Queensland

# Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

## Legislative Assembly

## TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1887

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Tuesday, 25 October*, 1887.

Petition—Maryborough and Urangan Railway.—Cooneana Railway Bill—third reading.—Local Government Act of 1878 Amendment Bill (No. 2)—consideration in committee of Legislative Council's amendment.—Electoral Districts Bill—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment

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

### PETITION.

MARYBOROUGH AND URANGAN RAILWAY.

Mr. FOXTON presented a petition from the Vernon Coal and Railway Company, Limited, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Maryborough and Urangan Railway Act of 1884; and moved that it be received.

Question put and passed.

### COONEANA RAILWAY BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of Mr. DONALDSON, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1878 AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith), the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider the Legislative Council's amendment in this Bill.

The PREMIER said the Legislative Council had amended the Bill in the 6th clause, which as it left the Assembly proposed to amend the 223rd section of the Local Government Act of 1878 dealing with the vetoing of loans proposed by a municipal council. Under that Act, when a poll was demanded in order to veto a loan, one-third of the possible number of votes must be polled against the loan to veto it; persons in favour of the loan were not required to vote at all. The Assembly proposed to amend that by substituting the following provision :—

"If the number of votes given against the loan is greater than the number of votes given in favour of the loan, the council shall be forbidden to proceed further with the loan."

That was to say, there must be a majority of the actual votes against the loan—the same as in the Divisional Boards Bill, which was agreed to by

the other House. Why the amendment had been made by the Council he did not know. The result of it would be that one-third of the actual number of votes, or about one-sixth of the possible number of votes, would be sufficient to veto the loan; that was to say, a very small minority, with an enthusiastic desire to prevent a work from being carried out, would be able to veto a loan for that purpose against the desire of a large majority. He thought that on serious consideration it would be found that no argument could be given why one-third of the actual number of votes should be entitled to veto a proposal already approved by the representatives of the ratepayers and by the majority of those who voted on the question as to whether the loan should be raised or not. He moved that the Council's amendment be disagreed to.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee disagreed to the amendment made by the Legislative Council in the Bill.

The report was adopted.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council, with a message intimating that the Assembly disagreed to the Council's amendment for the following reasons :—

Because it is convenient that the same rule should be applied in the case of municipalities as has been adopted in the case of divisional boards.

Because the proposed amendment would enable a very small minority of the whole number of ratepayers (instead of one-third of the whole number as now required) to veto a resolution adopted by the representatives of the ratepayers and approved of by a large majority of them.

## ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

### COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read, the House went into committee to further consider this Bill in detail.

Clauses from 6 to 8, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 9, as follows :—

"Whenever under the provisions of this Act it happens with respect to any of the now existing electoral districts that a portion thereof will form the whole or a part of one of the districts hereby created and another portion or other portions will form a part or parts of another or other of such districts, the registration courts having jurisdiction in respect of the parts of the electoral districts hereby created which so formed portions of one of the now existing electoral districts shall proceed with the preparation of the special lists hereinafter prescribed for all such districts or those parts thereof in respect whereof they have jurisdiction, concurrently and not separately, except so far as may be necessary or convenient."

The PREMIER said the clause provided that, when it was necessary to take the roll of an existing district and divide the names so as to make special lists for two or more districts, the whole process should be gone on with at once. The names on the Warrego roll, for instance, would be dealt with in such a way that those which would have to go on the Bulloo list, and those which would have to go on the Warrego list, and those which would have to go on the Balonne list, would be placed on their respective lists concurrently.

Mr. DONALDSON said there appeared to be some doubt as to the position of a person who might have land in various parts of a district, or whose land would be in two or more districts according to the new boundaries of the electorate. For instance, the property of a man whose name at present appeared only on the Enoggera roll might be so situated that under the new Act he would be qualified to vote in every one of the four divisions. Was the clause sufficiently clear to enable a man in that position to be placed on each roll?

The PREMIER said the clause did not touch that question at all; it simply dealt with existing rolls. A man's name being on the Enoggera roll would not entitle him to more votes than one. When the division was made he would have a vote for one district or another. He had no sympathy with the idea of people being entitled to vote in every district in which they owned property; he was more in favour of the "one-man-one-vote" principle, which had often been talked about in Victoria. He was in the position described by the hon. member, and he would have to make application to have his name placed on the list of a new district, in order to vote in each. And other people would have to do the same—either apply to the revision court or wait till the next revision took place. It was very undesirable to make special provision for such persons in that Bill, nor did he see why they should be entitled to more consideration than anyone else whose name was not on the existing roll.

Mr. DONALDSON said it was very important that if a man had property in an electorate he should have the right to vote. The Premier was wrong in saying that a man only had one vote in Victoria.

The PREMIER: I said it was often talked about.

Mr. DONALDSON said it was often talked about, but the only thing the advocates of that plan ever gained was the holding of all elections on one day, which was a huge mistake, and did not prevent property holders voting where they had a property qualification. If it was the desire of the Committee that a man should only have one vote, it was easy to provide for that, but if an elector was in the position that he was entitled to vote in respect of certain property, why should he be debarred from having his name placed on the roll for that qualification?

The PREMIER: He is not debarred.

Mr. DONALDSON said he would practically be debarred. Take as an illustration the present electorate of Enoggera. Under the Bill that electorate would be divided into four electorates —Nundah, Toombul, Enoggera, and Toowong. An elector might have a qualification in each of those four electorates, and under the present proposal he would lose his vote in three of them. Only one qualification was entered on the roll, and that might be Enoggera. The man might be more anxious to vote at Nundah than Enoggera. But he could not do that; he would have to vote in the district where his present registered qualification was situated. Of course they knew that in future it would be quite possible for him to have his name inserted on the roll of each electorate in which he held a qualification, but it should be remembered that they were on the eve of a general election, and that many persons might be deprived of the right to vote for each of the districts in which they held property.

Mr. DICKSON said the question raised by the hon. member for Warrego was one of importance. Some of the present electorates, notably the one he (Mr. Dickson) had the honour to represent, were being divided into several electorates, and it was a very improper thing that electors of that electorate, who had qualifications in each of the districts into which it was contemplated to divide it, should not have the privilege of voting in those districts. According to the provisions of the Bill, if the name of an elector who possessed the necessary qualification in the district which was to be Enoggera proper appeared on the roll,

it would be retained on the roll for that new electorate. But the same elector might have a qualification in each of the other three portions, and certainly in that case he should have the opportunity of being enrolled so as to vote at the coming general election.

The PREMIER: This clause has nothing to do with that.

Mr. DICKSON said he knew that clause had nothing to do with the question, but it was mentioned in anticipation of the 11th clause. At the same time he hoped the Premier would answer the hon. member for Warrego, and inform the Committee clearly the procedure required under that Bill in order that electors might be able to retain their rights.

The PREMIER said it was not a question of electors retaining their rights, but of getting additional rights, which was provided for by the 7th paragraph of clause 11. It stated that—

"Any person qualified to vote for any electoral district may claim to have his name inserted in the special list for such district or the proper division of the district, whether his name appears in any list before the court or not, and may appear either personally or by agent before such court, and on proof on oath of his qualification to the satisfaction of such court his name and qualification shall be so inserted in such special list."

Provision was made in the 9th section for dealing with the material which the revision courts now had—that was, the electoral roll for the current year, the electoral lists made up during the month of August, and the supplementary lists made up during the present month. The same persons whose names appeared on the existing roll would have the franchise in the new districts, and that was the machinery for dividing the names according to the redistribution of the electorates under the Bill. As to other persons whose names were not on the roll, they must make application, and persons who were already on the roll and were entitled to vote in two districts must be put in the same position.

Mr. DICKSON: Will the special lists be available for the general election?

The PREMIER said of course they would be. If that Bill did not pass, between the 1st and 21st of November revision courts would be held in all the districts, and those revision courts would have to prepare the rolls from the annual and supplementary lists. The annual list was compiled during the month of August from the existing electoral rolls, the electoral registrar striking out the names of all persons who had gone away, or were known before to be dead or disqualified. Then all the claims made the first week of October, which were dealt with by the registration court in October, would be put on a supplementary list. Then the revision court would sit in November. He was speaking on the assumption that the Bill did not pass. The court would from that material compile complete lists or rolls for the ensuing year of the names of the persons who had acquired the right to the franchise during next year. But it would be no use making up those rolls, because before they could be finished that Bill would come into operation, and the rolls would be useless. What was proposed, therefore, by the 9th clause was that the revision courts should make use of those materials, and, instead of making them into rolls for the existing districts, they should distribute the names into rolls for the new districts, as formed under that Bill, dealing with precisely the same names as the court would have dealt with in revising the electoral rolls for the existing electoral districts. Any persons whose names did not appear on the rolls would have to make application personally or by agent to have their names inserted. There was an alternative way of dealing with the matter, and that was to put it off for a year, as was done in 1872, and take a lot of time for it. He did not think that would meet the wishes of the Committee, nor would it meet the wishes of the Government. Persons who were left off the roll might apply personally or by agent, and prove their claim on oath. It was necessary that they should prove their claim on oath, because, if it were allowed that anyone could put in a claim, and that that should be taken as conclusive, it might lead to a great deal of abuse, especially on the eve of a general election, if there was no opportunity for objecting to the claim. Objections could be made now by law within a certain period, and to allow persons to come in at the last moment and make a claim without there being any opportunity for objections would be very undesirable. It was therefore proposed that they should prove their claim on oath, either personally or by agent. There was no hardship in that, and if claims were proved on oath there was not very much reason to fear any attempt to abuse the privilege. Persons who were entitled to two votes instead of one must prove their qualification. On the existing roll only one qualification was stated. If a man possessed another qualification, or had property which entitled him to another vote in one of the new electorates under that Bill, then he must apply to have his name enrolled the same as any other person. They would not lose their chance to vote at the next election. They could apply while the court was sitting, and there was no other way of doing it. How could the court know whether a man had a qualification unless he asserted it? That was a man's own business. He must disclose his qualification. The court could not adjourn to find out how many qualifications John Smith had in respect of freehold property in Enoggera. That was quite impracticable. Let John Smith come forward himself, or send his agent, who could speak to the facts; and if that was done there would be no difficulty. All the rights had been conferred that now existed, and no injustice would be done. He had explained the matter at length, because he remembered that on previous occasions he had not referred to that part of the Bill.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he could quite understand the explanation of the hon. gentleman. If a man was in the electoral district of Enoggera and he had freehold property in other parts of the Enoggera district which would now form separate electorates, such as Toombul, Toowong, and Nundah, he could go or send his agent to make a claim; but how would it be if he was down as an elector for Enoggera as it existed at present and that freehold would not be in Enoggera when the revised list was made out? It might be in Toowong or Toombul. So that in that case a man would actually be put off the electoral list for the electorate in which he held freehold property. How was the revision court to know whether his property was in the electoral district of Enoggera or in Toombul or Toowong?

The PREMIER said if the hon. gentleman would look at the 1st paragraph of the section he would see:—

"The names of all persons appearing on such lists which ought, under the provisions of the said Act, to have been retained on the list if this Act had not been passed, shall be inserted in the special lists for the districts for which such persons are respectively qualified to vote."

Then the 2nd paragraph provided how the court would ascertain where the property was.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: How will they find out unless they have the original application?

The PREMIER said that was provided for also :—

"For the purpose of ascertaining the situation of such residence or property, the court may refer to any claim theretofore sent in or made under the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Act of 1886, and the contents of such claims shall be taken to be *primâ facie* true and correct."

All that was provided for, and he did not think it could be provided for any more carefully than had been done.

Mr. NORTON said if a property was divided by a new boundary the owner would be entitled to two votes in some cases, and in that case the court would simply put his name down for one electorate. In that case, so far as he could see, the revision court would only give one vote, unless the owner personally or by agent appeared and claimed to be put down for the two electorates. Now, let them take the other case. Supposing a man had a property qualification in two districts, and the boundary was so altered that the two properties were brought into one district; then he would only have one vote, and the court would decide against him. Of course there must be a great deal of difficulty in working an Act of that kind at first, and getting all the claims properly acknowledged; but he confessed he saw no other way of managing it than to insist upon a man looking after his qualification himself.

Mr. SCOTT said, taking the Enoggera district, which was a very large district, containing a great many people who had property qualifications, that part of the district which would be called Enoggera would take most of the votes. He did not see how that could be helped.

The PREMIER: Why?

Mr. SCOTT: Because there would be very few people who would read the schedules, and very few would understand them if they did read them.

The PREMIER: They will get maps.

Mr. SCOTT said, eventually they would, perhaps, but he had not seen the maps of his district yet in which the boundaries were laid out—either the original boundaries or the amended ones; and he believed there were many other members in the same position.

The PREMIER: There is a map behind you.

Mr. SCOTT said that did not give the boundaries. The boundaries as originally given were not marked upon it, and they had been altered since. He had gone carefully over the map and could not find them; so that it would be impossible for people, unless they studied the map very closely, to find out the boundaries, and even if they did study it very closely they would not know what district they were in.

The PREMIER said as soon as the Bill had passed a map would be sent to each revision court showing distinctly the altered boundaries so far as the districts were concerned, and he had no doubt that every country newspaper in the colony would publish a description of the boundaries, which were very well known to the people in the districts. The boundaries now adopted under the Bill were easily discoverable. What he or other hon. members did not understand would be well understood in the districts, or by anyone tolerably familiar with the geography of the colony.

