"There should be a limitation? Well, if the committee desire it, there might be. It need not be more than three years. If the railway should not be made within three years, it would not be made at all."

He thought they might fairly let the Bill go through, following the forms adopted in other railway Acts, and leave it to the Government at a future period to bring in a measure which would embrace not only that and other private lines which had been constructed, but also all that would hereafter be constructed.

Mr. NORTON said it was somewhat unfortunate that the evidence obtained by the select committee in connection with the Bill was so very meagre. He was told that a very large sum of money had been expended on the property of the company—somewhere about £50,000 or £60,000—but there was no evidence on the subject. Only one witness was examined, and the number of questions and answers was about thirty. He did not think that was sufficient evidence to place before that committee, and members naturally objected to go on with the measure without hearing something more about the proposed railway. In the matter of the Urangan railway they passed an Act to enable the company to construct a line which was supposed to open up coalfields, and he did not know what else; but they had reason to believe since that Act was passed that the objects of the

promoters of the Bill were to secure coal land from the Government at a low price, and then form a company if they could, but if they could not, to throw up the whole thing. It appeared to him that Parliament was fooled by that company, and that was what prejudiced some members against the present Bill. When a private line was wanted to work a coal-mine profitably there was every reason why the House should give facilities for that to be done; but in the present case he felt baffled by the want of information on the subject.

The Hon. G. THORN said that some years ago an Act was passed giving the Governor in Council authority to make tramways, which were practically railways, over land and roads. It was probably under that Act that the parties whom he mentioned a short time ago had constructed their works. He would ask the Attorney-General if that Act was still in force?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. GRIMES said that two Bills had been placed in the hands of hon. members, one being the Bill as originally introduced and the other showing the changes recommended in it by the select committee. There was a considerable difference between them, especially in the 2nd clause. The select committee recommended that three years should be the limit of time allowed for the construction of the line, but no limit of any kind was contained in the Bill as introduced.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the Act referred to by the hon. member for Fassifern, authorising the construction of tramways along roads, was still in force. It was passed in the year 1880. But it did not authorise private individuals to construct tramways, that could be only done by order of the Governor in Council.

Mr. GRIMES said it was extremely desirable that they should give to farmers and others, who owned land in the neighbourhood of the railway, the privilege of using it on payment of a reasonable sum. It seemed to him that there was no provision in the Bill giving that privilege to persons who owned adjoining properties, although it did give it to the proprietor of the land through which the railway passed. That ought to be provided for, as it would be exceedingly difficult to get another Bill passed for another branch line close to the one under discussion.

Mr. CHUBB: Clause 7 provides for that.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that if any indiscriminate power was given to owners of adjacent land to go over the line they might so take advantage of the line as to injure the original owners of it. That should be guarded against, while at the same time a monopoly should not be given to the owners of the line. Running powers under certain conditions might be given to those persons mentioned by the hon. member for Oxley, but the rights of the owners should be so guarded that they would suffer no detriment thereby.

The PREMIER asked whether all the portions mentioned in section 2 belonged to owners other than the company?

Mr. CHUBB replied that they all belonged to private owners.

The PREMIER said it was very important that owners of land really adjoining the railway fence should be able to take advantage of the line. His attention had been directed sometime ago by the hon. member for Bundamba to the fact that the provisions of the existing private Railway Acts were insufficient to give the facilities in that direction which Parliament

intended at the time to give. Having found out their mistake, they might alter it, but beyond that they ought not to create any exceptional disabilities.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 2, as follows :—

"Subject to the provisions of this Act the company may with all convenient speed make and maintain a line of railway three miles and twenty-one chains in length, commencing by a junction with the Southern and Western Railway, between Brisbane and Ipswich, at a point distant sixteen miles fifty-seven chains and seventy-nine links or thereabouts from Brisbane, and thence running in a south-westerly direction through portions 238, 239, 210, 211, 167, 166, 165, 285, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 273, and 274 to a point on portion 283 in the parish of Goodna, the property of the company, in accordance with the deposited plan, section, and book of reference. Provided that the lands to be taken or used for the said railway shall not exceed twenty-two yards in width, except where a greater width is necessary for an approach to the railway, or for waggons and other carriages to turn, remain, stand in, lie or pass each other, or for raising embankments for crossing valleys or low grounds, or in cutting through high ground, or for the erection of any fixed or permanent machinery, stations, or other erections and buildings, or for excavating, removing, or depositing earth or other materials."

Mr. DONALDSON moved the omission of the words in the 1st and 2nd lines, "may with all convenient speed," with the view of inserting the words, "shall within three years from the passing of this Act." The clause, as originally proposed, was the same as in the Gulland Act, which did not mention any time within which the railway should be constructed; but the select committee thought it would be unwise to let the company get an Act passed for the construction of the line, whilst it might be several years before they attempted to construct it. Therefore, they proposed that the words "within three years" should be inserted. The hon. member for Enoggera had complained that that time was too long, and other hon. members took exception to it on that ground, but it must be borne in mind that this was a large company; that they were going to develop a very large mine, and it took a considerable time to construct even a short railway under the circumstances—because the other works were not in readiness for it—that was, the works at the pit. If the mine was a going concern he would not object to reduce the period, but that work was part of the whole system. The mine had to be opened up, and the line would be constructed with all convenient speed so as to develop that mine. In fact, it could not be worked properly without having the railway, and he was of opinion, and so were the select committee, that three years would be a reasonable time to give for the construction of the line. If that was considered too long, of course the clause could be amended, but he hoped they would not go far in reducing the time, because otherwise it would destroy the effect of all the favours they asked the House to grant. It would be hardly possible to develop the mine and construct the railway under three years; so he was informed.

Mr. NORTON said the real objection he felt to that portion of the Bill was that it affected the properties of a number of persons besides those of the parties who were directly interested in getting the railway, and there was no evidence before the Committee to show that any of those persons had had an opportunity of expressing their opinion in favour of it or otherwise.

Mr. DONALDSON: They did not object.

Mr. NORTON: How do you know?

Mr. DONALDSON: They had the necessary notices.

Mr. NORTON: We are not informed of that. That ought to be in the evidence given before the select committee.

Mr. DONALDSON: It has been given.

Mr. NORTON said the only evidence given to that effect was by a person interested in getting the railway carried out. If they were to be satisfied with that sort of evidence in that case they must be satisfied with it in all other cases. In that case everything might be perfectly clear and aboveboard, but other cases might be brought forward afterwards in which similar evidence might be given, and Parliament might consider it right to permit the construction of the line, although persons whose property was affected by it might be seriously opposed to it. They had to take that line entirely upon trust—upon the evidence of one witness, who said the owners of property along the line were not unfavourable to its construction.

The PREMIER: Why did they not come in and oppose it?

Mr. DONALDSON: Look at question 14.

Mr. NORTON said that was a statement by one of the persons interested in the railway. That statement might be perfectly correct; but in some other case where it was not, a question might be put and answered in the same way, and the House might be misled. He did not say that the evidence was not reliable. The only thing he complained of was that there was not more of it than the evidence of one witness.

Mr. FOOTE said he could enlighten the hon. gentleman on the subject. The railway, as proposed, went through all coal land, and all the persons interested in it wanted the line to be made. Possibly they would all participate in the benefits of the line when it was made. They were all agreeable to it. Circulars had been sent round to them; they had been invited to say what they had to say on the subject, and also to send in the value of their land in the line of the railway, and some of them were so much interested in it that they were prepared to give the land. He thought that was quite sufficient to show that there was no opposition to the line. All the people holding property in the district through which the railway would pass were in accord as to the making of the line, and although the hon. member for Port Curtis had remarked that only one witness had given evidence to that effect, if it had been thought that other evidence would have been required it could easily have been obtained.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not see very much in the objection of the hon. member for Port Curtis, because it almost went without saying that when a Railway Bill of that sort had been before the House for more than a month, and the locality in which the line was proposed to be constructed was quite close to the metropolis—and also, he might add, when it was remembered that owners of freehold land were peculiarly sensitive when any of their rights were invaded or touched, and called out very quickly—if the holders of land along the line thought they would be injuriously affected by it, they would have approached the House by petition or otherwise, or have laid their grievances or objections, if any existed, before the select committee. He therefore thought it was quite clear that none of the land-owners affected by the construction of the line felt themselves to be injured by that Bill becoming law.

Question—That the words "may with all convenient speed," proposed to be omitted, stand part of the question—put and negatived.

Question—That the words "within three years from the passing of this Act," proposed to be inserted, be so inserted—put.

The PREMIER said he should like to know why so long a period as three years was required. The only reason why so long a time should not be granted was that the existence of that concession might prevent somebody else from doing the work if the company did not carry it out themselves within that time. The danger of giving too long a period for the construction of the line was that it would block everybody else. Would not two years be better? He had no reason to believe that the company would not carry out the work as soon as they could, but they should deal with the matter upon general principles, and not give too much time, so that in the event of the company not doing the work, the concession would not prevent anyone else from doing it.

Mr. FOOTE said it was not the intention of the company to require three years to make the line, but they wished to be prepared for contingencies. They did not know what difficulties might arise in the way, and if the limit was too short it might be of serious inconvenience to the company in the long run. The primary reason why the company asked three years was because there was little or no railway constructing plant in the district. An instance had already been given where a contractor had taken nearly twelve months to make a line something under a mile, and at present there was no railway plant in the district for the construction of the line. As soon as the line was commenced it would be completed in about twelve months, perhaps eighteen. There was no probability of any other company wishing to construct a line in that direction, because all the principal coal properties up to Cooneana were held by two or three companies, which were all interested in that railway. They all had interests in common in the construction of the line, and it was hoped the company would be in full swing before the end of three years.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said a penalty for non-fulfilment of contract might be inserted.

Mr. NORTON said he presumed that a line of that kind when built ought to be equal to a Government line, because the Government would probably have to run rolling-stock over it. He could not help thinking it would be a very good thing for the Government to consent to construct lines of that kind at the cost of the promoters. It had been done in some cases, where private owners had wanted a line through their own land, and they had asked the Government to carry out the work for them, charging them the whole cost. The line could be constructed in that way within a very short time, and if there was some general understanding on the subject it would be to the advantage of owners of property to the Government.

Mr. MOREHEAD said if anyone would take the trouble to look into the question he would find that some of the leading and most wealthy men in Ipswich were interested in the line, and there was no intention on their part to get the Bill passed with the idea of evading the completion of the work. The reasons given why three years should be allowed were good and sufficient. One witness was asked a question why the line could not be commenced at once, and the reason given was that the owners of the property hoped to re-form the company in England, but failing that they would be prepared to make the railway themselves. If it could be shown that any harm would be done to other local owners or people owning land in the locality by the construction being delayed for three years, there might be something in the contention, but that had not been set forth, and he thought the Committee should not in any way try to hamper or trammel

private enterprise, because it was purely private enterprise. To cut down the time from three to two years would be an act in that direction.

Mr. GRIMES said, in the interests of those through whose property the line would go, he thought three years was too long a period to give for the construction of the line. Two years would give ample time. He knew himself of parties on the proposed route who had opened up coal lands and proved them, having sent a considerable quantity of coal to market, but the cost of cartage was too heavy, so that they had to wait for a railway before they could proceed further with the work. If they gave the Cooneana company three years in which to construct the line they could not bind them to commence before the end of the three years, and all the other individuals would be kept hanging on the whole of that time. If the company did not succeed in floating the company afresh in England, even with the great privileges they had, they would probably abandon the line altogether, and the other owners would have to begin afresh. He thought two years was ample time to allow for the construction of three miles of railway, and if the company was not prepared to do the work in that time, it was not an urgent work.

Mr. FOOTE said the hon member must be an interested party. The object of the hon. member was to compel the company to make a railway for the persons he spoke of, who were unable to make their coal pay on account of the cost of carriage, rather than for the company itself. But it must be remembered that the company were quite willing to allow the use of their line on the usual conditions. The hon. gentleman wanted them to make a line within two years for the convenience of other persons. He (Mr. Foote) thought that every facility should be offered to such a company for carrying out their enterprise. It was a great undertaking, and required much thought and consideration, and they should not be rushed into railway-making or undertaking any other work. He thought three years was a very reasonable limit. It was probable that the line might be completed in eighteen months, but it would be a hardship to make the company complete it within two years.

Mr. FOXTON said he knew something of the people to whom the hon. member for Oxley referred, and through whose property the line would go, and he thought, with the hon. member for Bundamba, that if those people were willing to construct the line, the company would be only too glad to let them do it. He knew from his own knowledge that the Cooneana Company were prepared to make arrangements with persons through whose land the line would go, for the purpose of making it a joint concern. It would reduce the original cost of construction, but it would have the effect of dividing the ultimate profits. Now, the property to which the hon. member for Oxley referred was evidently the property known as Verrall's land. It was true the owners sent coal to market and were unable to make it pay, but they had never made any attempt to make a railway for themselves. But when someone else came down and asked for leave to construct a railway, they asked that a limit should be put to the time during which the concession was to last, on the ground that they might be kept waiting for a period of three years. How long had those persons been waiting already? They made no effort until someone else was prepared to come forward and make the line, and they would reap the benefit of the energy and enterprise of the company which was promoting the Bill. Another thing was that a short line took longer to make, proportionately, than a long one,

because a large plant could not be put on for the construction of a short line; and it had to be constructed in a much less scientific way, so to speak. In connection with the matter he might add that he understood it took about six months to survey that line. The survey was carried out by the Railway Office, he understood, and, he presumed, at times when Government business of the kind was not pressing. He was led to believe that the company were thus late in the session in bringing forward the Bill, owing to the delays which took place in carrying out the survey of the line. Other lines in the West Moreton district had taken much longer to make than hon. members would imagine from the short length of line to be constructed, and he thought three years was by no means too long a time to allow the company to make the line.

Mr. NORTON said the hon. member who had just sat down had no right to complain that the Committee should ask for further information.

Mr. FOXTON: I did not make any such complaint.

Mr. NORTON said more information should have been supplied to the Committee on the Bill. If he was not mistaken the hon. member for Carnarvon was a partner of the gentleman who appeared as the solicitor of the company before the select committee—Mr. Cardew.

Mr. FOXTON: Yes.

Mr. NORTON said, that being so, it was that gentleman's business to supply sufficient information to satisfy the Committee of the House that it was desirable to pass the Bill. His only objection to the Bill arose from the very meagre evidence given on the subject before the select committee. He had been told there was a large amount of money spent upon the property, and he was quite willing to give every facility to the company to carry out the works proposed; but he complained that they had not sufficient knowledge on the subject, and he was surprised that someone, acting on behalf of the company, did not inform the select committee that it would be wise to have exacted a little more information before they brought up their report. The Committee should certainly have had more information than was supplied by the evidence taken before the select committee. He did not intend to oppose the measure.

Mr. FOXTON said the hon. member must have misunderstood what he was saying. He had not said anything about a lack of information. He was not in the Chamber when the hon. member spoke before, and his remarks had no reference to what the hon. member had said, but to what had fallen from the hon. member for Oxley. As to the want of information, he thought himself a good deal more information might have been given, and had he been on the committee he would probably have asked for it. As to the statement that Mr. Cardew appeared before the select committee as the solicitor for the company, that was a mistake. He understood some misconception occurred on the part of the shorthand writer in charge of select committees, who assumed that Mr. Cardew, who appeared as a shareholder in the Cooneana Company, appeared as the solicitor for the Bill. Mr. Cardew appeared as a witness, and made a long statement which was put down by the shorthand writer as an address by a professional man, whereas Mr. Cardew himself and the members of the committee understood he was giving evidence. That might account, to some extent, for the meagre evidence supplied, for Mr. Cardew's evidence was all summed up by the reporter in a line, in which Mr. Cardew, as solicitor for the Bill, was stated to have made an address. He was

glad the hon. gentleman had given him an opportunity of making that explanation, because it would not have been proper for Mr. Cardew to have appeared in support of the Bill as solicitor for the Bill. He simply appeared as a witness having all the information at his fingers' ends.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said he did not think three years too long a time to allow for the construction of the line, considering that the working plans and drawings would have to be prepared, and as they saw the Government had just let a contract for a mile and a-half of railway and given the contractor eighteen months in which to construct it, although the working plans were all complete.

Mr. GRIMES said there was no comparison between allowing eighteen months for the construction of the mile and a-half extension from the Roma-street terminus to Constance street and allowing three years for the construction of a line over comparatively level ground, as large tunnels had to be made in the case of the extension from Roma street to Constance street. He still maintained that it was unfair to the owners of land in the neighbourhood of the proposed line to allow so long a time as three years for its construction. It was well known there had been great speculation in coal lands lately, and though those people were not likely some time ago to enter upon the construction of a railway, they might desire to do so at the present time; and if three years were allowed the Cooneana Company in which to complete that line, they might draw out of it altogether, and another Bill would have to be introduced, and it would be five years before coal could be got down by that railway. It was unfair to those who might be anxious to introduce a similar measure, to allow so long a time as three years. He would move as an amendment upon the amendment that the word "three" be omitted with a view of inserting the word "two."

