

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 21 OCTOBER 1887

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 21 October, 1887.

Question.—Rosewood Branch Railway.—Grant of Land to John Mackay.—Question of Privilege.—Cooneana Railway Bill—resumption of committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTION.

Mr. ADAMS asked the Colonial Secretary—

What was the amount paid for two allotments of land in the township of Fife-Barnett, Mount Perry, being allotments 1 and 2 of section 5, and to whom the money was paid?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton) replied—

There was paid for two allotments of land and a house the sum of £250, to Messrs. B. B. and S. Moreton, in 1874.

ROSEWOOD BRANCH RAILWAY.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think it is advisable to waste the time of the House in adducing arguments in connection with the motion I have on the paper, to the effect that it is desirable that any new or additional policy of railway extension shall include a branch railway through the Rosewood district, *via* Marburg. All that can be said on the subject was said on a recent occasion when a similar motion was discussed, and I do not think a future Government can be bound by a resolution passed by an expiring Parliament. Therefore, in order to save time, I will, with the consent of the House, withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

GRANT OF LAND TO JOHN MACKAY.

Mr. PALMER, in moving—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the advisability of introducing a Bill to give effect to a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly, and adopted on the 2nd of November, 1882, viz.:—“That

it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise a grant of 1,000 acres of agricultural land to John Mackay, by way of consideration for his discovery of the heads of the Pioneer River and Port Mackay."

said: Mr. Speaker,—I am not aware why the Premier should have made this motion "not formal." I think he might have let it go into committee and discussed it then; but as it is, I suppose we must discuss it on the motion to go into committee. The question has never yet been definitely settled how far this Assembly is bound by the Acts of previous Parliaments; but I consider when a motion like that I have on the paper has been affirmed by a resolution of a previous Parliament without division—by a unanimous affirmation as it were—after being discussed by members on both sides, it should be regarded as a legacy from one Parliament to another, which is bound to carry it out. I shall not occupy the time of the House very long, but shall state plainly and shortly the facts of the case. The motion is to affirm a resolution passed in the year 1882 as follows:—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise a grant of 1,000 acres of agricultural land to John Mackay, by way of consideration for his discovery of the heads of the Pioneer River and Port Mackay."

The simple facts are that this explorer, Mr. Mackay, started from New South Wales in the year 1860, through what was then an unknown country. He had no chart or guide, but a tracing of the great explorer Leichhardt. He travelled according to his experience of the bush, and after leaving Rockhampton he was five months absent in a then unknown part of the country; a part of the country which we all know is very mountainous and difficult to get through. He discovered the Pioneer River and followed it down through very great difficulties, returning to what was then civilisation, in the most dilapidated condition, and suffering from illness in consequence of the rough life he had been compelled to live. In the following year he gave effect to his exploration, which was conducted at his own expense, by taking up a mob of cattle and placing them on the country he had previously found. After settling this run he repaired to Rockhampton in the following year, chartered a vessel at his own expense, and then connected his discoveries by land with discoveries by sea, discovering the mouth of the Pioneer River, which is rather difficult to find at any time, because it is rather obscure. He followed up and surveyed the river beyond the present township, and his chart was accepted by the Lands Department, and from it the river was marked on the map of Queensland. On the strength of his report the Pioneer was declared a port of entry. So far he did a great public service, and opened up what has turned out to be a flourishing part of the colony. At that time it was an unknown country, and those who went out took their lives in their hands; and anyone who displayed such public spirit is deserving of recognition, however late it may come. Those are the simple facts of the case. Difficulties soon overtook him, and he was never able to reap any reward from his discoveries. Financial troubles overtook him, as well as other pioneers of 1863 and 1864. He found he was not able to carry on; he lost his run and had to take to carrying for a living; eventually he returned to his profession—sea life—which took him away to other colonies, and he never had an opportunity of prosecuting his claim on the Government of Queensland. I have it on good authority that when this resolution was carried in 1882 Mr. Mackay gave up a very good appointment, thinking perhaps, in his simplicity or from his want of knowledge of technicalities, that the grant of land was his and that he had only to come and assert his claim, not knowing

that the passing of a Bill and other formalities had to be gone through. During the discussion that ensued on the motion seventeen or eighteen members spoke, as can be seen in *Hansard*, and they were all entirely in favour of it but two or three, and they only objected to it in a slight way in regard to its forming a precedent, not perceiving that they were really affording a strong argument in favour of the case, for I consider that anyone who opens up another Mackay will be deserving of an even greater reward. The other day I was instrumental in procuring a reward of £1,000 for the three discoverers of the Croydon Gold Field—a squatter and two of his men. They deserved a reward; and if we could give half-a-dozen more thousands for the discovery of other Croydons it would be money very well laid out, and the colony would be the gainer. A great portion of Queensland is still unexplored, and in order to encourage prospecting and exploring parties the precedent would be a very good one. We know that Mr. Landsborough, after rendering great services as an explorer, was rewarded in Victoria, and his claims were also acknowledged by the Queensland Parliament, who granted him £2,000, though he was receiving a salary of £400 a year at the time. We also know that Louis Hope was rewarded with a grant of land in the earliest days of Queensland. It may be said that Mr. Mackay has received a reward in the shape of a situation as harbour-master at Cooktown. There is not the slightest doubt that he is an able and efficient officer, and if he were not in that position some other officer would be found to do the work, but none more capable. He is merely receiving what I consider a small reward for most efficient services. He is doing good service, and the colony is merely paying him at rather a small rate for that service, and that is distinct from a reward. I think the legitimacy of these claims has been acknowledged in all the colonies; and we have also the highest Imperial authority in their favour. Sir George Ferguson Bowen promised Mr. Mackay that should the port of Mackay ever come to importance his claims would be acknowledged.

The PREMIER: Where is the evidence of that?

Mr. PALMER: The evidence, I suppose, we shall be able to get, because the promise was given in the presence of witnesses. It is solemnly asserted that the promise was made to him that the Government of Queensland would reward him. We also have the unopposed motion of this Chamber affirming the right to a reward. That reward has not yet been granted, and I consider it is a legacy from that Parliament to this one, which we are bound to carry out. It is not as if it was for a grant of money; it is for a grant of land, which to the colony is of no value until money and labour are expended upon it—until somebody has entered upon it and utilised the land. It is merely an acknowledgment that the gentleman did perform good service in the early days of the colony, for which he is entitled to a reward. That is the position I take up on this motion. I have only to say that I have not gone to any member of this House to ask for a vote, because that is a practice I look upon with contempt. If the case will not stand on its merits, I shall be satisfied to leave it. I rely on the justice of hon. members, and the justice of the case. I believe the case is a good one, and I commit it to the serious consideration of hon. members. I would not slight an hon. member so far as to ask him to vote for any motion I put on the paper. I have carried several motions, but on no occasion have I asked for the assistance or vote of a single member, nor have I on this

occasion. When the resolution was affirmed in this House it was affirmed unanimously, and I think both sides of the House may now reaffirm what was affirmed in 1882. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said : Mr. Speaker,—I confess that I cannot see any reason for acceding to this motion. If it is to be laid down that every man who, in the prosecution of his own business, makes a discovery in Australia, which afterwards turns out to be of advantage, shall receive a reward from the public funds in some way or another, there will certainly be a great number of claimants. This Mr. Mackay, as far as the facts were put before us five years ago, made a journey at the head of an exploring party, organised in New South Wales, to North Queensland; and went to the north of Rockhampton as far as the head of the Pioneer River, where he thought he had discovered good pastoral country. Subsequently he went there in a ketch, and entered the port. Those are the services for which it is proposed he should be remunerated. How many men are there who have rendered ten times as valuable services under similar circumstances? What about the discoverer of Townsville, Mr. Black? I think that discovery is a much more valuable one, and that the man who made it deserves much more than Mr. Mackay. What about the discoverer of Port Denison, Mr. Sinclair? He did not get a reward, and I do not know that the discoverer of Normanton and Burketown ever got anything. Why should the discoverer of this port, unfortunately an expensive port, be rewarded any more than the discoverer of pastoral country? We have one precedent with respect to pastoral land in the case of Mr. Landsborough, who received a grant of money; but that is a bad precedent. Nevertheless, the services rendered by him were very different from the services rendered by Mr. Mackay. The resolution referred to in this motion was passed at the end of the session of 1882, when every one was tired, and it came to nothing more. Mr. Mackay was afterwards appointed to a Government billet, and that, I am sure, was understood by most people to be a reward to him for whatever service he might have rendered to the colony. Immediately after the resolution was passed, or at any rate six months after, he received a public appointment. The resolution was passed in November, 1882, and he was appointed about the middle of 1883 to the office he now holds in the Government service. It was said that he had some claim on the Government; if he had, he was sufficiently rewarded by the appointment he holds at the present time. If a man in the prosecution of his own concerns makes a discovery which he anticipates will be an advantage to himself, and afterwards finds that he cannot keep that advantage to himself, he should not, therefore, be paid a reward by the Government unless his services are of a very signal and distinguished character. I cannot distinguish Mr. Mackay's services from those of numbers of other persons in the colony, and I do not see why we should adopt this resolution. Moreover, whatever claim he might have had has, I think, gone by his accepting a Government appointment.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said : Mr. Speaker,—There is one portion of the hon. gentleman's speech to which I must take exception, and that is where he objects to paying a reward to any pioneer or party who finds something valuable to Queensland whilst in the prosecution of their own enterprise.

The PREMIER : I said unless they rendered services of exceptional value.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN : We have fully established the principle of paying men for the discovery of goldfields, and any man who goes out prospecting goes on his own business, and not for the good of the State, just as Mr. Mackay did when he discovered the port and district of Mackay. I have firmly believed for a long time that we have paid too little as rewards to men who do something towards the advancement of the interests of the country. We thought we did a great deal in passing our Mining Act of 1874. I thought I was doing a great deal when I got a provision inserted in it to the effect that £1,000 should be paid to the discoverers of a new goldfield. I think the same rewards may be made with regard to the benefits the colony derives from the discovery of land fit for cultivation, and ports fit for navigation. £1,000 is an insignificant reward to pay for the discovery of a field like Croydon or Charters Towers. I do not think there was £1,000 paid for the discovery of Ravenswood; if there was it was paid in dribbles for gullies here and there on the field. If we look at Victoria, and the results that have accrued from the generous way in which they have paid prospectors, we shall find that Victoria, which is only about one-eighth the area of Queensland, has probably paid ten times more money as rewards for the discovery of mining fields, and with a very good result. The goldfields of Victoria were the means of raising the population in that colony up to the population of New South Wales, a country which had the start by a very long way. I do not know much about the merits of this particular case, but I think that if Port Mackay, and the district of Port Mackay, are worth anything, 1,000 acres of land is not too much to give as a reward to the discoverer, more especially as the man is in need of it. Mr. Black, the discoverer of Townsville, claimed no reward. He left Queensland a rich man and went to England; I do not know whether he is alive or dead at the present time. The man who discovered Burketown and Normanton unfortunately never lived to return to civilisation. It was Burke, the explorer, who discovered that part of the colony, and though he did not exactly discover those particular ports, he discovered the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria. He went from Victoria to high-water mark. That, therefore, cannot be regarded as a case in point. I do not know whether the opinion of the House is in favour of this motion or not, but if the matter goes to a division, I shall certainly support it, as I think Mr. Mackay is fully entitled in his old age and in poverty to some reward for having done something to forward the interests of Queensland.

Mr. STEVENSON said : Mr. Speaker,—I certainly expected that the Minister for Lands would have had something to say upon this question; but as the mover of the original resolution I would like to say a few words. I cannot understand why the Premier, who originally supported the motion, should now oppose it. Both sides of the House were then in favour of it. It was accepted favourably by the then Opposition, by Sir S. W. Griffith himself, and by Mr. McLean, who was at one time Minister for Lands. I know very well that Mr. Mackay endured very great hardships on that trip, and, notwithstanding what the Premier says, he did a very great service to the colony. I suppose, sir, every man has some regard for his own interests in whatever he does. I suppose Mr. Mackay had the idea of benefiting himself and those associated with him, but, at the same time, in doing that he benefited the colony, and, considering the very important place that Mackay has turned out to be, his claim ought to be taken into consideration. When I brought in the original

resolution and had it passed I asked Sir Thomas Mellwraith, then leader of the Government, what should be done next, and he told me it remained for the Government to bring in a Bill to give effect to the resolution, and if it had not been for that understanding I would have taken steps myself to bring in a Bill. I consider, with the hon. member who has brought in this resolution, that it was a legacy left by the late Parliament to us, and that the Government ought to have taken steps to have brought in a Bill, because the services of Mr. Mackay are as deserving of recognition now as they were in 1882. I do not see that there was any crime involved in his trying to benefit himself, whilst benefiting the country, and Mr. Mackay not only found the country but he settled down on it afterwards. And he did more than that. He went to the expense of purchasing or chartering a schooner, and went round to find the mouth of the Pioneer River. He was the first man to do that, and some little consideration ought to be shown to him. As far as his being compensated by getting a Government billet is concerned, I do not see anything in that. I am perfectly satisfied that it is a very poor billet for a man of his ability, and if it had not been for the fact that he thought he would get the land when the resolution was passed, he would never have come to Queensland. Mr. Archer, who was then Colonial Treasurer, finding that Mr. Mackay was in Queensland, offered him the position of harbour-master at Cooktown, but I can assure hon. members that he left a far better position to come up to Queensland to claim what he took to be a grant of land. A resolution which was passed unanimously by a former Parliament ought not to be repudiated. I hope hon. members will not repudiate it. As far as what the Premier says about there probably being numerous other applicants if this is agreed to, I do not think there are very many of them. Mr. Landsborough was granted £2,000 for his services, and I do not know that he endured any more hardships than Mr. Mackay. I think Mr. Mackay is just as worthy of reward as Mr. Landsborough was, and I hope, therefore, that this House will take the matter into their consideration and give effect to the resolution which was passed by the House in 1882.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said: Mr. Speaker,—Mr. Mackay no doubt was a pioneer, a very enterprising man, and did a great deal in the way of pioneering, but I fail to see that he has done more than a great many other men in the way of pioneering. He simply anticipated what would have been eventually accomplished by some other pioneer, probably within six months afterwards, because it must be remembered that the progress of settlement was very rapid in those days; and because Mr. Mackay anticipated someone else, I do not see why he should come to this House and ask for a grant of land as a reward. There are plenty of other men whose claims would be equally entitled to consideration who not only discovered new land but occupied it afterwards.

Mr. STEVENSON: So he did.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. STEVENSON: He took up land within fourteen miles of Mackay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, if he did, I hope he was successful. I believe he was not, but that has been the fate of a great many people who have gone out into the back country and have failed in making their ventures a success. But because they have failed in their enterprise, that is no reason why the country should assist them out of their difficulties, or give them something which they are not entitled to any more than hundreds of other persons. There was no special difficulty in finding Mackay

from Rockhampton. It is not so very far from Rockhampton over the mountains. It is not a great distance from Princhester.

Mr. STEVENSON: It was in those days.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So it was in other instances. The men who discovered the Burdekin, the Belyando, the Mitchell, or the Warrego had just as much hardship to endure, but we never hear anything about them. Those men did their work; some have failed, some have been successful, some have lost their health and their money, and they have never asked the country to recoup them either in one way or another. It was a speculation they were willing to engage in, seeing the possibility of making something out of it. They have failed, and I can only regret it; but that is no reason why the Government should assist them, because they have found something and not been able to make anything out of it.