The HON. G. THORN said he was quite satisfied in his own mind that there would be very great difficulty in allocating the names to the proper rolls. He had said that before. Take the electorate of Fortitude Valley. He was aware that there were a number of people with qualifications, simply Breakfast Creek, living on both sides of that creek with residence qualification only, and the Valley electorate had been extended to the creek on the Brisbane side. It would be hard to say what roll they should go on. The Premier's explanation would be all very well if the numbers of the portions were given in the electoral roll; but they were not given in nineteen cases out of twenty. He had a qualification for Enoggera, but really he did not know what electorate he would be in. When he sent in his claim he gave the number of the portion, but the number of the portion was not on the roll now; and how was he to know what district he would be placed in? He was afraid the magistrates, unless they were very careful men indeed, would not be able to allocate the names on the rolls.

Mr. DICKSON said he thought several people would be disfranchised if it was insisted that the application should be accompanied by personal attendance, or by the attendance of an agent. He had risen to say that he thought the oath should be dispensed with, and also the formal attendance in support of the application.

Mr. PALMER said he followed the Premier in his description of the manner in which the electoral rolls would be made up, but the hon. gentleman did not deal with the whole case. In the case of pastoral tenants, for instance, whose runs might be divided between two of the new districts, the hon. gentleman did not expressly state that those pastoral tenants would have a vote for each of those districts. Again, in the case of goldfields, what claim were the miners to have for a vote? Was residence to be the only qualification, or would the possession of a mining lease or a miner's right be accepted as a qualification?

The PREMIER said claims to vote in respect of leaseholds could be made in gold-mining constituencies as well as elsewhere. Freehold, leasehold, and occupancy were the different claims, and they might all exist on a goldfield. The freehold claim did not ordinarily exist, but there might be pastoral leaseholds or mining leaseholds to confer a claim if the tenure and annual value was sufficient. Miners, however, generally voted on a residence qualification. The hon. member also asked what would happen in the case of a man whose run was cut in two by the boundary of two electorates. He would have no cause for complaint, because he would still have one vote if his name was on the roll, and he could put in his claim for another.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. Premier had not exactly answered the question put by the hon. member for Burke with respect to a miner holding a mining lease. The question was, if a miner or three or four conjointly were the holders of a mining lease could their claim to vote on that qualification be disallowed? The leasehold might be of an annual value of over £100 or over £1,000, or even £10,000, as some of them were, but could their claim under a leasehold qualification be disallowed? That was what the hon. member wanted to know.

The PREMIER said they would, of course, be entitled to vote if the leasehold was of sufficient value. It all depended upon the annual value and tenure of the leasehold. If it fulfilled the conditions of the Act necessary in respect of a leasehold qualification, they would, of course, be entitled to vote.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said such a qualification had been accepted for many years on Charters Towers.

The PREMIER: Quite correct.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he did not quite understand what opportunity was given to a man to repair the omission of his name from the roll in a case, for instance, like that of Enoggera

where the present district was divided into four under the Bill. There were a large number of small freeholders in that electorate, many of them resident ten miles away from where the revision court would be held, and a great many of them would be left off the roll. They would not sacrifice a day's work to come in and give evidence as to their qualification, or send an agent to do so for them, and they would not know on which roll they should be placed unless there was a vigorous canvass made.

The PREMIER said that under the circumstances he would not have the slightest sympathy with them. They would have one vote at the coming election in any case.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: They would not have one.

The PREMIER said they would. Their names would be retained on the roll for one electorate or another, and if under the new revision they were entitled to vote in three electorates and were put on the roll only for one, he had not the slightest sympathy with them if they did not choose to take the trouble to get their names put on the rolls for the other two.

Mr, LUMLEY HILL said he did not clearly understand that. Then a person owning a freehold in the Nundah electorate would not lose his vote?

The PREMIER: He would be put on the Nundah roll.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: But there had been no Nundah roll. It would be a new institution.

The PREMIER: Yes; but it would be made up from the Enoggera roll.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said that was where the difficulty was. The portions were not marked on the present roll, and how could any revision court tell in which electorate a freeholder of the present Enoggera electorate would be entitled to vote?

The PREMIER said the Bill proposed a scheme for finding that out, and if it was not thought a good one he would be glad to accept any suggestion for amending it, but he thought if hon. members considered it they would find it a tolerably complete scheme.

Mr. McMASTER said he thoroughly understood the Premier's explanation. A name appearing on the present Enoggera roll might be that of a man who resided and whose qualification arose in the new Nundah electorate, and his name would be transferred to the Nundah roll, or, failing that, his name would be retained on the Enoggera roll. If he had a qualification in both electorates he could see for himself that his name was placed on the second roll. He thought that the electors would look very sharply after the rolls, in the face of the coming election; in fact he was afraid some of them were looking after them too sharply. He happened to go into the Police Court at Brisbane a few weeks ago, and he found there a man engaged in filling up a paper in order to get his name on an electoral roll. The clerk requested him to put down his qualification, and showed him the line in which to state it. The man hesitated a little, and then coolly informed the clerk, "Well, I am not living there just now, but I shall be living there in a fortnight." He thought it was clear that the electors, in view of the approaching general election, would take every care to see that their names were placed upon the roll.

Mr. BULCOCK said he could not understand the difficulty which hon. members seemed to see in the matter. Large maps with the boundaries of the electorates properly marked would be sent to the revising justices, and they would be guided in revising the lists by the application forms, which generally stated the portions from which the qualification arose. Where that was not done the persons might be informed, and fresh applications sent in.

Mr. MORGAN said that was a matter in connection with which some difficulty would arise, and a good deal of injustice might be done to electors whose properties were situated upon the borders of an electorate. He anticipated the difficulty would arise more particularly in those very large electorates where even magistrates with some local knowledge might not be well able to say in which electorate a certain property was situated, and on which roll the owner's name should be placed. If the Government were to invoke the aid of municipal councils and divisional boards a great deal of the difficulty would be overcome. If a circular were addressed by the Chief Secretary to those bodies, asking them to place their books at the disposal of the licensing bench for that particular purpose, any question of doubt arising could be settled by referring to those books. The bench could see in a moment in what electorate the property in question was situated. There was something in the idea, and he had no doubt that if the Government made the request it would be granted at once. Of course, it could not be done without a request from the Government.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—"Constitution of court"—passed as printed.

On clause 11, as follows:—

"The electoral registrar shall, at the opening of each such court, produce the annual electoral lists and the supplementary annual electoral lists compiled by him under the Elections Act of 1885 for all the now existing electoral districts or electoral divisions of districts any part of which is comprised in the electoral district or districts, or electoral division or divisions, in respect whereof such court has jurisdiction, together with the rolls marked as in that Act provided, and also a copy of the papers containing the names of persons objected to as therein provided, and all communications received from persons to whom notices have been sent by him as thereby prescribed.

"The court shall thereupon, from the lists, rolls, and other papers aforesaid, and otherwise as hereinafter prescribed, make out special lists of all persons qualified to vote for the electoral district or districts, or electoral division or divisions, in respect whereof the court has jurisdiction, and in so doing shall be guided by the provisions of the twenty-third section of the said last-mentioned Act and the following provisions:—

(1) The names of all persons appearing on such lists which ought, under the provisions of the said Act, to have been retained on the list if this Act had not been passed, shall be inserted in the special lists for the districts for which such persons are respectively qualified to vote, unless the statement of the situation of their residence or property in the annual or supplementary annual lists is insufficient to denote the electoral district within which such residence or property is situated;

(2) In the event of such statement being insufficient or if the situation of the residence or property of any persons whose names are on such last-mentioned lists is not therein specified, the court shall proceed to inquire by such evidence as it thinks fit, or upon its own knowledge, into the situation of such residence or property, and shall insert the names of such persons in the special lists for the districts or divisions in which it appears by such inquiry that such persons are entitled to vote;

(3) For the purpose of ascertaining the situation of such residence or property, the court may refer to any claim theretofore sent in or made under the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Act of 1886, and the contents of such claims shall be taken to be *primâ facie* true and correct;

(4) Every such special list shall specify the residence or the situation of the property, as the case may be, of every person whose name is so inserted therein;

(5) No name shall be inserted in any special list of any person who is proved to the satisfaction of the court to be dead;

(6) If the court is unable to ascertain within what district or division the residence or property of any person is situated, the electoral registrar shall forthwith send by post to the usual or last known place of abode of such person a notice informing him of the fact, and also of the provisions of the next following paragraph of this section;

(7) Any person qualified to vote for any electoral district may claim to have his name inserted in the special list for such district or the proper division of the district, whether his name appears in any list before the court or not, and may appear either personally or by agent before such court, and on proof on oath of his qualification to the satisfaction of such court his name and qualification shall be so inserted in such special list."

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he thought the first part of the clause, which provided that the electoral registrar should produce the annual electoral lists, and the supplementary electoral lists, was very good as far as it went, but something more was wanted to assist the revision courts in determining difficult questions that might arise. Take Enoggera, for instance, and the court wanted to know in what portion of the present electorate of Enoggera a certain freehold estate was situated, the electoral registrar should be compelled also to produce the applications or claims of electors, which applications described, as far as the applicant could, what was the freehold estate and where it was situated. Then, if any doubt existed in the mind of the court as to whether the property in question were in Enoggera, Toombul, or Nundah, it could be settled at once.

The PREMIER said it was provided in the 3rd paragraph of the clause that claims might be referred to.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that that only referred to providing the courts with a list of claims. He wanted the claims themselves to be available.

The PREMIER said he had no objection to meet the suggestion of the hon. member for Townsville, and would move that the clause be amended by the insertion of the following at the end of the first paragraph:—

He shall also produce to the court all claims in his possession which have been theretofore sent in or made under the Elections Act of 1885, or the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Act of 1886, and which relate to any of such electoral districts or electoral divisions of districts.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Mr. PALMER said the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, had stated that he thought all the persons entitled to vote would be very sharp in looking after their claims to vote, and to see that their names were properly enrolled. The hon. member, of course, got his experience from the district in which he was particularly interested, and his argument showed that experience in one district would not apply to all districts of the colony. Things were very different out in the pastoral districts from what they were in centres of population. In the first place, persons desiring to get their names on the roll were mystified and thrown off the scent altogether—in fact completely "bluffed," to use a colonial term—by the very form of claim. He had known even lawyers who could not fill up that form properly in making their claim, and scores of men sent in claims that were informal. In the Western pastoral district men had not the opportunities of getting their claims properly filled in that those living in town had, and hundreds and thousands of men out in those districts would be completely disfranchised by the new condition of things now brought about. The district he was now representing had been divided into three electorates to return four members, and in that district there were hundreds of carriers and others whose occupations took them from one end of it to the other, and they would now have the greatest difficulty in getting their names on the rolls. He believed that the Premier could, if he had a mind to, devise some means by which hundreds and thousands of men out in the pastoral districts—genuine voters—could be properly registered in such a way that they would be qualified to vote at elections. Even now they had to go unreasonable distances and to a great deal of trouble to get their names on the roll, and when the district was divided and cut up into much smaller electorates hundreds would be disfranchised. He was certain that different applications of the Electoral Act could be applied in a special manner to those districts so that they would not practically disfranchise men who were entitled to vote. They were supposed to give every man in the colony a vote, and then they hedged him round with all sorts of restrictions with respect to the form of application, confining him to the district in which he had to vote, and so on, until practically he was deprived of his vote altogether. To show how the thing worked, he would point out the proportion of voters in the pastoral districts to population, and show how differently they stood from other districts. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley need not think that because he knew all about Fortitude Valley he knew all about Queensland, or that the rules that applied to a closely populated district would apply to districts in the interior. The census returns showed that the proportion of voters to population was much less in the outside pastoral districts than in any other districts in the colony, 26·28 being the proportion of the group, while, as a rule, in other parts of the colony he believed it was 60, and even 70; so that it was evident that the people outside were labouring under special difficulties, and those difficulties would be intensified by the new order of things—the new form of application and the difficulties arising out of the division of the electoral districts.

The PREMIER said the new order of things the hon. member complained of was the nature of things. Whenever electorates were divided there must be some little trouble in adjusting the rights of electors; they could not help that; and as to the new form of application, every possible facility was given to an applicant to show that he was really entitled to vote. Under the previous system the form was incomplete, and led to claims being rejected.

Mr. McMASTER said he was not quite sure that the hon. member for Burke was incorrect when he said that he (Mr. McMaster) did not know everything about the colony if he did about Fortitude Valley. If he understood the hon. member properly, he was contending that the outside pastoral districts should have a travelling vote. The hon. gentleman spoke about carriers and others, and no doubt it would be a very good electioneering dodge to give votes to men travelling around the district with packhorses and swags collecting votes. When he (Mr. McMaster) said he thought the electors would be likely to look after their rights, he meant that country electors would do so as well as those who resided in towns. On the eve of a general election electors would be alive to their interests, and try to get their names placed upon the rolls. He admitted that a great many people did not know how to put in their claims for qualification. He had seen persons when filling in the qualification insert, instead of residence as freeholders, their occupation,

He thought the present form might be very much improved. If an individual put in one of those forms properly filled in, whether he was entitled to vote or not, the court had no power to reject the application, unless it was a very glaring case. If the individual he had seen in the police court, Brisbane, had filled in the application properly the revision court could not have rejected it, and he had not the slightest doubt that thousands of names were put on the rolls in that same manner. He did not think it would be at all desirable to give a travelling vote. The hon. member for Cook had told them a good deal about that

The HON. G. THORN said if the hon. member for Burke would take a leaf out of the book of the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, and pay men to go round and collect names to be put on the electoral rolls, the proportion of voters to population in his district, which was very small at the present time, would come much nearer to the proportion in Fortitude Valley and other portions of the colony.

Mr. DONALDSON said he had no sympathy with anything that would open the doors to roll-stuffing, but he wished to point out a difficulty that might arise with regard to residential voters. Supposing a person whose name was on the roll in virtue of residence in one part of a present electorate had removed to another part, then if the electorate were subdivided possibly he would have no right to vote in the new electorate where he resided, and he was not likely to go to the old one to record his vote. Supposing, for instance, in the electorate of Burke a man had his name inserted on the roll at Cloncurry, and had within the last month or two gone to Croydon. He would not be entitled to vote in the new district of Burke; he would be put on the Flinders roll, but he was not likely to go into the Flinders district to record his vote.