Question—That the word proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 26.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Rutledge, Chubb, Foxton, Macrossan, Thorn, Moreton, Sheridan, W. Brookes, Aland, Isambert, Campbell, Norton, Morehead, Philp, Wakefield, S. W. Brooks, Murphy, Donaldson, Salkeld, Macfarlane, Allan, Scott, Ferguson, Palmer, and Lalor.

NOES, 2.

Messrs. Grimes and Bulcock.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

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

At 7 o'clock,

The SPEAKER said: In accordance with the Sessional Order, the private business under discussion when the House adjourned at 6 o'clock now stands adjourned till after the consideration of Government business.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to further consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1887-8.

POLICE MAGISTRATES, CLERKS OF PETTY SESSIONS, ETC.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton), in moving that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the year 1887-8, the sum of £34,590, for police magistrates, clerks of petty sessions,

etc., said there was a slight decrease in the total amount for the present year. He would just give the Committee a *résumé* of the actual increases and decreases in the department. There was an increase in Brisbane of £150 for additional clerical assistance. Although there was a slight decrease in Warwick, there was an increase in Bundaberg, owing to Mr. Pugh taking his salary with him from Warwick to Bundaberg. At Caboolture there was an increase of £25, through a court of petty sessions being held there, and there was the same increase at Camooweal and Cardwell. There was a reduction at Clermont of £50 on account of the appointment of the late clerk of petty sessions, Mr. Glennie. At Cloncurry the salary for the clerk of petty sessions had been struck out, the work being now done by the police magistrate. A court of petty sessions at Cumberland caused the usual increase of £25. At Croydon there was an increase of £500, owing to the appointment of a police magistrate; and there was also an increase of £250, which did not appear in that estimate, for a clerk of petty sessions in the same district, which would appear on the Supplementary Estimates. At Gayndah there was an increase of £25, the sergeant of police having been appointed acting clerk of petty sessions, on account of the amount of work the warden and police magistrate had to do through the late springing up of three goldfields in that district. There was a reduction at Geraldton of £113 for a police magistrate who had been paid as sub-collector of Customs. At Gympie there was a reduction of £50, which was given to the former police magistrate for visiting Tewantin. That officer now received £11s. for every visit he made there. There was a reduction in the case of Hawkwood of £25, through abolishing the amount previously voted for the acting clerk of petty sessions; but there had been an increase at Ingham in consequence of an appointment of a similar nature. At Tallebudgera there was an increase of £15 to the acting clerk of petty sessions, who had been previously receiving only £10, and his salary was thereby brought up to the usual sum given to such officers. At Thornborough there was a reduction of £80 for a police magistrate who had previously received it as gold warden. Those were the alterations in the vote; but if further information were required by hon. members he would be quite willing to give it.

Mr. ADAMS said there was an increase of £50 to the police magistrate at Bundaberg, which he believed was on account of the change referred to by the Colonial Secretary. There was £50 down for the assistant clerk of petty sessions. He was not aware if the Colonial Secretary knew the amount of work that had to be done by that officer, who was an excellent deposition clerk, and who had as much as he could do from morning till night. He was perfectly satisfied that the work could not be done for that money, and when a young man had to pay for his board out of £50 a year he did not know how he could clothe himself. It was false economy to employ officers in that way, and not pay them for the work and labour done. The police magistrate at Bundaberg would be very sorry to lose him, and he (Mr. Adams) knew that he had been offered more salary to leave the Government service and go elsewhere. He also knew that officer had made application either for more salary or for a better position somewhere else, and he would like to know whether it was the intention of the department to make any alteration.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not know the gentleman who was acting as assistant clerk at Bundaberg, but believed he was a resident in the town, and that his family lived there also. He might inform the hon. member

that he had received innumerable applications for increases of salary from officers in that department, and was very sorry that none of them could be allowed. Some who had applied were very deserving, perhaps even more deserving than the officer referred to by the hon. member; but there was a distinct understanding when the Estimates were framed that no increases in salaries should be granted.

Mr. ADAMS said the young man he spoke of was certainly a resident in Bundaberg, but his father lived in Brisbane, and he was his mother's main support. Putting that aside, they ought to pay such salaries as the work demanded, and he was sorry to hear the hon. gentleman say he could do nothing more. If they lost that officer they would lose a really good man.

Mr. NORTON said they had had the reason given before that no additional salaries were to be given in the Estimates. But if they looked back to the last page they would see a few cases where there were increases. In the Water Police vote there was an increase of £70, and in the item before that there were increases in the Executive. They were certainly increases to which the men were entitled by regulation; but at the same time increases were not given to some men who were entitled to them. The complaint had been made before in that Committee that increases were given in some cases and not in others.

Mr. BLACK said he might point out that in the very item before them there were increases. The police magistrate at Bundaberg received an increase of £50.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have given a reason for that.

Mr. BLACK: How was it that they required an assistant at all there? Was the clerk of petty sessions unable to perform his duties? He was inclined to think that the assistant clerk might, with advantage to the district and to the country, change places with the clerk of petty sessions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had before stated that the reason for the increase at Bundaberg was that the salary there before was £450, and when Mr. Pugh was transferred to Bundaberg he took his salary with him. The reason for the employment of an extra clerk was that there was more work than the clerk of petty sessions could do; and he might say that Bundaberg and Mackay were on the same parallel so far as business was concerned. He was sorry that an increase could not be given to the young fellow at Bundaberg.

Mr. BLACK said he knew the clerk of petty sessions at Mackay was an efficient officer, and that he really required a clerk to assist him; he also knew something about the clerk of petty sessions at Bundaberg, and he still contended that it was quite likely that if the assistant clerk of petty sessions received £250 a year he would perform the duties more efficiently than they were performed by the two officers. He noticed that the sum of £50 was put down for the clerk of petty sessions at Croydon; but he thought that a clerk of petty sessions at a much higher salary than that would be required at a place the population and importance of which were increasing so rapidly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already explained that Mr. Brown, of the Registrar-General's office, had been appointed clerk of petty sessions at Croydon, and that his salary would be put on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. ADAMS said he could not allow the remarks of the hon. member for Mackay to go unchallenged. Even if the assistant clerk did

get £250 a year, he would not be able to perform the duties of the two officers. Both of them had as much work as they could get through, and he had known them to work till half-past 10 o'clock at night. Seeing that the general rule was to work no more than eight hours a day, he thought £50 a year was not enough for the work done, and if the Colonial Secretary was going to put any increases on the Supplementary Estimates, it would only be just to put on something extra for the assistant clerks at Bundaberg and Mackay. He always understood that when an officer got leave of absence he received half-pay during the time he was absent; but he was informed—rightly informed, he believed—that when the clerk of petty sessions at Bundaberg got a month's leave of absence three or four months ago he had to go back a week before his time was up, on account of the press of work, and was allowed no pay for the time he was absent on leave.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that as far as he remembered the hon. member was right in his facts. When Mr. Nicholson first asked for leave of absence, it was understood that the immigration officer there, Mr. Caldwell, was to do his work for him; but just about the time he was leaving, the department had a communication to the effect that Mr. Caldwell could not do the work. Mr. Nicholson took his leave of absence without any further communication with the department, and when he came back applied to have reimbursed to him the amount he had paid the person he got to do some of the work for him when he found that Mr. Caldwell could not take his place. That, however, was refused.

Mr. ADAMS said he presumed that though the officer in question got his leave of absence, and notwithstanding the fact that it was understood that officers on leave got half-pay, he was not to get any pay at all for the time he was absent on leave.

Mr. ALAND said he did not see why a difference should be made between an officer at Bundaberg and officers in other places. One had as much right as another to half-pay while absent on leave. It was just possible, however, that the officer at Bundaberg was paid something for the time he was absent, but was not allowed the money he was out of pocket in finding a substitute.

Mr. ADAMS: He got nothing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, as far as he could remember, Mr. Nicholson took his leave before it had been properly granted. He jumped at the idea that he was to go because he had made arrangements with Mr. Caldwell, the immigration officer. He was told first of all that he could not have leave of absence unless he made arrangements for carrying on the business, and it was understood in the Colonial Secretary's Office that the immigration agent was to do the work. Just before he left it was found that the Immigration Office declined to allow Mr. Caldwell to act. Mr. Nicholson then took his holiday without letting the Colonial Secretary's Office know anything about it, and afterwards sent in a claim for the payment of somebody whom he had engaged to do the work while he was absent.

Mr. ALAND: Was he paid his salary for the time he was absent?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, he was paid his salary; this claim was extra.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked whether the clerk of petty sessions at Bundaberg was competent?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had heard nothing against his competency, and had always understood that he was competent.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Is he the same gentleman who was at Mackay?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why was he removed from Mackay?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know the reason why he was removed, as the transfer took place before I came to the Colonial Secretary's Office.

Mr. MOREHEAD said perhaps the Attorney-General could give them some information upon that point. Could the hon. gentleman tell them whether that officer was competent to take down depositions? He was told the hon. gentleman could give them some information on the subject.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he did not know anything about the competency of the clerk of petty sessions at Bundaberg. He remembered having him under examination on one occasion at a trial which took place at Maryborough, and he did not strike him as being the most brilliant gentleman he had met in his life.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would like to know whether the hon. gentleman expected to find brilliancy in Maryborough? It was not, however, a question as to brilliancy, but as to competency. Did the hon. gentleman think that officer was competent to take charge of depositions or not?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have not sufficient data to enable me to form an opinion upon that point.

The HON. G. THORN said he wished to call attention to a matter of some importance, and he hoped it would not be thought he was doing it for electioneering purposes. The matter he referred to was the urgent necessity that existed for the establishment of courts of petty sessions at two important places in his electorate—Dugandan and Beaudesert. Dugandan had a general population of between 2,000 and 3,000, and the disputes arising there had to be settled at Harrisville or Ipswich. Sometimes people went to Harrisville and found there was no court there, and then had, at great expense and inconvenience, to go to Ipswich. The other day there were forty cases to adjudicate upon at Harrisville, and there was no bench. Beaudesert was also a place of some importance, and he was quite sure that the time had arrived when courts of petty sessions should be established in both those localities. The chief constables at both places might perform the duties of clerk of petty sessions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had received two letters on that subject from the hon. member, and it was still under consideration. He was not quite certain that it was necessary to establish a court of petty sessions at Dugandan yet, though probably it would be necessary to do so shortly. He thought that Beaudesert was a place where a court would have to be formed, and if that were done it would be advisable to take away the court at Veresdale. Beaudesert was about the centre of that locality, and a site had been obtained there for a court-house and police buildings.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked whether there would be any difficulty in the police magistrate at Ipswich also doing duty at Dugandan?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was what he had in view, but he did not like to tell the hon. member for Fassfern so, lest he might think the place was not so big as he imagined.

The HON. G. THORN said he did not ask for a police magistrate. All he asked was that a court of petty sessions should be established

there, so that the magistrates of the district might do their duty, and the only additional expense would be a small amount for clerks of petty sessions.

Mr. STEVENSON said he wished to ask a question with reference to the police magistrate stationed at Clermont. He found that a couple of years ago that officer was transferred from Townsville to Clermont. At Townsville he received a salary of £600 a year, and at Clermont he only received £450, and, in addition to his duties there, he had to visit Emerald and Springsure. Last year a sum of £500 was put down on the Estimates for a police magistrate at Springsure. He (Mr. Stevenson) believed that the position of police magistrate at that place was offered to a certain gentleman, who refused to accept it, and it was then done away with altogether, whilst Mr. Morey was sent to Clermont at a salary of £450, having also to visit both Springsure and Emerald. After Mr. Morey had been sent to Clermont at £450 a year, the police magistracy at Springsure was abolished, after it had been offered and refused by a certain gentleman; and in consequence of that Mr. Morey had to do the work at Clermont, Springsure, and Emerald on a salary £150 less than he was receiving at Townsville.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that when Mr. Morey was transferred to Clermont he was receiving £60 a year as land commissioner, which made up his salary to what he had previously been receiving at Townsville. The land commissioners had since been taken away from him, and he was now receiving a total salary of £545. Now that the railway was open to Springsure, it was considered that he could easily do the work at both places.

Mr. STEVENSON said what he wanted to know was why Springsure, which last year was considered worth a salary of £500, had been done away with, after the appointment had been offered to and refused by a certain gentleman. If that appointment was worth £500 a year last year, it was surely worth something now to the police magistrate at Clermont, if only to the extent of restoring his salary to what it was at Townsville.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was considered advisable to reduce the number of police magistrates wherever possible, and, the railway having been opened from Emerald to Springsure, it was thought that the police magistrate residing at Clermont might easily visit both places. The work at Clermont was not of a very arduous nature, and one police magistrate could do the work both there and at Springsure and Emerald quite easily. The land commissioners had been taken away from Mr. Morey during the last six months.

Mr. STEVENSON asked why the appointment at Springsure was offered to a certain gentleman at £500, if the police magistrate at Clermont could perform the work so easily?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that at that time there were so many police magistrates that it was necessary for the Government to find them something to do. Since then there had been other openings for employment, such as at Croydon, and it was then found unnecessary to place one at Springsure. Before the railway was opened a police magistrate was necessary there, owing to want of communication between one place and another, and the time it took to get to Springsure. It was considered necessary to have police magistrates in outside places, where people had to travel long distances to get to the court of petty sessions, but no doubt as railways progressed many more reductions would be made by throwing two or three places into one.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Colonial Secretary had not quite met the question of the hon. member for Normanby. It was a police magistrate at Townsville who was to be removed to Springsure. Townsville was not a very small village—it was a place of some little importance; and he did not understand the hon. gentleman's explanation that the appointment to Springsure was made in order to give employment to a police magistrate who at that time was unemployed. With regard to Springsure, it seemed very extraordinary that within so short a time, and under the same conditions that now prevailed, it should be found necessary to wipe out that £500 appointment. Some explanation ought to be given as to why the appointment of the present police magistrate at Townsville to Springsure, which had been, he believed, gazetted, was so shortly afterwards cancelled.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the same conditions did not prevail there twelve months ago as prevailed now. It was only within the last few months that the railway had been opened to Springsure. Before that line was opened it was impossible for the police magistrate at Clermont to do the work at Clermont, Emerald, and Springsure; and if it was now found that one man could easily do the work at the three places, it was the duty of the Government to abolish one of the appointments, so that one man might find full employment. It would be absolutely wrong to appoint two police magistrates where one could do all the work in consequence of the extension of the railway.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they wanted an explanation about the proposed transference of the police magistrate from Townsville to Springsure.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that at that time it was thought necessary, in the interests of the service, that there should be some changes made; and that was one of them. Afterwards it was found unnecessary to make it, and it was rescinded.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said it seemed impossible to get an explanation that would satisfy the wants of an ordinary man inquiring after the truth. Both the Ministers who had spoken seemed to forget that there would be nothing saved by transferring the police magistrate at Townsville to Springsure, because the post at Townsville would have to be filled by some other police magistrate. The railway was known, a year ago, to be approaching completion, and indeed should have been completed, so that that could have nothing to do with the abolition of the office after a gentleman had been appointed to it. That was an afterthought on the part of some member of the Government; he did not say whom. But the explanation they wanted was, why was the police magistrate going to be removed from Townsville to Springsure, and why was he not removed? The Chief Secretary could tell them more about it than the Colonial Secretary could, and would, perhaps, give the information before the vote was passed. Before leaving the matter he would point out this: Here was a police magistrate who was removed from Townsville to Clermont. In Townsville he was receiving a salary of £600 a year. He was an old Civil servant—one, he believed, who had given satisfaction; he was also gold warden at one time and gave perfect satisfaction; he was removed to Clermont for some reason or other—he supposed, the convenience of the public service—at a reduction of salary. His salary, even with the land commissionership added, was £545. Since then his salary had been still more reduced, and his work had been increased. He would like to remind the Colonial Secretary of what he (Mr. Moreton) had

said a few minutes ago with regard to the police magistrate at Bundaberg—that he had taken his salary with him from Warwick; why did not Mr. Morey not take his salary from Townsville to Clermont?

The PREMIER: He did.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said there was no comparison between the the two men, either as gold warden or as police magistrate. He had known both of them in both capacities. Yet one of them took his salary with him and the other did not. Mr. Morey went to Clermont at a salary of £545, including the land commission, and now his very big salary was still further reduced to £450, and his work had been increased by visiting Springsure. Would the Chief Secretary tell the Committee why Mr. Henry was going to be removed from Townsville, and why he was not?