Mr. STEVENSON: That is a very poor argument.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I fail to see anything in the argument of the hon. Minister for Works, that because Mr. Mackay anticipated what would have been discovered subsequently, therefore he should get no reward. According to that idea no inventor or discoverer should be rewarded. Under the Gold Fields Act if a man discovers a payable goldfield he is rewarded, but according to the logic of the Minister for Works that man should not be rewarded because some other man would in all probability discover it if the first man had not done so, and that man again should not be rewarded, because he would be only anticipating the discovery by someone else. The argument is an absurd one. The hon. gentleman also states that other men may have similar claims; but if they can show as strong claims for a reward as Mr. Mackay they should be rewarded. I fail to see that Mr. Mackay has been compensated by getting a Government billet. The billet is a very poor one, and he is doing good work for the salary he is receiving, and is recognised to be one of the best men in a similar position in the colony. Mr. Mackay has stronger claims than others, because a resolution has been already carried unanimously in this House affirming that he is entitled to this reward. A large majority of the members of the present House were members of the House that acquiesced in that resolution, and I fail to see why those hon. members of the present House should now repudiate the unanimous act of the last Parliament of which they were themselves members.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I see there is a stipulation in the resolution which speaks of a grant of "agricultural" land. We have not got so very much agricultural land in this country.

Mr. HAMILTON: We have millions of acres.

Mr. KATES: Not of agricultural land. We have any amount of pastoral land; but where is all the agricultural land?

Mr. MOREHEAD: At Thane's Creek.

Mr. KATES: I would rather he got £5,000 than get 1,000 acres on Thane's Creek. It would be a loss to the country to give him 100 acres of the agricultural land on Thane's Creek. This 1,000 acres proposed would find settlement for half-a-dozen homestead selectors. I have nothing to say against Mr. Mackay, and if he has done good service to the country let it be paid for with £500 in cash, or 1,000 acres grazing land, but I object to parting with the agricultural land of this colony for such a purpose. I would like to know whether, under this resolution, Mr. Mackay would have the

choice of the land proposed to be given him, because, if so, he might fix on the very best agricultural land in the colony, as the hon. member for Balonne suggests, between Warwick and Thane's Creek, 1,000 acres of which would be worth £3,000. If Mr. Mackay has done good service to the country let him be given a lump sum of money, but I cannot agree that he should be given 1,000 acres of agricultural land.

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not know Mr. Mackay at all, and do not think I ever saw him, but he is in an exceptional position with regard to exploring. We have had a great many explorers, but very few successful explorers, who have done a great deal of good to the country. Though Mr. Mackay did not do a great deal of good for himself in starting on the Pioneer, he brought the district under the notice of the public, and was the cause of an immense amount of land being taken up at Mackay and cultivated, and of the town which sprang up there a few years afterwards. He had been the means of the country selling a very large area of land there, and getting a large sum through the Customs revenue. I suppose that up to the time this resolution was adopted in 1882, there was more money passed out of the Mackay district, for its size, in the shape of Customs and revenue from the sale of land, than from any other district in the colony. Mr. Mackay is unfortunate in not being successful for himself, but he has been successful in being the means of developing a large area of very fine land, which has been turned to good account for many years, and I think he is fully entitled to receive what was agreed to by a resolution of this House four or five years ago.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I think, having regard to the resolution adopted without a division in the last Parliament, some consideration is certainly due to the claim of Mr. Mackay.

The PREMIER: He got a billet immediately afterwards.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The Premier says, "He got a billet immediately afterwards"; but I suppose the Government get from him a *quid pro quo*. They get value for the billet given to Mr. Mackay. If he is simply a pensioner, I admit at once that any claim he may have is satisfied. If, on the other hand, he gives full value for the salary he receives, I fail to see how the billet given him can be considered a reward. I assume from what has been said during the debate that Mr. Mackay is a very efficient officer and does his work remarkably well, and, in fact, is considered almost too good for his position. The last Parliament came to a resolution that a Bill should be introduced granting 1,000 acres of agricultural land to Mr. Mackay. To a certain extent I agree with the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, and think it inadvisable that the grant should take that form. If his services are to be recompensed—and I think they ought to be—it would be better that it should be done by a sum of money, as was done in the case of Mr. Landsborough. While speaking of Mr. Landsborough, I may say I do not share in the opinion expressed by the hon. member for Normanby in putting Mr. Mackay and Mr. Landsborough on the same level. There is no doubt that Mr. Landsborough was a great explorer, and has done an immense deal of good for the colony, and his claims upon the colony were in my opinion tardily and insufficiently recognised. I think a good case has been made out for this grant to Mr. Mackay. He should receive some recognition at the hands of the House, and I firmly believe that had the sugar industry progressed in the way it promised to do in 1882 there

would be no opposition to this proposal now. There can be no doubt that owing to the discovery of Mackay a great development of the sugar industry eventually took place on the banks of the Pioneer River. The Premier laughs; but the Premier, at any rate, offered no opposition to this resolution on a previous occasion; and I do not suppose that any new facts have come to his knowledge since he approved of that resolution, or rather did not disapprove of it, leading him to alter the opinion he tacitly held at that time. It would savour very much of repudiation if some recognition was not made to Mr. Mackay. I do not hold that the proper way is to give him 1,000 acres of land, but his efforts are certainly deserving of recognition; and, as they were recognised by the previous Parliament, they ought therefore to be recognised by the present Parliament.

Mr. PALMER, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I have not much to say in reply. I am surprised at the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates, saying that we are very short of agricultural land in Queensland. It would be indeed surprising if a colony 680,000 square miles in extent, and with only 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 acres already alienated, should be short of agricultural land. The motion says "agricultural land," but I do not know that it need necessarily be agricultural land. Grazing land is as useful as agricultural land—it is only a designation; and one is used for the other very frequently. I am certain there is plenty of good land yet to be found in the North. Mr. Mackay simply writes that he may have an opportunity of settling on and using this land, and leaving it to his family. His position will not last for ever; old age is creeping upon him, and he wants this recognition of his claim that he may be enabled to settle down for the remaining years of his life. He has assured me of that. I have been informed by a member of the House that the late Premier undertook that the resolution should be binding on the Assembly, and he promised that he would bring in a Bill to give effect to it if he had an opportunity—which he had not, owing to other events which happened about the same time. Considering that the late Premier undertook to bring in a Bill to give effect to the resolution, I urge that we ought to treat it as a legacy from the last Parliament to this. The Premier, in his speech, did not wish to assent to the principle, but he certainly did not offer any very great objection to granting this land, and I think, from what other hon. members have stated, that the House might very well accede to the request that this grant should be made for the discovery of what has been to the Government a very great source of revenue—the port and district of Mackay. The Minister for Works said he was not aware that Mr. Mackay settled the land. But he did settle it, at great expense and by going through what was then an unknown country. I suppose the hon. gentleman is aware of the rugged character of Connor's Range, and the difficulty there must have been in getting to Port Mackay through what was then an unknown country. After a great deal of labour Mr. Mackay settled it, and after all his labour he was left penniless and had to work for his living.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 18.

Messrs. Morehead, Stevenson, Aland, Chubb, Macrossan, Pattison, Scott, Hamilton, Adams, Morgan, Lalor, Black, Allan, Bailey, Ferguson, Palmer, Annear, and Lissner.

NOES, 20.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. W. Brookes, Rutledge, Jordan, Dutton, Moreton, Isambert, White, Buckland, Smyth, Foote, Mellor, McMaster, Higson, Kates, Sheridan, Fraser, S. W. Brooks, Grimes, and Bulcock.

Question resolved in the negative.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. HIGSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to call attention to the fact that on crossing the floor after the last division the hon. member for Normanby said, "What a bloody miserable member for Rockhampton!" I should like to know if that is parliamentary language, or language that should be allowed to be used by one hon. member to another in this House?

The SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson, makes a complaint against the hon. member for Normanby?

Mr. HIGSON: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What is the nature of the complaint?

Mr. HIGSON: I make complaint that he called me the "bloody miserable member for Rockhampton" as I was crossing the floor after the division, going back to take my seat. I want to know if that language is to be allowed to be expressed by one member to another when exercising his rights and privileges?

The PREMIER: I think the proper course will be to call upon the hon. member for Normanby to explain, or retract, or apologise, for the language used—if he made use of it. Then the House may proceed to deal with it.

The SPEAKER: I have to ask the hon. member for Normanby if he did make use of the words complained of by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson?

Mr. MOREHEAD: He need not criminate himself.

Mr. STEVENSON: I deny that I used the words as the hon. member has put them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HIGSON: The hon. member distinctly said "bloody member for Rockhampton" as I crossed over after voting on the question before the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—May not the words have been intended for the other member for Rockhampton—that is, if they were used at all? Or the hon. member may have made a mistake, and thought some other member was member for Rockhampton.

Mr. CHUBB said: In the House the words must be taken down, and the question is whether any action can be taken, as the words complained of were used in division. The Standing Orders provide that the words shall be taken down, and that if the House is in committee, the Chairman shall direct them to be taken down and report the same to the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Speaking to the point of order, I think the hon. member for Bowen is quite correct. If the words were used, as complained of by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson, the accuracy of whose quotation the hon. member for Normanby disputes, the Standing Orders require that they should have been taken down. At present we have simply the assertion of one hon. member against that of another. There is a certain form to be gone through in taking down words considered to be offensive or unparliamentary, and that not having been done in this case I do not see what remedy the House has.

Mr. W. BROOKES said: Mr. Speaker,—Rising to the point of order, I would point out that the words were used when it was impossible to call attention to them. This, if proved, is a very serious offence.

The PREMIER said: The rule respecting the taking down of words clearly relates only to words used in debate, when there is an oppor-

tunity of taking them down. With regard to an insult offered to a member, provision is made by the Constitution Act in the 45th section, which says:—

"Each House of the said Parliament is hereby empowered to punish in a summary manner as for contempt by fine, according to the Standing Orders of either House, and in the event of such fine not being immediately paid, by imprisonment in the custody of its own officer. Any person who commits any of the following offences:—

* * * * *

"The assaulting, obstructing, or insulting any member in his coming to or going from the House or on account of his behaviour in Parliament."

The complaint made in this case by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson, is that he was grossly insulted by the hon. member for Normanby on account of his conduct in Parliament. That is the complaint, and the hon. member for Normanby is bound to answer whether he did insult him in that manner. The precise words in which the insult was uttered is a matter of trifling importance. The complaint is that the hon. member for Normanby insulted the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson, on account of his behaviour in Parliament, and I think he must be called upon in his place to admit or deny the charge, and then the House will be in a position to deal with it.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—The Premier is very ready to put words into the mouth of the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson, and to formulate his complaint for him. That hon. member has accused the hon. member for Normanby of using certain words; the hon. member for Normanby has denied that. Now, we know very well what a very vivid imagination "James Hennessey" does give to some gentlemen; we know that the hon. member for Rockhampton is not a total abstainer.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Shame!

Mr. HAMILTON: There is no shame in it. If it is shameful to tell the truth, then it is shameful.

The SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is justified in making—

Mr. HAMILTON: We know very well—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Chair, chair!

The SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is justified in making that statement. It appears to me that he is exceeding the license of debate in imputing intoxication to the hon. member for Rockhampton.

Mr. HAMILTON: I am not imputing intoxication to him.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member insinuated it by innuendo, which is just as unparliamentary as making the charge openly.

Mr. HAMILTON: Perhaps the circumstances of the case might justify the insinuation, but what I did was simply to state in the abstract that spirits make a man imaginative. I may say—and this I know is not an insinuation; it is a statement of fact—that the hon. member for Rockhampton should be the last person to complain of anything of that kind, and that is generally known, not only in this House, but outside the House.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to state that I heard some remarks made by the hon. member for Normanby, but from the demeanour of the hon. member I should say it was not intended offensively, as he was smiling at the time. Of course some hon. members would take it as the hon. member for Rockhampton did. It often happens when hon. members cross the floor that something is said

about the way they voted, but in this case my opinion is that it was not done in a malicious or offensive way by the hon. member for Normanby. Of course he was not justified in saying what the hon. member for Rockhampton said he did, but I consider it my duty to state my impression of the affair.

The PREMIER: It is your place, Mr. Speaker, to call upon the hon. member for Normanby in his place to answer the charge that has been made against him. Standing Order 99 says:—

“Every member against whom any charge has been made, having been heard in his place, shall withdraw while such charge shall be under debate.”

Mr. SCOTT said: Mr. Speaker,—It is the usual custom of the House, when the question has been put to a member whether he made use of certain words, and he has said he did not make use of them, that his word is taken.

The PREMIER: He did not deny it.

Mr. HAMILTON: He did.

Mr. SCOTT: That has been the invariable custom ever since I have been in the House, and no one knows it better than the Premier. The member for Normanby has already said he did not make use of the expression he was accused of.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He did.

Mr. SCOTT: I heard him, and the Premier's saying he did not, does not alter my opinion. I am perfectly sure the hon. member said so. It has been invariably the custom, and has always been sustained by the Speaker, that a member's word must be taken under those circumstances.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sure everybody will be glad to take the word of the hon. member for Normanby if he said so.

Mr. SCOTT: He did.

The PREMIER: What I heard him say was an entirely evasive answer—that he did not use the words in the manner stated by the hon. member for Rockhampton.

Mr. SCOTT: He did not say “manner.”

Mr. HAMILTON: He did not use the word.

The PREMIER: I am sure the hon. member for Normanby is not a man who will endeavour to escape the consequences of what he does by running away. I am sure he has the courage to say plainly whether he did or did not say what has been attributed to him.

Mr. STEVENSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the Premier need not be making a mountain out of a molehill. I did not use the words as repeated by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Higson. I admit that I used certain words, but I said them in a tone of voice which was not meant to be insulting. I often use words in chaff to the hon. member, and I had no idea on this occasion of insulting him. I used words that were not supposed to be heard by every member of this House when crossing the floor. The hon. member took them to himself, turned round, and asked me whether they were meant for him. I said he could use his own discretion, or something to that effect. I had no idea of insulting the hon. member, and I am not going to repeat the words I used. If the hon. member thinks they were insulting—though they were purely said in chaff—I am quite willing to withdraw them.

Mr. HIGSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I accept the hon. member's word, and withdraw the complaint. If it had been said outside I should have taken no notice, but when it was said in crossing from a division I considered that it was my place

to take notice of it. I know that the hon. member has been chaffing me several times, and outside I would not—

Mr. SCOTT: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has accepted the word of the hon. member for Normanby, and has withdrawn his complaint, and he is not entitled to discuss the matter further.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker,—I think the House is quite satisfied with the explanation of the hon. member for Normanby, and I would suggest that we should pass to the Orders of the Day, and let the matter drop.

COONEANA RAILWAY BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being called, the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole to further consider this Bill.

Clause 3 passed as printed.

Clause 4 passed with a verbal amendment.

Clauses 5 and 6 passed as printed.

On clause 7, as follows:—

“This Act shall not prevent the owners or occupiers of land adjoining the railway, or any other persons, from constructing and laying down upon their own lands, or upon the lands of other persons with the consent of such persons, any collateral branch railways, to communicate or connect with the railway, to be constructed under this Act, for the purpose of bringing carriages to, or upon, or from the said railway; and the company shall, if required, at the expense of such owners and occupiers and other persons, make openings in the rails and such additional lines of rail as may be necessary for effecting such connection in places where the connection can be made without injury to the said railway and without inconvenience to the traffic thereon.”