The PREMIER said he thought that would be met by paragraph 7 of section 23 of the Act of 1885:—

"When a person whose name appears on a list or roll has ceased to hold the qualification stated in the list or roll, but has another qualification entitling him to have his name entered in the list or roll, he may attend at the court and prove such other qualification, or make and send to the electoral registrar a claim in the form hereinafter prescribed for making claims, and every such claim shall be produced to the court. The court shall correct the statement of the qualification of any such elector accordingly."

Mr. DONALDSON said he had no doubt that that debate would be very useful, and he hoped the compilers of the rolls would have *Hansard* by them and refer to the opinions given by the Premier; because difficulties were certain to arise which his explanations would assist in removing.

Mr. NORTON said there were two principal difficulties in compiling the rolls. One was that those who were entitled to have their names on the rolls would not take the trouble to have them put on, as the hon. member for Fortitude Valley knew.

Mr. McMASTER: No, I do not.

Mr. NORTON said the hon. member was old enough to know that in nearly every district it was necessary to send someone round to induce people to put their names on the roll. The second difficulty was that the revision court did not always deal with the claims in a common-sense manner. In almost every district claims had been rejected without anything like reasonable justification. Unless the Government took some steps to improve the composition of the revision courts, there was great danger of many names being struck off that ought to be on the rolls.

Mr. PALMER said the percentage of electors who had their names on the rolls was shown by the census table, page 18; and it would be seen that the pastoral groups were at the lowest standard of registration of voters. In the Warrego district the proportion was 25·44 per cent.; in the Gregory district it was still lower—15·15 per cent. In the metropolitan districts, including Fortitude Valley, and the Burnett and Wide Bay districts, the adult males seemed to be more attentive to registration than in any other part of the colony. The same condition of things did not exist in the metropolitan district as in the interior, where the people had to go sometimes hundreds of miles to vote, and perhaps a great deal further to get their names properly registered. It would be a very nice treat to follow the suggestion of the hon. member for Fassifern, and send a man round the Western district to collect the papers, paying him higher wages than prevailed in any other part of Queensland. Every name enrolled there would be very dearly bought. He thought a system of voters' rights might be instituted—say for special districts; it had worked well, he believed, in other colonies.

Mr. CHUBB said that getting the names on the roll in pastoral districts such as the Burke was only the first step; they had to get the electors to the poll when the election came off. Some of them lived forty or fifty miles away. It was not like the Valley, or Brisbane, where a man could go after breakfast and record his vote in five minutes.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he thought the advice of the hon. member for Fassifern was very good. His experience was, that whenever he paid a visit to the electorate he represented, the question was invariably asked—particularly since the passing of the Elections Act of 1885—"How is it my name is not on the roll; you ought to see that it is on the roll?" The fact was that every elector who was entitled to vote expected the sitting member to see that his name was put on the roll. That was his experience, and it was also that of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, and of the hon. member for Fassifern, and of the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Aland. He had no doubt that that was the better way, if not the only way, of seeing that the names of those who were entitled to vote were on the rolls, and he should advise the hon. member for Burke to take the matter in hand. He did not know whether that hon. member had a travelling-box, or took any steps to get the names registered or not; but it appeared that that was the only way to get all the names on the roll. Every member in the Brisbane district was constantly asked to take any quantity of applications to the police office, and see that they were properly registered.

Mr. MURPHY said if it were necessary for every member to see that his constituents' names were on the roll, it would be better for them to return to the old system of having the names collected by Government officials, which used to be the practice before, in the colony. Of course if that duty were left to the sitting members, they would see that only those who held correct opinions were put on, and those who held other views would not be represented at all. He had no doubt that the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, when he went round with a packhorse collecting the names for the roll for his district, took very good care that only those holding what he considered correct opinions were put on the roll; and there was no doubt the hon. member for Fassifern did the very same thing. If it were absolutely necessary that the names should be collected—and there appeared to be a consensus of opinion

amongst hon. members that it was—he thought they should be collected by some Government officials sent round the constituencies for the purpose.

The PREMIER said that system was tried in 1874, and it remained in operation until the next Government came in, when it was altered. He thought it a very good system of compiling the rolls. It had been tried twice in the colony, and had twice been repealed, and he did not propose to go back to it now.

Mr. CHUBB said a suggestion was made to him some time ago by a gentleman as to how the rolls could be collected in a comparatively cheap manner, and that was that the persons who collected the annual statistics for the Registrar-General should also leave forms of application to be placed upon the rolls, and collect them again with the other forms when they were filled up, and leave them at the various court-houses. That could be done without any great additional expense to the country.

The PREMIER said if no hon. member had any amendment to propose he would move one or two verbal ones. The first was in the last line but one of the 2nd paragraph of subsection 2 of the clause. He moved that the words "or divisions in" be omitted with a view of inserting the word "for." That would make the paragraph read in the same manner as the previous one. In reference to what fell from the hon. member for Warrego, as to a man removing from one end of a large district to another, he proposed to insert a paragraph to deal with the matter, as in a case like that there would be an entirely different revision court. A man might go from Cloncurry to Croydon, but the former revision court would have no jurisdiction over the electorate of Burke, and therefore he thought there should be provision inserted to meet such cases, where it appeared that a man who had ceased to have a qualification in one part had one in another part of what was previously the same district, but was made a part of another. He had the paragraph written out, and would move it after paragraph 6.

Mr. PALMER said there was still a difficulty which might arise. There would be no evidence before the court at Croydon to show that a man registered at Cloncurry had a right to a vote for Burke. He might be away at a distant part of the diggings, and not appear himself, and, if so, there would be no evidence before the court to show that a man who was at present at Croydon ought to be on the roll for Burke.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved that the word "qualified" be substituted for the word "entitled" in the last line of the paragraph.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved the insertion, after the word "under," in paragraph 3, of the words "the Elections Act of 1885, or."

Amendment put and passed.

The PREMIER said he had an amendment which would meet the case suggested by the hon. member for Burke. He proposed to insert the following after the 4th paragraph :—

If it is made to appear to the court that any person whose name appears on a list is not qualified to vote for any electoral district in respect of which the court has jurisdiction, but is nevertheless qualified to vote for another district in respect of a qualification situated or arising within another division of the same existing electoral district, the court shall cause particulars of the name and qualification of such person to be transmitted to the proper court having jurisdiction in respect of such other district, to be by such court inserted in the special list for the district.

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

On clause 12, as follows :—

"Every such court shall have power to adjourn from time to time for any period or periods not exceeding seven days. Provided that no such adjourned court shall be held after the thirtieth day from the day appointed by the Governor in Council as aforesaid."

The PREMIER said he confessed that he was rather afraid that the proviso, that "no such adjourned court shall be held after the thirtieth day from the day appointed by the Governor in Council," would allow too short a time. On the other hand he did not like to give the courts unlimited power to adjourn. In the more distant electorates the courts could not be held before the end of December or the beginning of January, and when the rolls were ready it would take some time to get them put in proper order and printed; so that although he would be very loth to extend the time unnecessarily, he was afraid that the date fixed by the proviso would be too short for the country districts, and even for Brisbane. Perhaps it might be as well to alter it to sixty days.

Mr. CHUBB said that clause provided that an adjourned court must be concluded on the thirtieth day after it was commenced to be held. But according to the 7th section—

"If any such registration court is not held at the time so appointed, the Governor in Council may approve of the proceedings of any such court held at any time after the time appointed."

So that the original court might be commenced to be held after the time appointed, if it was not held at that time, whereas an adjourned court must stop on the thirtieth day.

Mr. BULCOCK said he thought it would be advisable to make it sixty days instead of thirty, as there would be a good deal of trouble in preparing the rolls in Brisbane as well as in the country districts.

The PREMIER said it was just a question whether they should extend the time to sixty days or leave it to the Governor in Council to extend the time. He was disposed to think that the latter would be the better plan, and would therefore move that the clause be amended by adding the words "or such later day as may be approved by the Governor in Council."

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

Clause 13—"Special courts to take place of annual revision courts"—passed as printed.

On clause 14, as follows :—

"Forthwith after the making out of the special lists as aforesaid for the several districts and divisions in respect whereof the court has jurisdiction, the electoral registrar shall forward the same to the returning officer of the electoral district to which they respectively relate."

The PREMIER moved the addition of the words, "who shall forthwith proceed to compile from such lists an electoral roll in manner prescribed by the Elections Act of 1885."

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

Clause 15—"Rolls to be in use for 1888"—passed with a verbal amendment.

On clause 16, as follows :—

"Except as hereinbefore otherwise provided, the provisions of the twenty-second to the twenty-seventh sections, both inclusive, and of the twenty-seventh to the forty-third sections, both inclusive, of the Elections Act of 1885 shall be applicable to the registration courts hereby appointed to be held, and to the compilation of the special lists and rolls under this Act."

The PREMIER said an extraordinary mistake had crept into the clause in the 3rd line, and he could not understand how it arose. The 3rd

line was all wrong, and the sections referred to related to entirely different subjects. The whole line had been interpolated, but he had no means of tracing the mistake. He moved the omission of the 3rd line of the clause, "and of the 27th to the 43rd sections, both inclusive."

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

Clauses 17 and 18 passed as printed.

On postponed clause 2, as follows:—

"The Legislative Assembly of Queensland shall thereafter consist of sixty-eight members."

The PREMIER moved the omission of the words "sixty-eight," with a view of inserting the words "seventy-two."

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

On the schedule—

The PREMIER said he thought it would be convenient to deal with the whole schedule at once, for the purpose of substituting for it a new one. There were a great many mistakes in the boundaries, and he proposed to substitute a new schedule with the amended boundaries. There were a few verbal errors in the amended schedule which would have to be corrected. In the amended schedule the electorate of Albert appeared first, and Aubigny next, and so on in alphabetical order.

Mr. CHUBB: We had better take them in alphabetical order.

The PREMIER said that would be of no use, as the whole of the schedule was wrong as it stood, and it was no use putting the Chairman to the trouble of reading them all. He did not want to prevent discussion on the amended schedule, but he thought there could be no objection to substituting the amended schedule bodily for the one in the Bill. They could then recommit the Bill and put the 4th clause in alphabetical order, and then take the districts of the schedule seriatim if that were thought advisable.

Schedule put and negatived.

The PREMIER moved that the amended schedule be the schedule of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that you do now leave the chair, and the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clause 4 so far as relates to the names of the electoral districts and their alphabetical order, and the schedule.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

On clause 4—"Electoral districts and members"—

The PREMIER said he did not know whether any amendments were to be proposed in the names of the electoral districts. There was only one in respect of which he would himself suggest an amendment, beyond that of "North Rockhampton," which should be that of the "Rockhampton North." The electorate to which he referred was the electorate of Blackall. A good deal of confusion had arisen from the fact of there being two "Blackalls" in the colony—one the electoral district, near Rockhampton, and the other a large town in the Barcoo district. Although he was loth to do anything which might be considered disrespectful to the name of the late Governor Blackall, he thought it would be more convenient if another and a native name was found for that district. "Mount Morgan" had been suggested, but he thought that too localised. He suggested that the name of "Calliungal" would be a good name for it. If there were to be any alterations in the names it would be convenient to make them when they reached the line after which, in alphabetical order, they should be made. He moved that before the words "Aubigny, one member," the words "Albert, one member," be inserted.

Mr. CHUBB said he should like to see native names chosen for electorates wherever possible. He must confess he did not like the name "Albert."

The PREMIER said that all the local names in that electorate were connected with special localities—such as Coomera, Pimpama, and Nerang, and some in the Fassifern district. There were several very nice names, but they were all local, whilst the word "Albert" represented a very large portion of the district at any rate.

Mr. HAMILTON said he thought the general opinion of hon. members was in favour of a native name. There was hardly anything to which "Albert" was not applied. There were Albert memorials, Albert watch-chains, and Albert this, that, and the other. There were plenty of good native names without their being compelled to fall back upon "Albert."

Amendment put and agreed to.

Mr. NORTON said that no very great reason had been given for dispensing with the name "Blackall." The only reason he knew of was that there was a town in the West named Blackall; and that was not a sufficient reason, because no difficulty could arise therefrom.

The PREMIER: There has; a little.

Mr. NORTON said he did not think it would create so much difficulty as the similarity of the names "Mulgrave" and "Musgrave." He did not object to the name "Calliungal," but there had been a member for Blackall for a number of years, and the name had become familiar. That was a good reason for retaining it. He did not know what the opinion of the people there was about it, but he thought scarcely sufficient reason had been shown for changing the name.

Mr. FERGUSON said he did not attach very much importance to what the name of the electorate might be, but if there was to be a change he would like to see it called "Fitzroy."

The PREMIER said that was what he also should prefer.

Mr. FERGUSON said it would be a very appropriate name, as the electorate ran alongside the River Fitzroy all the way to Port Alma.

Mr. NORTON said he also had thought of the name "Fitzroy," but he did not suggest it because it had been already struck out of the clause.

The PREMIER said that was for a very different reason, which he mentioned at the time.

Mr. NORTON said the name "Fitzroy" was connected there with local associations, and it was advisable to have some local association in connection with the name of an electorate.

Mr. PALMER suggested that "Boree" would be a very good substitute for "Albert," as the name of the first electorate. It was a native name, and was quite as good as "Bulloo."