The PREMIER said, as far as Mr. Morey was concerned, he lost nothing in point of salary by removal to Clermont. The fact was the salary at Townsville had since been raised.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Why?

The PREMIER: Because of the importance of the office. It was considered desirable in the public interest that Mr. Morey should be removed from Townsville. At least the Government thought so.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I do not blame the Government for removing him.

The PREMIER said he was in charge of the department at the time, and Mr. Morey's interests were carefully considered. The removal was in no sense a degradation; it was simply considered desirable that he should be removed. Changes became necessary occasionally without assigning any particular reasons for them. Assigning reasons might have the effect of casting a slur upon an officer, and it should be distinctly understood that officers could be removed from one place to another without any slur being implied on their character. With regard to the removal of Mr. Henry from Townsville, at first it was thought desirable, in the public interests, that there should be a change—he had forgotten the subsequent arrangements—at any rate after that there were reasons why Mr. Henry should not be removed.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: The public interest.

The PREMIER: Yes; the public interest. There were reasons why that gentleman should not be removed from Townsville. He was doing extremely good work there, and there was a possibility of the office at Springsure being dispensed with altogether. One reason that weighed with him more than anything else was this: That there was in the Kennedy district an extremely efficient and large branch of the Defence Force; Mr. Henry was the life and soul of that corps, and it was undesirable in the interests of that branch of the force that he should be removed. He knew that he weighed in his own mind for some time which set of reasons to give effect to, and when he left the colony for England the matter was unsettled. It was decided when he was away. That was all the information he could give on the subject.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought they had done with the Defence Force, but it seemed now that the arrangements of that force were to rule the appointment of their police magistrates—that they were to be dependent upon that wonderful Defence Force that they were suffering from. It was rather a strange thing that in the Blue Book for 1886 he found "Alfred Henry, police magistrate, Springsure," with a salary that aggregated £597.

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The PREMIER: That was up to the 31st December.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He was police magistrate at Springsure.

The PREMIER: I suppose so.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman did not seem to know very much about it. He (Mr. Morehead) could not conceive that he knew less than the Colonial Secretary, but still he knew very little about it. He thought the Springsure and Townsville arrangement wanted a little more explanation than the Committee had got yet, because, as had been pointed out by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, it was quite evident at the time the appointment was made, assuming that the Government held the same views with regard to the ultimate consequences which were contemplated upon the construction of the railway between Emerald and Springsure—that they thought there would be no necessity for a police magistrate at Springsure. It was evident that they thought so by the Estimates they had laid before the Committee. It would really be the "irony of fate" if Mr. Alfred Henry had continued in his appointment until it was abolished by the railway of the Minister for Works, which he himself always said would be of no use. It would be a very extraordinary coincidence if the hon. gentleman had put his friend, Mr. Alfred Henry, at the end of that railway line for the purpose of destroying him—a line which he said he never believed in, but which he promised to vote for if the electors of Leichhardt only returned him to that House. It was an extraordinary complication—the Townsville affair, the Defence Force, and the reasons which had led the Premier in the first instance to consider that it was desirable in the interests of the public service to make that change. Similar reasons had no doubt induced them to remove Mr. Morey from Townsville, and then by a sudden turn round the Premier thought it was very desirable, in the interests of the public service, that Mr. Henry should be retained in his position. He believed, as a matter of fact, that Mr. Henry point-blank refused to go to Springsure.

The PREMIER: No; on the contrary.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Did he accept the position?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: But he never took the position. Then he was certainly of opinion that back-door influence had been at work. He knew that the Premier sifted everything carefully before he arrived at a decision, and having arrived at the decision that it was in the interests of the public service that Mr. Henry should be removed from Townsville to somewhere inland where perhaps he would not have been of so much assistance in defending the colony—having arrived at that conclusion, after well considering and cross-examining the evidence, he (Mr. Morehead) was convinced that there had been influences brought to bear—which that Committee knew little of, but respecting which they could infer a great deal—which led to the alteration of that decision. He understood the Premier to say that the alteration took place after he left the colony.

The PREMIER: It was finally settled.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that fitted into his argument admirably. The hon. gentleman went away leaving it unsettled—having settled it in the first instance—so that he might now come down to the Committee and tell them that during his absence it had been settled.

The PREMIER: I am told I was wrong; that it was settled before I left.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not know that the hon. gentleman was ever wrong, and he was glad he had told them so, although, as a matter of fact, he did not even now make that admission. He certainly thought the Committee were entitled to know the reason why, in the first instance, it was decided to remove Mr. Henry from Townsville, and the influence that had led to a reconsideration of the matter and a reversal of the decision previously arrived at.

The PREMIER said he did not propose to state in detail what the reasons were. It would certainly be of no advantage to the public service. If the hon. gentleman wanted to know privately what the reasons were he should be glad to tell him; but he thought it would be of no advantage to the public service to break the rule which had always been understood in connection with matters of that sort.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not see that he could derive any possible benefit from being told privately what passed between Mr. Henry and the Chief Secretary. He had no desire to have communications of a private nature made to him on such subjects. If the Chief Secretary would not state the reasons, he for one would not ask him to state them privately, but all he could imagine was that there must have been something terribly bad if it could not be exposed.

Mr. PHILP said he thought the police magistrate of Clermont had been very unfairly treated by the Government. He was in receipt of a much larger salary at Townsville, and so far as the people in Townsville knew he was an excellent servant. He had been sent to a very much less important place, where he was doing a great deal more work for less salary. He thought he should get as much as the present police magistrate of Townsville, who was no better than Mr. Morey, and a great many thought he was not as good as Mr. Morey.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Committee was entitled to a reason from the Premier as to why Mr. Morey's salary had been reduced. The Premier had said it had not been reduced, and if that was the case no further explanation was necessary; but since then one of the members for Townsville had distinctly stated that although Mr. Morey's work had increased his salary had been reduced. Therefore he thought they were entitled to an explanation, seeing that the Colonial Secretary's explanation, that when a police magistrate left a place he carried his salary with him, had proved incorrect. It was evidently not the case in that instance if what the members for Townsville said was correct, and he could hardly think that they could be misinformed on a matter of that kind.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he would tell the hon. gentleman why the police magistrate's salary was reduced. He was acting as land commissioner at Clermont, and probably hon. members knew that land commissioners were required to send in reports to the Lands Office every year, on the operation of the Land Act in their districts. Well, Mr. Morey had to make up a report, and it was sent down to the Lands Office, but he also published it in the local paper. As soon as he (Mr. Dutton) found that out he dispensed with the services of Mr. Morey as land commissioner, and would do the same to any land commissioner who acted in that way. The first place a report should come to was the Lands Office, but instead of that it reached the local paper first; consequently Mr. Morey's services as land commissioner were dispensed with and his salary reduced by £60.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he was really rather amused at the admission of the Minister for Works. He happened to have read carefully

Mr. Morey's report, and it was not quite in accordance with the Georgian theory. It did not carry that out. It did not endorse the success of the Land Act of 1884. The report not suiting the Minister for Lands for the time being, Mr. Morey's services as land commissioner were dispensed with. As to publishing the report in the local newspaper, he thought it was a harmless thing. He did not know whether the Minister for Lands for the time being expected the report to be sent to him, and then to have it trimmed down and altered to suit his own views before it was published. He thought when Mr. Morey made the report it was as well that it should be published in the local paper simultaneous with the time he sent it in to that department. He did not see any great harm in that. Mr. Morey's views might have been mistaken or they might have been correct, but because they did not coincide with the views of the Minister for Lands for the time being, that was no reason why his salary should be reduced by £100 a year. It was a pretty sharp punishment. If he had published a report in favour of the Act, did anyone imagine that he would have been dismissed from the position of lands commissioner? He believed the man published a conscientious report. It might have been a mistake to send it to the Press before he sent it to the office, but he did not see any great error in that. The report was bound to become a public document. The Press were pretty inquisitive and got hold of most things, sooner or later. He considered that, Mr. Morey being a public officer, as soon as he had made up his report it certainly ought to have been published in its integrity. The public of the colony had a right to sift and criticise such reports, and from all he could see of Mr. Morey's report it was a very good and genuine one, and one with which the people would agree. It did not bear out the idea of the Minister for Lands for the time being, but that was no reason why it should be doctored before it was inserted in the Press, and no reason why £100 a year should be knocked off his salary. If they were going to have that sort of reign of terror government, officials would be trained to utterly disregard the events that were going on in their districts, and would have to compile and shape their reports to suit the views of the Minister. He thought it would be a very bad state of things for the colony when that occurred.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that it could not be a matter of surprise to anyone that there should be such a remarkable divergence of opinion between himself and the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, considering how differently they were constituted, and that the hon. member might not be expected to understand what propriety should be observed by a Civil servant in the discharge of his duty. He maintained that it was distinctly the duty of a Civil servant, when required to make a report, to send it in to the head office before he submitted it to anyone else; and before it found its way into the papers it should be submitted to the scrutiny of that House.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: It is a public document.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was not a public document until it was laid upon the table of the House, and it had no business to be so. So long as he had the management of a public office he would see that those under him preserved the proprieties, no matter who they might be, or what position they occupied, whether they were land commissioners or anything else. It was evident that what actuated the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, in the speech he had made was the feeling that usually

actuated that hon. member, because he fancied he saw in Mr. Morey's report something entirely in accord with his own peculiar notions on certain subjects. He could assure the Committee he had not himself read that report to this moment.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Then why did you dock his screw?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was absent on leave in the South at the time, and when he came back it was brought under his notice that the report had appeared in the *Clermont* papers. Of course, upon that he at once took steps to remove Mr. Morey from the position he occupied as land commissioner, and he maintained he was fully justified in doing so. He would always do the same under similar circumstances. Take the case of the gentlemen sent up to Cairns to report, and suppose that as soon as they made their report they published it in the *Cairns* papers before sending it on to the office!

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Why not?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it should first be sent to the department. If they allowed everyone to act independently of the head of the department they would have a pretty state of things. Depend upon it, as long as he was in office, those under him would have to observe its proprieties.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he quite agreed that Mr. Morey's conduct in publishing that report without leave, and before he sent it on to the head of his department, was highly censurable. But he thought the punishment was quite inordinate with the crime, if it was a crime. Having regard to the fact that Mr. Morey was not only a very old Civil servant but a very old settler in the colony—

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He ought to have known better.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman said "He ought to have known better," but he did not know that the hon. gentleman got wiser or better as he grew older; at any rate it was hardly fair for the hon. gentleman to make the interjection he did make when he (Mr. Morehead) was putting before the Committee what Mr. Morey's career in the colony had been. That gentleman's career was known to many members of the Committee. They knew that Mr. Morey was for many years a settler in the colony, and lost every shilling he had, though he was at one time a wealthy man. He then joined the Civil Service of the colony, and had done very good work in it, and had devoted many years of his life to the service of the colony. He thought it very hard under the circumstances that Mr. Morey should, for a mere error of judgment—for it could not be called anything else—have his salary reduced to the extent of £60 a year by the arbitrary act of the Minister for Works. That might be a very important item to Mr. Morey, though it would possibly be a small matter to some members of the Ministry. That was the punishment meted out to Mr. Morey by the Minister for Works. That hon. gentleman had told them over and over again what he would do "to people under me," as he termed it. Two or three times the hon. gentleman had explained the arbitrary power he intended to exercise through his position as a Minister of the Crown. Now, it was a good thing to have a giant's strength, but it was tyrannous to use it as a giant. That was the way the Minister for Works used his strength. He seemed to think he was put into such a position that those under him should be trodden upon by him if they dared to differ from him or to make any departmental slip. His iron heel was upon them at once to crush them out. That was the great Liberal

Minister; that was the man who wished to make all men equal; that was the apostle of the Georgian theory for the equality of men; that was the socialist, the supporter of trade unions, who subscribed £5 to this and to that to make all men equal. It had always been the case, and always would be the case, that those men were born hypocrites, who traded upon the weakness and passions of the human race, but who had no human sympathies. If the speech they had just heard from the Minister for Works was the only one ever made by him it would show what a tyrant he was at heart. He said that without hesitation. What one amongst the members of that Committee, if anyone in his employment made a slip—for Mr. Morey could not be said to have made anything else but a slip—would treat him in the harsh and cruel way that the Minister for Works had treated Mr. Morey? He doubted if there was any member in that Committee, or anyone in the colony except the hon. gentleman, who would do so. Now he was going on to something else. Mr. Morey had been punished—bitterly punished—for that mistaken act on his part. He admitted at once the greatness of the impropriety committed by Mr. Morey, but what had happened with regard to the hon. gentleman's relative, Mr. Henry? What about the conduct of Mr. Henry? It had been decided by the Cabinet that that gentleman should be removed from a certain position for good and sufficient reasons, which the Premier would only explain to him (Mr. Morehead) privately, but which were at any rate good and sufficient reasons. He was to be removed to another place, and to have his salary diminished, but none of the relatives of the Minister for Works were to be so treated. Pressure had been brought to bear undoubtedly, and that relative of the Minister for Works had been reinstated—no one knew how and no one knew why. He would now come back to the question of the late Railway Arbitrator. Had anything in the conduct of Mr. Morey been so discreditable or disgraceful as the conduct of the late Railway Arbitrator? Was not the manner in which that man had conducted himself at Maryborough an open book? The time had come to speak out, when he saw such injustice being done to Mr. Morey. The late Railway Arbitrator was known to have been in a state of intoxication in a public-house at Maryborough for several days, during the time the Corser arbitration case was going on. He did not wish to state that, but he had said it now when he found the way in which Mr. Morey was treated. It was time he should make no more bones about the matter, but show how the Minister for Works, in his despotic way, acting in the interests of his relatives, kept one Civil servant in a position when it was decided by the Cabinet that he should be removed from it, and when another relative of his was notoriously and disgracefully incapable for the position he occupied and found he had to abandon it, got him put into the position of clerk of petty sessions at Clermont, under the very man who was punished by him (the Minister for Works) with the loss of £60 a year of his salary for publishing his report in a newspaper. It was as well that the colony should understand the position. What he had stated to the Committee were the facts, and could not be gainsaid by anyone. He had stated simply facts to the Committee, and he left them and the colony to judge between them.

The PREMIER said he quite agreed that it was just as well that the truth should be known; but the truth was not in what the hon. member had said.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The truth is there,

The PREMIER said that was the only reason why he rose to follow the hon. gentleman, because it was just as well that the truth should be known. He believed Mr. Henry was some connection by marriage of the Minister for Works—he did not know what; but he knew that they were not on speaking terms, and certainly the Minister for Works had never been the champion of Mr. Henry's cause with the Government. Never had he heard the Minister for Works say a single word in his favour, and so far as he knew they had not been friends for a great number of years. Now, as to Mr. Thomson, he (the Premier) knew nothing about the charge made by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. MOREHEAD : It is a fact.