The PREMIER said he thought the clause was entirely insufficient to effect the object intended by it. It would not prevent the occupiers or owners of adjoining land connecting with the railway, but it would not enable them to do so. The intention was, of course, to enable persons having adjoining land to make use of the line. The clause ought to be remodelled to read thus:—

The owners or occupiers of any land adjoining the railway, or adjoining any land authorised by this Act to be taken by the company for the construction of the railway, may construct and lay down upon their own lands, or upon the lands of the company, or upon the lands of other persons, &c.

That would give them actual power to do so, which they had not as the clause stood.

Mr. CHUBB said the amendment of the Premier would require to be altered slightly. If persons occupying adjoining land wished to go upon the lands of the company they should not be allowed to go where they chose, but only subject to the approval of the Commissioner for Railways; so that they might not enter at one end and run right down to the other.

The PREMIER said the last words of the clause were intended to meet that; but he did not think they did so. Some time ago the subject was brought under his notice in connection with the difficulties that had arisen, as to the Gulland and Thomas lines, and he had found on his table that day the draft of a Bill prepared in 1884 dealing with the matter. In it, it was proposed that any person desirous of using those lines might enter upon the lands of Gulland and Thomas respectively, and make the necessary connections. The clause before them did not give power to enter upon the land, but only said it did not prevent it. That draft Bill also provided that if any difficulty arose as to where was the proper place to make the connection,

it should be determined by the Commissioner for Railways. That would be a good provision to insert in the present Bill. He did not suppose there would be any objection to the amendments he was about to propose.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the clause was amended so as to read thus:—

The owners or occupiers of any land adjoining the railway, or adjoining any land authorised by this Act to be taken by the company, may lay down and construct upon their own lands or upon the land of the company, or upon the lands of other persons with the consent of such persons, any collateral branch railways, to communicate or connect with the railway to be constructed under this Act, for the purpose of bringing locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles to, or upon, or from the said railway, and for that purpose may enter upon the lands of the company; and the company shall, if required, at the expense of such owners and occupiers, make openings in the rails and such additional lines of rail as may be necessary for effectuating such connection in places where the connection can be made without injury to the said railway and without inconvenience to the traffic thereon.

Provided that if any difference arises between the company and any person desiring to make any such connection as to the place where, or the manner in which, the connection is to be made, such difference shall be referred to and determined by the Commissioner for Railways, whose decision shall be final and binding upon both parties.

On clause 8, as follows:—

"The persons making or using such branch lines of railway shall be at liberty to pass along and over the railway to be constructed under this Act with locomotives, waggons, carriages, and other vehicles upon payment of such tolls and dues as the company may from time to time prescribe, and under and subject to any regulations that shall be made by the company in manner aforesaid in respect of the use of the railway and the mode of conducting the traffic thereon, or otherwise."

The PREMIER said he pointed out, on the second reading of the Bill, that under that clause as it stood the company might make regulations that the persons using the railway should only use it between midnight and 2 o'clock in the morning, or at some other impossible time. Of course that was not desirable. He proposed, therefore, to omit all the words after "subject to" in the 5th line, with the view of inserting the following: "such conditions as may be mutually agreed upon by the company and such persons, or if they cannot agree then under and subject to such conditions as shall be determined by arbitration in accordance with the provisions of the Interdict Act of 1867." The next clause gave the Governor in Council power to reduce the tolls; the amendment only dealt with the conditions of running, the time-table, and all that sort of thing. He moved the amendment.

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

On clause 9, as follows:—

"The Governor in Council may from time to time revise and reduce the tolls and dues prescribed by the company in respect of conveyance and transport, along or over the railway, but such tolls and dues shall not, unless with the sanction of the company, be so reduced below the scale of tolls and dues for the time being charged by the Government upon the Government railways."

The PREMIER said the words "tolls and dues" were used in the old Railway Acts, which was passed at a time when it was supposed that the railway would belong to the company, and other people would own the rolling-stock. They could not call rates "tolls," and those words were intended originally to cover dues for vehicles passing over the line. He did not see why the company should not carry goods. He moved, therefore, the insertion of the word "rates" after the word "tolls."

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER said something was wanted after the words "conveyance and transport." Conveyance and transport of what? He moved the insertion of the words "of locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles, or goods."

Amendment agreed to.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the clause was further amended by the insertion of the word "rates" after "tolls and dues," on lines 10 and 12.

The PREMIER said he did not know whether the hon. member in charge of the Bill knew what the clause was intended to convey. What was the scale "charged by the Government upon the Government railways"? Which Government railway? The rates were not the same everywhere. He should think it should be the "nearest" Government railway.

Mr. CHUBB: The highest scale.

The PREMIER said that would be very objectionable. He would move the insertion of the word "nearest" between "the" and "Government," on the last line.

Clause, as amended, as follows:—

The Governor in Council may from time to time revise and reduce the tolls, rates, and dues prescribed by the company in respect of the conveyance and transport of locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles or goods along or over the railway, but such tolls, rates, and dues shall not, unless with the sanction of the company, be so reduced below the scale of tolls, rates, and dues for the time being charged by the Government upon the nearest Government railways—put and passed.

Clauses 10 and 11—"Parties making branch lines to repair connections," and "Company entitled to compensation if line damaged"—put and passed.

On clause 12, as follows:—

"If at any time after the completion of the railway the company desire to have any of the engines, carriages, waggons, trucks, or other vehicles forwarded over any Government line of railway forming a continuous line of communication with the said railway, or if the Commissioner desires to have any engines, carriages, waggons, trucks, or other vehicles forwarded over the said railway from any Government line of railway forming a continuous line of communication therewith, each of them (the company and the Commissioner) shall afford to the other all reasonable facilities for the receiving, forwarding, and delivering of such engines, carriages, waggons, trucks, or other vehicles without any unreasonable delay."

The PREMIER said the clause required amendment to give running powers to other people who might have branch railways; but that could be done in a few words.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the clause was amended to read as follows:—

If at any time after the completion of the railway, the company or any persons entitled to use the railway desire to have any locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles forwarded over any Government line of railway forming a continuous line of communication with the said railway, or if the Commissioner desires to have any locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles forwarded over the railway, or any such branch line of railway, from any Government line of railway forming a continuous line of communication therewith, each of them (the company, or such other persons, and the Commissioner) shall afford to the other all reasonable facilities for the receiving, forwarding, and delivering of such locomotives, waggons, carriages, or other vehicles, without any unreasonable delay.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 13—"Terms may be settled by arbitration"—was passed with consequential amendments.

On clause 14, as follows:—

"If either party fails to afford such facilities as aforesaid, after the terms have been so settled, the parties so failing shall be liable to pay to the other the sum of fifty pounds for every day during which such party so fails as and by way of liquidated damages."

The PREMIER said that the amount might be fixed at £10, which was a good big fine, or £20 a day.

Mr. GRIMES said he did not think £50 was at all too high, as he would show by an incident which happened within the last three or four days. Some two years ago the proprietors of a colliery, situated on Gulland's branch railway line, constructed a branch from that line to their colliery. They made an arrangement to carry coal from their pit, leaving it to the Commissioner for Railways to make an arrangement with Mr. Gulland, the proprietor of the line, as to the charges to be demanded. The other day an order was sent up, without notice, to the colliery proprietors, to close the points of connection between the two lines. That would have had the effect of stopping all the work at that colliery, and very likely, if they happened to be in full work at the time, putting some hundred men out of employment. Fortunately arrangements were made through the Commissioner for Railways which prevented the project from being carried out; but if the proprietor of that railway had cut off the branch it would have put the colliery proprietors to such loss, and their customers to such inconvenience, that a fine of £50 a day would have been none too much to cover. He hoped the amount would not be reduced.

Mr. DONALDSON said he thought it would be better to leave the amount at £50.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15, 16, and 17, and preamble, passed as printed.

On the motion of Mr. DONALDSON, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the Bill to the House with amendments.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

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.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING, ETC.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving £29,957, salaries and contingencies for Government Printing and the Electric Light, said there was an increase in the whole vote of £466. There had been some changes in salaries which had resulted in a decrease upon the vote of last year. The foreman bookbinder had retired from the service, and his place had been filled by the sub-overseer at a reduction of £50 in the salary. The machinist had also retired from the service, and his successor had been appointed temporarily for six months. If he succeeded in performing the work well he would receive £236 as against £285 paid to his predecessor. The contingencies had increased by £1,000, which had been necessitated by the employment of additional supernumerary hands, apprentices, runners, machine boys, and boys and girls in the binding and ruling rooms. The item for paper, machines, types, and incidentals remained as last year. Therefore, there was only a very small increase on the whole estimate for the present year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said perhaps that might not be an inopportune time for raising a question he intended to raise before the Estimates passed, and that was the competition, improper competition he should say, which he believed was taking place between members of the Civil

Service who were artificers and those who were in the same line of business in Brisbane. Seeing the item for electric light had reminded him of it. He did not know whether it was the officer in charge of that particular department, but he had been informed that some officers connected with that branch of Government work were doing private work and competing, he thought improperly, with ordinary tradesmen. He believed electric lights in the *Courier* office, for instance, were fitted up by a Government official, and there were numerous other cases where the Government electrician or men in that department had fitted up private places. He thought that was manifestly unfair, and that the Government should see that the employés of the State did not compete with private enterprise. They were very well paid, so far as he understood, and it was very unfair that tradesmen in the same line of business should have to compete with men in a subsidised position.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the statement of the hon. gentleman had come upon him as a surprise. He was not aware of anything of the kind, and it certainly should not be allowed. Did the hon. gentleman mean the new *Courier* buildings?

Mr. MOREHEAD: Yes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not aware of it, and he should make inquiries. The Government electrician had to go round and do all the work required at the railway station and other places belonging to the Government, and he thought that was quite enough to take up all that officer's time.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had stated that he was so informed. He had received letters on the subject, and other hon. members knew that a general complaint had been made respecting it. If his information was correct—and he had every reason to believe it was—he hoped the Government would see that a change took place. Such a thing should not be allowed.

Mr. W. BROOKES said the matter the hon. the leader of the Opposition had brought under notice covered more ground than that; indeed it covered a very large area of ground. That was the question of Government servants doing private work when they were in receipt of salaries, and preventing other persons who were not in the receipt of salaries, from getting a fair living. There was considerable complaint in the city on that very head. The mention of that matter to the Colonial Secretary seemed to be new information to him, and perhaps what he (Mr. Brookes) was going to say would be new information to other departments. He believed that practice was especially so in those departments where they had to draft and draw plans—architects' work generally. He did not think that ought to be allowed, and he trusted that what had fallen from the leader of the Opposition would be remembered by the parties concerned and the Ministers concerned, because it was really not right. The times were not very flourishing in the city—many people had as much as they could do to get a living, and sometimes it was more than they could do; and yet they saw work which they were able to do, to get a living, done by Government officers. That was not right, and he hoped it would not be necessary to make any subsequent allusion to it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said in justice to the Government electrician he must make an explanation. He found that he was in error in the statement he had made. He had just been reminded of the circumstance that Mr. Buzacott had spoken to him on the subject, and he told that gentleman that the Government electrician, Mr. Barton, could see, when the work

at the *Courier* office was finished, that the installation was all right. That was his recollection of the matter, which had just been brought to his memory. He desired to make that statement, because he did not wish it to be thought that he had told an untruth about the matter. It had entirely slipped his memory.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he hoped inquiry would be made as to the correctness of the information he had received. At the next meeting of the House he would have the letters he had received in his possession, in which the complaint was formulated in the way he had stated.

Mr. NORTON said the subject was one of too much importance to be passed over without knowing what the opinion of the Government was in regard to it. He understood that there were cases where officers in the Civil Service had been engaged by the Government with the understanding that they should not only do the work they had been engaged for by the Government, but that in addition they should have the privilege of doing private work, which was a great advantage. In some cases it might be judicious, perhaps, to make arrangements of that kind, but there were very many other cases where it was not fair to the outside public that that sort of thing should be allowed to go on. Now, a great deal had been said about it at different times, not in one profession alone, but in a number, and he should like to know from the Colonial Secretary whether the Government had made up their minds to take action in the matter or not. It was only fair to the outside public that they should know what the Government proposed to do, or whether they proposed to do nothing; and then those interested would be in a position to take any further action they thought advisable.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, so far as the officers in his department were concerned, he should certainly oppose their doing any private work. Their time was paid for by the public, and they should do nothing else but the duties the public paid them for. As for the particular case referred to, he thought the work that officer did was merely to see that the things were put up right; he had nothing to do with the working or anything of that sort; he just tried the lights to see if they were running properly, and whether the connections were in proper condition. That was his impression, but he would look up the papers and see what the facts were.

Mr. NORTON said that in what he said he had been referring not so much to that case as to the general question. He could understand that there might be cases where a Government officer might be allowed to act as a consulting man of business in whatever his profession might be; there would not be much objection to that. What had been complained of was, that clerks in competing with outsiders availed themselves of information which they got in the office, and which was not available to others; of course, it seemed very hard that men outside should be exposed to competition of that kind. But then there were two sides to the question; many of the clerks had very low salaries, and they were quite entitled, after office-hours, to engage in any employment which would add to their income, provided that in doing so they did not exhaust their energies so as to be unable to give full attention to their public duties. At the same time, if clerks did work out of office-hours they had no right to make use of information which they gained in the office, and which was not accessible to those with whom they came into competition. The general question deserved a good deal of attention, and the sooner the Government took the whole matter in hand the better.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member was quite right in saying that there were two sides to the question. When he was in the Lands Department it was brought under his notice that clerks were in the habit of preparing plans for people outside, and on inquiry he found that the cause of complaint was that there were certain maps which could not be allowed to go out of the office, and of which there were no lithographs. The draftsmen in the Survey Office were allowed to prepare plans from those particular maps after hours. Of course they were thus availing themselves of information which could not be got by outside men, and the only way that could be met would be to set apart one of the drafting-rooms, so that outside professional men or draftsmen would have access to those maps in the office, and prepare the plans for private people. Of course it would not be right to exclude the public from the information that the drafting-room possessed, and that information could not be allowed to go outside the office, because the maps were valuable ones, of which there were no lithographs. He had intended, had he remained in the department, to make some such arrangement as he had suggested, by which outside professional men would have access to those plans in the establishment, and he recommended his hon. colleague the Minister for Lands to deal with the matter in that way if he took it up. Somereference had been made to the officers in the Colonial Architect's office preparing plans for the general public. If they only did it in their spare time—in their evenings at home—he did not know that there was any objection to that. Of course they had no right to do it in office-hours, or to make use of information or facilities they had in consequence of their connection with the office.

Mr. NORTON said he agreed with a great deal that had fallen from the hon. member. Any officer in the Colonial Architect's Department was just as much entitled when he was at home in the evening to engage in preparing plans for private persons as a private architect was. A private architect not only carried out his work during the day, but, if he chose to do so, in the evening as well. He did not see that any objection could be taken to men working in that way, provided that they did not work so hard as to prevent them working properly in the daytime. He was referring to the matter, not so much from what they had heard and seen in Queensland, as from what had taken place elsewhere. There had been a good many complaints here that work had been done in the Lands Office by clerks, which others outside thought they were entitled to. In New South Wales things went further than ever they had gone here. Clerks were allowed to remain in the office after the office-hours and use the office plans, which really was not a fair thing. That custom went so far that, a few years ago, a rule was made that no clerks should be allowed to remain in the office except in office-hours unless they were doing Government work. Exception was taken to that because there was so much information available of a kind which was wanted by a large number of people outside. He was, therefore, glad to hear what had fallen from the Minister for Works, and hoped that the gentleman who had succeeded him in the Lands Office would take the matter into consideration, and that, at any rate, if officers of the Lands Office worked overtime, no injustice should be done to those outside, who made their living by doing work of that kind.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member must understand that to do what he suggested would prevent any draftsman in

the Lands Office working after hours for the purpose of preparing plans from maps which could not be allowed to go outside the office. That would shut the public out from information which could only be obtained there, and the only remedy he could see was the one he suggested—namely, setting apart a certain part or portion of the office for the public convenience.