The PREMIER said that with regard to the names "Mulgrave" and "Musgrave," mentioned by the hon. member for Port Curtis, it would be convenient to leave out "Mulgrave," and substitute for it some other name. The memory of the Marquis of Normanby was perpetuated by the name "Normanby," which

it was not proposed to alter. Probably "Woongarra" — a name associated with the district —would be a good substitute for "Mulgrave." The name "Barolin" might also be suggested in connection with that electorate. Perhaps the hon. member for the district might suggest another name.

Mr. ADAMS said that as Mulgrave had been the name of the electorate for a number of years, he thought it would be unwise to change it. It would be far better to alter "Musgrave," although neither "Woongarra" nor "Barolin" represented more than a very small portion of the district.

The PREMIER asked what other divisional boards there were in the district?

Mr. ADAMS said there were Woongarra, Kolan, Burrum, Granville, and Gooburrum. Therefore he thought it would be very unwise to alter the name of "Mulgrave."

Mr. BLACK said he agreed with the hon. member for Mulgrave. "Mulgrave" was a name very well known; it was familiar to people all over the colony, and he thought it would be expedient to allow that name to remain. There was no doubt the names "Musgrave" and "Mulgrave" did cause confusion, being so similar to each other, and he would suggest that "Musgrave" be altered to "Herbert," which would be a very appropriate name, the same as the well-known river in that district.

The PREMIER said he did not at all concur in that suggestion. It had always been the practice to give electoral districts the names of the governors of the colony, so that they might be commemorated in that way. He thought it would be particularly ungracious to take that opportunity of striking out the name of the present Governor and insert some other. They might change "Mulgrave" to "Musgrave"; that would not be a bad idea.

Mr. ADAMS said if it was the wish of the Committee and of the Chief Secretary that they should perpetuate the name of the present Governor he had no objection to altering "Mulgrave" to "Musgrave." He thought it would be somewhat discourteous to strike the present Governor's name off.

Mr. BLACK said that when he suggested the alteration he had no intention whatever of any discourtesy to His Excellency the Governor. He had done so simply because, as was well known to hon. members, the two names "Musgrave" and "Mulgrave" were a frequent cause of difficulty, and now that they were giving new names he had thought that "Musgrave" might be altered to "Herbert," which would be a most appropriate name for the electorate in which the Herbert River was situated. He should be very glad to see the name "Musgrave" perpetuated.

Mr. KATES said he and a great many residents of the Darling Downs did not like to see that name wiped out altogether. It was a well-known name which ought to be retained. He therefore moved that the word "Cunningham" be omitted with the view of inserting "Eastern Downs," which was formerly the name of that part of the Darling Downs.

Mr. NORTON said he did not know whether the hon. member, Mr. Kates, had said that it was the wish of his constituents that the word "Downs" should be retained in some form, but he thought "Cunningham" was a very appropriate name for that part of the colony. It was a name that everyone knew and held in honour, and it ought to be perpetuated.

Mr. KATES said it was the wish of his constituents, as expressed in public meeting, that he and the other member for Darling Downs should endeavour to get "Eastern Downs" inserted, and he thought the hon. gentleman would admit that they ought to defer to the wishes of their constituents in a matter of that sort. He was sure there could be no objection to the alteration, and he hoped the Committee would agree to it.

The PREMIER said he had received a great number of communications from all parts of the colony with regard to the new electorates, but none from the electorate represented by the hon. member. Perhaps they preferred to communicate their wishes to their members. He should like to know where the meeting the hon. member referred to was held, the number of people who were there, and the number who were in favour of the alteration, because, as he had said, he had received communications from all parts of the colony on the subject except that one.

Mr. KATES said the communication was sent to him as member for the district. The meeting took place at Allora, which was in the centre of the district, and was the place of nomination and polling. The meeting was fairly advertised, and it was unanimously agreed that he should see the Premier and endeavour to get "Eastern Downs" inserted in place of "Cunningham." Eastern Downs was formerly the name of the electorate, which was once represented by the late Mr. Macalister, and he was sure there could be no objection to it.

The PREMIER said, when Eastern Downs was the name of that portion of the district, they had also the electorates of Western Downs and Northern Downs, and there was then some sense in it, because it distinguished the different parts of the Downs. After that they had Darling Downs and Northern Downs, both of which were now gone; and why should Eastern Downs be retained? It would be very unfair that that part of the district should monopolise the whole name to itself. He thought that "Cunningham" would give general satisfaction. It was a good name, and one deserving to be commemorated. That was not the first time that it had been proposed. It was proposed fifteen years ago for an electorate having almost the same boundaries as were now proposed.

Mr. ALLAN said he had previously presented a petition to the House from the electors of the district expressing the wish that the name "Darling Downs" should be retained for that particular part of the country. Of course, now that the electorate had been cut up, he did not know whether that would be a proper name or not. But there was one reason why that part of the district should be called Eastern Downs, and that was, because there was a large association there called the Eastern Downs Agricultural Association. He certainly thought it desirable to retain old names as far as possible. "Darling Downs" was well known, not only in the colony, but over all Australia; and as that was eliminated by the Bill, he thought they should at least keep half of it by naming the electorate in question "Eastern Downs."

Mr. SHERIDAN said he hoped the Premier would not be dissuaded from calling the new district "Cunningham." "Cunningham" was a name associated with the whole history of Australia. Mr. Cunningham had accompanied Sir Thomas Mitchell in his great explorations, was a botanist of renowned knowledge, and was esteemed as such all over the world. He lost his life in the service of the country, having been killed by the blacks on the Bogan River. In Sydney a beautiful monument had been erected to his memory, and indeed in every history of Australia his name was put forward as one of the great men of the world. For those reasons he thought it would be a fitting tribute to his memory that the new district

should be called after him, and he sincerely hoped the Premier would insist that it should be so.

Mr. KATES said he quite agreed that Cunningham's name should be perpetuated in the colony, as he had been a great explorer. He had proposed the amendment in deference to the wishes of his constituents, but after what had been said he would, with the permission of the Committee, withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The clause was further amended, and passed as follows:—

"The colony of Queensland shall thereafter be divided into the following electoral districts, returning respectively the number of members set opposite to their names, that is to say:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Albert | One member |
| Aubigny | One member |
| Balonne | One member |
| Barcoo | One member |
| Bowen | One member |
| Brisbane, North | Two members |
| Brisbane, South | Two members |
| Bulimba | One member |
| Bulloo | One member |
| Bundaberg | One member |
| Bundanba | One member |
| Burke | Two members |
| Burnett | One member |
| Burrum | One member |
| Cairns | One member |
| Cambooya | One member |
| Carnarvon | One member |
| Carpentaria | One member |
| Charters Towers | Two members |
| Clermont | One member |
| Cook | One member |
| Cunningham | One member |
| Dalby | One member |
| Drayton and Toowoomba | Two members |
| Enoggera | One member |
| Fassifern | One member |
| Fitzroy | One member |
| Flinders | One member |
| Fortitude Valley | Two members |
| Gregory | One member |
| Gympie | Two members |
| Herbert | One member |
| Ipswich | Two members |
| Kennedy | One member |
| Leichhardt | One member |
| Lockyer | One member |
| Logan | One member |
| Mackay | Two members |
| Maranoa | One member |
| Maryborough | Two members |
| Mitchell | One member |
| Moreton | One member |
| Murilla | One member |
| Musgrave | One member |
| Normanby | One member |
| Nundah | One member |
| Oxley | One member |
| Port Curtis | One member |
| Rockhampton | Two members |
| Rockhampton, North | One member |
| Rosewood | One member |
| Stanley | One member |
| Toombul | One member |
| Toowong | One member |
| Townsville | Two members |
| Warrego | One member |
| Warwick | One member |
| Wide Bay | One member |
| Woolloongabba | One member |
| Woothakata | One member." |

Schedule—

Electoral districts of Albert, Aubigny, Balonne, Barcoo, passed as printed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the electoral district of Blackall was omitted, with a view of inserting it later on as Fitzroy.

On electoral district of Bowen—

Mr. CHUBB said that in the schedule, as it was framed, the electorate included the country between the Burdekin and the Houghton Rivers, portions 1 and 2A in the census district of Townsville.

The PREMIER: Excepting Ravenswood Junction.

Mr. CHUBB said he had not been able to get much information as to the number of people in that part of the country. The old electorate of Bowen contained 1,143 adult males, exclusive of aliens; but the new electorate would contain 972 adult males. So far as he could ascertain there was a total population of 1,129 persons in the country added; but he supposed that included Ravenswood Junction.

The PREMIER said the population, leaving out Ravenswood Junction, was 657 persons.

Mr. CHUBB said the adult male population in the added country was about 155, and there was a difference of opinion amongst his constituents as to whether that district should be added or not. But he was afraid if it were left out the population would be below the standard.

The PREMIER: Very much below.

Mr. CHUBB said he did not know that there was very much objection to it. Some of the residents to the north of the Burkekin, he believed, were not in favour of it. But without the addition there would not be population enough to entitle the district to a member upon the adult male or population basis.

The PREMIER said the difference would be not less than 650 total population and 270 adult males.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Brisbane North and Brisbane South passed as printed.

On electoral district of Bulimba—

The PREMIER said it was proposed to alter the boundary between Oxley and Bulimba by making the old Logan road, instead of the Ipswich road, the boundary between them. The result would be to throw Rocklea into the Oxley electorate.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he thought the amendment a very good one, and the hon. member for Oxley, Mr. Grimes, also approved of the alteration.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Bulloo, Bundaberg, and Bundanba passed as printed.

On electoral district of Burke—

The PREMIER said the district as now proposed did not take in the Woolgar Gold Field, which had more connection with Hughenden than with the Etheridge or Croydon. It was now proposed that the district should include the Etheridge and Croydon Gold Fields and such runs in their neighbourhood as were closely connected with those goldfields, and would afford a convenient boundary.

Question put and passed.

On electoral district of Burnett—

The PREMIER said the Isis Scrub was left out of the Burnett and put into the Wide Bay district.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Burrum and Cairns passed as printed.

On electoral district of Cambooya—

Mr. JESSOP said he thought Cecil Plains ought to have been included in the electorate of Cambooya.

The PREMIER said he had endeavoured to exclude purely pastoral country, as far as possible, from Cambooya, which was almost entirely agricultural, with the exception of Eton Vale. His object was to make it as nearly as possible a selectors' district; but Cecil Plains was by no means a selectors' district.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Carnarvon, Carpentaria, Charters Towers, and Clermont passed as printed.

On electoral district of Cook—

Mr. HAMILTON said he believed it was understood when the Bill was last discussed that Hutchinson Creek was to be the southern boundary of the district. That creek ran almost due east into the sea, about sixteen miles below the mouth of the Bloomfield River, and formed a natural boundary; and the people of the Cook district had expressed themselves almost unanimously in favour of Hutchinson Creek being the boundary, in preference to the boundary line running west from Point Tribulation, as laid down in the schedule.

The PREMIER said the boundary had been altered so as to take in the southern watershed of the creek referred to. The boundaries proposed were intended to give effect to what the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, had suggested.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he thought the Premier had made a mistake. The boundary as laid down in the schedule commenced at Cape Tribulation, but Hutchinson Creek was fifteen miles south of that.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Premier stated that the boundaries described in the map would take in all the Bloomfield mines. He did not believe it would. The mouth of Hutchinson Creek was fifteen or sixteen miles below Cape Tribulation, and he (Mr. Hamilton) considered that Hutchinson Creek would be a more natural boundary than the one given in the schedule.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Cunningham, Dalby, Drayton and Toowoomba, Enoggera, and Fassifern passed as printed.

The PREMIER moved that after Fassifern there be inserted "Electoral district of Fitzroy," taking for its description the electoral district of Blackall as it appeared in the schedule.

Mr. NORTON said the present electoral district of Blackall commenced "at the south side of the Fitzroy River at a point bearing south from the summit of Broadmount, and bounded thence by a line bearing southerly to the watershed separating the Fitzroy River from Raglan Creek; thence by that watershed and the watershed separating the Fitzroy River from the Dee River and Gogango Creek." On the map that seemed a very inconvenient boundary, but as a matter of fact it was a good one, because there was a scrub occupying the watershed which divided Raglan Creek from the Fitzroy River. The people living on the western side were more intimately connected with Rockhampton. On the eastern side there were two or three runs, but the map was not distinct enough to show whether the proposed boundary included these two runs in the Port Curtis district.

The PREMIER: They are taken from the police boundaries.

Mr. NORTON said it was not shown distinctly on the map. The Premier had first proposed to take Raglan Creek as the boundary, but that would not be a good boundary because it would divide two runs, and throw portions of each into the two districts.

The PREMIER said the boundary was that of the police district, and that was settled two or three years ago by a committee of permanent heads of departments, who adjusted the boundaries. A great deal of trouble was taken, particularly with that boundary, and it was a well-known boundary between the police districts of Gladstone and Rockhampton.

Mr. NORTON: Does it include all the people about Raglan?

The PREMIER said he believed so.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Flinders, Fortitude Valley, Gregory, and Gympie, passed as printed.

The PREMIER moved that the electoral district of Herbert be inserted after Gympie, being the description of the electoral district of Mulgrave. It was merely a transposition and change of name.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Ipswich, Kennedy, Lockyer, Leichhardt, Logan, Mackay, Maranoa, Maryborough, and Mitchell passed as printed.

On electoral district of Moreton—

The HON. G. THORN said he did not take exception to the boundaries of the district, but in the absence of the two members for Stanley he wished to say that he believed one of them was under the impression that Byron and Kilcoy had been taken out of Moreton and placed in Stanley. He might point out that the electoral district of Stanley took its name from the Stanley River, and two-thirds of the Stanley River would be out of the district of Stanley unless Kilcoy and Byron were included in the district of Stanley. In that case it would be a misnomer to call the district "Stanley."