The PREMIER said that knowing nothing about it he could say nothing; but he did know that the Minister for Works had no more to do with the appointment of Mr. Thomson as clerk of petty sessions at Clermont than the hon. member for Balonne had. The Government of the country was not conducted on those principles now, whatever it might have been at some previous time from which the hon. member drew his inspiration, or rather his imagination.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman was trying to draw a red herring across the trail by comparing the purity of his Government with that of previous Governments. There had not been one bit of difference, so far as he could see, between the administration of the present Government and that of other Governments. Whatever inspiration the leader of the Opposition had drawn he had not drawn it from his experience of the Government of which he was a member. The Government of which that hon. gentleman was a member had never to their knowledge kept an immoral character on the bench after having once decided to remove him. The hon. Chief Secretary knew well that the reasons he was hiding in his own breast, and which he offered to give privately to the leader of the Opposition, were disgraceful reasons. That particular officer was going to be removed, and he was not removed. He (Mr. Macrossan) did not charge the Minister for Works with using any back-door influence, but the reason given by the Premier—that Mr. Henry was useful as a member of the Defence Force—was not the true reason, and the hon. gentleman knew it well. He (Mr. Macrossan) knew nothing about the charge made against the late Railway Arbitrator. The Chief Secretary said he was removed without any collusion with the Minister for Works. Of course none of them supposed that the hon. gentleman said, "Mr. Dutton, would you like me to remove Mr. Thomson to Clermont, to be clerk of petty sessions there?" That was not how it was done. It was done because it would please the Minister for Works. Now, that gentleman was put there with a salary of £449, according to the schedule—£1 less than he had been getting—while Mr. Morey, for being guilty of an official breach of propriety—not of an immoral impropriety—had his salary reduced to within about £100 of that of the gentleman who was under him as clerk of petty sessions. Now, if there was any truth at all in the statements made by the leader of the Opposition, it was time that the Premier should inquire into the truth of allegations that were made both inside and outside the House. They knew the reason for which Mr. Henry was going to be removed from Townsville just as well as the Chief Secretary did. The hon. member for Cook had said that the Press knew everything.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL : I did not say so.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : The Press knew a great deal, but it only got its information from people outside, and hon. members got their information from the same source. The Chief Secretary was quite right when he said Mr. Henry should be removed, and he was quite wrong in keeping him there afterwards. The hon. gentleman's conscience must tell him he was wrong in keeping Mr. Henry there now. No excuse as to his being a captain in the Defence Force was sufficient to satisfy the hon. gentleman's own conscience. Now, Mr. Morey should not be serving the country at such a reduction of salary. He was a good officer. He (Mr. Macrossan) had known him in his capacity of goldfields warden as well as police magistrate, so he was speaking from experience. Mr. Morey was a good officer, and although he had been guilty of a breach of official etiquette—which he (Mr. Macrossan) as well as the hon. leader of the Opposition admitted—still the punishment meted out was far too severe, especially when compared with no punishment meted out to gentlemen who were guilty, not of a breach of official etiquette, but of a breach of the moral proprieties. Which was the worse—that a gentleman should publish a report to his chief—

The PREMIER : An attack on his superior officer.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had not read it, but he admitted it was wrong for Mr. Morey to do it; yet there was nothing morally wrong about it. Now, there was something morally wrong about the other two cases.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for Townsville had alluded to him (Mr. Hill) as having said that the Press knew everything. Now, he had never said that the Press knew everything, or that everything they published was perfectly true; he emphatically dissented from that. He must say that he failed to see the impropriety in Mr. Morey sending his report simultaneously to the Minister and to the Press. He did not see why the business of the colony should be carried on in a hole-and-corner way—that officials paid by the public should send in their reports to the administrator of the department, and perhaps have to take them back and cut them up and revise them according to his views before they were made public. Mr. Morey was evidently not ashamed of his report, or he would not have sent it to the Press. It was an act of great intelligence and independence on the part of a Civil servant to do it. He was paid by the public out of the public purse to advance the interests of the public, and he was perfectly justified in making his report public. If it had jumped with the ideas of the Minister the effect might have been different, and Mr. Morey would probably have been patted on the back; but because it happened to fall short of the expectation of the Minister for Lands for the time being he was sat upon at once, and his salary was docked. He (Mr. Hill) had heard a great deal about that supposed scandal at Townsville, which had got about with regard to the present police magistrate there, on newspaper authority alone. Well for his part, he did not believe a word of it. There was nothing in it. He did not attach the slightest importance to it. If he believed half the things that he saw in the newspapers about himself he should be inclined to sink through the floor of the House; he should feel that he ought to efface himself from public life and from private life as well; but he disregarded such statements, and treated them with the most utter contempt. He only laughed when he saw anything virulent or scurrilous about himself.

If he believed all he had read about himself since he had been in public life he would certainly give himself a happy despatch.

Mr. HAMILTON said it was nauseating to hear the way in which some members of the Government spoke of their own honesty and uprightness. The public would judge by facts. The Colonial Secretary ought to have a fellow-feeling for Mr. Morey, because he had made far greater mistakes in the same line. When they reckoned the cost the country had sustained through his mistakes in advertising the electoral rolls, and if the hon. gentleman had fined himself in the way he had fined Mr. Morey, there would be very little of his £1,000 a year left. It was a pity Mr. Morey should have been treated so harshly for such a trivial mistake, while Mr. Henry, who appeared to be a relation of one of the Ministers, and who had made apparently a very gross mistake, should have had his salary increased. Certainly the Premier stated that the Minister for Works was not on speaking terms with Mr. Henry, although he was a relative; perhaps that was why his salary was increased. The facts of the two cases certainly indicated what the leader of the Opposition had said, that back-door influence was at work.

Mr. DICKSON said he did not think any hon. member would approve of an officer of the Government publishing in a newspaper a report before it had been submitted for the consideration of the head of his department, and he thought his hon. friend, the member for Cook, had said what he had merely to give a little liveliness to the debate, and not from any conviction as to the propriety of the action. He was glad that hon. members opposite agreed with the Minister for Works in his disapproval of what Mr. Morey did upon that occasion. However, he was inclined to think, from what he knew of Mr. Morey, that that gentleman had not made an intentional mistake, or intended to throw any discredit upon his department, or show any disrespect to his Minister. If that charge could have been substantiated Mr. Morey should have been dismissed. The Minister ought to have called upon him for an explanation of the reasons which led him to depart from the ordinary propriety of departmental management. He did not know whether the hon. gentleman had obtained a report upon that matter; but that would have been the proper course to have taken, and if Mr. Morey had, in his explanation, shown an offensive demeanour towards the Minister, the punishment should not have stopped where it did; he should have received his *congé* from the public service. Many hon. members knew Mr. Morey, and knew he had been an efficient public officer for many years, and had performed his duties as police magistrate exceedingly well. He did not think Mr. Morey had ever been reprimanded or in any way brought under the censure of the head of the department, and surely for one mistake he ought not to be lowered in the status he had obtained in the public service. He agreed that the offence that gentleman had committed ought to be condoned, and that Mr. Morey ought to be reinstated to the extent of the salary he enjoyed while in Townsville. He had suffered sufficient punishment, and if the reduction of salary were perpetuated the punishment would be excessive. He thought the debate had done good. He had not read the report and no other hon. member appeared to have read it, but the impropriety of publishing a report before it was submitted to the head of the department was a very grave one. The officer doing so deserved a severe reprimand and should have been called upon to explain his conduct, and if he could not do that satisfactorily, and it was shown that he

intended to be insubordinate to his chief, he deserved dismissal. From his knowledge of him, he did not believe Mr. Morey would take up that position, and did not think he should be permanently deprived of his position in the Civil Service and the emoluments to which he was entitled by a long number of years of faithful service.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the remarks of the hon. member for Enoggera seemed extraordinary, considering he was a member of the Government when Mr. Morey's services were dispensed with, and understood what the *modus operandi* was under such circumstances. Mr. Morey published a report, and he (Mr. Dutton) thought he ought to dispense with his services, and made out a minute in accordance with his view. The hon. member was at the head of the Government then, during the absence of the Premier.

Mr. DICKSON: It was before the Premier went home.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was while the Premier was in England that that occurred, and the hon. member for Enoggera did not raise any objection at the time; but now he thought a reprimand would have been sufficient. For the sake of saying something pleasant and sweet to hon. members on the other side, he pretended to take the view he had just mentioned, which was a course of conduct he (Mr. Dutton) did not understand at all. It was utterly contemptible to him. The hon. member should have denounced the proposal at the time. He felt very strongly upon the matter, no matter what the kind or character of the report might have been. In reference to what was said by the leader of the Opposition he tried to convey the impression, with the object he usually had in view when his remarks were addressed to him, that he (Mr. Dutton) was related to Mr. Henry, and was a personal friend of his.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I never mentioned the words "personal friend."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that Mr. Henry was not a friend of his, and was not related to him in any way. The hon. member might be a Scotchman, and he might call that relationship, but he (the Minister for Works) repudiated anything of the kind.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You would repudiate anything when it suited you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was a good deal of humbug about the matter, and he always repudiated humbug. He had been accused of being a Liberal, a Socialist, a believer in trade unions, but he was not ashamed of that. He was a Liberal, he was a Socialist, but not in the sense the hon. member meant, and he thoroughly believed in trade unions, and he gave them all the assistance he could. He believed they were necessary for the working man, to protect him against the greed of capitalists. He had always maintained that, and always would, and he was glad the hon. member had given him an opportunity of saying so.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You never employed white men if you could get black men to do your work.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he contended for equal rights to all men, whether white or black, and his antipathy even to Chinamen did not go so far as that of some hon. members. He would entirely exclude Chinamen from the colony in future, but he would not be unjust to those already in the colony. The hon. member had referred to some scandalous rumours

in reference to the late Railway Arbitrator, Mr. Thomson, having been for days in a state of intoxication at Maryborough. He had never heard of it before, and he did not believe it was true, though he admitted that the hon. member had a very keen nose for anything in the shape of a scandal. If it was true, however, there was still more justification for the action taken by the Government in connection with the arbitrator.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You can find out the truth or otherwise by inquiring at Maryborough.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was no doubt the hon. member had a good many spies in the country to prime him with anything they could get hold of, and he afterwards took the opportunity of retailing what he got from them in that Chamber. He did not believe there was any truth in the rumour, but he should like to know whether there was any ground for the scandalous assertion.

Mr. STEVENSON said he was not at all satisfied with the explanation as to the reduction of Mr. Morey's salary. He was amused, however, at the Minister for Works holding himself up as the defender of the poor working man. Anyone who had known the hon. member as long as he had—for twenty-four years—knew perfectly well that he would never employ white men as long as he could get black men, and that he was looked upon as a perfect tyrant to white men in the Central district; and that the white men on his station got lower wages than those on any other station. The hon. member worked his station with aborigines and kanakas; and to pose now as the working man's friend was a little too thin. He did not believe that Mr. Morey did right in publishing the report before submitting it to the Minister, but it could not have done much harm and had cost nothing. It was very different from what took place some time ago, when tremendous expense was incurred by advertising, though the laxity of some official in the Colonial Secretary's Department. An inquiry into that matter was promised, but it had been allowed to drop. No one, in that case, was deprived of his salary as Mr. Morey had been. The Minister for Works said he never read the report, but there was no doubt he knew what was in it, and because the report did not please him he relieved Mr. Morey of his duties as land commissioner. Considering all the years Mr. Morey had been in the public service, and knowing that he was a capable public servant, there was very little encouragement to deserving officers when they saw him deprived of his salary to the extent of £50 a year. Before he sat down he wished to ask who was performing the work of land commissioner at Clermont now, and whether he got a salary?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the land commissioner from Rockhampton had to attend there once a month to deal with the land cases. He had a travelling allowance amounting to about £40 a year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that a large question had been raised by the discussion which had just taken place. The Committee had heard from the hon. member for Enoggera expressions of sympathy on account of the way in which Mr. Morey had been treated, and he (Mr. Morehead) agreed with every word that had fallen from that hon. member. Then they heard the Minister for Works disclose matters which his position, as a Cabinet Minister, ought to have deterred him from disclosing. The hon. member had informed the Committee what took place in the Cabinet. He did not know that any other Cabinet Minister had revealed, either inside

or outside that Chamber, anything that took place while the Executive were sitting, but he was told that it was not the first time it had been done by the Minister for Works. It was quite a new departure so far as he knew, and he thought that they ought either to do away with the secrecy that heretofore existed with regard to Cabinet business or adhere to it. The hon. gentleman had broken, not only all the traditions, but a most serious oath he had taken in connection with his conduct as a member of the Executive, and no one knew it better, or ought to know it better, than the hon. member himself.

The PREMIER said the hon. member had only been a short time a member of a Government, and did not appear to know exactly the subject upon which he was speaking. Ministers did not take an oath not to reveal what took place in the Cabinet, which was a meeting of members of the Government unknown to the Constitution. The oath they took had reference to meetings of the Executive where no discussion took place, and what transpired there was not disclosed without the consent of the Governor.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman forgot to mention that the action of the Cabinet was followed by the action of the Executive, and it was the Executive action to which he (Mr. Morehead) alluded. The action that was taken could only be taken by the Executive. He was not such a short time in office—well on for three years—that he did not know what was the procedure. He referred to the Minister for Works as a member of the Executive Council, and the removal of Mr. Morey from his position as land commissioner could only be done by the Executive.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said what he deprecated in the speech of the hon. member for Enoggera, the ex-Colonial Treasurer, was the fact that the hon. member blamed him for having dealt with Mr. Morey in the way he was dealt with, when, as he (the Minister for Works) had explained, the hon. gentleman was a member of the Government at the time, and a member of the Executive Council that dealt with that particular matter. He (the Minister for Works) merely stated how the matter was dealt with, and said that if the hon. gentleman had any objection to the course which was followed that was the time to make it, and not now in Committee of the House. He did not feel himself bound to withhold an explanation of that kind when he was attacked in the way he had been that evening. He agreed with the view taken by the Premier; the only oath he had taken was as a member of the Executive. The hon. member for Enoggera tried to throw the whole blame upon him of having dealt improperly with Mr. Morey when the hon. gentleman was himself a party to the action taken by the Government. He maintained that the hon. member was entirely right then, but now, because he wished to get a little sympathy from members opposite, he wanted to go on the other tack. Let the hon. gentleman explain why he took up a different line now from that adopted by him on a previous occasion. He (the Minister for Works) maintained that the course he took was a perfectly correct one, but the hon. gentleman was now endeavouring to occupy a perfectly untenable position, inasmuch as he was trying to throw the whole blame of an alleged improper thing in which he coincided on to him. He (the Minister for Works), however, did not think there was any blame in it at all. If Mr. Morey had been a novice in the Government service, who had only recently been appointed to office, it might be thought that he had made a mistake; but he was an old Civil

servant, as members on the other side claimed, and had for years discharged the duties of police magistrate, and he was not so entirely ignorant of the propriety he should observe in his office as not to know that such an action as publishing that report amounted to nothing but a clear intention on his part not to be bound by any rules of propriety. It was not done through ignorance; if it had been, he would have been dealt with very leniently indeed.

Mr. W. BROOKES said he must confess that on that matter he was thoroughly of the opinion of the Minister for Works. He could not but think that hon. gentlemen opposite for present purposes had twisted it from its true aspect. As a plain simple person, never having been a Minister, and never having taken an oath, he could not reveal anything that had taken place in the Cabinet or Executive; and having no other knowledge of official life than what he could gather from outside sources, it struck him that the ex-Treasurer had presented himself in a very humiliating light that evening. There was not the slightest doubt that the hon. member had tried to fix on the present Minister for Works a kind of brand for doing something with which the hon. gentleman had just as much to do as the Minister for Works. Balancing the words of the ex-Treasurer with the words of the Minister for Works, he must come to the conclusion that either they were both wrong or that one of them was speaking what was not true. The two accounts could not be reconciled. They were told plainly by the Minister for Works that when that affair of Morey's took place the ex-Treasurer was Acting Chief Secretary, and yet that evening, in a very shabby way, the hon. member for Enoggera repudiated that statement.

Mr. DICKSON: No.

Mr. W. BROOKES said they found that the hon. member attempted to make out that it was a wrong thing to do, and that the whole blame rested on the Minister for Works. That was a mean way of getting out of anything. He did not think that when the account of that discussion was read by any reasonable man in the colony he would see anything at all creditable in it to the ex-Treasurer. He did not wonder that the Minister for Works should heartily resent it. He would like to know whether there was a gentleman in that Committee who would resent it more heartily than the leader of the Opposition. It was a matter touching personal honour, personal veracity, and everything that was held dear by any person of refinement and susceptibility. He wondered how the Minister for Works could sit in his seat and listen to the statements which he knew were the very opposite to facts. With reference to what had fallen from the junior member for Cook, he did not know what had inspired him; but the hon. member must admit on cool reflection—he believed he had moments of cool reflection sometimes—that for a subordinate officer to publish a private report about matters in his department was a breach of discipline which, if it prevailed in the public service, would subvert all government. It was impossible to reconcile it with any idea of propriety. But the point was that the ex-Treasurer distinctly said the offence should have been condoned—that an old faithful servant should not have been punished so severely as Mr. Morey was; and yet the hon. gentleman was the executioner, the leader of the Cabinet at the time, though he (Mr. Brookes) did not say that the Minister for Works was obliged to fall in with what was proposed by the then leader of the Cabinet! Certainly such a thing was never heard of in the Legislative Assembly before as that a superior officer should abjure his own words when they were not found

very creditable, and attempt to put the whole of the blame on a gentleman who occupied a subordinate position in the same Cabinet.