Mr. NORTON said if the clerks in the office were allowed to work after hours it would be advisable to allow them to work in the room which would be open to outsiders, so that the plans would be available to all. That would remove a great deal of complaint.

Mr. GROOM said, in connection with the matter before them, he had been written to by some pressmen in the colony in regard to an idea they had, and which, he was happy to say, was now not a correct one, in connection with the printing of divisional board books and forms. When first divisional boards were established the whole of the printing in connection with them throughout the colony was done at the Government Printing Office, to the injury of the printing offices in the country districts; even the rate notices and ballot-papers were printed at the Government Printing Office. He had, however, discovered that all that had been abolished, but there was a sort of monopoly existing which it was just as well should be known. The Government, some time ago, decided that, in future, divisional board work should not be done at the Government Printing Office, and the whole of the books and the plates in connection with the work were sold to Messrs. Watson, Ferguson and Co.; and, as he was informed, all divisional boards, when they applied to the Government Printing Office for books, were referred to that firm. The result was that an impression had gone abroad that all work was to be done in the Government Printing Office, and that the country was keeping a huge office to compete with local printing offices, when such was really not the case. The work done in the Government Printing Office was purely in connection with Government departments, and the divisional board work was now done at the office of Messrs. Watson, Ferguson, and Co., who seemed to enjoy a monopoly of it. Whether they did it cheaper or not, he did not know; but he mentioned the circumstance because the owners of country printing offices had written to him about it, and he was happy to be able to make it known that the Government Printing Office had nothing to do with it. There was another matter he might mention, and that was in connection with the printing of the electoral rolls. Under the Redistribution Bill the rolls throughout the colony would have to be reprinted. The alterations arising from the transfer of names occasioned by the Redistribution Bill would be very heavy, and as the matter stood at present, the returning officers, in accordance with instructions given to them some years ago, had to send the whole of the revised rolls when they received them from the revising magistrates to the Government Printing Office. Now, if that were done, he felt morally certain that it would be impossible to have the rolls printed in time for the general election to be carried out, even at the date hon. members expected. Another thing was that hon. members who had seen the rolls would observe that there were numerous inaccuracies. Men's names were wrongly spelt, and the christian names were sometimes put in front of the surnames. He had seen an instance where a returning officer had refused to allow a man to vote simply on account of his name being wrongly printed on the roll. His impression was that the electoral rolls for the Northern districts, for instance, might be printed at Townsville, where there were as complete

printing offices as in any other part of the colony. He had seen those offices himself, and could bear witness to the admirable machinery and printing appliances there, and he was perfectly sure that if the Government were to invite tenders for printing the Northern electoral rolls at Townsville they would be done as cheap as, if not cheaper than, at the Government Printing Office, and with greater accuracy, for the reason that the returning officers would be able to obtain the revised proofs from the local offices, and take care that every man's name was properly printed on the roll. The same remarks would apply to the Western and other districts. He thought it could be done very well under the tender system—more particularly in view of the general election following on the Redistribution Bill—and far better than if the rolls were printed at the Government Printing Office. He did not attach any blame to the Government Printing Office for the mistakes that occurred. The handwriting might be so indistinct and imperfect that it would be impossible for the reader to correct the rolls properly, whereas if they were printed in the district the proofs could be sent to the returning officer, who would from his local knowledge make the necessary alterations and return them in order that they might be printed correctly. He mentioned the matter in the hope of attracting the attention of the Premier to it. There would be no loss to the country, although it might be said that the rolls were already in type in the Government Printing Office. In addition to the main rolls revised last year there were now the quarterly lists of names enrolled in October—1,300 names in one place, 1,200 in another, 1,000 in another, and so on; but they would all have to be altered under the Bill. It was of very great consequence that the rolls should be printed in places where care could be taken to print them accurately. In connection with *Hansard*, he would like to say a word or two. Some arrangement ought to be made by which country subscribers should have *Hansard* sent to them from the Government Printing Office on the morning of publication. He was informed that that was not done. It was late when they went to press, and it was almost as much as they could do to catch the morning mails; but considering the large number of subscribers who received *Hansard* direct from the office—and the number was increasing very much—he did not see why someone should not be told off to send *Hansard* to those subscribers by the morning mails. It was a matter of considerable importance that the people in the country should receive it on the morning of publication instead of forty-eight or sixty hours afterwards. He was not aware of any obstacle in the way of sending it by the morning mails. He should imagine it could easily be done and at very little expense.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that all the electoral rolls were sent in proof from the Government Printing Office to the returning officers for correction—sometimes two or three times—and if any errors did occur, it was their fault, and not the fault of the Government Printing Office. As to issuing *Hansard* earlier, so as to catch the morning mails, he would make inquiry; but it would only affect those subscribers who were within easy communication by rail with Brisbane.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Colonial Secretary had not answered the remark of the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, that certain printing appliances had been handed over to Watson, Ferguson, and Co.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was informed that when it was decided to discontinue the work, the books and forms on hand in the

Government Printing Office were sold to the highest bidder. The Government Printer wrote to the different booksellers to ask them their prices; and Watson, Ferguson, and Co. were the purchasers. There were no copper-plates or anything of that kind.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that practically the copyright was sold to that firm by a circular letter sent by the Government Printer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not the copyright; the remainder of the books.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The remainder of the books, and practically the copyright. Was that circular sent out by instructions from the Colonial Secretary? He was certain they were not made public.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that instructions were given that no more books should be printed at the Government Printing Office, and it was thought advisable to sell what books were on hand.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that hardly squared with what fell from the hon. member the last time he spoke—that a circular was sent out by the Government Printer. Were those books sold at auction? Were they advertised to be sold by tender? Parting with copies of books published by the Government Printer to any private printing office would give that firm a vested interest in their future publication. He wanted to know whether the circular was sent round to the various printing establishments or firms in the city of Brisbane, when it was sent, and to what firms. He supposed the circular emanating from the Government Printing Office was printed, and he should like to see a copy.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was sent to the printers in the city asking them to tender, and he assumed that the highest tender was accepted—namely, that of Watson, Ferguson, and Co. It was done before he became Colonial Secretary. He had never seen it himself; he only stated what he was informed by the Government Printer.

Mr. MURPHY said the Committee had received no satisfactory reason why the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Groom), with regard to printing electoral rolls at local printing offices, should not be adopted wherever there was a local Press. When the Mitchell electorate was divided into two constituencies the Government found it very much more convenient, better, and quicker, to have the Barcoo roll printed in the local newspaper office than in Brisbane; and there was the additional advantage of having the work done in the neighbourhood of the returning officer. It was necessary that the proofs of the rolls should be forwarded to the returning officers for correction; but it would be a great waste of time to have the manuscript of the Barcoo roll sent to the Government Printing Office in Brisbane, then the proof sent from Brisbane to the returning officer and back again to Brisbane, and at last have the roll, as corrected, sent from the Government Printing Office to the returning officer. If the roll could be printed locally, he did not see any reason why it should not be done. In the country districts the police magistrate was generally the returning officer—he should be in every case, because the returning officer should be a competent man—and the police magistrate resided in the township in which the local Press was situated, so that there would be no difficulty in the matter of correcting proofs if the rolls were printed locally. The work might be done by tender or by the Government making a bargain with the local printers at a certain price. What objection was there, if any, to taking the course suggested?

Mr. GROOM said he would give an illustration of the importance of the question he had raised. Hon. members would remember that last year what was called the purging process was carried out, and all the rolls were more or less revised, from the first name on the lists to the last. All those purged rolls had to be sent to the Government Printing Office. In his own district, which was within 100 miles of the metropolis, the revision court was held in November, the rolls as revised were sent down by the returning officer in January, and he did not get them back till May, five months afterwards. Then the roll was applied for by electors, and there was a regular hue and cry, as, on examination, it was found that over 500 names had been left off the roll. If it was to take five months for a roll to be completed, then, how many rolls could be prepared under the Redistribution Bill in the months of January and February? He thought it was of the utmost importance that as many rolls as possible should be printed in the localities where the electors resided. The Colonial Secretary had stated that proofs were sent to the returning officers, and after correction were returned by them to the Government Printing Office. How would that arrangement work at the present time in the case of the rolls for Burke, Carpentaria, Woothakata, and other places? It would take five or six weeks to get the rolls down here, and it would be another six weeks before they were completed, whereas, as he said before, they could be printed at Townsville as well, more expeditiously, and perhaps cheaper than in Brisbane. It would be a public benefit to have the rolls printed in the districts where the electorates were situated, if that could be done.

The PREMIER said there was a good of force in what the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba said, but at the same time a good deal of judgment must be exercised in the matter. There were many parts of the colony where the rolls could be printed locally with advantage, and in some of the new electoral districts the rolls would have to be printed there in order to get them ready in time for an early election. At the same time care must be exercised because some returning officers, unfortunately, did not seem to know how to revise the rolls, and if they were not looked after in the Colonial Secretary's Office great confusion would ensue. He saw a roll the other day in which the returning officer, a very intelligent gentleman, had undertaken to prescribe the polling-places at which each elector was to vote, although the electors themselves did not think of fixing anything of the kind. As far as possible he would undertake to say that the rolls would be printed locally when it was quite certain that it could be done with safety.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, returning to the question respecting the sale of those divisional board books to Watson, Ferguson and Co., he hoped the Colonial Secretary would give the Committee full information with regard to the circular that was issued, and how the business got into the hands of Watson, Ferguson, and Co. He had no enmity against that firm—he paid them a considerable sum of money every year for periodicals—but he wished to know why they were favoured. He would now refer to another question which had been dealt with before to a certain extent, but had not been exhausted, and that was the question of Civil servants doing work outside their own business. He thought it was very unfair indeed that Civil servants should occupy the position of doing the work of accountants or any other work outside office-hours. The outside public were entitled to have some say in the matter. It must be patent to every member of the Committee that there was no class in the

community who had such difficulty in getting employment as that class who were called clerks and bookkeepers, and so forth. He had reason to believe that Civil servants did a great deal of work of a bookkeeping nature out of office-hours and received emolument for it, thereby depriving many men of work who really were not only deserving of work, but were absolutely in want of it at the present time. He did not think that Civil servants subsidised by the taxation of the general public should be allowed in any way whatever to compete against labourers in the same field. He called attention to that fact because it had been brought prominently before his notice on several occasions that Civil servants were doing work outside office-hours that properly belonged to those who were not subsidised by the State. He believed that many members of the Committee knew of the circumstances, and that the sympathies of all were with him in what he had said.

The PREMIER said that, in respect to the books sold to Watson and Ferguson, his hon. colleague had stated that he was not Colonial Secretary at the time. He (the Premier) had quite forgotten all about it, but he had made inquiries, and now remembered the circumstances. Great complaints had been made to him that the Government Printing Office, in preparing account-books, etc., for divisional boards, was doing work that might be done by private establishments. He believed there was good reason for that work being done in the Government Printing Office at the start, as other printing offices had not the necessary appliances to prepare the books. There were at the time the complaints were made a number of books on hand, prepared especially for divisional boards, and he directed that the principal leading booksellers and stationers in town should be invited to tender for the stock, it being determined that no more work of that kind should in future be done in the Government Printing Office. A circular was sent to the different stationers, and the highest tenderers were Watson, Ferguson, and Co. Their tender was accepted, and the stock handed over to them, and that work ceased in the Government Printing Office. That was the whole history of the matter. With respect to outside work being done by Government officials, he entirely disapproved of it, and was under the impression that it had been forbidden by regulations. So sure was he of that, that he had asked for the correspondence and the Executive minute by which it had been forbidden, and he then found that there was none. The question had been raised for twenty years, but no definite conclusion had been come to on the point. He found that to his surprise; he was certainly under the impression that it was forbidden by the regulations of the public service. So far as he was concerned, he desired to see an almost, if not absolutely, inflexible rule established—there might be some possible exceptions, but he could not think of one just then—that Government servants should not occupy their spare time in competition with the outside public.

Mr. MURPHY said there was another matter that he wished to call attention to, though he did not know whether it quite came within the scope of the present discussion. Still he would mention it, as it was one of which notice should be taken, and that was, with reference to judges acting as directors of public companies. He did not know whether there was really any law to prevent them doing that, but he thought there was. He thought it must be contrary to law that they should act as directors, or even shareholders, in large public companies. The judges, he believed, were paid high salaries, and their emoluments

secured by Act of Parliament in order to keep them from engaging in trade and commerce. That was the intention of the Legislature—that the judges should, by being paid high salaries, be prevented from becoming tradesmen and merchants, and engaging in occupations which would be likely to bring them into conflict with their own duties on the bench. Now, he thought it was the duty of the Government to see that judges did not become directors of public companies, and have their names advertised in newspapers as directors.

Mr. W. BROOKES said there was another matter which seemed naturally to follow from the question which the leader of the Opposition had asked the Colonial Secretary, and that was about those circulars. Well, he was a little interested in them. He would like to see one. He would state what he had been told was the present system: That, notwithstanding the Government Printing Office had abandoned the system of printing divisional board books, country divisional boards still continued the practice of sending down orders to the Government Printing Office, and the Government Printer always referred them to Messrs. Watson and Ferguson. Now, there was nothing specially out of the way in that, but he thought that it would be well to have it publicly understood that if the Government Printer, instead of referring the boards to a Queen-street or Brisbane firm, told the boards to have the books printed anywhere they liked, it would tend to remove something which he thought was of the nature of an abuse which at present existed. He did not think it was quite fair to country offices that when the boards sent down their orders to the Government Printer he should refer them to one particular firm; and if the parties connected with country divisional boards only knew that they could have the books printed at the nearest printing office to where they lived and worked, it would be an advantage. The arrangement certainly worked not exactly in the way of a monopoly, but it was very much like one, and seeing that it was quite unnecessary, it was as well to mention it.

Mr. ALAND said he would like to see the circular which had been referred to, because it was just possible there might be another side to that which was put by the member for North Brisbane. As he understood the Chief Secretary, the Government Printing Office had been in the habit of preparing certain books with special headings and of very particular ruling. Now, these books were of no use whatever to anyone except divisional boards, and he thought that the books had been sold to Watson and Ferguson on the understanding that, as they were applied for by the boards, reference would be made to them in the matter. If such was the case, and no reference was made, the sale of those books to Watson and Ferguson would be very unfair to them. He did not enter into the matter of general printing, because that could be done anywhere, and would be no loss to Watson and Ferguson; but if they had bought a certain quantity of books on the understanding that they should supply them to divisional boards, he thought the Government Printer had not done wrong in referring the applicants to them.