The PREMIER said he had made careful inquiries about that, and there was no doubt that Kilcoy and Durundur belonged entirely to Moreton. All the trade came that way, and all their connection was that way. He did not see his way to propose any amendment in the boundary in that respect.

The HON. G. THORN said the trade of Durundur was with East Moreton, but Kilcoy and Byron were part of West Moreton, and had been, before separation from New South Wales. The trade of Durundur came to the Caboolture River, but the trade of Kilcoy, now that the railway was constructed, went to Esk.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said it was the wish of the electors of Kilcoy and Durundur to belong to Moreton.

Question put and passed.

On electoral district of Mulgrave—

The PREMIER moved that the word "Mulgrave" be omitted, with a view of inserting the word "Musgrave."

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

Electoral district of Murilla put and passed.

Electoral district of Musgrave put and negatived.

Electoral districts of Normanby, Nundah, Oxley, Rockhampton, Rockhampton North, Rosewood, and Stanley passed as printed.

On electoral district of Toombul—

Mr. BUCKLAND said he understood the boundary of Toombul had been altered so that the southern side would be Breakfast Creek; it did not cross the creek at all.

The PREMIER: No; it does not cross the creek at all.

Question put and passed.

Electoral districts of Toowong, Townsville, Warrego, Warwick, Wide Bay, and Woolloongabba passed as printed.

On electoral district of Woothakata—

Mr. HAMILTON said the boundary of that district as marked on the map should be altered, because it was misleading, as it did not correspond with the description in the schedule. The schedule description of the boundary stated that

the northern watershed of the Daintree River east to Cape Tribulation was to be the northern boundary, but according to the line drawn upon the map it was not the boundary, as according to that line the northern boundary was a considerable distance north of the northern watershed of the Daintree. Hutchinson Creek ran towards the sea in an easterly direction, fifteen miles south of Cape Tribulation. The boundary on the map was from Cape Tribulation, whereas, according to the schedule, it went below Hutchinson Creek. The two things did not tally.

The PREMIER said the boundary on the map corresponded exactly with that given in the schedule. There was, however, a mistake in the 2nd line of the schedule. The word "easterly" appeared instead of the word "westerly." He moved, therefore, that the word "easterly" be omitted, with the view of inserting the word "westerly."

Amendment put and agreed to.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Premier was wrong in stating that the boundary marked on the map and that set forth in the schedule agreed, as anyone could see at a glance by comparing them. If they were to go by the description in the schedule, he and the residents of Cook would be perfectly satisfied; but they would not by the map.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the map certainly did not bear out the description in the schedule. The schedule was right enough, but the map ought to be so altered that the people in the Cook district would not be led astray by it.

The PREMIER said the hon. members were evidently referring to the maps first issued, in which there were a number of mistakes, and not to the maps sent to the Library yesterday morning, the boundaries on which would be found to tally exactly with those set forth in the schedule. There could be no mistake about the northern watershed of the Daintree River, and judging from the precipitous hills on that part of the coast there was no room for error as to what waters any place was on.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

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

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry that this afternoon I quite forgot that an amendment had been circulated some time ago dealing with the question of Thursday Island, which is not now within any electoral district. It will be necessary, therefore, to again recommit the Bill for the purpose of considering that clause. There is also a verbal amendment to be made in clause 12. I move that you do now leave the chair, and that the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clause 12, and the consideration of a new clause.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said hon. members would remember that Thursday Island and Cape York Peninsula were not at present in any electoral district. It was proposed to make it part of the electorate of Cook. Not being part of any electoral district, claims to be put on the roll could not be made now; and between the time the Bill passed and the time for holding the revision courts, there would not be time, probably, to send in claims and get them dealt with. There ought to be some provision enabling electors in that part of the colony to send in their claims and have them dealt with when the revision court sat at Thursday Island. He had taken the responsibility of directing forms of claims to be sent to Thursday Island, and to let it be known, as far as was possible, that claims might be sent in By the present law, any claims sent in from a district which was not within an electoral district could not be recognised; but under the exceptional circumstances of the case some latitude might be fairly allowed, and the scheme he was about to propose might be fairly adopted. It provided that the electoral registrar should produce to the registration court all claims received by him up to the sitting of the court. The court should then receive and deal with such claims, and any claim should be deemed to be valid, notwithstanding that at the time it was sent in that part of the electoral district did not form part of any electoral district, if it showed that the claimant was in fact entitled to be registered as an elector of the electoral district. Then there were provisions for objections, which might be made orally in open court, and should be dealt with there and then or after adjournment, as the case might be. If they were dealing with a part of the colony where people were in the habit of getting claims registered, such a provision might be dangerous; but, as he had said before, under the exceptional circumstances of that part of the colony it might be safely adopted. He therefore moved the following new clause, to follow clause 11 :—

With respect to that part of the electoral district of Cook hereby created, which is not now within any electoral district, the following provisions shall have effect, that is to say—

(1) The electoral registrar or registrars shall produce to the registration court or courts appointed for that part of the said electoral district all claims made under the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Act of 1886, and received by him or them before or at the sitting of such court or courts.

(2) The said court or courts shall receive and deal with such claims in manner hereby prescribed, and any such claim shall be deemed to be a valid claim, notwithstanding that at the time when it was sent in or made the said part of the said electoral district did not form part of any electoral district, if the claim shows that the claimant is in fact entitled to be registered as an elector of the said electoral district.

(3) Any person entitled to be registered as an elector for the said electoral district may object to the insertion of the name of any such claimant in the special list. Any such objection shall be made orally in open court, and the court shall proceed to deal with the same either forthwith or after an adjournment, and with or without notice to the claimant, as may appear most convenient.

(4) The names of all claimants who appear to the court to be entitled to be registered as electors should be inserted in the special list to be made up by the court.

(5) Except as aforesaid the foregoing provisions of this Act shall, so far as they are applicable, apply to the making up of the special lists for the said part of the said electoral district."

Mr. NORTON said he would like to ask the Chief Secretary whether there might not be a difficulty in the appointment of electoral registrars in that portion of the colony which was not included in any electoral district. As soon as the Bill became law, of course it would be all right, but there might be occasion for an electoral registrar to be appointed before the Bill became law. Could they, under the present law, appoint an electoral registrar for that portion of the colony which was not in any electoral district?

The PREMIER said they could not do so until the Bill became law. The moment it became law they could appoint electoral registrars, but not until then. It was only by that Act that they would have power to do so. The clause provided that the registrar should produce to the court all claims he had received. That was the scheme; he did not see any other way of getting over the difficulty.

Mr. NORTON said the clerk of petty sessions might be instructed to receive claims.

The PREMIER said that had been done. The police magistrate at Thursday Island had been instructed to direct the clerk of petty sessions to receive claims at any time they were sent in.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Have the people been made aware of it?

The PREMIER said they had as far as it was possible without a newspaper. He might say that the chairman of the divisional board communicated with him on the subject, and he replied thanking him for calling attention to the matter, and informing him that the clerk of petty sessions had been instructed to receive claims, and that provision would be made in the Bill to meet the case. The necessary instructions had been given, and no doubt the chairman of the divisional board had made the matter public.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said perhaps the Colonial Secretary could inform the Committee if the forms of claim that had been sent up to Croydon had arrived in sufficient time for the people there to send in their claims. They were very much in the same position as the people at Thursday Island.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. B. Moreton) said no further information had been received upon the subject. Instructions had been given to have the forms printed on the spot if necessary.

New clause put and passed.

On clause 12, as follows:—

"Every such court shall have power to adjourn from time to time for any period or periods not exceeding seven days. Provided that no such adjourned court shall be held after the thirteenth day from the day appointed by the Governor in Council as aforesaid."

The PREMIER said in consequence of the insertion of the new clause, the word "such" in the 1st line of clause 12 would have to be altered. He moved that the words "Every such court shall have power to" be omitted, with the view of inserting "Any registration court may," which was more in accordance with the usual form.

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

The House resumed, and the Bill was reported with further amendments.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the adoption of the report stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow. It may be convenient for hon. members to have the Bill in their hands to-morrow, in case of any error having arisen which they may wish to point out before it is read a third time.

Question put and passed.

## 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.

### GAOLS, PENAL ESTABLISHMENTS, AND REFORMATORIES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that the sum of £11,786 be granted for Gaols, Penal Establishments, and Reformatories, said there was an increase of £1,298. Of that, £1,000 was for contingencies, £30 was caused by the establishment of a lockup at Ayr in May last; a dispenser had been appointed at the Brisbane Gaol with a salary of £150, and a turnkey at Mackay with £118.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to know whether, since the report of the Gaols Commission had been received, any action had been taken by the Government to effect a reform in the disgraceful system that prevailed in some of the gaols of the colony?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had been taking some action in the matter, especially with regard to the Townsville Gaol. He had communicated with the sheriff and also with the gaoler from Townsville, who had been down here, but he had not yet made up his mind what action was necessary there. He was satisfied, not only from the report of the Commission, but from other information he had obtained, that some radical change would have to be made there. He would bring the matter before the Cabinet at an early date.

Mr. NORTON said that the report showed the necessity for a radical change, beginning with the gentleman in charge of the establishment, if the Colonial Secretary was satisfied that the statements contained in the report were true. There were other places that required attention just as much as Townsville Gaol—for example, the female gaol at Toowoomba, and the lockup in the Valley. It was atrocious to think of putting women into such company so long as they had a shred of respectability left. In a case of that kind action ought to be taken at once to remove the disgrace from the colony that had arisen in consequence of the exposure that had been made.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the whole matter had not been discussed by the Ministry up to the present time, but it would be shortly. As far as Toowoomba Gaol was concerned, he had been over it, and he really did not believe half the evidence that was given by some of the women before the Commission. He had had several letters from people who had frequently visited the gaol, and they spoke very highly of the gaoler, and of his wife who was acting as matron. It would take some time before the whole system of their prisons could be thoroughly renovated. The present system was one that had been gradually increasing upon them——

Mr. NORTON: Growing worse and worse.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he denied that it had been growing worse and worse. It had been increasing upon them perhaps more rapidly than they had means to properly meet it. To do the whole thing in the manner it should be done would not only require proper classification in the gaols, but also the different gaols classified. He believed that there should be a gaol for none but short-sentence prisoners, so that they should not be associated with long-time prisoners. That was a matter which would take some time; and it was for the members of the Committee to express themselves freely as to what they considered the right way of meeting the difficulty.

Mr. NORTON said he did not believe one-quarter of the evidence given by the women in the Toowoomba Gaol; but making all allowance for that, it would be far better, if a woman had one shred of respectability about her, that she should be turned loose without punishment, than be shut up in that place. He did not think any women but the very worst should be put there. It was a matter that did not brook delay; the Government ought to do their very utmost to devise some system which would have the effect of separating the worst class of women from those who were not steeped in immorality and vice. So far as regarded what the hon. Colonial Secretary said about separating the different classes of criminals, they all agreed with that; but if they were to separate

those who were sentenced to two or three years' imprisonment from those who were sentenced to longer periods, they would want a great many more gaols than they had. They ought to be able to classify them in the gaols they had, or improve on those gaols so as to enable them to do so. They could not go on building new gaols for ever. Notwithstanding what had been said by the Colonial Secretary, he maintained that the whole system had been getting worse and worse. He did not believe the gaols were ever in a worse condition than at present; he could not believe it, and he thought action should have been taken at a very much earlier period. He had never heard of anything like what was mentioned in the report, even making all allowances.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that, in reference to what the Colonial Secretary had said about Ministers not having had time to consider the report and take action upon it, he hoped that when they did consider it they would also consider the evidence and see if it was in accordance with the report. If they did so, they would be very careful about what action they took. They would find that the report was extremely highly coloured in many places, and not at all borne out by the evidence—that the evidence had been strained. He also hoped when they considered the report that they would also consider the expense that the commissioners recommended. It was impossible for them to carry out those recommendations at present. They would require as great a surplus in the Treasury as they had a deficit to enable them to do so. Out of mere sentiment were they to treat the men and women in their gaols better than working men and women were treated outside? The thing was utterly absurd. There was too much sentiment altogether in regard to reformation. When persons had been in prison twice there was not much chance of reforming them. There might be a chance after the first time; but when they had been there twice, the best thing to do was to punish them and make them work for their living, and not keep them at the expense of honest men outside the gaols. He was glad to hear the Colonial Secretary speak so well of the gaoler and the matron at Toowoomba, because he had heard them very highly spoken of. He had never visited the Toowoomba Gaol, but had visited some of the other gaols mentioned in the report, and considered it utterly impossible for a gaoler to do what he considered was fair and just in regard to his own duty with the accommodation there was in some of them. The hon. member for Port Curtis said they could do a great deal with the gaols they had. He (Mr. Macrossan) thought they could do nothing in regard to classification, because the gaols had been built to hold thirty or forty prisoners, and were obliged to accommodate double that number. They would have to more than double the size of their gaols to carry out a system of classification; and keep on increasing their size as well. He thought it would be far better if they had one large gaol in some place where a good public work might be carried on—a work of some utility, such as making a breakwater, the same as had been carried out in England, at Portland, and in one or two other places—where men sentenced to long terms of imprisonment might be employed. They would then be earning their living, and saving the country a great deal of money spent out of loan on such works in different parts of the colony. They could select a place—like Townsville, for instance—where there had been a large breakwater built, or such other part of the coast as might be selected where a breakwater was needed. It would be better than keeping them cooped up in gaol all day long. As to what the Colonial Secretary had said about the Townsville Gaol, he had read the report carefully, being specially interested in that town, and had read the evidence in regard to it, and he had come to the conclusion that the report was not creditable to the men who had drawn it up, considering that evidence. If the Colonial Secretary read the evidence carefully, and then read the report, he would find that the commissioners had drawn upon their imaginations, and had concluded to be proven charges which were not proven, and which were actually disproven in some cases. He hoped the Premier, when he considered the report, would not consider it with the idea of increasing the expense of the gaols of the country.