Mr. DICKSON said he did not intend to follow the example of the Minister for Works or the hon. member for North Brisbane, who had endeavoured to mystify the matter by indulging in a lot of hard epithets. He had no wish to shirk his responsibility in the matter, nor had he in any way accused the Minister for Works of acting unfairly or unjustly. His memory did not carry him back to the fact of his having approved of the minute. He would not take upon himself to deny it, but he certainly had not the slightest recollection of any statement having been made to him at that time about a report being published in a newspaper. It was quite possible that he, acting as the head of the Cabinet, accepted the representations of the Minister for Works, who at that time was administering the Lands Department, as he would have received the representations of any other member of the Cabinet, without question or cavil, except on matters of public policy, believing that they were the best judges of what was right in the administration of their own departments. The thing would not have come so forcibly before him, but that in June he visited Clermont, and there Mr. Morey represented the case to him, and pointed out that he was a very considerable loser by the action of the department. It came upon him as a matter of surprise; he was not aware that Mr. Morey had suffered a loss of emolument. He told Mr. Morey to address him in writing, and he would submit the matter to the Cabinet on his return to Brisbane. He did so, and it was then he learned for the first time that it was in consequence of a report published in a newspaper that the action had been taken. He certainly said to his colleagues that he thought Mr. Morey should be restored to his full emoluments, and he still thought so. He accepted the blame for not making himself more fully acquainted with the matter when the Minister for Lands passed his minute, though really he did not remember the circumstance. If a fault had been committed it could be repaired, and he distinctly told his colleagues that he thought Mr. Morey had made out a very good case for his salary being restored to him. He again repeated that it was only on his return to Brisbane that he was made aware that the action had been taken in consequence of some report which had appeared in the Press; and he again said, without casting any unnecessary blame on the Minister for Works, who had exhibited an amount of irritability during the debate which was perfectly uncalled for, that Mr. Morey should be restored to his full emoluments. He had no wish to shirk the fullest responsibility, but he was always prepared, if he had made a mistake, to acknowledge it.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he believed the Premier was in the colony when Mr. Morey's report was published in the papers.

The PREMIER: When was it?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was in February, or perhaps in January.

The PREMIER: I never heard of it before this evening.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had just got the report of the Lands Department, and had turned to Mr. Morey's report.

The PREMIER: What is the date of it?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said there was no date to it, although there ought to have been, and he could not understand why it was left out. But he was pretty certain, speaking from memory

that the report was published in the paper before the Premier left for England, and he did not see why the ex-Colonial Treasurer should be made responsible for the whole business. The reduction was made on the representation of the then head of the Lands Department, because the report did not coincide with his views. That was the only inference that could be drawn. But hon. members could read the report for themselves; and there was nothing in it that was not perfectly true and thoroughly borne out by facts. He considered that Mr. Morey was perfectly justified in sending his report to the papers. If it had been a mendacious report—one which would have misled the public in any way—then he would have deserved to have had his "screw" docked or to be turned out of the service. But nothing of the kind had been proved; every word in it had been verified, and the public in general ought to be very much obliged to him. The people paid Mr. Morey's salary, and not the Government of the day, and the people had a right to be enlightened as soon as possible.

Mr. S. W. BROOKS: Through the Minister.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would rather take the actual undiluted report from the man who was responsible for his own position and salary than after it had been filled up here and pared down there in the department, and sent back to him with a request that it was to be published in its altered form. If an officer made fallacious and mendacious reports, let him be degraded or "sacked"; but if he simply made true reports, which were borne out by facts, and published them, it was most disingenuous on the part of the Government to punish him for so doing. He considered that the report of one of those officers after it left him for the Minister was his own property, and that he could do what he liked with it. It was his own property and the property of the public, and he could give it to the public as soon as he gave it to the Minister. He was responsible for it. The Minister was not responsible for what was in his commissioner's report.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is responsible to this House.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was absurd to say that a Minister was responsible for what appeared in the report of his commissioner. There were half-a-dozen of them, and the Minister did not know anything about five-sixths of them. The commissioner had to accept all the responsibility himself. It was all very well to talk about the responsibility of Ministers, but he had never seen where it came in. The only man responsible was the man who was paid by the State, and having made his knowledge or his opinion public, because the views expressed did not suit the Minister, that gentleman knocked off the commissioner's salary. They could not attack any one of the Minister's salaries in that way. They were not responsible: the commissioner was the only person responsible, and he was paid by the State.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was sorry the hon. junior member for North Brisbane had gone out, because he liked to say anything he had to say about a member when he was present. Nevertheless he should say what he intended to say. That hon. member had taken upon himself the rôle of trying to use as many hard words and opprobrious epithets against the late Treasurer as he could possibly find, since that gentleman had left the Ministry. The chief reason for that was this: that that hon. gentleman in coming back to the House had proved the hon. junior member for North Brisbane to be a false prophet. He prophesied very loudly one night that the hon. member for Enoggera, Mr. Dickson, would

never come back to that House, but he did come back; so that it was a dangerous thing for the hon. junior member for North Brisbane to attempt to prophesy without he knew the facts. He did not know them on that occasion, and he had never forgiven the late Treasurer since, and would not during that Parliament. To come to the Minister for Works: there was only one person in that House who thought that Mr. Morey was not guilty of a breach of official etiquette, and that person was so eccentric that he would believe anything. But although Mr. Morey was guilty of a breach of official etiquette he (Mr. Macrossan) quite agreed with the ex-Treasurer, Mr. Dickson, that the punishment was too great for the offence. Whatever the offence was, that gentleman had rendered long and faithful service, and it should now be condoned. But the Minister for Works himself had been guilty of a far greater breach of official etiquette, as the leader of the Opposition had pointed out. But how were they to punish the Minister for Works? Would the Chief Secretary undertake to punish him by reducing his salary £100 a year? He thought he ought to do so, to put him on a fair footing of equality with the other gentlemen who had committed a similar breach. The Minister for Works had been guilty of as great a breach of official etiquette as ever he had heard any person guilty of in that House. He not only stated what the leader of the Opposition had said, but he went further, and gave information which no member of the Committee could give. He said that as a member of the Executive—of course they knew the hon. gentleman made a mistake, and that he meant the Cabinet—he brought down a minute to dismiss Mr. Morey.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman had certainly said so, and he said it was not agreed to; but the other proposal was agreed to—that was, the infliction of the loss of the land commissionership.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he rose to a point of order. He did not say anything of the kind. The hon. gentleman was stating what was not correct. He had never said he had brought down a minute for Mr. Morey's dismissal. What he had said was that he had brought down a minute recommending that that gentleman's services as land commissioner should be dispensed with.

Mr. NORTON: The hon. gentleman certainly used the word "dismiss."

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was perfectly certain the hon. gentleman used the words he had stated. Of course, he did not know what the hon. gentleman meant. He might have meant to say that he had brought down a minute recommending the suspension of Mr. Morey from the land commissionership; but he had distinctly said that he had brought down a minute for his dismissal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I could only suspend him from the land commissionership. How could I bring down a minute for his dismissal?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said any person who had been a member of a Ministry knew that such a minute as that described by the hon. gentleman could be brought down and discussed in Cabinet, but it might be disagreed with and a lesser penalty be inflicted for the breach of official etiquette. Of course everything was liable to discussion in Cabinet, but it appeared that the ex-Colonial Treasurer was not aware of the infliction of that penalty upon Mr. Morey. He seemed to have forgotten all about it, and it was very likely that the matter was rushed through the Cabinet. Such things had been

done. He was not speaking of any particular Ministry, but they knew from the history of Governments generally that such things had been done.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In your experience—not in mine.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was not talking of his experience in any Government, but of his knowledge of the history of Governments, and it seemed, according to the statement made that night, that one member of the Cabinet, who at that time was the official head of it, knew nothing about the matter.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Conveniently so.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would take that hon. gentleman's word against that of the Minister for Works. He contended that the offence was not sufficiently grave to warrant the reduction in Mr. Morey's salary to the extent that had been done, and he hoped for the sake of his long and faithful services that that officer would be reinstated. He did not say that he should be reinstated in the land commissioner-ship, but that he should be compensated by having his salary increased as a police magistrate. He should be put in the same position as he was in when at Townsville as far as salary was concerned. Now, to come to the other matter connected with the gentleman at Townsville. He was rather surprised to hear the Minister for Works get up and deny any relationship between him and the police magistrate at Townsville.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do; I deny it now.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Did the hon. gentleman deny relationship with the late Railway Arbitrator?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; it is a nearer relationship.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said one was not a relation and the other was a nearer relationship. Now, the hon. gentleman took up a position of extreme truthfulness in the House—eccentrically so; but he should stick to the truth as it stood in reality, and not quibble about words. It was well known that the hon. gentleman was a relation of the police magistrate in Townsville, and it was no use denying it. He (Mr. Macrossan), together with gentlemen on both sides of the Committee, was surprised to hear the hon. gentleman deny the relationship. Was he ashamed of it? Probably he was. He would respect him the more if it was so, because he believed there were a good many respectable people in Townsville who would rather that Mr. Henry was not there, and the Chief Secretary knew that well; he would in fact confer a boon on the people of Townsville if he removed that gentleman to some other sphere than Townsville. The hon. gentleman knew what he meant well, and he had better do it. He knew that the Premier, outside of his official position, would not connive at any immorality whatever, but he was sorry to say that his official position had rather weakened his moral perception, and that his ideas of immorality had to give way to official etiquette, through his being in a Liberal Ministry with a Minister who had relations in the service. He would like to hear from the Chief Secretary that he considered that Mr. Morey should be reinstated as far as salary was concerned. He admitted that he was guilty of an offence, and no doubt Mr. Morey would admit it also. They had not been told whether he was called upon to explain or not. Perhaps he was not; but he should have been before he was punished. The Minister for Works said that if Mr. Morey had been a young officer in the service he

would not have punished him at all. Now, what had Mr. Morey to gain by publishing that report before it was sent to the department? The Minister for Works could see it was a mistake.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He could see nothing of the kind.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was extremely sorry that the hon. gentleman could see nothing good in anything, and that when anybody committed an offence he came down upon him with the greatest severity possible. He hoped the hon. gentleman punished himself and did penance outside of the House for the great offences he committed inside of it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was just as well that hon. members should be made acquainted with the real relationship which existed between himself and Mr. Henry, as well as between himself and the late Railway Arbitrator. He was not a Scotchman or Irishman, and therefore his ideas of relationship were perhaps rather restricted. In a conventional sense Mr. Henry might be called a relation of his, inasmuch as he married a cousin. Well, that might be regarded as relationship or not as hon. members liked. He said there was no relationship, and nothing whatever in common between himself and Mr. Henry, except the fact that Mr. Henry married his cousin. Mr. Thomson, in a conventional sense, was a nearer relation, inasmuch as he married his (the Minister for Works') wife's sister; but after all that was a relationship which most persons did not acknowledge. He did not call it a relationship in any sense of the term. Blood relationship was the only relationship he recognised. The mere fact of those gentlemen marrying some of his relations did not make them his relations.

Mr. MOREHEAD: But you give them all billets.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it might be so regarded by the leader of the Opposition, but he happened to be a Scotchman, or of Scotch descent, and claimed every other man he met in the street as a relation.

Mr. STEVENSON: But he does not give them billets.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he did not know any one more capable than the leader of the Opposition of doing so. He not only found billets for his friends and relations, but for anyone who could be of service to him.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Point them out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there were a good many of them. He had not such a tendency for hunting up scandal as the hon. gentleman had. When he heard that high moral tone which the member for Townsville had taken up, he felt sorely tempted to make some reference to the way in which the hon. gentlemen regarded high morality. Let the hon. gentleman look back on all his surroundings, not individually or personally, when he was in office, and then say whether he assumed such a very high moral tone. The hon. gentleman need not assume such a very lofty sense of disgust and opprobrium towards every man who was guilty of lapses from virtue. Now, he did not think he need say anything more. He had said what his relationship was to the two men in question; it was a relationship which he did not acknowledge. He was not personally friendly with either of the men. He had never been so with Mr. Henry, and he had known him for twenty years, and for a considerable time past he had not even spoken to him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would like to refer to a remark which fell from his hon. friend the ex-Colonial Treasurer. The hon. gentleman talked about having been at

Clermont and seen Mr. Morey, and that he made inquiries when he came down, and informed his colleagues that Mr. Morey should get an increased salary. The hon. gentleman did bring down a letter, and sent it to him, but he sent it back with the explanation that Mr. Morey's salary in the Colonial Secretary's Department had not been altered, but that whatever alteration had taken place was in connection with the Lands Department. He did not remember at present, but he believed that the hon. gentleman had never told him that he thought Mr. Morey should have an increased salary, because if he had done so it would have been put on the Estimates in the belief that the hon. gentleman as Treasurer would have approved of it.

Mr. STEVENSON said they did not appear to get much satisfaction from the Colonial Secretary or the Minister for Works, and he would now try the Minister for Lands, and see whether they could get any satisfaction out of him. He understood that £60 was put down for land commissioner at Clermont in the Lands Department, and he would like to ask the Minister whether he would be willing to let that amount go to Mr. Morey instead of sending Mr. Young from Rockhampton, where he had ample work to do, to Clermont? He did not think there was any necessity to punish Mr. Morey any longer, and thought that he might be restored to his former position.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. H. Jordan) said that was a question of which he was utterly ignorant, not having heard of it before that evening. Mr. Morey was not employed by the Lands Department, and therefore he said that he had nothing whatever to do with the question, and hon. gentlemen would see that he could not answer it.

Mr. ADAMS said a fault had been committed somewhere. Though he did not know Mr. Morey, he did know the late Minister for Lands and the present Minister for Works, and if they took that hon. gentleman's dictum on all matters they must come to the conclusion that that hon. gentleman above all others in the colony was infallible. They had heard that Mr. Morey was a very old public servant, and had been a police magistrate for many years, and it was just possible that he had never been in the Lands Department before. It was possible that, having made out his report as lands commissioner, he had been got at by the Press, as the Colonial Secretary had admitted other Government officials had been got at in connection with the publication of the electoral rolls; but in the latter case the State had suffered a considerable loss, while it was not shown that the State had suffered at all through the mistake committed by Mr. Morey. If the loss of £60 a year was to be the punishment meted out to Mr. Morey, he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary what punishment was to be meted out to the other public officers who had allowed themselves to be got at in connection with the publication of the electoral rolls? It appeared that the man who made a mistake which cost the country nothing was to be punished, while those who made mistakes which cost the country hundreds of pounds were not to be punished at all. The suggestion made by the hon. member for Normanby was a very good one; and if Mr. Morey had made a mistake—possibly through want of experience in the Lands Office—the punishment meted out to him up to the present was ample, and his former salary should now be restored to him.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Minister for Lands could hardly be ignorant of the merits of that case, and at all events after the manner in which

the matter had been discussed that evening, the hon. gentleman should be able to form an opinion as to whether it was in his power to recoup Mr. Morey for the injustice done him. The hon. gentleman must, as an impartial man, admit that nothing could justify the Minister for Works in punishing most harshly, as he had done, an old and valued servant for a trivial mistake, while he at the same time actually increased the salary of one of his relations who had been guilty of far worse conduct, and failed to punish another relation guilty of much worse conduct. The action of the Minister for Works in those cases was but fresh evidence of the appropriateness of the appellation given to the Ministry by the leader of the Opposition when he said they were "the Ministry of law and brother-in-law."

Mr. MOREHEAD said he hoped the Premier, having heard the whole of the discussion about Mr. Morey and the way in which he had been treated, would see his way to reinstate that gentleman. After all, what had Mr. Morey done beyond a mere act of inadvertence? It could not have been an act of design, as an act of design would carry with it some motive. What earthly motive could Mr. Morey have had for an act which might lead him into trouble as that had done, with no ulterior good to come out of it, when he had nothing before him but the Civil Service? His error must have been purely the result of inadvertence, and he was sure that Committee and the Premier would not be parties to doing not only an unjust, but an excessively unkind act to an old man who was at the same time an old and valued public servant. As the hon. member for Townsville and he had pointed out, Mr. Morey could have no motive for what he did, and no one had so far accused him of having been paid for it. He admitted that Mr. Morey committed a grave blunder, which he did not for one moment intend to justify. At the same time, having regard to the services Mr. Morey had rendered to the colony, and the utter want of motive attending his publication of that report, he trusted the Government would see their way to reinstate him in his old age at the salary he had enjoyed for many years past, and which, as his years wore on, was probably more required than it would have been in his earlier days, when he would have been better able to strike out for himself, had he had to meet any such trouble as at present appeared to have befallen him.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman referred the matter to him, but he had never heard of the case before that evening. The hon. member would remember that only that evening he had said that Mr. Morey's salary was not diminished, and he fully understood that to be so. Mr. Morey was an old servant and his removal from Townsville was not to interfere with the amount of his salary. He thought from what had been stated Mr. Morey had been guilty of very grave misconduct.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER said he had not read the report, and he would suspend his judgment until he had read it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: The Minister for Lands has not read it.

The PREMIER said he would like to know what the report was before he formed an opinion about it. He could not at present express any opinion further than that.