Mr. MOREHEAD said of course there must come a time when that stock of books were consumed—had ceased to exist—and what would happen then? That was what he wanted to get at. Had Watson and Ferguson the sole right, so long as the Act was in existence, to sell those books or forms to divisional boards?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Their copyright ceased after the stock was exhausted?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Of course.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No monopoly of printing was given to Watson and Ferguson. A stock of books had simply been sold by tender?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That put a different complexion on the whole matter. Simply selling a lot of books to one firm he took no exception to, but if it was giving them a permanent right to the printing of those books which were supposed to emanate from the Government Printing Office, then he should most distinctly object to it. He was glad to hear that that was the explanation of it. It was simply a matter of selling books that were printed by the Government Printing Office, and after they were disposed of, the arrangement ceased. He understood that to be the position.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. MORGAN said he thought there was truth on both sides. A circular was issued from the Government Printing Office inviting tenders for a certain stock of books which the Government wished to sell, as they had decided to give up competing with private firms. It was an invitation to tender for the purchase of those books, and Watson, Ferguson, and Co. were the successful tenderers. Those gentlemen, having acquired that stock, issued to the divisional boards throughout the colony a circular, couched in somewhat ambiguous phraseology, that conveyed to those divisional boards the impression that they were printers in ordinary to the Government. Thereby the divisional boards were misled, and a species of monopoly was established which told against the local printing offices. The Government of the colony were not responsible, he was perfectly well aware of that; but he thought the little game ought to be exposed, and the present debate would have the effect of exposing it. Those gentlemen had no right whatever to the exclusive printing of divisional boards' work, but they had led a good many divisional boards to believe that they were so entitled. They held a pretty big stock, which they acquired at a very low cost, and the monopoly had this effect: that the divisional boards had been getting their work done, or rather their books supplied, at a very low cost, and when Watson and Ferguson's stock ceased to exist they would not be willing to pay more to the local printers than they had been paying Watson and Ferguson. As he had said, the little game ought to be exposed, and it should be made perfectly clear to divisional boards that Watson and Ferguson had no monopoly, and that the divisional boards might go where they liked for the work.

Mr. GROOM said the discussion which had taken place had shown that he was perfectly justified in bringing that matter before the Committee. It was quite true, as the hon. member for Warwick had said, that many of the divisional boards were under the impression that Messrs. Watson, Ferguson, and Co. had obtained from the Government the monopoly of doing that work, just as if they had purchased the copyright. To such an extent was that idea carried out that even the ballot-papers for divisional elections were sent for to Brisbane. The country printing offices had a just right to complain of such a state of things, and he was glad the present discussion had brought out the facts of the case, and that what had really happened was the mere sale of a stock of books. He admitted that those books, as prepared by the Auditor-General's Department, could not well be printed in many country offices; but they could be

printed in other Brisbane offices as well as at Watson, Ferguson, and Co.'s. If tenders were asked for the supply of divisional board books it would be found that they could be supplied by some offices almost as cheaply as by the Government Printer. The books were intricately arranged, and required a particular kind of ruling, which could not be done in many country offices, and might necessarily have to be done in Brisbane; but if it was generally known that the supply of those books and forms was not confined to Watson, Ferguson, and Co., and was open to general competition, both the country printing offices and the divisional boards would probably reap the advantage of it. As the matter stood at present the country divisional boards and printing offices were under the impression that Watson, Ferguson, and Co. had been granted the privilege of alone supplying these books and forms.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would like to ask the Colonial Secretary whether those forms were stereotyped, and whether the stereotyped plates were sold with the books?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not suppose they were.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The matter is important, and I should like to know if they were.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am given to understand that some of them were sold.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that put a different aspect on the matter, and made it much more serious.

The PREMIER: How long will they last?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would leave it to experts in the Committee to say how long those plates would last; but he believed they would last a long time. He would like to know whether it was mentioned in the circular that the stereotypes would be sold as well as the books. The more he heard of the matter the less he liked it.

Mr. MORGAN said the admission the Colonial Secretary had just made put a different complexion upon the case. The stereotype plates would last for years, and hundreds of thousands of copies could be struck off them. The fact was that by giving the stereotype plates to Watson, Ferguson, and Co., all they would have to do when an order was sent in for some forms, would be to put the plates on the machine and run off as many copies as they required, and they were thus placed at a great advantage as compared with the country printing offices, or any other office where the compositors would have to be set to work to set up the formes before any copies could be printed. A distinct wrong was therefore done to outside firms in that way. It was to all intents and purposes placing Watson, Ferguson, and Co. in the position of wood engravers in possession of blocks of engravings required, and expecting outsiders who had not the blocks to compete against them.

The PREMIER: How much would it cost to set up the type for a receipt? About half-a-crown, he supposed, and, perhaps, another 5s. to make the plate. The thing was not worth talking about, as 10s. would cover the whole of it. The hon. gentleman opposite appeared to think a stereotype plate a wonderful thing. Let him go to the *Courier* office and he would see stereotyping done every night.

Mr. MOREHEAD: You can go there; I will not.

Mr. BUCKLAND said that, though it might be generally understood that Watson, Ferguson, and Co. had the exclusive right to do that work for divisional boards, he knew at least one board that did not confine their printing and bookbinding to that firm, but gave it to those who would do it at the most reasonable price.

Mr. GRIMES said he could not see what there was to complain of in the matter. It appeared that tenders were called for a stock of books, and also a few stereotype plates remaining in the hands of the Government Printer; and if, as was stated, Messrs. Watson, Ferguson, and Co. were the highest tenderers for that stock, why should they not get the advantage of it, and why should they not send out a circular or advertisement if they chose, stating that they were in a position to supply books of that kind throughout the colony, in exactly the same form as they had hitherto been supplied by the Government Printer? If it could be shown that it was a hole-and-corner affair there might be something to complain of, but everything was aboveboard and on the square, and he could see no objection to it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would like the Premier to say whether the tenders were advertised for in the *Government Gazette*, or to what firms the circular spoken of was sent? He would like very much to see that circular, because he had grave doubts of its existence.

The PREMIER said the matter had occurred during the time he was Colonial Secretary, but he really had not the least recollection about it personally. He was informed that it was done in this way: Notices were sent out to four or five of the principal publishers in town, and they came round and inspected the goods. They were asked to buy, and made their offers for the stock of books and about 20s. worth of stereotype plates. The matter had occurred two or three years ago, and hon. members could scarcely expect that a circular of that kind, sent out two or three years ago, could be produced to the Committee that evening.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: That is not public competition.

The PREMIER said it was such public competition as was usually observed by the Government in such matters in England, in the other colonies, and in this colony, and he could not undertake to say any more about it, as it had happened so long ago. His hon. colleague had been Colonial Secretary now for a year and a-half, and the matter had arisen a long time before he became Colonial Secretary. He had given all the information he could, but he did not remember more than that.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he recollected great objections being taken in that House a few years ago to that particular mode of calling tenders, and by the hon. gentleman who had just sat down. The hon. gentleman then pointed out that it was a mode by which, through collusion, certain favoured firms would get the tender.

The PREMIER: No doubt it might be so.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said that was the best proof that it was not public competition, but something far from it. How did the hon. gentleman know that if the stock had been offered to public competition some of the printing offices at Toowoomba, Ipswich, Maryborough, or Townsville would not have competed, or other firms in Brisbane itself? He would like to know the names of the firms that were specially entitled to send in tenders.

The PREMIER said he quite agreed that there was room for great abuses in calling for private tenders; nevertheless that was the principle generally adopted in calling for tenders for particular kinds of goods. They did not advertise, but went direct to those who undertook that special kind of business. No one was asked out of Brisbane, because it was not likely that anybody out of Brisbane would have bought such a

large stock of books. The Government Printer had just informed him that the circular was sent to Watson, Ferguson, and Co., Cleghorn and Co., Warwick and Sapsford, and Muir, and others whose names he did not remember, as being the principal publishers of account-books and work of that kind. The instructions he gave were to dispose of the goods, to prevent the complaint being made that the Government Printing Office was unduly competing with the public.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that although the matter might appear small, and the sum of money paid by Watson and Ferguson very little, yet it had given them a leverage which they had made use of, and which they could not have made use of, if publicity had been given to the sale. Could not the hon. gentleman give them some information as to the terms of the circular?

The PREMIER said it could scarcely be supposed that he would be able to remember it after three years.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I will guarantee that the hon. member would remember any grudge against me for thirty years.

The PREMIER: I should not remember it for thirty hours.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he doubted very much whether the circular was ever issued, although he did not doubt the statement that the hon. gentleman was informed that such a circular had been issued. It was quite within the range of probability that that information was wrong. Anyway, the fact remained that Watson, Ferguson, and Co. had taken advantage of the purchase to practically advertise themselves as the Government agents or representatives with regard to the selling of that particular class of goods.

Mr. GROOM said he had another question to ask the Colonial Secretary. Hon. members would observe that the cost of the Government Printing Office last year was £29,125. He would ask the hon. gentleman whether there was any truth in the report which had been communicated to him by one of the Brisbane printing offices, that the Electric Telegraph Department sent home to London, with or without the consent of the head of the department, for the printing of several million forms and envelopes? Further, whether the cost of printing those in England had been ascertained and compared with what the work could have been done for in their own printing office, and if so, what had been the profit or loss on the transaction? Also, was it intended to continue the practice of sending to London to have work done, which could be done as well, or even better, at their own office? There could be no doubt the work ought to be kept in the colony, more especially as the Government Printing Office was quite as competent to execute it as any printing office in England.

Mr. MURPHY said that while the Chief Secretary was getting the information asked for by the hon. member for Toowoomba, he would return to the subject of judges acting as directors of public companies. He should like to hear from the Premier whether they had a right to act as such directors—whether it was not contrary to the Act under which they held their appointments? It seemed to him highly indecent.

The PREMIER said there was no law on the subject. As a matter of propriety, he had no hesitation in saying that it was highly undesirable that judges should act as directors of public companies, if only for the reason that they might be called upon to sit in judgment against them; and it would be very inconvenient for the bench to be deprived of the assistance of a particular judge in disposing of the matter. But

the Government had no control over the judges in that respect. He was not aware whether any of their judges were directors of public companies.

Mr. MURPHY said he held in his hand the *Queenslander* of last Saturday, 15th October, and there he saw an advertisement under the heading of "Public Companies," in which it was stated that one of the directors of the Queensland branch of the National Mutual Life Association of Australasia, Limited, was the Hon. C. S. Mein. He had every respect for Judge Mein, who was a personal friend of his, and who would not misunderstand his motives in calling attention to the matter; but he felt impelled to draw attention to the fact of a judge being the director of a public company, in the public interests, because it seemed, in his opinion, a highly improper thing for a judge to do. It was not aimed at Judge Mein, personally in any way, but he simply mentioned it because he thought it a most-improper thing for a judge of the Supreme Court to be a director of a public company which might at any time be involved in litigation in his own court. That particular company was also a loan company, and might at any time have to appear before him, probably at his own direction. It was therefore highly indecent that a judge of the Supreme Court should be a director of a public company.

The PREMIER said, of course a judge could not have a matter brought before him in which he himself was concerned. The advertisement the hon. gentleman had read was a very old one evidently.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: No; October the 15th, 1887.

The PREMIER: It was evidently old for all that, because Mr. Justice Mein was described as he was before he became a judge. He understood that he had long since ceased to be a director.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Probably he has.

The PREMIER said very probably he had. With respect to the matter the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, had mentioned about the printing of some telegraph envelopes in England, it was rather an old affair, having occurred about three years ago, and it had exercised the mind of the Government a good deal at the time. The order was given by the Telegraph Department without the knowledge of the Colonial Secretary's Office, and it led to some friction between the two departments. However, the matter was past; the contract was given and they had had to pay the amount. There was a good deal of trouble in adjusting which department should pay for it. The Telegraph Department wanted it charged to the Colonial Stores, and the Colonial Secretary's Office objected. It was ultimately settled, he could not remember how, as it was a long time ago. It had never been done since. The printing of all the envelopes was done in the colony at the present time in an extremely economical way. He could not say from memory what the cost of the envelopes obtained from England was.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they had heard the remarks of the hon. member for Barcoo with regard to the impropriety of judges of the Supreme Court sitting upon boards of joint-stock companies, and what the Chief Secretary had said in reply. He was now going to deal about the propriety or otherwise of a member of the Ministry sitting upon the board of a deposit bank. As chairman of that bank—a bank which advertised that it offered better security than the Government Savings Bank did. Some hon. members laughed at what he said, but it was not a matter for laughter in any way whatever. The

Colonial Secretary, as chairman of the Deposit Bank of Queensland, or whatever it was called, authorised—at least, he assumed so—the publication of an advertisement in which it was set forth—those were, he believed, the words almost literally—"at present the security offered by this bank is better than that offered by the Government Savings Bank." That was set forth in very large capitals, lined and underlined and interlined, and it was intended, he assumed, to obtain money from the public. Now, he maintained that that was a very serious matter indeed, because he had no hesitation in saying that it was an attempt to obtain deposits—money—from the people of this colony by false pretences. It was a lie on the face of it. The Government Savings Bank had the whole colony at its back. The whole colony was responsible and would be responsible to the very end for any and all money deposited in the Government Savings Bank; and was it proper, was it right, was it honest, on the part of any deposit bank in the colony to issue such an advertisement as that—that they offered better security than the Government Savings Bank—a limited liability company touting for business, offering 7 or 8 per cent., certainly not less than 7 per cent., at that time for deposits at twelve months? Was it right that such an advertisement should be published, bearing on the face of it the impress of the Colonial Secretary of the colony as chairman of the company? He said it was not. That was a much more serious matter than that brought forward by the hon. member for Barcoo.

Mr. MURPHY: I think not.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman need not laugh. He (Mr. Morehead) thought it was. He said it deluded the public. They saw directly that the hon. the Colonial Secretary of the colony was chairman, and they saw stated under that that the security offered was better than that offered by the Savings Bank of the colony. No doubt he and others who understood the matter might laugh at it; they knew that on the face of it it was a palpable misstatement, to put a very mild interpretation upon it, but they were not the people who would be entrapped by such an advertisement. It was the working classes who were asked to deposit their money with the Colonial Secretary and those who were working with him in that bank, which was said to be better than the Savings Bank of the colony and paid higher interest. That was the grossly objectionable feature in that manifesto issued by the Colonial Secretary. He said it was not in any way a matter for laughter in that Committee. It was a very serious matter indeed. Any man who knew anything of business would know that no man, no matter in what position he might be, had a right to take advantage of that position to induce people to invest money under misrepresentation. Misrepresentation had led to very unpleasant consequences to those who had misrepresented matters as regarded banks in other portions of the British Empire, and he thought that if any disaster should come to any bank, whose business was advocated on the lines advocated by the Colonial Secretary in that particular transaction, a double punishment should be awarded to him by reason of the high official position he held. He would go further, and ask the Chief Secretary this question: Whether it was proper that the Colonial Secretary of the colony—mark his position as Colonial Secretary being clearly defined in the prospectus—was he justified as chairman of that company in holding out those inducements to depositors? Was he justified in saying "I, a member of the Government, and chairman of this company, hold out inducements to depositors better than those held out by the

Government of which I am a member"? That was another way of looking at it. He said it was simply disgraceful, disgraceful alike to the association and to the hon. gentleman who had allowed an advertisement to get into circulation containing such a proposal as that. He said it was highly improper, indecent—he would go further and say it was unworthy, not only of a Minister of the Crown, but of anyone occupying a seat in the House—to allow his name to be put in juxtaposition with such a statement as that contained in the prospectus.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was sorry the hon. gentleman had gone into heroics over the matter.

Mr. MOREHEAD: There are no heroics about it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, yes, there was a great deal.