Mr. JESSOP said he was very glad to hear the Colonial Secretary had made up his mind to consider the matter. He really did hope that by the time the matter came before the Committee some definite line of action would have been laid down, and that the Colonial Secretary would have been able to tell them what the programme was to regulate the disturbance that had taken place, and to set the Committee and the country right as to what they intended to do to fix up matters in reference to the gaols. He agreed with a great deal that had fallen from the hon. member for Townsville in reference to the prisoners being put in such positions that they would be able to earn their own living, and be punished also for their misdoings, especially when they had been convicted more than once. He thought that was perfectly right, and if hon. members referred to what he had said before, they would find that he was of that opinion then. He also thought, with the hon. member for Townsville, that a gaol should be placed somewhere where prison labour could be utilised. The Colonial Secretary told them that something was to be done; but the Committee were still in the dark on the subject. A great reform would have to take place somewhere. He trusted that the Committee would not think that, because he had asked for the commission last session, he undertook the championship of the prisons. He did nothing of the kind. He wanted to have a lot of things set right, and now was the time to do so. In reference to the Toowoomba Gaol, he had been there himself, and he looked on it as a model in regard to its management, though it was so built and so situated that it was impossible for anyone to make it what it should be. Mr. Blaney, the governor of the gaol, was a gentleman who was fully fit to take possession of any place of the kind in the colony or anywhere in the world. Everything in that establishment was in perfect order, and no reflection had been cast upon Mr. Blaney, as a manager, by the evidence or the report. In reference to the evidence he admitted that there was a great deal that could not be believed, but still there was a good deal of corroborative evidence, and some weight must be attached to that as it was impossible that so many people should repeat the same thing unless there was some truth in it; and there was no doubt that the evidence showed the necessity for a great change. He did not wish to cast any reflection on anyone, but he would point out that the sheriff was getting old now and ought to be replaced by a younger and more active man with a thorough knowledge of his business. The sheriff was entitled to a pension; the department was now too much for him, and he should be allowed to retire. He was glad to see that a dispenser had been appointed to the Brisbane Gaol. When he last spoke on the matter he made a mistake in saying that the dispenser at Townsville Gaol had administered morphia, and he now took the opportunity of saying that it was in Brisbane Gaol that it was done. The whole question required a great deal

of consideration, and he trusted it would be fairly and fully discussed, not in order to obstruct the Estimates, but with the view of having an alteration in the system.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was glad to hear the Colonial Secretary say that the matter would have his attention. The hon. member for Townsville advised the Ministry, when taking the matter into consideration, to compare the report with the evidence. He (Mr. Macfarlane) had read the report and a good deal of the evidence, and though they might not believe—some of them would not—that things were as bad as represented in the report, yet there was sufficient in the evidence to show that there was something seriously wrong in connection with the gaols of the colony. In reference to the Toowoomba Gaol, it was a disgrace that young girls who had offended for the first time should be sent to mix with women who were the scum of society, because it made them worse than they were before, as was proved in the evidence. It would be better for society if those girls who were convicted for the first time were let loose rather than be sent there to be corrupted by those old sinners; it would be better to let them go unless they could be separated from other offenders. It was also shown in evidence that they were not properly attended to by the doctor, and that they were allowed to go out in just as bad a state as when they went in. If they could find out the causes of crime they would be better able to reduce the number of prisoners. There was a cause for everything. In a great many cases crime sprung from larrikinism, and there were many young men who would never have become larrikins if they had been properly looked after at home. Some hon. members, including himself, lately went on a visit to St. Helena, where they entered into conversation with two or three individuals of the larrikin class who went astray, according to their own admission, before they were fourteen years of age. Free education ought to go a long way in training the young, but education would not do everything. They wanted moral training as well. It was shown that want of paternal supervision, facilities for getting into bad company, and the use of strong drink, were some of the principal causes of crime. Probably strong drink did more than many other things combined to lead people to commit crime. He might say, in passing, that Queensland had the finest law with reference to intoxicating drinks of any country in the world, but he must confess that that law was not administered. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would do his duty in trying to decrease crime by trying to prevent it. If he would do his duty and administer the Act, which compelled publicans to shut up on Sunday, he would do a great deal to prevent young people from being led astray. It would be far better for young people to go out into the country on a Sunday, even by train, than be huddled in those drinking-shops on the Sabbath day. It was well known that in Brisbane and many other towns, the Act was not administered, but he did not know why. If a man thieved he was called to account for it; and why should not the publican who kept open his shop contrary to the law, also be dealt with? It would be far better to repeal the Act than not to put it into force. A law not put into force was a disgrace; and he hoped the Colonial Secretary would do his part towards preventing crime in the manner he had suggested. In reference to employing prisoners, he did not see why their labour should not be utilised. There were strong men in prison pining for something to do. One hon. member spoke of employing them in erecting breakwaters or weirs. That was an excellent method of employing their labour, and if break waters or weirs were put across the Brisbane River the water might be dammed back for miles and miles, giving an almost everlasting supply of pure water to the inhabitants of Brisbane and Ipswich, and all the way down the river. For want of those breakwaters the water was allowed to go to waste. There was another way in which prisoners might be employed. Any hon. member who had passed from Brisbane to Roma would have noticed the miles and miles of country along the railway that was studded with scrub. Prisoners might be employed in clearing the forests on that splendid land, which would then be worth £10 an acre. It would be perfectly easy to do that; it would cost the country very little indeed; and it would be better for the prisoners, better for the country, and better for all concerned. From the laugh that was raised by one or two hon. members he supposed they thought that scheme of improving the country was Utopian. But other countries had done such things, and why not Queensland? She stood in the front rank in many things, and why should she not stand in the front rank in the matter of utilising prison labour? He had no sympathy with the feeling that prisoners should be attended to, and made so comfortable that they were in a better position than working men. They did too much for their prisoners. If a boy committed an offence he believed that a whipping with a birch-rod would do him more good than sending him to prison. If a boy of his committed an offence, he would far rather see him whipped with a birch-rod than imprisoned. He hoped that the Executive would be more concerned to prevent crime than to punish it.

Mr. BLACK said the report of the Commission did not speak favourably of the condition of the Mackay Gaol. He noticed a sum down on the Estimates for a turnkey for the Mackay Gaol. Was that for the present gaol, or the new gaol in contemplation for which a sum of £1,400 or £1,500 was voted some time ago? Would the Colonial Secretary state what had been done towards the erection of the new gaol?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, as the hon. member would no doubt recollect, a site had been chosen on which the gaol should be erected. Plans were afterwards prepared for the buildings, and it was then found that an extra sum of money would have to be voted, and that sum was, he believed, on the present Estimates. After that it was agreed that the gaol should be erected on the other side of the river, and it was then discovered that the bridge had not been finished. Arrangements had, however, been made with the Works Department to have the approaches made, so that that difficulty would be got over.

Mr. MURPHY said the hon. member for Ipswich asked why they could not send prisoners to the Darling Downs to clear the country of scrub. He (Mr. Murphy) thought that when an hon. member made a proposition of that kind he should think it out a little better before venturing to propound it to the Committee and to the country. If the hon. member considered for a moment what the cost of keeping those prisoners occupied in the country would be, he would see the fallacy of his proposal. The cost of keeping them there and preventing them from escaping would be something enormous; besides they would have to build a prison there for them. The only way they could profitably employ prisoners was on works such as that suggested by the hon. member for Townsville, where prisoners could be easily guarded; but to send them away to clear land would cost a great deal more than the land was worth. There was one thing that struck him very forcibly on reading the report of

the Gaol Commissioners, and that was, that under the present system of management criminals were actually being manufactured. Whether the gaols were perfect or not—of course they were not perfect—the system, the treatment that they adopted with regard to prisoners was radically wrong. Young persons who were arrested for small venial offences were put into the same cells and prisons with old prisoners.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MURPHY said the hon. gentleman said they were not.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In Brisbane I mean.

Mr. MURPHY said he would read an extract from the report with reference to the Fortitude Valley prisoners in proof of his argument. It referred to female prisoners, who, of course, should be treated with more consideration than male prisoners. The Commissioners stated:—

"All female prisoners apprehended in Brisbane and who are on remand pending the investigation of the charges made against them are detained here. Then all women committed for trial are sent here until a sufficient number are assembled to justify an escort being forwarded with them to Toowoomba Gaol. The committed prisoners are brought back from Toowoomba for trial in Brisbane and confined here during the sitting of the court. The worst evils of indiscriminate association and of mixing tried and untried prisoners are rampant. Children, young girls, and criminals who have served ten, twenty, and thirty terms of imprisonment in gaol are herded together. If what Sergeant Slattery calls 'a good girl'—that is, a girl accused of petty larceny or some venial offence — comes in he endeavours to save her from contamination by taking her into his own kitchen during the day, but she has to sleep in the associated cell at night with the other prisoners. Neglected children are sent here for protection, but they, too, must herd with the most abandoned characters. At the time of our inspection a girl seventeen years of age was in the lockup. She had been apprehended on suspicion of having stolen a ring. Her case was under investigation, and she had been detained for thirteen days. A notorious brothel-keeper was in the lockup at the same time, and the girl first told the sergeant and then ourselves that her fellow-prisoner had made most improper overtures to her, and that if when released she went to a certain address, she would get plenty of flash clothes and £10. There are no beds in the cells; the women sleep on the floor with a pair of blankets under them and a pair over them."

He (Mr. Murphy) thought that, notwithstanding what the Colonial Secretary said, that style of management was not a good one. In fact, it was evident that the system adopted in the gaols was a particularly bad one, and if the Government would only direct their attention to that one point and remedy it, they would do a great deal towards remedying faults that existed in connection with their gaols. He had been over the Brisbane Gaol and he saw little there to complain of. The management of that institution was excellent, and when the present additions to the gaol were completed all the prisoners would have separate cells. The state of St. Helena was also very creditable, although the associated cell and yard system also prevailed there. They would always have the associated yard system, but the associated cell system should be done away with, and no doubt would be, because new buildings would shortly have to be erected. If the Government would only direct their attention, with the means they had at command, to separating prisoners young in crime from old criminals; if they would keep young girls from associating with old prostitutes who were arrested off the streets of Brisbane—they would do much good. There was no doubt that young girls were herded with old criminals, and in that way they were simply manufacturing criminals.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said since the Estimates were last under consideration he had received some telegrams referring to a matter mentioned by the hon. member for Barcoo, Mr. Murphy, and he would read them to the Committee. The first one he would read was from Sergeant Dillon, who was in charge of the Blackall Gaol:—

"*Re* your wire to-day the report is false On the 20th January 1886 a man named Frederick Clifton was received in this lockup from Mr. Murphy's station charged with being of unsound mind He was attended by Dr. Johnstone the health officer here He was brought before bench on following day and remanded to this gaol for medical treatment He was regularly attended by the health officer as also by the visiting justice during his remand Two constables were told off to attend to him but notwithstanding the careful treatment he received and nourishment supplied him by the visiting justice and gaoler he gradually sank and died on the 26th same month. See Inspector Murray's telegram to you of 27th same month I deny that Clifton mutilated himself or that he lost any blood during his confinement here I refer you to the P.M. Maryborough then visiting justice here also to Dr. Johnstone now of Sydney."

The next telegram was from Mr. Rankin, police magistrate at Maryborough, who was visiting justice at Blackall Gaol at the time:—

"Your wire delayed in transit Mr. Murphy's statement *re* death of Fred. Clifton Blackall Gaol is thoroughly inaccurate in all essential particulars Clifton was given into custody at instance of Mr. Murphy's brother and was violent lunatic and had recently been drinking Medical officer deeming it unsafe to attempt to convey Clifton to asylum he was removed to gaol because that building was more airy than lockup Clifton stripped himself and being very violent and disposed to injure himself was tended day and night by constables and others Having known and liked Clifton I took especial interest in his case and constantly visited him in gaol and supplied for his use beef tea and other nutritious diet from my own kitchen Clifton received every possible kindness from his attendants Inflicted no serious injuries upon himself and statement of his having bled to death is as I firmly believe utterly false Saw him about two hours before death and had such a thing happened must have known it as the then visiting justice of gaol I respectfully demand fullest investigation in order that I may be cleared from stigma possibly attaching to me consequent upon Murphy's misstatement Am not certain whether inquest held Will wire later on this point."

He wired later on:—

"*Re* Fred Clifton Have ascertained that no inquest held Reason for this difficult to state at this distance of time but in view of fact that I was personally cognisant of circumstances attending death and that medical officer gave certificate of death I probably at time considered an inquest unnecessary Also please note that deceased was not strictly speaking an inmate of gaol It occurs to me as most extraordinary that such a statement as was made by Murphy should now be heard for first time."

He merely read these telegrams as he stated the other day that he would make inquiries into the matter.

Mr. MURPHY said that what had been read only showed how absolutely necessary it was that inquests should be held in gaols whenever a death took place. Now, what he had repeated to the Committee was information which he received from very reliable sources. At all events, it was the common report in the district, whether Mr. Rankin knew of it or not. It was not likely that those reports would reach the ears of those most interested, and who knew that those officials were interested in screening one another from the consequences of their own acts. An inquest should have been held, and if he was wrong in his statement, as he might have been, those officials had brought it upon themselves by not having held an inquest upon the man who died in the gaol, especially upon a man who was committed into their charge as a lunatic. They should have been very careful indeed to have held a proper inquiry, and then it was probable that none of those reports would have gained currency. He knew Mr. Rankin very well, and had every confidence in

him. He did not want to throw any slur or slight upon him or the performance of his duties. He believed he was one of the very best police magistrates in the Government service; but the telegrams read only went to prove his (Mr. Murphy's) contention. He only mentioned those matters to show how essential it was that inquests should be held whenever a death occurred in a gaol. As he had said, he was only repeating a common rumour in the district, and if Mr. Rankin, the police sergeant, and the doctor had done their duty, and had held a proper inquiry into the death, those reports would never have been heard of, and there would have been no necessity for the statement he had made; but when a man died in a gaol, and there was no inquiry held into the cause of death, rumours got afloat, and in that instance the rumour was that the man mutilated himself and practically committed suicide.