Mr. STEVENSON said he did not understand that there was anything about the character of the report which would justify the reduction in Mr. Morey's salary, and the Committee understood that Mr. Morey was punished simply for publishing it. He understood that the offence

charged against Mr. Morey was that he had published that report before he had put it into the hands of the department. The late Minister for Lands took action without having read the report, and he could not see any good in the Premier telling them now that he would have to suspend his judgment until he read the report. The Premier might as well give an answer now and be done with it. When that estimate was passed the matter would be out of their hands. That was the only opportunity they had of doing justice to Mr. Morey, and it did not appear to him to be right for the Premier to say that he would suspend his judgment by a sidewind in that way. He could tell the Committee whether he was prepared to recommend that Mr. Morey should be reinstated in his position instead of having Mr. Young brought up from Rockhampton to do the work of land commissioner at Clermont.

The PREMIER said he had already stated that the subject was brought under his notice for the first time that evening. An officer of the Government was relieved of his duties as land commissioner on account of his action in connection with a report which he was required to make. Hon. members upon that asked him what he thought of it. So far as he knew now, he thought the gentleman was rather hardly dealt with, but he would like, first of all, to see the report before giving any opinion upon the matter, because it might be shown by the report that he was totally unfitted for the position of land commissioner. He (the Premier) knew nothing about it, and he declined to express an opinion until he knew the facts.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that he knew no more than the Chief Secretary before the discussion took place of the reason Mr. Morey had been relieved of the duty of land commissioner, so that he and the hon. gentleman began the discussion with blank minds on the subject; but the hon. gentleman must have learnt, as he (Mr. Macrossan) had, that Mr. Morey's offence did not lie in the nature of the report, but in the publication of it before it reached the head of the department. There was no reason for the hon. gentleman to suspend his judgment until he read the report. Of course if he did not wish to reinstate Mr. Morey as land commissioner, he need not do so; he could put an equal amount on his salary as police magistrate, and leave him in the same position as he occupied in Townsville. He (Mr. Macrossan), in advocacy of that, would point out that Mr. Morey was now not only doing the duty at Clermont to which he was first appointed, at a smaller salary, of course, but he was also doing the duty of an officer who was appointed to do duty at Springsure at £597 a year, but who had not been sent there. The Premier might well give a decisive answer without waiting to read the report at all. If he had wished to read it he could have done so, as it was in the House. It was in the hands of the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, at the time that hon. member was speaking. The hon. gentleman must have heard the late Minister for Lands, now Minister for Works, say that even now he had not read the report, so that it was not upon the nature of the report that Mr. Morey was punished.

The PREMIER: That would be a very important element to my mind.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he did not see how it could be an important element; it had no connection with the offence; the offence was of an entirely different character. Had Mr. Morey sent the report to his chief before allowing it to be published in the Clermont

newspaper, there would have been no question about it, no matter what was in the report—whether it was something antagonistic to the Georgian theory, or whether it was throwing some slight discredit on the working of the Land Act. It would have been simply a report of the commissioner to be taken for what it was worth, and he would not have been deprived of his office. The Minister for Lands had distinctly stated that it was not for that he had been deprived of his office.

The PREMIER said that possibly he regarded the matter from a slightly different point of view from that of his hon. colleague the Minister for Works. Before expressing an opinion upon the gravity of the offence of publishing that report, he would like to know what it was. If it were such as to show a deliberate act of insubordination against a superior officer, he should be inclined to treat it very severely indeed; but on the other hand, if it were a mere colourless report—a statement of dry facts—its publication might be treated as an inadvertence. It appeared to have been dealt with by his colleagues from a different point of view, and he was asked to reverse at a moment's notice the action taken by the Government many months ago, during his absence.

Mr. STEVENSON said that, in order to prevent the Premier from being in ignorance, he would read the report. In justice to Mr. Morey it ought to be read, as some hon. members, and perhaps outsiders too, seemed to have a mistaken opinion of what the report was. The Chief Secretary perhaps thought there was something in the report that struck at the head of the department. So he would read it—

The PREMIER: This is stonewalling the Estimates.

Mr. STEVENSON said it would not take long to read the report, and it would let the Premier know what it was.

The PREMIER: That will not help me to make up my mind this evening.

Mr. STEVENSON said the hon. gentleman did not want to make it up; the hon. gentleman wanted to get his Estimates passed, and then they would have no further opportunity of bringing the matter up. He was going to read the report:—

"In compliance with your request that I should forward a full report on the progress of settlement and working of the Crown Lands Act of 1834, including the timber regulations within my district during 1886, I now do myself the honour to furnish the same.

"The paralyzing drought adverted to when my last year's report was written (in February), continued to intensify until July, when sufficient rain fell to cause some spring in the grass, though it did not assist our water supply.

"But by that date (July) the state of the district was deplorable. The gatherings of years of industry, principally in the form of stock, disappeared, and many selectors abandoned their holdings.

"Under such circumstances it cannot be wondered at that selection, under the Act of 1834, in this district was at a standstill.

"And even now, when the season is most favourable, and experience of our climatic conditions leads us to expect a succession of good to fair seasons, no settlement on the land is taking place.

"Out of an aggregate of 29,933 acres within agricultural reserves open to selection, only one of 430 acres has been taken up, and that purely for grazing purposes.

"Of grazing farms there is but one open to selection; it is still unrented.

"Two causes may be assigned for this backwardness in selecting—viz., want of means and fear of results. The working classes, from whose ranks selectors emerge, are, as a rule, poorer now than they were three years since; and, in this district at any rate, are not in a position to take up stock and improve holdings.

"And it is also certain that the experience of the past three years, so bitter to the unlucky men who held selections, has the effect of frightening others from taking up agricultural farms in this district.

"As a matter of fact, farming in the ordinary acceptance of the term is out of the question, for the population to be supplied is too small to warrant the erection of a flour-mill; wheat-growing, therefore, is not attempted, and the quantity of horse fodder required in good seasons is quite insignificant, while in bad years (such as the past three) it could not be grown.

"Then with regard to fruit culture, the experience of the past proves that more money has been sunk in that branch of industry than ever was made; in fact, it may be said there is not an orchard or vineyard in the district. In the years to come, when population has increased, a demand will arise, and it may, and probably will, be a profitable occupation to raise fruit on a large scale by irrigation.

"Then what remains for the intending selector of an agricultural farm to make a living from? Dairying is already fully met by existing selectors. I see no other means save stock-raising.

"Now, unless the selector has a good slice of country outside his farm on which to run stock, he cannot expect to raise and maintain a sufficient number to make a living out of; we may therefore assume that selections favoured in that way will be taken up, and we may also assume that a few will be rented by the carrier or timber-getter for their grazing capabilities. Save these I see no immediate prospect of others coming under occupation.

"Thus the progress of settlement in this district, under the Act of 1884, is painfully slow, while in respect of settlement under its grazing clauses the Act is untried.

"For up to the present only one small grazing farm (640 acres) is open to selection; it still remains unsettled. I am still of opinion, as expressed in my last annual report, that success is to be looked for from the large holdings—namely, 10,000 to 20,000 acres—rather than from the smaller farms. My long experience of grazing pursuits in our uncertain climate has taught me that inexperienced men, and men having little or no capital, will simply waste their time on grazing farms.

"But men having experience will not tackle farms unless they have the capital to stock and work the maximum holdings allowed under the Act.

"I must further express the opinion that it will be impolitic to throw open grazing farms of small area in the resumed halves of runs, for men having experience and means would not take them up; though they might, and probably would attract many undesirable men—that is, men who would draw upon their neighbours' flocks and herds to assist them in making a living."

That was the whole report, with the exception of a few clauses with regard to the timber regulations. He did not see anything very objectionable in it, and the hon. gentleman might just as well tell them now whether he was prepared to reinstate Mr. Morey.

The PREMIER said he was not prepared to say at a moment's notice, but he thought the matter deserved further consideration at the hands of the Government. He had never heard of it before, but the hon. member opposite wished him to say that he would reverse at a moment's notice the action of the Government while he was away. He would not undertake to do anything of the kind. He would ask the Government to reconsider the matter; he would certainly say no more than that.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they were quite content to take the statement made by the hon. gentleman, as they knew that if he reconsidered the matter it would end in Mr. Morey being reinstated. There was nothing in that report that any man could find fault with.

Mr. PALMER said he would like to know who was the police magistrate at Croydon, and where he was acting before?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Mr. Cribb was the magistrate at Croydon, and he had previously been at Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Dalby, and other places.

Mr. PALMER said the police magistrate at Croydon was put down at £550, which included £50 for a clerk of petty sessions and mining registrar. Since that a clerk of petty sessions and mining registrar had been appointed, so that the £50 would be deducted. The salary of the police magistrate at Rockhampton was £700, and they all knew that the cost of living was far greater at the former place. Wages were just 25 per cent. higher at Croydon; they were £2 10s. and £3 at Rockhampton, and £4 at Croydon. The cost of living was almost double, and yet the police magistrate in Rockhampton received £700, and at Croydon £600.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member was quite right so far as the clerk of petty sessions was concerned. That officer had been appointed since the Estimates had been framed. As he had said before, a sum of £250 would be put upon the Supplementary Estimates. The police magistrate was really receiving £600, the salary gazetted for the police magistrate at Cooktown, which gazetted office he was holding.

Mr. JESSOP said, was it the intention of the Government to keep Mr. Cribb at Croydon?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was not. It was the intention that he should go away from there shortly, as he was only appointed for four or five months to start the business. At the present time there was a warden and an assistant warden, who was mining registrar too.

Mr. JESSOP asked who was the registrar?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Cusack.

Mr. JESSOP said, would Mr. Cribb go back to Cooktown, and when?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not answer that question at present. It would depend upon what was done in regard to New Guinea.

Mr. HAMILTON said the police magistrate at Rockhampton received £600 salary and £100 allowances, and the Colonial Secretary said he received £600 at Croydon. Did he receive the allowances at Croydon that he had received at Rockhampton? As the necessities of life were very much more expensive at Croydon than at Rockhampton, he ought to receive a proportionate allowance.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was no allowance. The salary was £600 a year, and Mr. Cribb went of his own free will.

Mr. HAMILTON said he wanted to know if the gentleman who had held the position at Rockhampton at £700 a year was getting an equal amount at Croydon?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Mr. Cribb was receiving £600 a year at Rockhampton previously, and he willingly went to Croydon at £600.

Mr. HAMILTON: Is he receiving the same aggregate salary as at Rockhampton?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not receiving the allowance of £50 as gold warden or the £50 forage allowance.

Mr. HAMILTON said he thought Mr. Cribb was very badly treated. The work which he did at Croydon was far more than the combined work he had had to do at Rockhampton, and it appeared that because he willingly went to one of the most outlandish places in the colony he was to be penalised by his salary being reduced £100.

Mr. JESSOP said he could hardly understand the Colonial Secretary's statement that Mr. Cribb went almost at his own request, because

he could hardly see why he was anxious to leave Rockhampton, where he was getting £700 a year, to go to Croydon at £600 a year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had left Rockhampton before.

Mr. JESSOP said it appeared that Mr. Cribb had been gazetted to Maryborough, but for some reason he did not go there. He would like to know under what circumstances he went to Croydon. Was it because there was no other place for him to go to?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Mr. Cribb had some private reasons for not wishing to go to Maryborough; and when the rush to Croydon occurred the Government deemed it advisable that there should be a police magistrate as well as a warden at Croydon. Mr. Cribb was asked if he was willing to go temporarily with a salary of £600 a year, and he said he was.

Mr. NORTON said he should like to know if Mr. Cribb was drawing his salary when the offer was made?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. JESSOP asked whether Mr. Cribb had been reduced in position as well as in salary?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had not, but he could not take his gold wardenship with him all over the colony.

Mr. JESSOP said he had three or four times the work at Croydon that he had at Rockhampton; the climate was a great deal worse, and living was a great deal more expensive. It seemed strange that he should be sent from Rockhampton, which claimed to be the second town in the colony, to a place like Croydon, at a lower salary.

Mr. HAMILTON said Mr. Cribb received £100 a year less, though he did quite as much work, and his expenses of living were £100 a year in excess of what they were at Rockhampton; so that practically he was receiving £200 a year less, though he was selected as the best man that could be sent to Croydon.

Mr. DONALDSON said that Mr. Cribb was certainly not getting forage allowance or an allowance as gold warden, but it must be borne in mind that his appointment to Croydon was merely temporary, and that it was quite likely that within a short time he might be put into a position that would command the highest salary paid by the Government to any police magistrate. He thought that the discussion had gone far enough in that direction, however, because no possible good would be done to Mr. Cribb by advocating his cause any further. A good many complaints had been made with regard to the removal of police magistrates, but he had to complain because one was not removed in the district he represented. The Premier explained that for many reasons it was necessary that police magistrates should be moved about occasionally, but he did not say what ought to cause their removal. In reference to the police magistrate at Thargomindah, he would ask the Colonial Secretary whether any of the public, more especially the honorary justices, or any public body, had complained against him and asked for his removal, and, if so, why he had not granted the request of the petitioners?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was a petition from the divisional board and one from the honorary magistrates, who said they would not sit with the police magistrate. There was also a complaint about the police magistrate acting in collusion with the poundkeeper; but that charge was made in a newspaper, and the police magistrate was now on his way to Brisbane, having commenced a libel action against the newspaper in which the charge was published. He (the Colonial Secretary) had advised him not to

touch the newspapers, but the police magistrate's solicitors said the case was a very gross one and that he should have the right to bring it into court. Therefore he had given him leave to come down and prosecute the case, and he thought it would be well to wait and see how it terminated, because the trial of that case would either prove or disprove the charge of collusion with the poundkeeper. He always tried, as far as he could, to see that magistrates worked well in the districts where they were placed, and, if they could not, then to make some transfers, but he had never been obliged to transfer a magistrate on account of incompetence; and he could not say that the existence of a dislike to a magistrate was always sufficient reason for transferring him.

Mr. DONALDSON said that, with regard to the libel case, that was purely a personal matter and should not enter into the question as to the man's fitness, or into the consideration of the Minister with regard to his removal. The question should be decided on the ground that petitions had been sent in requesting his removal. It was within his knowledge that some of the petitioners would rather suffer any injustice than try to get justice before him. He thought some attention should have been given to the petitions before now. It was twelve months ago since the honorary justices complained, and since then the Bulloo Divisional Board had requested that he should be removed, but no attention had been paid in either case. Several transfers of police magistrates had taken place within the last few months, and he had hoped that the hon. gentleman would transfer the police magistrate in question to a district where he would work more harmoniously. He had not a word to say against Mr. Kendrick, except that he had acted foolishly. He had associated himself with some cliques, and had, in consequence, got himself into disrepute. A magistrate should not commit himself in any way—more particularly in the matter of giving advice out of court in a case he would have to adjudicate on afterwards; but he was informed that Mr. Kendrick had done that on two or three occasions, and he believed his information was correct. He trusted the hon. gentleman would take the matter into his consideration, and remove Mr. Kendrick as soon as possible. He did not wish that the magistrate should be reduced in his status. Mr. Kendrick might be a very capable officer for all he knew, but for the sake of peace and harmony in that district it was desirable that there should be a change. Perhaps when Mr. Kendrick was down on his libel case that would be an opportune time for making the change, as he would not then be put to the expense of going back to Thargomindah, a distance of about 1,000 miles. He (Mr. Donaldson) knew that the expense of a removal was one of the objections the Government had to a change some time ago, as they had paid £40 or £50 to send Mr. Kendrick to Thargomindah.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not say that he would immediately transfer a police magistrate because he did not always get on with everybody in the district or with some portion of the inhabitants. He knew himself that country magistrates sometimes took up queer notions about the police magistrate; he had done so himself, and would not sit with a police magistrate, but they got to understand one another better. However, he would see Mr. Kendrick when he came down, though he did not know if he would transfer him at the present time.

Mr. JESSOP said the hon. member for Warrego seemed to misunderstand his remarks in reference to Mr. Cribb. He was not fighting

Mr. Cribb's battle or saying anything in favour of him or against him, but simply wished to know why he was removed to Croydon at a less salary than he was receiving at Rockhampton. He did not know that Mr. Cribb had done anything to want anybody to fight his battles for him. So far as he was aware that gentleman had always fulfilled his duty, and it did appear strange that an officer should be removed from Rockhampton, the second town in the colony, to Croydon, at a less salary than he was receiving at Rockhampton.

Mr. DONALDSON : Not as police magistrate.

Mr. JESSOP said it was true that he did not get allowances, but if allowances were given him at Rockhampton, surely he deserved more at Croydon.