Mr. MOREHEAD: There are the facts nevertheless.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it did not matter whether they were facts or not. There was nothing whatever dishonest or culpable in it in any shape or form. That was what he understood the hon. gentleman to hurl at him at the present time, and he now hurled it back at him. He had done nothing that was in any way dishonourable or culpable. There was nothing dishonourable in it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Do you offer better security than the Government Savings Bank?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the company offered plenty of security, quite as much as the hon. gentleman offered in any of his syndicates.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That has nothing to do with it. I am dealing with the advertisement as it stands.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they were offering plenty of security, as would be seen shortly.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That does not meet my objection.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not going to discuss the matter with the hon. gentleman. He had done nothing that was dishonourable or culpable, and he would allow the hon. gentleman to say as much as he liked; he would not get another word from him on the subject. He would allow the public to say whether he was right or not. He must ask the Chairman to protect him from the interruptions of the hon. member.

The CHAIRMAN said the discussion was entirely irregular, having nothing whatever to do with the question before the Committee.

Mr. CHUBB said reference had been made to judges being directors of public companies. He found two English companies—he dared say there were more—in which judges were directors, one, the Equity and Law Life Assurance Society, had numbered amongst its directors Mr. Justice Denman and Mr. Justice Kay; and in another insurance company one of the directors was Baron Herschell, who had been Lord Chancellor. Hon. members would see by that that there was apparently no objection in England to judges acting on boards of insurance companies. There was a section in their Supreme Court Act, which perhaps did not apply to the particular cases which had been cited, but which showed the intention of the Legislature when it provided for the appointment of judges. The 12th section said:—

"No judge of the said court shall be capable of accepting, taking, or performing the duties of any other office or place of profit or emolument within the colony

of Queensland, except as next hereinafter provided; * * * and every such acceptance, taking, or performance of the duties of any such other office shall be deemed in law an avoidance of his office of judge, and his office and commission shall be thereby in full superseded and his salary thereupon cease."

Of course that would only prevent a judge accepting some office under the Crown, but it showed the spirit and intention of Parliament that the judges should look to their judicial salary and nothing else for their emolument.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he thought that this matter of the judges—

The PREMIER: That is not the question; come back to the Printing Office.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Considerable latitude is always allowed when discussing the Estimates.

Mr. ALAND: Wait till we get to the Attorney-General's Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: I have allowed a considerable amount of latitude already, but now that attention has been called to it, I must ask hon. members to confine themselves to the question.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said considerable latitude had been allowed; but when anything inconvenient to the Government arose, he noticed that the Chairman always jumped up and put on the gag. He was not going to be gagged, and if the Government wanted to get on with their business—

The CHAIRMAN: I must request the hon. member to confine himself to the subject before the Committee.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would confine himself to the question before the Committee—the Government Printing Office, and the way business was conducted there. There had been a very nice exposure of the favouritism dealt out to a certain firm of publishers, and it did not show up well for the Government. He objected to being compelled to confine himself to that subject, when a dozen other members had been allowed to wander away from it. If he had to confine himself to the Government Printing Office, he would talk on the Government Printing Office and the country newspapers, which he supposed were included in the Government Printing Office.

The PREMIER: You want to get a fortnight's talking done in advance before you go away.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had not gone away yet, and if the Premier was very anxious to confine him strictly to every item he would stay and talk. With regard to the Government Printing Office, he would point out that though it was kept up at a cost of about £30,000 a year, they had to pay a little bill of £4,003 for advertising electoral lists one year; then there were additional items for the first quarter of 1887, and there would be a thundering bill for the next quarter.

The PREMIER: There will.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said that now, when they had to make both ends meet, they should consider whether they could not make a saving through the medium of the Government Printing Office. The advertising bill last year amounted to £14,000. He would read some of the items; some of them would interest the Premier. There was the *Australian Christian World*, for example.

The PREMIER: I have nothing to do with that.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: That paper got £39 4s. 3d.; the *Border Post*, £5 4s.; the *Brisbane Courier*, £361; the *Bundaberg and Mount Perry Mail*, £11 15s.; the *Bundaberg Star*,

£17 2s.; the *Evangelical Standard*—a very useful paper with an enormous circulation—£261; the *Moreton Mail*, £143; the *Nord Australische Zeitung*, £269; *The Planter and Farmer*, £495.

THE PREMIER: There will be no more for them.

MR. LUMLEY HILL: The *Sandgate Directory*, £176 13s.; the *Southern World*, £372; the *Telegraph*—had the Premier anything to do with that?—it got £371, and perhaps it deserved it; and his poor friend *Figaro* got nothing at all. Now, when they were running the Government Printing Office at an expense of £30,000 a year, it was not fair to the taxpayers that they should subsidise newspapers under the Electoral Act to the extent of £4,000 or £5,000 a year. He did not believe they would get out the advertisements of the new rolls for £10,000 that year. He hoped the Premier would see his way to bring in some amendment to the Electoral Districts Bill which would save the country that great expense, which was absolutely unnecessary. The people did not read those advertisements. No one knew better than the junior member for Enoggera, Mr. Bulcock, how electoral rolls were purged. They were not purged by casual readers of advertisements in newspapers. It was done by organised societies, and very rightly too, who got the lists at the police office and went through them and took an active and intelligent interest in politics. Those bodies purged the rolls and made the objections, not the casual newspaper readers. If the rolls were not printed in a single newspaper the societies he had referred to would easily get copies of them from the returning officers, and do their work in that way. The present mode was an utter waste of the taxpayers' money, and he hoped the Premier would see his way to effect a saving in the direction he had pointed out. He had before called attention to the amount of money which was squandered in advertising and to the burden which papers really were to the taxpayers through their being carried about for nothing. Newspaper proprietors enjoyed exceptional advantages over other classes of tradesmen, inasmuch as they had their wares carried about the country free, gratis, and for nothing. So long as they enjoyed that advantage, they ought to give some *quid pro quo*, and insert the Government advertisements that they might be called upon to insert, gratuitously. The idea of their being allowed to charge for those sheets of names under the Bill, while, at the same time, they had the Government Printing Office, which cost £30,000 a year alone, was preposterous.

MR. PALMER said, in the few remarks he was going to make, he would confine himself to the vote before the Committee, although in doing so he might travel over a considerable amount of ground. The Government Printing Office was a huge establishment, and it was increasing year by year. It took £30,000 to run that establishment, and all of that amount, with the exception of £10,000, was for administration and wages. There was £10,000 added last year for paper, machines, type, and incidentals, and a like amount was added this year. But that £30,000 which they saw for the administration of that printing establishment was not the only item in connection with it. They never found how much the machinery had cost, or the buildings in which it was placed, or the interest. That was a very considerable amount; but it did not appear from year to year. What he particularly wished to call attention to was that it was a large centralising establishment. The Premier had introduced three Bills during the session, intending to greatly decentralise the administration

of the Government; but in regard to printing, everything had to be brought to Brisbane. They could hardly get an electoral roll printed in any of the Northern districts. The other day some electoral forms were absolutely necessary for Croydon Gold Field. They were started for Normanston, but they could not get them onto the field in time; so, after some very great pressure had been brought to bear, they were printed at Croydon. Why could not the principle of calling for tenders be carried out in regard to the Government Printing Office, and tenders be called for the printing for the different departments? He was certain it could be done at a great deal less cost than under the present system. The electoral rolls he referred to had to be sent here and printed here, and then sent back for revision. It was time that huge centralising establishment should be looked into. Two thousand electoral forms had to be sent to Croydon the other day. They were packed in Brisbane, sent up by steamer, and it was six or eight weeks before they could be utilised, whereas such work could be done in a few days at the printing office there by sending a telegram. That was another instance of the centralising of Government work in Brisbane. With very little administration that sort of work might be distributed over the different parts of the colony, particularly in the North, where they found that communication could not be so readily carried on as the Premier stated.

MR. DICKSON said he would not like the motion to be carried without replying to some comments made by the Premier in the earlier part of the debate in regard to the question of Government officers undertaking private work outside their office-hours. He quite shared the opinion expressed by the majority of members of that Committee that it was undesirable, and should be stopped. In reply to what the Premier said, that he could find no minute passed by the Government condemning the system, he could only say that in the Treasury he would find a regulation issued three years ago absolutely prohibiting any officers of that department from performing any private work outside unless by special permission. The question was raised chiefly in connection with the department of the Auditor-General by action of an officer to whom he need not refer. The regulation was drawn up by himself (Mr. Dickson) and brought subsequently round to him for confirmation by the Auditor-General. That regulation was in existence in the Treasury Department, and he had not heard, since it was issued, of any officer of the department having disregarded it. It was highly desirable that such a rule should be insisted upon; but at the same time it must be borne in mind that where the Government possessed the services of skilled professional officers, the opinion and advice of those gentlemen might at times be required by the public outside. The same knowledge might not be available from other sources, and therefore he could quite understand why, on application to the department, it was in the true interests of the public that such Government officers should be permitted to inspect, report, and possibly advise in the absence of sufficient knowledge being obtainable elsewhere. He was not in the Committee when the question of the Government electrician was under consideration; but he had something to do with that matter. It was represented to him that that gentleman, by furnishing advice to some private institutions in the city, was interfering with private enterprise and skill. He saw Mr. Barton and pointed out that while, on application from any of the public who were desirous of obtaining his opinion, the Government would offer no objection to his employment in that

limited capacity, they considered it highly undesirable that he should be employed in cases where the necessary professional skill could be obtained elsewhere. He rose chiefly to say that a regulation had been in existence for three years at least in the Treasury, prohibiting the officers of that department from performing duties other than their official duties without the express permission of the head of the department.

The PREMIER said the hon. member's memory agreed with his. He had felt so certain that a regulation existed on the subject that he simply asked for the minute directing that no Government officer should engage in private work, but he was told that there was none. The only regulation that existed was in reference to a branch of the Treasury Department—namely, the Audit Office. He thought it would be a very good thing to have a general rule.

Mr. ADAMS said it was only fair that the Government should call for tenders for printing registration forms in every electoral district, particularly at the present time. On the present occasion a vast number of names were being put on the rolls, and if they were printed in Brisbane, and had to be sent back to the returning officer to be revised, there would not be enough time for the work; but if they were printed on the spot the returning officer would be able to correct any inaccuracies. Many a name was inadvertently spelt wrong, and when the man went to record his vote he was not allowed to do so because the proper name was not on the roll; but if the rolls were printed in the several districts the returning officers would have a better opportunity of correcting inaccuracies. Therefore he would ask the Colonial Secretary whether it was the intention of the Government to invite tenders for the printing of the electoral rolls. There were three printing offices at Bundaberg, so that there would be some competition in that town at any rate.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was the fault of the clerks of petty sessions if they ran out of forms; they ought to know when they were likely to require fresh supplies. The Chief Secretary had already stated that as much work as possible would be done in future in the large towns where it could be done.

Mr. BLACK said the Government must not be at all surprised at the somewhat severe criticism their Estimates were receiving when they considered the extravagance in the different departments during the last year, which had a serious effect on the financial condition of the country. The Government last year had exceeded their estimate by no less a sum than £412,000, and no department had been more culpable than the one they were now discussing. That department had spent £33,000 more than the House had voted during last year, and when they considered the reckless—he might almost say criminal—extravagance displayed in administering that department in connection with the advertising of the electoral rolls, it was only the duty of his side of the Committee to the country to criticise in the most severe manner every item of expenditure. He did not know why the Colonial Secretary's Department should have displayed such reckless extravagance as had been disclosed by the Estimates before them, but he hoped the lesson the Colonial Secretary had learned during the period his Estimates had been under discussion, together with the further criticism they would receive, would have some salutary effect upon him, and teach him to exercise that necessary supervision which he might say he was paid to exercise, and which that Committee and the coun-

try expected he would exercise. Now, in connection with the vote for the Government Printing Office, he would ask the Colonial Secretary whether the amount he was now asking was likely to be exceeded. Including the Lithographic Department, which he thought formed part of the Government Printing Department, they were asked to vote a sum of £32,386. Could the hon. gentleman give them any assurance that that amount was not likely to be exceeded during the year? They would condone a great deal of the past if the hon. gentleman would let them know whether that was really the extreme amount for that very expensive—he was almost inclined to say, greatly mismanaged department. Last year they voted £31,920. That was a very large sum, but the actual expenditure was £34,523. The expenditure the year before—he had not the amount voted, but he thought it was under what had been spent—was £36,049. Had they any reasonable expectation that the amount asked for now, £32,386, was likely to be the full amount required, or were they going to have a further over-expenditure in that very extravagant department, over which the hon. gentleman seemed to have lost all control? It was a very serious thing in the present financial position of the country, to think that they could so little depend upon the Estimates as laid before the Committee by the Government. That was not the first year that it had occurred; the same thing had been going on for the last four years; every year the expenditure was considerably in excess of the amount voted by the Committee. They criticised them, tried to elicit all sorts of information, and endeavoured to get a promise from the Government that they would be as economical as possible, but the Government were not only unable to keep their expenditure within the bounds of their Estimates, but they also seemed utterly unable to exercise that supervision over the financial departments of the Government which was essential to the welfare of the country. What was the consequence? There was deficiency after deficiency, and they were met by fresh taxation. How the Government were going to carry on the financial arrangements of the country until a new Government assumed office he did not know. By their own Estimates they showed a very large deficit in revenue as compared with expenditure for the present year, and he was sure that unless the Government would make up their minds to keep to the amount voted by the Committee the financial position of the colony would be a very serious one indeed when the next Government came into office.

Mr. BULCOCK: That is a long way off.

Mr. BLACK said he had never yet heard the hon. member for Enoggera make any sensible interjection: he did not think the hon. member was able to do it. As far as electioneering was concerned, he could give the hon. member credit for being able to do what they called "bulcocking" the rolls, but beyond that he did not show any marked intelligence.

The Hon. G. THORN said the Government Printing Office was the most economically managed department of the Government. It was not possible to keep the expenditure of that department within bounds if the session was protracted. Another Parliament was likely to meet before the end of the present financial year, and, if so, that vote must be considerably increased. When they got an enlarged number of members they would, he thought, be almost in perpetual session.

Mr. DONALDSON said he had no wish to protract that debate, but he desired to make a brief reference to the speech of the leader of the Opposition with respect to the Colonial Secretary

occupying the position of chairman of the Deposit Bank. The attack on the chairman of that institution was an attack on the bank itself, and he regretted that the ruling of the Chairman, that the discussion was out of order, had not been given earlier, and that members had not been allowed an opportunity to contradict the statements made by the leader of the Opposition. He for one would contradict those statements, and he could not allow the debate to pass without entering his protest against the ruling of the Chairman, or at any rate against his not giving it earlier.

Mr. STEVENSON said that if the hon. member stated that the statements made by the leader of the Opposition were not correct he ought to show where they were incorrect. He (Mr. Stevenson) thought the statements were perfectly correct, and that the Colonial Secretary had no right to say that any deposit bank could offer better security than the Government Savings Bank.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that if a debate took place on the Deposit Bank, and the comparative merits of its security in relation to the Savings Bank, he would have something unpleasant to say on the subject. He was not satisfied with the answer given by the Colonial Secretary to the hon. member for Mulgrave with regard to the printing of the electoral rolls at the Government Printing Office.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: My answer was about registration forms.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member for Mulgrave asked about electoral rolls, and the answer he received was that the Government would in future do their best to have them printed in the districts where they could be printed.

The PREMIER: I said that two hours ago.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would ask the hon. gentleman to point out any electoral district in the colony where they could not be printed? That was something like the answer that had been given session after session, and which the hon. gentleman complained of not being acted upon in regard to public servants doing private work. It should be understood that every electoral roll should be printed in the electorate for which it was prepared.