Mr. WHITE said that at Toowoomba Gaol they seemed to be a very happy family. Prisoners were allowed to play the piano and generally make themselves very comfortable. The gaoler, he believed, was a Mr. Blaney and the matron a Mrs. Blaney. He wanted to know whether Miss Blaney was employed as a turnkey, and whether the Colonial Secretary thought it right that she should be so employed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he believed Miss Blaney looked after the reformatory, not the gaol.

Mr. SHERIDAN said he believed every member of the Committee agreed with the hon. member for Barcoo as to the necessity for holding an inquest upon every person who died in any gaol or lockup in the colony. It was absolutely necessary that a strict inquiry should be held in every such case, not only to ascertain the cause of death, but also to do away with any imputation or charge that might be brought against the officials. He had himself had a great deal of experience as a public officer, and he believed that in every case an inquest was held when a prisoner died in any gaol or lockup; and he was surprised to learn from the hon. member for Barcoo that inquests were not held when and where they ought to have been held. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would issue orders that strict inquiry should be held into every death which in future might take place in a gaol or lockup, and that a report should in each case be made as to the cause of death. With regard to the treatment of prisoners generally, he agreed with the hon. member for Townsville that they should be employed on public works such as breakwaters. They knew that in New South Wales, at Trial Bay, the breakwater there was being erected by prisoners, who were thus employed in making what would turn out to be a grand harbour of refuge on the coast. It was better that their prisoners should be employed in the construction of harbour works at Townsville, Port Curtis, Mackay, Cairns and other places on the coast than that they should be maintained in semi-idleness in gaol. He hoped the inquiry and the very voluminous report brought up, would lead to some such useful suggestion being adopted as to the employment of prisoners on isolated public works such as the improvement of their harbours.

The HON. G. THORN said he agreed with the hon. member for Barcoo that it would be better to go back to the old days of the coroners' inquests, which were far preferable to the magisterial inquiries which took place now. He rose for another purpose, however, and it was to elicit from the Colonial Secretary some information as to the composition of the Gaols Commission. If he recollected rightly one of the two gentlemen who were at first appointed resigned after a very short time. He was a very able and efficient officer, an old colonist, and a man of great experience. Could the Colonial Secretary inform the Committee why that gentleman resigned? The hon. member for Townsville had stated that the report brought up by the Commissioners was not in accordance with the evidence taken by them, and he was quite sure if the gentleman he had mentioned had remained on the Commission they would have had a very different report brought up. Did that old officer in the service differ with his new-chum colleague on the Commission? He was not going to contrast the merits of the gentleman to whom he referred and those of Mr. Okeden, but he would like to know if it was in consequence of that gentleman differing from Mr. Kinnaird Rose that he left the Commission? He thought the Committee would sooner have seen the report brought up by that old and efficient officer of the service than by an inexperienced new chum, because he thought they would have had a much better report brought up had that gentleman remained on the Commission to the end.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the gentleman to whom the hon. member referred left the Commission on account of ill-health, and he had sent in a doctor's certificate in support of an application for leave of absence, as he objected at the time to the fatigue of travelling from one place to another.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Whose ill-health was it that caused Mr. Cribb to resign? His own or that of his fellow-commissioner?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: His own.

Mr. CAMPBELL said he agreed with the hon. member for Townsville that the Commissioners drew largely upon their imagination in compiling their report. When they visited a place like the Toowoomba Gaol, where there were such a large number of bad characters, it was only fair and just that the gaoler or some other responsible officer should have been present when the inquiry was made. Several of those prisoners were asked to speak plainly upon the affairs of the gaol, and, as hon. members knew, the class of women who were located there would not hesitate to swear away the life of anyone. Since the time that evidence was given, several of them had told parties in charge that they were prepared to deny everything that was in that report. There was another little matter he would like to speak about in reference to the matron. He thought it was stated in the report that she had taken girls out of the reformatory and allowed them to associate with the prisoners taken out of the gaol for household work. The matron had told him herself in conversation, and impressed it upon him as a fact, that Mr. Cribb, the late police magistrate at Toowoomba, when the reformatory was established there, told her to take the girls out of the reformatory and let them look after her children and be taught as much as possible of household work. The matron had taken one or two of them at different times into her household to teach them, but there was no possibility of their associating with the other other girls she employed from the gaol. With reference to the Blaney family—he thought that was the proper way in which to deal with them—there was Mr. Blaney, the governor of the gaol, his wife as matron, and his daughter, who he thought was schoolmistress in the reformatory. He had every reason to believe there was also another relative there, and while he was of opinion that they all did their duty, still he was of opinion that it was not advisable to have too many of one family employed in an establishment of that kind.

Mr. McMASTER said the hon. member for Barcoo read an extract about the Fortitude Valley lockup and the hard bed the unfortunate prisoners had to lie on. They had to lie on the floor, and no doubt it was a hard bed. Whilst he had not much sympathy for the oldest criminals, he had sympathy with the young girl mentioned in the report as waiting for her trial. In the eyes of the law that girl was innocent, and it was a great hardship that she should be placed in such a cell as the Fortitude Valley lockup. There was another circumstance connected with it, however, which was a greater hardship than the hard bed on which the prisoners had to lie. That was the proximity of the cell to the sergeant's dwelling. The two buildings were practically under one roof. He referred to that matter last session when the vote was going through, and the Colonial Secretary promised that something would be done. It would not cost very much to erect a cell at some little distance from the sergeant's house, so that the foul language which the Colonial Secretary himself last year admitted having heard from the cell, when he paid a visit to the school adjoining, might not be heard.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I said I was told it could be heard.

Mr. McMASTER said he had read it in *Hansard* only a few days ago, that the hon. gentleman stated that when he was paying an official visit to the school he heard language from the cell that ought not to be heard.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it might be in *Hansard;* he did not correct his speeches.

Mr. McMASTER said the number of criminals sent to the Valley lockup was increasing, and it was very hard upon the sergeant and his growing-up family—there was at least one daughter sixteen or eighteen years of age—that the cell should be so close to their dwelling. He hoped something would be done shortly to put up a cell a little distance from the officer's dwelling, so that the language used in the cell might not be heard by his family.

Mr. NORTON said it would be far better if the hon. member would propose that a sum of money be expended in erecting a new lockup in the Valley, instead of asking the State to spend £35,000 on a sports ground.

Mr. McMASTER: We have not got the money yet.

Mr. NORTON: Nor was the hon. member likely to get it, and he might just as well drop his motion of which notice had been given that day. The hon. member would be acting more in keeping with his own arguments just now if he went in for improving lockups rather than going into that extraordinary expenditure.

Mr. McMASTER: That is not the question before the Committee.

Mr. NORTON said he knew it was not; and he hoped it never would be. Something might be done to prevent the shutting up of women who were only awaiting trial, with the lowest class of prisoners. It was an outrageous thing that young girls of seventeen or eighteen should be shut up in a place of that kind, when in the eye of the law they were still innocent. That was one of the worst complaints they had to make. He did not know that the case referred to by the hon. member for Barcoo was the only one. He had heard of another.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is the same case.

Mr. NORTON said that one case of the kind was one too many, and steps ought to be taken to put a stop to anything of the kind. If a girl could not be tried immediately she was apprehended, it would be a great deal better to let her go again.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the case referred to by the hon. member was one which appeared in the *Courier*, and from inquiries he had made he found that there was a great deal of exaggeration in the story. The girl did not mix with the women. He was speaking from information given to him, and he had every reason to believe that the statement in the *Courier* was greatly overdrawn.

Mr. CHUBB said the subject under discussion was one of very wide range, and they might talk for days upon it. He, for one, had not yet read all the evidence that was taken before the Commission; but having read the report and a portion of the evidence he had come to the conclusion that some radical change was necessary. But that was a change which could only be effected, in one direction, by the expenditure of a very large sum of money, which money Parliament would some day have to find. But there were several minor matters that might be at once dealt with; one in particular—the herding together of persons under committal for trial with notorious criminals—an evil which could not be avoided where the accommodation was small. But there was an Act on the Statute-book which enabled persons convicted of a first offence to be let go on bail. They were not sent to prison; they were kept under surveillance. The granting of bail might in many cases be dealt with on that same principle. Magistrates should not be so strict in requiring substantial bail for minor offences, but should apply the principle of the Offenders Probation Act to persons charged with first offences of a venial character, and let them go on bail until their trial took place. He believed the female gaol at Toowoomba was used not only for the purpose of confining criminals, but also neglected children beyond the age at which they could be sent to orphanages—girls of thirteen or fourteen, who were taken up, not for any offence, but for being without parents. There was no other place to send them to, and there they herded with the worst classes of criminals.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Nothing of the kind. They are sent to the reformatory.

Mr. CHUBB said he did not believe all the evidence given by prisoners. It was a common thing for prisoners to exaggerate when they were being examined. They were told to speak out, and often they spun very long yarns, with perhaps a modicum of truth in some of them. In that particular inquiry he did not think all the evidence was taken that might have been taken. More officials should have been examined, and then possibly they might have had a more accurate report from the Commission than they had. Speaking for himself, he was not in a position to form a conclusive opinion on the results arrived at by them, and at present saw no grounds for adopting their report without further consideration of the evidence. But he quite agreed with hon. members that the subject was one which required the serious consideration of the hon. gentleman in charge of the department. However, until Parliament was prepared to assist the department with a large sum of money, the necessary changes with regard to single cells and other things which were now to be found in more modern gaols in Great Britain and America could not possibly be effected, and they could not arrive at that pink of perfection which they would all like to see.

Mr. FOOTE said he had read a considerable portion of the evidence, and he must say that much of it was of a character that one soon got tired of, and there was a great deal of it which he did not think was true. What he rose to speak about was the great cost that would be required in order to bring about the state of reform that was necessary. He did not mean, in every instance, the state of reform recommended

in the report, because in some instances those recommendations could scarcely be borne out. He believed that in many instances the state of things was quite as bad as was represented. But he considered that their prisons should be so managed that the prisoners should be made to support themselves, and not only support themselves but build their own gaols. There was no reason whatever why that should not be done. What was there to prevent the prisoners at St. Helena from erecting as large a gaol as was considered necessary, and adding to it from time to time? And what was there to prevent them from working at the breakwater at Townsville and other public works in different parts of the colony? He would also point out that the mouths of several rivers in the Bay were not very far from St. Helena, and in many of those places gangs of prisoners could be sent to work in the morning and brought back again at night. There were also many little islands in the Bay not far away where their labour might also be made available, and, as had been suggested by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, they might be employed in placing dams across freshwater rivers. He was satisfied that before long the Government would have to deal with the important question of the conservation of water. The colony would soon arrive at that pitch that that would have to be done, and prison labour might also be made available in those instances to a very great extent. All the prisoners would require to be carefully kept and guarded, and there were plenty of persons —pensioners and old soldiers—to whose care they could relegate duties of that sort, and who could discharge them exceedingly well. He maintained that that expensive item, buildings for the accommodation of prisoners, should be provided for by prison labour, and there was no reason why it should not be done; in fact, to his mind, it was a shame that the taxpayers of the colony should have to provide for prisoners to the extent they had to provide for them at present. That was no new question; it cropped up every year when that vote came on, but unfortunately nothing was done. Perhaps now that they had the report of the Commission on the subject some little attention might be given to it. But he was satisfied that attention would not be given to it in the direction that it ought to be, that was to thoroughly remodel the system, not to make prisoners so comfortable that they liked to spend their time in gaol, but with the view of meting out the punishment their crimes deserved in many cases, and of course showing leniency where it should be shown—where the prisoners were thoroughly repentant and intended that when they got their liberty again they would lead different lives. He saw no difficulty in the case whatever. It only required thought and study, and with that he was satisfied that their prison system could be made very much more efficient than it was at present.

Mr. S. W. BROOKS said before the question came to a vote he should like to say a few words upon it. He was one of those members who had read the whole of the evidence and the report, and having done so he had come to the conclusion that the inquiry had been an exhaustive one. It had been honestly carried out and faithfully reported, and the report of the Commissioners, as prefixed to the evidence, indicated very considerable research in what was now known as penology. At the same time when he was reading that report, he was also reading the life of Algernon Sidney, one of the purest and best of England's political heroes, and he found that he had prepared a constitution for William Penn. When William Penn was about settling Pennsylvania he drew up a constitution and submitted it to Algernon Sidney, who made certain alterations in it, and he took it home to Penshurst; where he in fact entirely remodelled the whole constitution, which he returned with the following results of his cogitation:—

"Prison discipline should be reformed, and the gaols, instead of being dens of vice, should be turned into houses of industry and education—not nurseries and hotbeds of crime, the almost inevitable ruin of all who entered them, but places where both punishment and improvement are provided."

When he read that, after having read the report of the Commissioners, and the evidence attached to it, he thought that they, in this nineteenth century, had not made very much progress since the time of Algernon Sidney. They did not seem to have gone beyond his aims. The prisons were at present, to a very great extent, dens of vice. The hon. member for Barcoo had drawn attention to a part of the report, where one of the witnesses said, in relation to the association of prisoners, that the system was one admirably adapted for the manufacture of criminals. It would be found at page 101 of the evidence:—

"Supposing this prison were conducted on the separate system, and no prisoner permitted to leave his cell, except to go to the yard for exercise morning and afternoon, would flogging then be so necessary as you think it now? No; it is the association system that requires it. It is in association that the evil spirit gets powerful.