Mr. DONALDSON said he was perfectly sure that the answer of the Colonial Secretary would not be satisfactory to the justices of Thargomindah. Some hon. member had interjected that it was not at all necessary that a police magistrate should be in harmony with the justices, but it was highly necessary that he should, as the honorary justices were permanent residents of the district, and it would be far better to remove a police magistrate than to take them off the commission. He knew the justices in that district personally; he had associated with them for some years, and had found them most agreeable in all things, and he was certain that they would never have taken up their present position if they had not good ground for complaint. He had nothing to say with regard to the libel action, and would not say one word in favour of the paper. He knew it had spoken very strongly, and if it was wrong it would suffer. If it was right, he trusted the Colonial Secretary would not lose sight of the fact.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : You may be sure that if the paper is right he will go.

Mr. DONALDSON said the hon. gentleman had stated that he would have a chat with Mr. Kendrick when he came down. He (Mr. Donaldson) did not think that any *ex parte* statement should be accepted. He had not gone to the hon. gentleman and asked him as a favour to remove the police magistrate, but had simply placed before him the correspondence he had received and presented a petition that came into his hands praying for the removal of Mr. Kendrick. He believed that another petition, which did not go through his hands and which was signed by two or three persons calling themselves the progress committee, had been sent in praying that the police magistrate should not be removed. As he stated before, the removal was not desired for the purpose of disgracing Mr. Kendrick, but for the sake of the harmony of the district.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought that it was a pity that the Colonial Secretary, when he proposed that the whole of that estimate should be taken *in globo*, had not given the Committee some information as to changes that had taken place among the police magistrates during the past year. If he had done that, it might have saved a good deal of trouble and discussion. He would now like to ask the hon. gentleman why the police magistrate at Warwick was removed to Bundaberg? He hoped there were no secret reasons. He saw that he carried his salary with him, and he would like to know what were the causes which led to the removal of Mr. Pugh to Bundaberg?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was one of those exigencies which cropped up in the Civil Service, which sometimes necessitated a

change of a police magistrate from one place to another. Mr. Pugh had been some time at Warwick, and it was thought advisable that he should be shifted. There was an opportunity of shifting him to Bundaberg at the time, and it was done.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought he really might be excused for laughing at the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary. The hon. gentleman said "It was one of those exigencies that cropped up in the Civil Service, therefore it was thought advisable that Mr. Pugh should be removed from Warwick." That was practically the explanation given by the Colonial Secretary. Were they to be fooled in that way? Let them have some definite answer from the hon. gentleman, or if he could not give it, let some other member of the Ministry tell them why Mr. Pugh was removed from Warwick to Bundaberg. They were not going to be put off with answers of that *la-di-dah* style, that it was one of the exigencies that cropped up in the Civil Service, that occurred accidentally, as it were—one of the eventualities that must arise as long as a Civil Service existed. That was not the way Estimates, as a rule, were treated in that Committee. If the Colonial Secretary could not give an explanation let him temporarily leave the Chamber, and let his Under Secretary—who, he believed, was capable of giving rational and proper reasons for anything done in the department—take his place. The answers given by the Colonial Secretary, whenever his Estimates came on, were getting beyond a joke. Last year, and at about that time, he (Mr. Morehead) was at the other side of the world, and he could assure the Committee that the replies given by the Colonial Secretary, as reported in *Hansard*, were much more laughable than anything he read in *Punch*, or in any of the society papers. He had not the least idea that the Colonial Secretary had so much humour in him, or could be the cause of so much mirth in others. But he hoped he would give the Committee some definite reason why that particular thing had cropped up in the Civil Service, why Mr. Pugh had left Warwick for Bundaberg, otherwise he might be able to find reasons for him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I am not disposed to stand any impertinence from the hon. member, even in this Chamber; and I dare him to use such language to me outside the House. The hon. member may remember that when he meets me outside the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD : Do you want to go outside?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I will go outside if you wish it.

Mr. MOREHEAD : Who will take your place?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Nobody. Who will take yours? I do not think anybody would take a fool's place. If the hon. member is not satisfied with my answer he will not get another until he learns how to treat me with a little courtesy.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was determined to have some further information on the subject. The hon. gentleman need not lose his temper. They were perfectly justified, as representatives of the people, in demanding from the Colonial Secretary, or from any member of the Government, why any departmental changes had taken place. The hon. gentleman, as he supposed he knew, was paid by the State, and he must also know that when his Estimates were going through he was bound to give any information he possessed to the Committee, if they asked for it, as to any action that had taken place during

the recess. With regard to the transfer of Mr. Pugh from Warwick to Bundaberg, he was perfectly entitled to ask that question and to get an answer—an answer that would be tolerated in ordinary business relations between one man and another—such an answer as ought to be given in Committee of Supply which the representatives of the people had to deal with. He was perfectly justified in calling the attention of the Committee to the—he might almost call it—indecent way in which the Colonial Secretary gave his replies.

Mr. JESSOP said he was sorry that that little matter should have cropped up.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is not a little matter. It is an important matter.

Mr. JESSOP said he thought he could throw some light upon it. He believed that Mr. Pugh applied to leave Warwick, because he found that the Warwick railway was not going to be continued to St. George.

Mr. W. BROOKES said he was very sorry that that passage-at-arms had taken place. Again, the leader of the Opposition had made a mountain out of a mole-hill. That hon. member did not know how aggravating his manner was. Everybody did not understand him. He (Mr. Brookes) did not understand him, and he might tell him that his manner was very bad. He had found fault with the term "the exigencies of the Civil Service." He seemed to think it was intended as a kind of explanation to cloak something.

Mr. MOREHEAD: So it is.

Mr. W. BROOKES said the hon. gentleman had himself been a Minister of the Crown, and must know that the term "the exigencies of the Civil Service" was a perfectly allowable one; and while it might often be an excuse for something doubtful, yet it very often meant no more than that it was necessary, in the interests of the Civil Service, that a change should take place. The difficulty had arisen through the preternatural sharpness of the leader of the Opposition in trying to find out some weakness of human nature, or some unfair motive. He might just as well have received the explanation of the Colonial Secretary as he (Mr. W. Brookes) understood it—namely, that Mr. Pugh had been in Warwick long enough. Surely it was permissible for a police magistrate to get tired of a place, and to ask to be removed; and he was removed to Bundaberg. If he said anything wrong he should be glad to be corrected by the hon. member for Mulgrave, to whose opinions, so far as regarded Bundaberg matters, he always attached a great deal of value. When he was at Bundaberg some three or four years ago he had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Johnstone, who, he believed, had been there a good while. Just at the time when the transfer was to be made, Mr. Johnstone wished to be removed and Mr. Pugh wished to be removed. Was that a laughable explanation? To minds ordinarily constituted it would seem to be a sufficient explanation. There was a police magistrate at Warwick who wanted to be removed, and there was a police magistrate at Bundaberg who wanted to be removed; and for some reason or other, in "the exigencies of the Civil Service," it was deemed advisable that they should each be transferred. That was all. Why kick up all that dust, and why get to such a pitch of anger? There had been a good deal going on that night that was not very creditable to them. He was prepared to discuss the question in the most perfect harmony and the most Christian charity with the leader of the Opposition, and all he had said was entirely for his good. Let him remind the hon. member that every body had not the same keenness that

he had, and that the removal of the police magistrate of Warwick was sufficiently explained when he said that Mr. Pugh wished to be removed, and that it was thought right and proper that Mr. Johnstone should be removed. He was reminded that Mr. Pugh left Warwick amid expressions of regret from a considerable number of people; he did not leave under a cloud; he was popular enough; and he (Mr. Brookes) had never heard of any failure in the performance of his duty as police magistrate.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not think there was a deeper depth of damnation until he heard the hon. member for North Brisbane get up to answer for the Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Secretary ought to answer his own questions without leaning on the stick of the hon. member for North Brisbane. With regard to that transfer, he took exception to it in many ways. He took exception also to many transfers that had been made by the present Government, and possibly by some previous Governments—that was, allowing officers sent to different parts of the colony to carry their salaries with them. They found that Mr. Pugh had taken the Warwick salary of £500 to Bundaberg, and the Warwick salary was now reduced to £450. That was one objection, and he maintained, as he had said before, that they should have definite reasons given—not departmental reasons or reasons of political exigencies—when police magistrates or any other high officers of the State were moved from one place to another. They should get full information on the subject, and not the very vague statements made by the Government night after night. Of course rumour was rife when the Government would not give definite reasons for the transference of police magistrates from one place to another, and it had been rife with regard to Mr. Pugh. He therefore contended that they ought to have some reasons given for that change. The Minister for Works had given reasons why he had struck £60 a year off a Civil servant, and very definite reasons. He gave that hon. gentleman credit that when he did anything he gave good and definite reasons for it. They might not believe in it; he might do it in a tyrannical or autocratic way, but, at any rate, he had the manliness to come forward and state what his reasons were, and say that he was prepared to act in the same way again. That was a definite line to take up—a position they could accept—a clearly defined position; but the position taken up by the Colonial Secretary was one that that Committee could not accept. It was a "wishy-washy" position. The hon. gentleman defined nothing, asserted nothing, but simply said it was considered expedient that that gentleman should be removed, carrying his salary with him, and depriving the Warwick police magistrate of the salary that attached to that office for many years past. He maintained that when such changes took place they were entitled to fuller information—to full information—and they had had none from the Colonial Secretary. They had had simply bluster and talk from him; words and fury signifying nothing. When they were dealing seriously with the money of the taxpayers of the colony, he thought the matter should be dealt with in a more serious way by the Colonial Secretary. As to the remarks of the hon. member for North Brisbane, nobody minded them. They all liked the hon. member, who had several peculiarities. He did not like blackfellows, although he (Mr. Morehead) believed he employed them occasionally. He had various idiosyncrasies, but they all admired him, and had great personal respect for him; but, as a lecturer, he was afraid the hon. gentleman had not much weight in that Committee. He

again contended that the Colonial Secretary, who had those Estimates under his charge, and was supposed to have a little knowledge of them, should give the Committee the information to which they were entitled.

The PREMIER said this was simply an attack on the Colonial Secretary. It was quite uncalled for, because the answer he had given was the answer that had been given to similar questions ever since Parliament had sat. A very similar answer had been given by himself earlier in the evening, and it was accepted as satisfactory. The hon. gentleman wanted to know why Mr. Pugh had been transferred from Warwick. Well, several changes of police magistrates were taking place at that time; Mr. Pugh had been a very long time at Warwick—longer than he thought it desirable a police magistrate should be anywhere.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about Mr. Pinnock?

The PREMIER said, with regard to Mr. Pinnock, he was afraid that gentleman was in a position from which he could not very well be removed. There was no place to remove him to. Possibly it did not matter so much in large places, but in small places, where there were cliques and coteries of people, it was undesirable that a police magistrate should remain very long. He knew that when he was in charge of the department he had looked around many times for a place to remove Mr. Pugh to, but could not find one, and he was very glad that his hon. colleague had been able to find a place to remove him to. He had certainly been too long at Warwick.

Mr. STEVENSON said his chief reason for asking for information with regard to the estimate was that there appeared to be some mystery attached to the department. The Premier in an earlier part of the evening had told the leader of the Opposition that he was willing to give him private information, but that he would not give it to the Committee. He (Mr. Stevenson) could not understand that at all. The Colonial Secretary simply said that he could give no information—that something or another had cropped up, and so forth; and he thought it was a very undignified position for the Colonial Secretary of the colony to take up, to ask an hon. member to go outside.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not. I said that if he would go out I would follow him.

Mr. STEVENSON said he did not think that a dignified position for the Colonial Secretary to take up. If he were ignorant of the details of his department, that was not a dignified way of getting out of it. The hon. gentleman had slapped his copy of the Estimates down on his seat, and refused to give any information. He (Mr. Stevenson) contended that they ought to have information from every Minister with regard to his department when it was under discussion. That was the only way in which they could get information. With regard to Mr. Pugh, he could say that he had known that gentleman some years ago at Rockhampton, and a better police magistrate never sat on the bench; and he thought the Colonial Secretary ought not to be ashamed to give the reasons why that gentleman had been transferred from one place to another. Surely there was some reason to give, and if the reason was a good one why should the Colonial Secretary be ashamed of it? If the hon. gentleman had no information—he did not appear to have very much—he might go and get it from his officials in the gallery, and find out the reasons for the transfer of Mr. Pugh from Warwick to Bundaberg.

Mr. MORGAN said he intended to draw attention to one phase of the subject that had been mentioned by the leader of the Opposition—not as to the motives which had induced the Government to remove Mr. Pugh from Warwick—no doubt they had very good reasons for doing so, and he was not disposed to question their action in that matter—but why Mr. Pugh's successor on going to Warwick found that the salary which had been paid to the official discharging the duties of that office for many years past had been cut down by £50. He believed that Mr. Archibald, who now filled that office, went to Warwick on the distinct understanding that he should have the Warwick salary; but after going there he found that the salary was cut down by £50. Now, the Colonial Secretary had told them that Mr. Pugh took the Warwick salary with him to Bundaberg. If that was to be the rule of the service, by a judicious shifting of Civil servants they might get their salaries cut down to a very low amount yearly. But he did not think it was a rule that would be given general application to, for a mutiny in the service would be inevitable. Mr. Archibald had served a long time in the North, and it was an unwritten law of the service that, when a man had served a considerable time in the tropical climate of the North, he was entitled to promotion in the South. That was the ground upon which that gentleman was transferred. He was a most efficient officer and the climate of Warwick would suit him, but it really was left-handed promotion to send a man to a good climate and reduce his salary. He thought the Warwick salary ought to remain as it had been hitherto, particularly as business was not decreasing, and as the gentleman who now filled the office was quite as competent as his predecessor.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he could say something of Mr. Archibald, because he knew him in the North, and he was a most efficient officer. He was mining registrar at Charters Towers, and through his capability was asked to become warden, and some little pressure had to be put upon him to take that position. He went to Ravenswood, and was a first-class officer. He (Mr. Macrossan) was surprised, therefore, to hear that he had gone to Warwick at a reduced salary. He quite agreed with the Chief Secretary with reference to the removal of police magistrates from small towns, and thought a general rule should be established to that effect, but that was no reason why an answer should not be given to a question as to why an officer had been removed. If there was some high reason of State for keeping it secret, he could understand it, but they were removing petty officers from one place to another, and the Colonial Secretary took up the high position which a foreign secretary would take up in the House of Commons—talked about the exigencies of the service—and threw his papers down in disgust. He said that the hon. gentleman should be compelled to answer, because there was no reason for keeping those things dark. If there was anything disgraceful done by a Civil servant he should be dismissed; but if he had done nothing disgraceful, then there was a halo of disgrace thrown round him by making a mystery of the thing. Now, he said the practice was utterly wrong of withholding information of that sort. He thought it was a wrong position to take up, and a position which he had never seen a Minister take up before. He had seen Ministers sitting on the Government benches who were compelled to give information before they passed their Estimates.

The PREMIER: We desire to give all possible information.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said all the information had not been given, but they had been told that it was one of those exigencies that cropped up in the Civil Service. That was no explanation, and the Colonial Secretary said if they were not satisfied with that he could give no other information. Now it was time that state of things ended. If they asked for information let them have it. If a Civil servant had done anything that he should be disgraced for, he should be disgraced. If he had done nothing, and simply wanted a removal, or it was advisable to remove him, then that should be stated. The hon. member for North Brisbane gave that information, and seemed to know more about the department than the Colonial Secretary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said from the hon. gentleman's remarks it would be supposed that when an officer was transferred from one place to another it was a sign that he had done something wrong. He did not think that was correct. Transfers had to be made sometimes, but they did not necessarily imply that the person transferred had done anything wrong. He must apologise to the Committee for having lost his temper a little time ago, but he thought hon. members would agree with him that he was rather drawn into it by the hon. the leader of the Opposition. It was that hon. gentleman who asked him to go outside first.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. gentleman was mistaken. The leader of the Opposition had suggested that he should go outside and let the Under Secretary take his place.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was a different thing altogether; that occurred some time after. As far as regarded the police magistrate who was now at Warwick, Mr. Archibald, he was gold warden at Ravenswood, and it was at the request of the late Minister for Mines, Mr. Miles, that he was put in the police magistrate's service on account of his health. He distinctly understood from Mr. Miles that Mr. Archibald knew that the salary at Warwick would be £450, but he knew now from letters that had passed since then that Mr. Archibald denied that. He (the Colonial Secretary) had been told that Mr. Archibald was willing to accept the position at that salary because he must be removed from the North on account of his health.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was sorry he should have been the cause of the Colonial Secretary's irritation. He regretted it extremely, although the hon. the junior member for North Brisbane seemed to doubt his sincerity. Now, he wanted from the Colonial Secretary information on two subjects, and first, as to whether there were any complaints from the people of Warwick that referred to the conduct of Mr. Pugh, or whether he was removed solely for the reasons given by the Premier and seconded by the Colonial Secretary? He would ask the Colonial Secretary that definite question—whether he had had any complaints with regard to the conduct of Mr. T. P. Pugh which led him to make the transference. Another question he had to ask, notwithstanding the explanation of the hon. gentleman, was whether he considered it necessary when a transfer was made that the officer transferred should carry his rate of salary with him to the district to which he was exchanged.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Mr. Pugh was an old servant in the Civil Service, and it was not thought right to reduce his salary when he was transferred. He might say, in answer to the other questions put, that no complaints had been made to him as to the conduct of Mr. Pugh, though he would say that

after the late Colonial Treasurer returned from a visit to Warwick he told him it would be advisable to transfer Mr. Pugh when a transfer was to be made.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was glad to hear that, because it showed how the door was kept open, through that system of transference, for moving an officer who was unfit for one place on to another, until he had proved himself unfit for that place, when he was moved on again. What could the late Colonial Treasurer have had to say to his colleagues to show that it was advisable that Mr. Pugh should be transferred? The hon. gentleman must have assigned some reason for that opinion, as it was not likely that the transference was made on the *ipse dixit* of the late Colonial Treasurer. They were entitled to some explanation on that point. The more they inquired into the matter the more deeply he was impressed with the belief that that system of transfer was used where dismissals should be made, just to give those men another chance. He did not say that was done in the Minister for Works' Department, but in the other departments, and he was not sure that he would not rather lean to the Algerine system of dismissal of the Minister for Works. The Warwick transfer seemed to be surrounded with suspicion, and he should like to hear now what reason the late Colonial Treasurer had for the advice he had given his colleagues.