The PREMIER: If there are proper means there for printing them.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said there were proper means for printing the rolls in every electorate. Take the most distant electorate in the colony—that on the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria—there were means in that district for printing the electoral rolls.

The PREMIER: Take Gregory and Bulloo.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the rolls could be printed in those districts. There was not one electorate in the colony without printing offices, so that the vague answer of the Colonial Secretary was really no satisfactory answer at all. It was no use his going over the whole of the arguments used before against the printing of the rolls being carried on in the Government Printing Office in Brisbane, because every hon. member admitted that was wrong, that it led to delays and inaccuracies, and that it was far more expensive. They should have a distinct promise from the Government to the effect that the rolls would be printed in the different electoral districts.

Mr. ADAMS said before the hon. gentleman answered that question he would like to say a word or two. The Colonial Secretary distinctly stated that he (Mr. Adams) spoke of registration

forms. He had mentioned registration forms at the commencement of his remarks. He had waited for nearly a minute before he could get the hon. gentleman to listen to him, and he then asked whether it was the intention of the Government to have the electoral rolls printed in the districts where they would be used, and he urged as a reason why that course should be followed that the returning officers were on the spot and had the original rolls, by which they could correct any inaccuracies that might occur.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would just state, in reply to the hon. member, that after answering his remarks with reference to the registration forms, he said that the latter portion of the hon. member's speech had been answered by the explanation of his hon. colleague the Premier.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: What is the Premier's explanation?

The PREMIER said he would say it again. He stated that a number of the next electoral rolls would certainly have to be printed in distant parts of the colony, and all the electoral rolls ought to be printed locally, as far as possible; but, if the Government knew that they were going to be printed all wrong, they would not have them done locally.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: You know they will not be printed wrong.

The PREMIER said that unfortunately the experience of the past was that, in many cases where the rolls had been printed locally, serious mistakes had been made. Where there were returning officers who would look into details—for there were a great many details that required careful scrutiny—and where it was possible to have the rolls printed locally, it would be done. Where it was not possible to be done locally it would be done somewhere else than locally, but not necessarily in Brisbane. The work had to be done correctly, because it would never do to have an electoral roll, the names on which could not be identified in consequence of errors. Such things had happened. He had seen newspapers printed in such a way that he should be sorry to entrust the proprietors with the printing of electoral rolls.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had known the electoral rolls printed in the far North fifteen years ago, and surely they had not lost the art of printing within the last fifteen years. As to their being printed incorrectly, if there was an incompetent returning officer, who could not look over the printing of his own list, how was that to be remedied by having the list printed in Brisbane? It was the returning officer who had to make the corrections. Surely it was not the Brisbane printer who would make the corrections. The rolls must come back to the returning officer for revision.

The PREMIER: The manuscript will be here.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the papers were sent back to the returning officer. Some of the signatures were illegible, but that was more the fault of the clerks of petty sessions than the returning officers. He took it for granted that the electoral rolls would be printed in all the electorates, or at the nearest available place. He wanted to ask another question in relation to *Hansard*. They had been told several times that the circulation of *Hansard* was increasing. He would like to know from the Colonial Secretary what were the receipts from *Hansard* weekly, monthly, or during the session.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the amount received last year was £338 from the sale of *Hansard*. The daily issue of *Hansard* for the present session was 4,000 copies. There were 363 session subscribers at 3s. for the session.

Mr. NORTON: The receipts will be less this year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the total number of copies printed last year was 175,968.

Mr. JESSOP said he would suggest to hon. members that they should go to the Printing Office and see for themselves the work that was being done there. They would then be able to judge a great deal better of the value of the work than if they simply looked at *Hansard* or the papers which were turned out. It would do hon. members good if they spent an hour in the day or in the evening at the Printing Office and saw with their own eyes how things were managed. He was very much pleased with the work he had seen in progress, the stereotyping, the printing, and everything else. He was very much surprised at it, but he did not believe that the members of the House thought it worth their while, or took the trouble, to make themselves acquainted with the work that was being done in the Government Printing Office.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had been through the Government Printing Office. He had been all over the old building, all over the new building, and had seen the machinery. He said it was the duty of every hon. member to make himself acquainted, as far as possible, with all the public institutions, and, as far as he was concerned, he spent a great deal of time in them. As an hon. member interjected, he even went to look inside the gaols, and in fact everywhere else, to see how the money of the taxpayers was being spent. He had nothing whatever to say against the Government Printing Office. He thought it was an admirable institution, but he should like to enlarge its range a little and save the country some of the vast sums of money that were being spent in advertising. He had pointed out to the Committee before, the immense lever that might be made for party purposes of that advertising vote. It would be an immense relief to the present and to any succeeding Government if they were relieved from the imputation of bribery and corruption of electorates through the newspapers by the power they had of inserting Government advertisements in them. He hoped a day would come when a Government would be found strong enough in principle to enforce such a course of action as he suggested, and he was sure that was a wish that would commend itself to nine-tenths of the members of the Committee, if they dared to speak their minds in the face of the coming election. He knew that many members of the Committee were in abject terror of their local papers.

Mr. WHITE: You are frightened of your tenant.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the rack-renting landlord for Laidley interjected that he was frightened of his tenant; but he was not a bit afraid of him, as he reserved to himself the power of raising his rent if he became too abusive. The immense amount of money they spent annually beyond the Government Printing Office in every kind of Government advertisement was a serious matter for consideration. He thought the suggestion he had before thrown out should be adopted, and that the newspapers, in return for being carried about the colony free, should be obliged to insert all Government advertisements free.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said there was a good deal in what the hon. gentleman said, if his suggestion could be carried out; but that was the difficulty. As to saying that hon. members were in abject terror of the newspapers, he hoped the hon. member for Cook was not like the ploughboy in Gray's "Elegy in a Country Church-

yard," whistling aloud to keep his courage up. He wished to ask what was the average number of men employed in the Government Printing Office. He found there were a great many officers, and that was the reason he asked the question. There was the Government Printer as the head officer, an overseer, and a sub-overseer, a foreman bookbinder, sub-overseer bookbinder, and at the bottom of the list three foremen and other officers—nineteen in all, and there must be a good many men employed where there were so many officers. He would like, therefore, to know the average number of men employed in the Government Printing Office, if that information could be given.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not say what the average number was, but the number at present employed there was 190.

Mr. NORTON: Including the *Hansard* staff of compositors?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Including all. He understood that at the end of the session some forty of the number would not be required.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would like to have some answer from the Premier as to whether he felt at all capable of carrying out economy in the present lavish expenditure of public money for Government advertisements.

The PREMIER: If you say what you have to say in a few words I may understand you, and be able to answer you.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he was not making use of very many words about the matter. He believed he was speaking directly to the subject before the Committee, and the Premier could not say that he was wandering from the path of virtue and digressing to any other subject.

The PREMIER: If you have any idea, you overwhelm it so in words that we hardly know what it is.

Mr. MURPHY: He has not got an idea.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he had got an idea that there was a great deal of money being spent in advertisements that could be saved.

The PREMIER: How?

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: By making the newspapers insert those advertisements gratuitously. Their papers were carried about for them free of charge, and they should insert Government advertisements free of charge in return for that privilege. He had been taunted with being afraid of the newspapers, but he was not afraid of them, and did not bow down to the power of the Press. He should not consider his seat in that House worth having if he had to become the mere mouthpiece of a local paper. He should like to know if the Premier could give the Committee any hope that advised economy would be effected in that direction.

The PREMIER said he would appeal to the sensible and serious members of the Committee to allow the Government to get on with the business. Here they were, at a later period of the session than he had ever known before, not half-way through the Colonial Secretary's Estimates.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Why did you not bring them on sooner?

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Cook, Mr. Hill, got up and took half-an-hour to say what he might have said in half-a-minute, a good deal more intelligibly. If they went on at that rate of progress they would not conclude the Estimates by the end of the year, and they

would not have time to prepare for the next election. They would want a little time to see their constituents—those of them who had any. As to the hon. member's suggestion concerning the publication of Government advertisements, any such change could only be carried out by an alteration in the law. It would be a very curious law to pass, he thought, and he was not prepared to introduce such a law.

Question put and passed.

LITHOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £2,795 be granted for the Lithographic Department. The vote was exactly the same as that for last year.

Mr. PALMER asked if that vote for the Lithographic Department included the lithographic work done in connection with the Lands Department?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; they are perfectly distinct departments.

Question put and passed.

INSANITY.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £21,898 be granted for Insanity and Hospitals for the Insane. There was a decrease of £50 in the vote for fees to official visitors, travelling expenses, and contingencies, and an increase of £334 in the vote for the asylum at Goodna, owing to the increased number of attendants. The item of provisions and incidentals at the Goodna Asylum showed an increase of £1,500. Those were the only changes in the vote.

Mr. JESSOP said he thought that would be a good time to refer to certain recommendations in the report of the Gaols Commission with reference to cells in lockups for the insane, not in Brisbane only but throughout the colony. The matter was one which required immediate attention. He would read the following short extract from page 18 of that report:—

"A very large number of lunatics pass through the various lockups of the colony in the course of the year, but in none of them is special provision made for the safe custody of persons of unsound mind, except, perhaps a ring-bolt fixed in the floor and a chain with which to manacle violent lunatics. A padded cell at each lockup would involve great expenditure, and more than meet the case; but some minor improvements in the care of lunatics might be introduced."

He did not believe that in any of the country lockups or gaols any provision was made for the security of the insane. One case particularly in point came under his notice not more than a fortnight ago. A poor unfortunate woman was brought into Dalby, and on the way down she was very violent, and on arrival was put into the lockup for a short time. She became so very violent, and knocked herself about so much, that eventually she had to be taken to the hospital. She became a tax upon that institution, and the hospital committee had great difficulty—

Mr. LUMLEY HILL asked whether the hon. member for Dalby was in order? The report of the Gaols Commission was not the subject immediately before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. member for Dalby was perfectly in order; he was speaking on the question of the insane.

Mr. JESSOP said he was not referring to the hon. member for Cook. The hospital committee found it very difficult to get attendants to watch the poor woman, the consequence being that she was somewhat neglected, and caused a great deal

of trouble and expense to the hospital authorities. There had been many instances of that kind where the want of a padded cell had caused not only the police, but the friends of the patient and the townspeople, a vast amount of trouble. He held that it was the duty of the authorities to have a padded cell at every gaol, for insane patients had often to be locked up before they could be taken before the bench, and committed to the reception-house. They ought to be prevented from injuring themselves by their own violence. He submitted the matter for the consideration of the Committee.

Mr. ADAMS said that as the Colonial Secretary did not seem inclined to give an answer to the hon. member for Dalby, he would remind him that last year he asked whether there would be anything done in reference to the lockup at Bundaberg, and stated that there had been several lunatics there all of whom had had to be put into the common cell. Sometimes prisoners had to be taken out of the cell to make room for them. Often they became dangerously ill and had to be sent to the hospital, and the noise they made was almost sufficient to cause the death of the other inmates. When he asked that question last year, the answer he got from the Colonial Secretary was that a commission was about to be appointed to report on all the gaols of the colony. That Commission had since made its report, and he should like to know whether anything was going to be done with reference to the gaol at Bundaberg.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not understand the hon. member for Dalby to ask any question, but that he simply drew the attention of the Committee to the recommendation contained in the Gaols Report, that there should be padded cells in all the lockups in the colony. That recommendation was now under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. JESSOP said he meant to have asked the Colonial Secretary if it was the intention of the Government to carry out the recommendation of the Gaols Commission with regard to padded cells. The hon. gentleman had said that the Government had the matter under consideration. He held the opinion very strongly that it should be taken in hand at once. In fact, it ought to have been done long ago. It was a long-felt want, and he thought the Colonial Secretary should inform the Committee that it was the intention of the Government to attend to it at once. It was a grievous thing to see a poor unfortunate lunatic, who did not know what he had done, put into a cell with felons or "drunks," and allowed to knock himself about to such an extent that he might actually kill himself, or become a burden upon some other charitable institution until he recovered. It was the duty of the Government to say whether they intended to take the matter in hand or not. If they got a distinct promise from the Government he believed something would be done, and some good would have been attained by bringing the matter forward.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had told the hon. gentleman already that the matter would be taken into consideration by the Government. It would have to be referred to the Works Department to get estimates and plans, and to see if it could be done. In reply to the hon. member for Mulgrave, he was not aware in what condition the reception-house at Bundaberg was. The buildings were now in the hands of the Works Office. He had seen some plans, but whether the work had been gone on with or not he did not know. No doubt when they came to the Works Department the hon. gentleman would be able to ascertain.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they would want the information long before they got to the Works Department. He did not think it was at all a fair thing for the Colonial Secretary to try and shelter himself behind the Works Department.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not shelter myself behind the Works Department. I only stated the fact that work of that kind is done in the Works Department, having been taken out of the Colonial Secretary's Department last year.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was sorry the hon. gentleman was so touchy. He (Mr. Morehead) did not think he had said a word that could in any way be considered to be offensive.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I never said they were.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman's action, if not his words, had led him to believe that his words were offensive, but he certainly did not intend anything of the kind. It appeared that they had to treat the hon. gentleman very gingerly indeed. He did not think the hon. gentleman had given a satisfactory answer to the hon. member for Dalby, when he stated that the question of the construction of cells for the reception of unfortunate insane people had been handed over to the Works Department, and no doubt they would attend to it. It was a question that should be asked, and he thought the Colonial Secretary himself should have been able to give a direct answer to it; that was, whether provision was or was not going to be made for the reception of insane persons at the various lockups of the colony by the erection of padded cells. That was a fair question, and should receive an explicit answer from the Colonial Secretary. It was a question of considerable importance, because those unfortunate people should, at any rate, receive some regard at the hands of the present Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he did not know whether the erection of padded cells at all the lockups of the colony was a recommendation of the Gaols Commission or simply a recommendation of the hon. member for Dalby. Before the Colonial Secretary could give an answer that there would be padded cells at all lockups he would have to request the Works Department for an estimate; then they would have to see whether there was any money for the purpose, and if there was not, the work could not be done.

Mr. JESSOP said he had not yet got a distinct answer that the work was to be done. There appeared to be a great deal of circumlocution about it. The Colonial Secretary referred to the Minister for Works; he, no doubt, would refer it to the architect, and it would have to go from one department to another, so that it might be years, perhaps, before anything was done. What was required was clearly set forth in the report of the Gaols Commission, and he should read another short extract from it relating to the police cells at Blackall:—

"When a prisoner complains of being unwell the gaoler sends for the local doctor, who is paid a fee of half-a-guinea for each visit in the day-time, and a guinea for a night call. No book exists in which cases of sickness are entered. We heard of one death in the gaol—that of a lunatic, who was so violent that he not only tore all his clothes off but a piece of wood out of the wall. No special provision is made for the treatment of lunatics; they are placed alone in a cell, and appear to be left to their own devices. This particular lunatic died, but no inquest was held."

When they got a statement of that kind, arrived at by a special commission appointed by the Government to inquire into matters of that kind, it clearly showed the necessity for some

provision being made for those unfortunate people. He knew a great deal about cases of that kind when he moved for the appointment of the commission to inquire into the management of gaols and lockups. A great deal had come out in that report that he never expected and never had hoped to see, but with regard to the lunatics he knew that they suffered very much from want of proper accommodation, such as padded cells; and the extract he read was a good illustration of it. Hon. members could easily understand that when a man was mad from drink, or from any other cause, he would do very extraordinary things. The hon. member for Barcoo could bear him out in what he was saying, as he was referring to a case that the hon. member had told him about, where a man in the police cells at Blackall had so mutilated himself that he died. He wanted a distinct promise from the Government that something should be done, otherwise it might go on for years without anything being done. When the Estimates came before the Committee again next year, it would probably be said that the Government had not time to attend to it. But if they gave a distinct promise that steps would be taken, no doubt they would do it, and if another Government came in they would follow it up and act upon their instructions. He would not accept any excuse for not getting a distinct promise on the matter.

Mr. MURPHY said whilst on the subject of lunatics, as the hon. member for Dalby had said, he could throw some light upon the way in which lunatics were managed, at all events in the country districts, and he need not go beyond the report of the commission appointed to inquire into the management of the gaols and lockups of the colony to establish his case. In the special report concerning the gaol at Blackall, in the paragraph headed "Health," page 61, the gentlemen who held that inquiry wrote as follows:—

"HEALTH.—We had nothing to assist us in arriving at any opinion as to the health of the inmates of the prison—although the gaoler said it was very good, and that prisoners generally got fat. There is no visiting surgeon. When a prisoner complains of being unwell the gaoler sends for the local doctor, who is paid a fee of half-a-guinea for each visit in the day-time, and a guinea for a night call. No book exists in which cases of sickness are entered. We heard of one death in the gaol—that of a lunatic, who was so violent that he not only tore all his clothes off, but a piece of wood out of the wall. No special provision is made for the treatment of lunatics; they are placed alone in a cell, and appear to be left to their own devices. This particular lunatic died, but no inquest was held."

Now, it was quite true that a lunatic was put in Blackall gaol as stated there; but he was not really suffering from lunacy, he was merely suffering from *delirium tremens*. He was brought from his (Mr. Murphy's) station and put in Blackall gaol because he was unmanageable on the station, and they knew how his disorder arose, because they found that a case of grog had been brought by the local mailman, and that he had never stopped till he drank every drop of it. He was so violent that they were afraid he would do injury either to himself or to someone else, and so they handed him over to the police. He was put into a cell and left to himself, where he mutilated himself in the most horrible way, and bled to death before he was found. No inquest was held on the body. There was no doubt that it was a case of self-mutilation, but no one could tell that that might not have been caused by ill-treatment to him in the gaol. He would read the evidence in this man's case; it would be found on page 161 of the Commissioner's report, question 3857:—

"Have you many lunatics? I think there were eight last year. One lunatic died last year with us."

"What from? From insanity; I do not know what the doctor's certificate was. He lived for six days in the gaol.

"Was he a raving lunatic all the time? Oh! as mad as possible. He tore pieces out of the wall and attempted to eat the wood. He was perfectly naked; he tore his clothes at first, but afterwards he became so weak that he was not able to tear his clothes off. He was too weak to have the strait jacket put on him.

"Did the doctor attend him? Yes, Dr. Johnson attended him. That doctor is not here now.

"Is there any inquest held when a prisoner dies? There was none in that case.

"Is there ever any inquest held? That was the only prisoner who has died since I came here.

"Were you as gaoler content with the certificate which the doctor gave the registrar? Yes.

"Without inquiry as to the cause of death? Yes."

Now, it was a scandal to any community that such a thing as that should be possible. That man would have been alive and well if he had had proper treatment; but he was put into a cell and left to himself. In any asylum or properly conducted gaol, a man like that, who was known to be dangerous, would have had a warder or a policeman always in the cell with him, to see that he did no injury to himself. Of course, there was nothing in the cell that he could kill himself with, and he did not dash his head against the wall; but he mutilated himself in such a way that he actually bled to death. That showed that the contention of the hon. member for Dalby was quite right—that the Government should erect receiving-houses at all the gaols, specially adapted for lunatics; and the Government should see, moreover, that an inquest was held in every gaol in the colony when a prisoner died, otherwise what check had they upon the gaolers? The death might be caused by some of the officials. He did not make any charge against the Blackall police that the man died from any ill-usage received from them, because he knew that if the man were left to himself for any length of time he certainly would commit suicide.

Mr. NORTON said he was afraid that discussion would lead people outside the colony to think that they were a community composed very largely of lunatics, and were obliged to have a padded cell at every gaol in the country. The case the hon. member had referred to was not of a very uncommon character. The man was not what was commonly called a lunatic; he was simply suffering from *delirium tremens*, and the way to deal with a case of that kind was simply to strap him down to a bed and keep him there till he was better. He had had to deal with cases of that sort, and had had seen men strapped down for days together, though usually it did not last very long. That was the simple way to deal with the case, and it was an unfortunate thing that a man in that position should be put in gaol, and left in a cell to kill himself. It simply showed that those in charge of the gaol had not common sense enough to know how to treat a man whom one would think anyone would know how to treat.

Mr. JESSOP: It appears they did not.

The PREMIER said he agreed with the hon. member for Barcoo that there ought to be an inquiry on every man who died in a gaol or lunatic asylum, and it would be just as well if instructions were given to that effect. He had thought that there always were inquiries, and he was surprised to find there were not. As to having padded cells in all the lockups, of course they could not afford it. It would be impossible to have a lunatic asylum in connection with every country lockup—such as Blackall, for instance. It was not that the officials were heartless or cruel towards the lunatics, but unfortunately they could not afford to provide the refinements of treatment all over the country.

Mr. MURPHY said Blackall was not a lockup; it was a gaol which accommodated upwards of twenty prisoners.

The PREMIER: How many lunatics are there there in a year?

Mr. MURPHY said not many. That was the only one during the time the present gaoler had been in charge—that was for some two years.

The PREMIER: And he was not a lunatic?

Mr. MURPHY said no; and they took good care that no other should go there, because they dealt with him in such a summary manner that the friends of other lunatics were not likely to put them in Blackall Gaol. He did not think it was necessary that there should be padded cells, or anything of that kind; but there ought to be a small separate building in which lunatics could be confined, so as to keep them away from the rest of the prisoners; and the police should be instructed that a lunatic was not to be treated as an ordinary prisoner, and simply shut up in a cell to dash his brains out against the wall, or commit suicide in any other horrible way he liked. That might be remedied without any expense at all, and, if the police knew an inquest would be held on the body of every person dying within the walls of the gaol, he thought they would treat them differently from the way that lunatic was treated. If the gaoler at Blackall had known that an inquest would certainly be held, and that he would be held responsible for the death of that man—and he really was responsible for it through his neglect—the unfortunate man would have been much better treated and looked after. He thought that inquests should be held in every case. If no inquest was held in a lunatic asylum, what check was there on the way the lunatics were treated by the warders? They knew that in the private and public asylums in England there had been most frightful cases of ill-usage at different times, and how were people to know that their friends who were unfortunate enough to be put in such places had been properly treated by the warders, unless inquests were held? He had no hesitation in saying that if the sergeant in charge of the Blackall Gaol had known that an inquest would have been held, and he would have been held responsible for the death of that man through his neglect, that man would have been alive now and a respectable member of society as he was before.

Mr. JESSOP said in the report upon the Mackay Gaol it was stated:—

"Lunatics are also received here, the average number for the last four years being ten. When very violent, the lunatics are placed in the 'drunk' cell, where there is a ringbolt and chain, for chaining down prisoners; but when they calm down they are removed to the female cell, if there happen to be no female prisoners at the time."

If hon. members turned to question 3072 in the evidence given by Mr. Robert A. Johnstone, of Bundaberg, they would see it bore out all the hon. member for Barcoo had said:—

"Our greatest want here is the want of a lunatic cell attached to the lockup. Last year we had fifteen cases of lunacy. In one case the unfortunate man was pronounced by the doctor to be suffering from typhoid fever, so I instructed the police to take him to the hospital, as the lockup was not a place for such a patient. He was taken to the hospital, where several patients complained that they could not rest or sleep because of the disturbance which he caused. The medical officer then ordered him back to the lockup, and I called in a second medical man, who pronounced him to be suffering from typhoid. I went to the medical officer of the hospital, and he said if that was so the man must be sent back to the hospital. He was sent back to the hospital and died the same night. I believe his death was caused by his being shifted backwards and forwards in that way. The present lockup accommodation is not sufficient."

That went to prove that what he had said was correct. He had only brought the matter forward so that the Government might take immediate steps to relieve the unfortunate sufferers who happened to get into the gaols. He did not think it necessary that there should be a padded cell in every lockup, but there should be at the central places. Of course he did not mean that they should have them at every place where there was a cell or two, but in such places as Roma and Dalby, where there were police gaols. He brought the subject forward to obtain a promise from the Government that what he had suggested should be attended to.

Mr. MURPHY said he would not feel easy in his mind about the matter unless he received a distinct assurance from the Government that instructions would be given to the police in regard to lunatics, and also that they would insist upon inquests or magisterial inquiries being held in the cases of deaths in gaols or lunatic asylums.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he quite agreed with the hon. member that an inquest should be held in the case of every death occurring in places of that kind. He had always thought that was done, and he did not know how it had occurred that there was no inquest in the case referred to. He thought the police magistrate at Blackall was the visiting justice to that gaol, and he should have taken steps to inquire into the matter himself. He should give instructions that inquests should be held.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was not satisfied with what had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, that he always understood that inquests were held. There had been a case of gross neglect, and why was it not done? He was very glad indeed that the hon. member for Barcoo had brought that particular subject before the Committee. In regard to inquests, it might happen, as it had happened in Great Britain and elsewhere, that deaths of unfortunate patients might be brought about by injuries inflicted by warders, and nothing whatever known about them unless those inquests were held. That was what the hon. member for Barcoo had brought prominently before the Committee, and he trusted that if the rule was in that direction at the present time the Colonial Secretary would see that no death took place either in a gaol or in a lunatic asylum in future, no matter from what cause that death might arise, without there being an inquest held.

Mr. ANNEAR said there was no doubt it was a very exceptional case that had been brought forward by the hon. member for Barcoo. He had been twenty-four years in the colony, and he had never heard of such a thing before. He thought that the police in that instance had failed in the performance of their duty. Inquests should be held in every case, but why the Colonial Secretary should be asked to make some declaration that it would be done when it always was done, he was at a loss to know. He thought the police magistrate, the police, and the Under Colonial Secretary in Brisbane, had always done their duty in that respect, in a way that had not been excelled in any other part of the world. The Colonial Secretary had given the only answer that he could give—namely, that he would inquire into the case, and see that inquests were held in every instance. When the report of the Gaols Commission came under discussion he should have something to say.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could only reiterate what he had said before—namely, that it was the practice to hold inquests

on all deaths in gaols. If an inquest had not been held in the case referred to, it was an accident, and he should make inquiries as to why it had not been done.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he was surprised that an inquest had not been held, and he was sure that if any member of the Committee had been asked, he would have replied that inquests were held in every case. He saw by the vote before them that they were paying salaries to 103 persons for looking after the Goodna and Sandy Gallop asylums. That was a very large number of people to be paying salaries to, for looking after the insane amongst a population of 340,000. What was the number of insane in those two places? He also wished to know what had become of the vote for the Toowoomba Asylum?

The PREMIER : The place is being built.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN asked when it would be in a condition to receive patients?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had no knowledge as to when it would be ready. The number of patients under treatment in the two places during the year 1886 was 989.

Mr. MURPHY said the case he had brought forward had been called by the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, who appeared to be a Mr. Know-all, an exceptional case; but if the hon. member would do his parliamentary duty and read the reports that were made at so much expense to the country and with so much care by those who were instructed to make them, he would know that it was not an exceptional case. He would quote another case—no other than that of the Rockhampton Gaol, which was one of the largest gaols in the colony. On page lv. of the report, under the heading "Health," the following sentence appeared:—"Inquests are not invariably held when prisoners die." The hon. member knew everything about police magistrates, and the police; he knew they did their duty and did not require anybody to look after them; but what did he say to that? It was absurd for the hon. member to make such random statements, and he for one, when he knew to the contrary, would not allow them to go forth to the country uncontradicted.

Mr. ANNEAR said he would never ask the hon. member when he should get up to express an opinion; and as to being a Mr. Know-all, hon. members were the judges as to whether he or the hon. member for Barcoo pretended to be the know-all. The hon. member said that several prisoners died in gaols without inquests being held. Scores of persons died every week on whom no inquest was held because there was no occasion; and he dared say the authorities knew far better than the hon. member how to perform their duties. The doctors and the gaoler in Rockhampton knew when an inquest was necessary, and if necessary it would be held. The hon. member presumed to lecture him. He could take a lecture from the hon. member and could give him one in return whenever he liked.

Mr. MURPHY said that the hon. member appeared to think that an inquest should only be held in a gaol when the gaol officials thought fit. It was to protect the public from gaol officials that inquests were held. The hon. member did not appear to know their object.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said he would like to know when the Toowoomba Asylum would be finished, seeing there were so many patients at Sandy Gallop and Goodna.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the matter was in the Works Department.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he could not give the information now. He would be prepared to give it probably when his own Estimates came on.

Mr. PALMER asked what amount was paid by the friends of lunatics for their keep in the asylums?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had received the following letter from Dr. Scholes, which would give the required information :—

"I have the honour to inform you that in the annual report for 1886 the Curator of Insanity is stated to have collected for maintenance of patients in asylum the sum of £1,318 ss. 2d. In addition to this sum the Curator paid into the Treasury £716 15s. 10d. drawn from the estates of patients: thus his collections should be stated at £2,035 4s. 6d. The addition of this sum further reduces the annual cost of each patient per year in asylum from £27 14s. 0½d. to £26 15s. 10½d. The mistake arose in this office and was not discovered until pointed out by the Curator a few days ago."

Mr. MOREHEAD said it appeared that the Colonial Secretary shunted everything on the Minister for Works, who informed the Committee that in all good time he would give the information which he might or might not possess. The work in connection with the asylum ought to have progressed so far by this time that an opinion could be formed as to when the other asylums could be relieved of some of their patients. It appeared to him that the number of attendants for the number of lunatics was exceptionally high.

The PREMIER: They have to be looked after day and night.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that taking the number of patients at 989, there were only nine or ten patients to each of the 103 attendants. He did not wish to cast any discredit on the asylum as far as medical attendance was concerned, but he thought that if it was compared with the best regulated asylum in Australia, that of New South Wales, the comparison would show that it was below the mark.

Question put and passed.

RECEPTION HOUSES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £2,520 be granted for Reception Houses, and said there was only a small difference in that vote as compared with the amount passed last year, and that was at Maryborough. The matron at Maryborough formerly received on account of the reception-house £30, and on account of the lock hospital £50 per annum, making a total of £80. Now she got £50 for the reception-house and £15 for the lock hospital, but the latter amount did not appear on that vote. The two votes were reduced by £15.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was hardly worth while at that late hour cavilling over a matter of £15, even if they had to deal with lock hospitals. He trusted that after that vote passed the Premier would move the Chairman out of the chair, as there was likely to be a very long discussion on the next vote.

The PREMIER: Of course; but we wish to finish the subject of the insane before adjourning, and then we can make a fresh start.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I am afraid you will not finish the subject of the insane until the present Government are out of office.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. It is proposed on Tuesday next to take first of all the amendments of the Legislative Council in the Local Government Bill of 1887, which had to stand over until the Divisional Boards Bill became law; then to further consider the Electoral Districts Bill in committee; and if that is finished early in the evening, as I hope it will be, we shall go on with Supply. I may state that the proposed amended schedules of the Electoral Districts Bill will be circulated on Monday morning, that maps showing the proposed new electorates will be sent up to the House, the same morning.

Question put and passed.

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