Mr. W. BROOKES said somebody had expressed a wish that they had the power to see themselves as others saw them. If the leader of the Opposition would allow him he would tell that hon. gentleman what he thought of him just now. He thought nature intended the hon. gentleman for a sanitary inspector.

Mr. MOREHEAD: If I was one I would wipe you out at once.

Mr. W. BROOKES said the hon. member was hunting about for some vice, weakness, or defect, and he did not see in the hurry of the chase that there might be good and sufficient reasons for transference of a police magistrate. Let him remind the hon. gentleman and the Committee that the hon. member for Warrego had assigned a very good reason for the transference of one police magistrate from Thargomindah—because he allied himself with certain cliques, which made it disagreeable for the local magistrates to sit on the bench with him. The leader of the Opposition did not want to give Mr. Pugh a shadow of a chance, but wanted to get down to the cesspool of the matter; and that was not right. A great deal of fault was found with the rather unfortunate expression made use of by the Colonial Secretary—"the exigencies of the public service." The hon. member for Townsville had dignified that expression by saying that it was such as might be fitly used under an Imperial Government. No one knew better than the hon. member that the phrase "the exigencies of the public service" had a very wide meaning, but his point was that it did not necessarily mean anything foul, dishonourable, culpable, or vicious. The hon. member for Townsville had made one very sensible suggestion which he would recommend to the Committee, and that was that there was such a thing as keeping a police magistrate too long in one place. They should work under a different system, and a police magistrate should not be allowed to stay in one place until he had become so associated with the upper classes of that place as to be scarcely capable of forming an impartial judgment between the rich and the poor, or the squatter and the working man, and so forth. If that system were adopted it would be seen that the expression, "the exigencies of the

public service," was a perfectly lawful term. Though the Colonial Secretary's vocabulary appeared to be somewhat limited, he trusted hon. members opposite would remember that he had like passions with themselves, though he was not so glib-tongued as the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. NORTON said they were travelling a little too far from the Estimates. Everyone who heard that discussion year after year must be convinced that their system of dealing with police magistrates was a thoroughly rotten one and most unfair to the police magistrates themselves. They had a long list of police magistrates throughout the colony, and it was time their positions were classified and then they might transfer officers to positions of the same class, or if it was intended to promote them they might be removed to positions of a higher class. If that were done they would not, as now, be carrying the salary for one position to another, so that hon. members never could tell what was the salary being paid at Warwick, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, or any other place. If the plan he suggested were adopted, a man transferred from one position to another of the same class would get the same salary, and if he was promoted to a higher class position he would get a rise.

The PREMIER: No doubt they ought to be classified.

Mr. NORTON said they certainly ought to be classified. It was absurd that a discussion like that should go on year after year. A good deal of it was quite avoidable, and was simply owing to the bad arrangements they had. That was a matter the Chief Secretary might take up; there was no one better capable than he of thinking it out. There was one matter he would like to get some information on. Some time ago he brought under the notice of the Colonial Secretary the advisability and the fairness of making Mount Morgan a place for holding petty sessions, and he had to express his satisfaction for the prompt manner in which the matter had been dealt with. He would like to know whether any arrangements had been made for holding petty sessions there now. Of course he knew there was a difficulty about a suitable building.

The PREMIER said that while his hon. colleague was obtaining the information he might say that he thought, with the hon. member for Port Curtis, that it would be best to classify the different officers according to salaries. Of course some places were more expensive to live in than others; so that it was rather a difficult subject. If that arrangement were made the Estimates would simply show so many police magistrates at £700, so many at £600, so many at £500, and so many at £450. There would still be a difficulty in moving them, because a police magistrate at Birdsville, for example, with £450 would not be as well off as one at Warwick with the same salary.

Mr. NORTON: Of course that would be a promotion.

The PREMIER said of course it would be treated in that way. The unsatisfactoriness of the present system had impressed itself very much on the Government. It had been necessary to make several changes, and it had been found difficult to make the change without doing injustice to officers by reducing their salaries or giving an unnecessarily high salary for the work done at a particular place.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Mr. Lukin, the police magistrate at Rockhampton, had been requested to go to Mount Morgan and hold courts of petty sessions. At the present

time there were only the police quarters to hold them in, but as soon as a report was received from Mr. Lukin as to what accommodation would be necessary, something would be put up there.

Mr. HAMILTON said, in answer to what had fallen from the hon. member for North Brisbane, that the leader of the Opposition recognised what some members apparently failed to recognise—that the meeting of that Committee was not a farce for the purpose of passing a lot of estimates that the Treasurer brought forward as a matter of form. They were the custodians of the public purse, sitting there for the express purpose of deciding whether they were justified in granting the sums asked for. To ascertain that, it was their duty to ask questions, and it was a Minister's duty to give the information asked for.

Mr. DICKSON said that, as his name had been mentioned by the hon. Colonial Secretary, he thought he might say a few words. He had always held the opinion that it was desirable in the interest of the public that police magistrates should not remain too long in any one district, especially in small communities, to form cliques and connections which might have a detrimental bearing on the discharge of their public duties. On his visit to Warwick during the absence of the Premier, he observed, or was furnished with information which led him to believe, that there had been a relaxation of discipline. He heard nothing injurious personally to Mr. Pugh, but he received confirmation of his previously formed opinion that Mr. Pugh had been at Warwick long enough, and that, without in the slightest degree censuring him or desiring to degrade him in the public estimation, it would be in the interests of the public that he should be removed when a convenient opportunity presented itself. On his (Mr. Dickson's) return to Brisbane he conveyed that impression to his then colleague, the Colonial Secretary. He thought the change was one in the true interests of the public service. Mr. Pugh was still capable of discharging his public duties straightforwardly and beneficially in the new community in which he was placed; and the community at Warwick would also benefit by having Mr. Archibald placed in succession to Mr. Pugh. They must bear in mind that Mr. Pugh was held in very great estimation in Warwick, and that when he left he received several demonstrations of cordial approval of the manner in which he had conducted the affairs of his office during the time he held it. He (Mr. Dickson) did not wish it to be inferred from anything his late hon. colleague had said that he had expressed any opinion adverse or injurious to Mr. Pugh. He felt then, what he had always contended for, that it was possible for police magistrates to remain too long in one community. They moved in one groove, and the reins of administration and discipline might be gradually relaxed to the danger of the community. He hoped that nothing that had transpired would imply any distrust of the Government in the ability of Mr. Pugh to perform satisfactorily the duties of the office which he held.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was rather a strange speech that had been made by the hon. member for Enoggera. He stated that after visiting Warwick as Acting Chief Secretary he came down to Brisbane with the impression that Mr. Pugh had been in Warwick long enough. "Long enough" was rather a strong expression to make use of.

Mr. W. BROOKES: Not at all.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The hon. member who has just interrupted me has been here long enough. However, he was dealing with what fell from the hon. member for Enoggera,

That expression, coming from the Acting Chief Secretary and conveyed to his colleagues, would certainly mean that the sooner Mr. Pugh was removed from that place the better.

Mr. W. BROOKES : Not with any sinister meaning.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he did not know whether the elderly gentleman opposite was to be allowed to interrupt him; if it pleased the hon. member, it did not hurt him; but the hon. member for North Brisbane would have the opportunity of speaking afterwards. The hon. member for Enoggera said he came down from Warwick impressed with the belief that Mr. Pugh had been long enough at Warwick, and he had learnt that from what he heard in that town. The next thing was that Mr. Pugh was moved somewhere else, and very likely it would shortly be found that he had been long enough there. He was found to have been long enough in Rockhampton some time ago. Those indefinite charges were really more damaging than any definite charge, and the testimonials that Mr. Pugh received were the most damaging of all. They proved one of two things, either that he had made himself into a favourite, or that the people were very glad to get rid of him, even at the cost of a few sovereigns. It was well known to everybody that Mr. Pugh was a man who ought to be out of the Civil service, and the present head of the Ministry knew that as well as anyone else, and perhaps better. That was the reason why he particularly called attention to his transference. In regard to the remarks made by the hon. member for Enoggera about not keeping police magistrates in one place for any length of time, the Government were profuse in those expressions; but they only acted upon that idea and leaned upon that crutch when they wanted to excuse a shady transfer. That was the only time they brought that argument forward. They had had ample opportunity of dealing with the question, which was a very good generalisation, but which it would be very hard to practically bring into effect. Whenever the present party in power found that they had done a shady transaction they said they did not think it was advisable that a police magistrate should remain too long in one town. That was the way in which they justified their iniquitous and discreditable dealings with Mr. Pugh and others. Mr. Pugh had no right to be in the public service at Bundaberg or anywhere else, and the Government had more information than they chose to give to the Committee in regard to that transference, not only from Warwick to Bundaberg, but from Rockhampton to Warwick.

Mr. ADAMS said he was afraid some of the remarks made by the junior member for North Brisbane might be perhaps somewhat damaging to a very eminent officer. He referred to Mr. Johnstone, the late police magistrate at Bundaberg.

Mr. W. BROOKES : They were not intended to be so.

Mr. ADAMS said, from what the hon. member said it might be inferred that Mr. Johnstone wished to be removed, and the consequence was, that when he wished to be removed Mr. Pugh wished to be removed, and, of course, the people were agreeable. Bundaberg and the surrounding districts were well pleased with Mr. Johnstone. He did his duty fearlessly and honestly and honourably, and everyone, with the exception of the evil-doers, respected him and trusted him. They wanted him to remain in Bundaberg, and several of them requested him (Mr. Adams) to ask Mr. Johnstone if he should write to the department for his retention. He did ask him,

and Mr. Johnstone said it was a departmental shift, and he would be one of the first to go when his chief told him to go. Moreover, he said he had received a very nice letter from the department, and the Under Secretary had written to him, saying that on account of his sore eyes a change would be better for him. The change was a loss to Mr. Johnstone, because he had a house of his own to live in, and it was well furnished, and when he had to shift, of course he had to break up his home. He knew perfectly well that it was a departmental shift, and that Mr. Johnstone was agreeable to it. In reference to Mr. Pugh, he did not know that gentleman very well. He had sat with him on the bench two or three times, but that was all he knew of him. He could say, however, that Mr. Pugh brought a very good reputation with him, and appeared to be a very valuable officer.

Mr. MURPHY said he noticed that the police magistrate at Barcaldine visited Jericho. He wanted to know if he stopped at Jericho or went beyond? The Barcaldine police magistrate had been in the habit of going a considerable distance down the line to Alpha and Pine Hill; but was he only to go as far as Jericho now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not visit Pine Hill now. He visited Jericho and Alpha.

Mr. ALLAN said the Colonial Secretary had led the Committee to believe that there was some misunderstanding as to whether Mr. Archibald's salary was reduced from £500 to £450. Was Mr. Archibald aware of that, or was he under the impression that he would be paid the salary paid to the previous police magistrate at Warwick?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he claimed at the rate of £500, but was only paid at the rate of £450.

Mr. ALLAN said he would like to know if Mr. Archibald was sent to Warwick without due notice being given him of a reduction in the salary. If he had gone there on the supposition that he was to get the same salary as the previous police magistrate, would he be reimbursed? It was well known that Mr. Archibald had given great satisfaction; and he would ask whether it was well to allow him to come down to Warwick under a misapprehension and reduce his salary by £50 a year?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Mr. Archibald was willing to take anything in the South. He was willing to take Bundaberg at £450; but Bundaberg was being filled up by Mr. Pugh, who took his salary of £500 with him, and Mr. Archibald received £450 at Warwick instead of at Bundaberg.

Mr. ALLAN said he would ask whether, if it was found on inquiry that Mr. Archibald was not duly informed as to the reduction when he went to Warwick, he would be paid the same salary as the police magistrate at Warwick previously received?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would look through the papers again to see where the misapprehension arose, and if necessary would bring it before the Cabinet.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the difficulty was owing to the police magistrate of Warwick carrying his salary with him. The salary should attach to the place and not to the individual. If it was desirable that police magistrates should be changed periodically, like Wesleyan ministers, there should be a fixed salary for every police magistracy in the colony. The police magistrate at Warwick, for instance, was put down at £450, and under the present system that would not be altered until a man carrying a salary of £500 or £600 a year was removed to that place. If

it was expedient to remove magistrates from time to time, a fixed sum should be attached to every place, allowing a little more, possibly, in the outside districts where living was more expensive. As matters stood at present an officer who carried £500 or £600 a year might be removed from a place where he had plenty to do to a place where he had very little to do, and he would be in the position of doing very little work for a very large salary.

The PREMIER said the system of allowing a fixed sum for each place had been found to be extremely inconvenient. The exigencies of the service required the transfer of officers from place to place. Sometimes they were removed for the purpose of promotion; sometimes it was desirable to remove them without reducing their salary, and if each office carried a fixed salary it would sometimes be necessary to turn one man out when it was desirable to remove another. He thought it would be better to have a system of classification under which there would be so many police magistrates at £400, so many at £450, and so on, the higher paid officers being sent to the more important places. The difficulty had been forced on the attention of the Government very much lately, and he knew it had caused more trouble to him than any other matter in connection with the Government service. It would save a great deal of trouble if there was a system of classification, paying officers according to their standing in the service, or according to their capacity.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Colonial Secretary ought to answer the question put to him by the hon. member for Darling Downs, in regard to Mr. Archibald. The Colonial Secretary had explained that the officer in question had lost his health in the North, and had expressed his willingness to take a reduced salary at Bundaberg. If he had been sent to Bundaberg at £450 the contract would have been carried out, but Mr. Pugh had been sent to Bundaberg from Warwick, where he received £500, and had taken the £500 with him. Mr. Archibald had been sent to Warwick believing that he would get the same salary as Mr. Pugh received there, and if Mr. Archibald's statement was correct, he ought to get the higher salary. He did not agree to go to Warwick for a lower salary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already stated that he would consider the matter and bring it before the Cabinet.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had a question to ask the Colonial Secretary with regard to a subject he knew all about—namely, the advertising business. According to a return laid on the table, clerks of petty sessions had passed large sums for advertising electoral rolls, contrary to instructions from the head of the department; and he wished to know what steps had been taken with regard to those clerks of petty sessions?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they were told last year that they were only to advertise in the different places in one paper according to the Act, but in some country places the rolls were advertised in two newspapers, because they represented two different classes of readers.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What has been done to them? Have they been discharged?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that for a much more venial offence Mr. Morey was to lose £60 a year, whilst nothing was to be done to those clerks of petty sessions who disobeyed the distinct instructions of the head of the department. He was not going to condemn the Colonial Secretary, although he thought that those subordinates

ought to be punished to some extent. If one sort of justice was to be served out in one department, it ought to be served out in another. He hoped the Government would, after the condoning policy adopted by the Colonial Secretary, see their way to put Mr. Morey back to the position he was in before. He was sure that, notwithstanding the unexpected unamiability of the Colonial Secretary that evening, if that hon. gentleman had been in the position of Minister for Lands he would have let Mr. Morey down more gently than the then Minister for Lands, but now Minister for Works, did.

Question put and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. It is proposed to proceed with Supply to-morrow, and I hope we shall be able to make some further progress than we have to-night.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at thirty-two minutes past 11 o'clock.