"When so many men are allowed to associate doing nothing, the staff of warders must be very much greater than when men are kept to their cells? If the prisoners were kept to their cells, half the present number of warders would do. This association of prisoners is nothing but the manufacture of criminals and blackguardism."

That was a point to which he wished to refer. That the inquiry had been an exhaustive one he thought all hon. members who had paid any attention to it would admit, without any argument at all. The Commission started with the resolve that every prisoner, in all the prisons of the colony, should have a chance of making any complaints he might have to make, and at St. Helena the basis of operation seemed to have been a statement of grievances, which most hon. members had seen or heard of, and which they would remember concluded as follows:—

"We plead the urgent necessity for immediate action, and in order that we may take away all grounds for a plea of neglect, we may as well state that any delay may lead to unpleasant consequences"—

meaning, of course, that the Colonial Secretary had better look out, because if those grievances were not attended to, some mischief might perhaps come to him. That seemed to be the basis of operations, and, so far as he could gather from the evidence, that petition was drawn up by a prisoner named Minnis, who, it would be remembered by some hon. members, was the man who knocked poor Pillinger on the head at Broadwater some years ago. He was tried in November, 1881, the trial lasting for ten days and a night, and then the jury disagreed. He was tried again in March, 1882, the trial on that occasion again lasting ten days; was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to imprisonment for life. He believed that that statement of grievances was drawn up by that prisoner, and he thought it was very likely that Captain Townley had him in his mind in his reply to those grievances, when he said, speaking of the prisoners:—

"There are others who have enough of cunning, ability, and hypocrisy to keep out of the punishment book, but who secretly do the plotting in cases of this kind, and counsel others to commit acts of insubordination, while they themselves simply appear as the peaceable delegates of the poor suffering prisoners; and these men have pliant tools in their hands with oft-convicted offenders, who again and again return to gaol, and who, looking forward to spend the most part of their lives in prison, think that by making loud complaints they will have times made easier for them, be more comfortable, and have less punishment inflicted upon them."

That there were many gems in the evidence some hon. members knew well. For instance, on page 3, one prisoner said :—

"Warder Canning used to me a very peremptory tone, and said he would bring me to the office for not doing something. I object to the non-classification of prisoners in the establishment. There is no attempt at classification. I and others feel it a grievance that we should be compelled to work for longer than eight hours per day."

Then on page 4, a prisoner said :—

"We want a delegate from amongst the prisoners appointed to visit the kitchen each morning and inspect the food before it is cooked."

The wonder was they did not want a delegate sent down to the contractor's place of business to inspect the food in bulk before it was sent down, as young Washington was said to have suggested to his father, that he should ask a blessing on the whole cask of beef before it was opened instead of on each piece. Then there was evidence of a combination amongst the prisoners to compel united action. On page 7, a prisoner stated :—

"I was compelled to sign the petition for safety. We are compelled to go in the crowd in a prison. If not, we stand a good chance of being knocked down and kicked to death."

On page 8 :—

"A short time ago there was a considerable amount of insubordination in St. Helena, due to the prisoners thinking they were harshly dealt with. They formed into a league to openly defy order. Many prisoners were pressed into it from fear of their fellow-prisoners. I openly objected to join them in any direct disobedience to orders, for which I was at once challenged by one of the men in the yard, who said I should have to fight him. There was no getting out of it, and I had to stand up in front of him at once."

Then, again, on page 14 :—

"I signed the petition reluctantly. I was on a former occasion threatened."

Again—

"I signed the petition because if I had not, I believe, it would not have been safe for my life—at least, I would have received bodily injury."

Then there was a fourth-timer, on page 11, complaining that he received no indulgences. On several pages they complained of having no work to do.

"I have nothing to complain of at all. I am cutting wood just now, but I would rather be picking cotton-fibre than doing nothing.

"I want to work, and would willingly work to get more to eat."

One complained on page 6 that there was no seasoning in the soup, and another on page 11 that the prison regulations did not recognise any overtime. Those were just a few gems he had jotted down in reading over the evidence. But leaving the gems alone, there were many points in the report that were very well worthy of consideration, especially when they considered that the detection and punishment of crime cost the country as much as the education of the young. The matter of industrial occupation, to which the hon. member for Townsville had referred, was one which demanded attention. Many working men strongly objected to the employment of criminals in any industrial occupation, but he could not think it right that honest men outside should have to keep those men loafing inside, with their hands growing soft and tender for want of work. In America they did not acknowledge it as right. He had in his hand two numbers of an American paper which he had before referred to on other subjects, as it often supplied information on matters they had to deal with. One published last year contained an article on prison labour, and the other, dated 30th July, 1887, had an article on the same subject—convict labour, based on statistics of convict labour in the United States, from Commissioner Harold D. Wright's annual report. They went to show that the matter might be worked so as not to interfere injuriously with the industries outside the gaol walls. He (Mr. Brooks) thought they might very well make men in prison do something to pay for part of the cost of their oversight. As to religious teaching, there was not very much in the report to warrant the contention that it did much good in prison. He did not think it did; he thought the report might be taken as showing that religious teaching inside the gaols was not likely to do very much good. There was one point which cropped up again and again—the importance of seeking to harmonise the punishments with the crimes committed. He had advocated that to some extent last year, by suggesting that if a man committed a brutal assault on a woman, or violated a child, it should be taken out of his skin. His carcass should suffer for the pain he inflicted upon others. If a man embezzled money from an employer he should be made to work, so that he should not only support himself and pay something for his oversight, but should also pay back the money he had embezzled from his employer. If a man embezzled £50 from his employer, he spent that £50 in his own enjoyment, and, although he got punished, the employer did not get his £50 back. He thought that the employer should get it back.

Mr. MURPHY : What if he embezzles £50,000 ?

Mr. S. W. BROOKS said he should have to work until he repaid it. Of course that would practically be for life. There were many things in the Mosaic economy which they would do well to remember, especially in their sanitary and social arrangements ; and it would be remembered that there was a special provision that a thief should make restitution. He (Mr. S. W. Brooks) believed with the hon. member for Ipswich that the report dealt almost entirely with effects, and what they should do was to look to the causes of those effects. He did not think they ought to expect that the present ratio of criminals would be sustained; they should see if they could not lessen that ratio, and keep people from becoming criminals. He thought, in many cases, it would be a very wise thing to make a father smart for the wrong-doing of his son. The father should have control over his children till they were fifteen or sixteen years old; and if a household were well conducted there would not be many fathers to suffer under such a provision. He must say he agreed with the hon. member for Ipswich that there was not much to hope from education in the matter. He did not place as much reliance on the power of education to lessen the number of criminals as some people did. To teach a boy to read, write, and figure, would not make him a good boy, though it might change the character of the crime to which he was liable. Education did not lessen the number of criminals; it merely changed the character of the crimes. Religious instruction would not do it either—that was to say, the teaching of religious dogmas would not do it, because where that had been most persistently and most thoroughly done, crime had been most rampant. He believed they might teach the young morality apart from religious dogmas. A judicious application of the Offenders Probation Act would, he believed, do a great deal to lessen in number the inmates of the gaols. He thought, too, the sympathy of the Government for every agency which would keep people out of gaols would do some good. The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society might have their sympathy, and so might the Salvation Army. People might wonder to hear him speak about the Salvation

Army; but he did not hesitate to say that he looked upon it as a very grand organisation for doing the work of lessening crime. He believed they should look upon them with a great deal of sympathy, as a matter of economy merely, for he did not agree with their beliefs or anything of that sort; but he did very much agree with their methods and their earnest endeavours to make people better than they were. He thought the suggestion of the Commissioners about the preparation of statistics might very well be carried out. Indeed it should be done, so that they might know who were the most criminal part of the population, because the most criminal part was the most costly part, and they should protect themselves against them. If the most criminal part of the population came from abroad, they should protect themselves by stopping the importation of such. He was a protectionist to that extent, and would have the country protected against the importation of costly criminals. Put a poll-tax upon them, or do anything to keep them out. Those were some of the points that crossed his mind in reading the evidence and the report. He had not dealt with the matter at such a length as he intended, as it was about time the debate was concluded. He hoped something would be done in the way of improving the management of their prisons, so that they should be no longer nurseries or factories of criminals; and they might also do what was better still—namely, lessen the number of criminals by directing their attention to the matters he had mentioned.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member who had just spoken did not believe in the old adage that it was as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb, because he told them that if a man embezzled a sum of money he should not be liberated until he had earned sufficient to return that money. So that if one man embezzled £5 and another £5,000, the latter would receive a much more severe punishment. But it was the theft that a man was punished for; it was considered just as wrong to steal £5 as £5,000; the same principle was involved. The opinion of most members and that of the country generally was that the support of prisoners should not be a charge upon the community—that they should be self-supporting—and he hoped that the suggestion which had been thrown out by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, would be carefully considered. Certain prisoners should be sent to work at such operations as the building of breakwaters, as had been done in New South Wales, where, he believed, there was a harbour which had been made by convicts. Of course in doing that they must regulate the class of labour which was employed. Short-sentenced prisoners—men who were to be imprisoned for six or nine months—might be employed. Very little good was done in trying to teach them trades, and they were the class of men whose services could be employed with profit on such an undertaking as had referred to, and they certainly would be self-supporting. In Townsville, where a breakwater was required, wages were now 8s. per day, and those prisoners could certainly earn half that amount. Four shillings per day would be quite sufficient to support them. Another advantage of that would be that short-sentenced men would not be allowed to remain at St. Helena. They were the men who were subversive of discipline. They snapped their fingers at the warders, knowing that they would get out in a short time; and they made the other men discontented. No remission of sentence was allowed as a reward for extra work, and a man who had been specially useful was at the end of a long sentence sent out into the world with half-a-sovereign, which was the maximum amount allowed. In cases where men had worked hard, they should be allowed a little more than that. A man might have been immured there for years, and would leave with only half-a-sovereign on him, knowing no one, and with no recommendations, and the chances were ten to one that that money would be exhausted before he could get any employment, and he was tempted to fall again. He knew very great dissatisfaction existed amongst the prisoners, and the warders actually believed there was ground for that dissatisfaction in regard to the liberations which took place at the time of the Jubilee. Men were liberated on that occasion, some of whom had more than one conviction against them. Some men were liberated who had been guilty of very great offences, and who had served a very short time, while others who had served long sentences for less grave offences, and had no previous convictions against them and had good marks, were still in prison. That was not an incentive to men to conduct themselves properly. He recollected some time since that a question was asked the Premier, whether the prisoners O'Neil and Williams were not sent to St. Helena, and the reply of the Premier was that no prisoners in irons had been sent to St. Helena during his time. He would ask the Colonial Secretary now, if prisoners convicted also of kidnapping had not been sent to St. Helena in irons during the last four years?

Mr. JESSOP: Not in irons.

Mr. HAMILTON said he was informed when he was there recently, by a warder, that two men named Maclay and Lee had been sent there.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that to his knowledge such was not the case.

Mr. JESSOP said he was very much pleased with the assistance hon. members had given him in speaking upon the matter. In his opinion the report was a very good one, and the Commissioners had done their work well, and it would be a great benefit, and show the Government where the real evils existed. He would say a word or two in reference to what was said by the hon. member for Aubigny, who stated that some of the prisoners were ready to contradict all they had said. He could quite understand that; but hon. members who had read the evidence would see that the prisoners had corroborated each others' statements to a great extent. It was therefore evident that there was a great deal of truth in the evidence, though he was free to admit that a great deal might be untrue. And it was quite likely that after the evidence was published and got into the hands of the different officials, many of the witnesses would be prepared to contradict their evidence when taxed by their superiors as to what they had said. A great deal had been said about the expense of carrying out the recommendations contained in the report, but to do so would cost a great deal less than the *via recta* railway. There were some matters that ought to be attended to at once. On page xviii. of the report the following occurred:—

"In country districts the cells are generally under the same roof with the quarters of the police. Where the constable in charge is a married man with a family this arrangement is objectionable, as old and young are too frequently compelled to hear from intoxicated prisoners language of the most filthy character; and we were informed by many lockup keepers that they had frequently to send their wives and families from home to prevent contamination by outrageous prisoners. In future cells should be built separate from the police quarters."

He knew that to be a fact, and he thought the matter really required the attention of the Government as soon as possible. The evidence of Captain Townley, of St. Helena, and Mr. Henry,

of Townsville, went to prove the arguments of the member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. S. W. Brooks, the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Macrossan, and the hon. member for Bowen, in reference to prison labour; and the report showed that the Commissioners had paid great attention to that matter. Speaking on the subject of remands in the country districts, the report on page xviii. said :—

"We direct attention to the long periods to which, especially in the Western districts, persons are kept in lockups on remand. In some cases, to which our notice was drawn, men had been remanded, on the slightest possible and even no evidence from week to week for over three months. This, in effect, means the infliction of imprisonment without trial in badly-constructed cells, on presumably innocent men."

And then, in reference to labour, the following occurred :—

"To the question of the employment of prisoners in reproductive industries and on public works we gave the most anxious consideration. Prison statistics in Europe show that the want of a trade has great influence on the law which controls the causes of crime. In Ireland, under the Crofton system, by which prisoners are taught a trade, only 10 per cent. of the convicts return to prison, while in the Eastern States of America as few as 3 per cent. of prisoners who have been taught a trade are again received into gaol. There is most unimpeachable evidence from the sheriff, the Commissioner of Police, and others, that in Queensland many men who were taught a trade in the old gaol have earned an honest living after their liberation and have become useful and respected members of society. There is a threefold purpose in imposing hard labour on prisoners. First, it deters them from a return to gaol by its penal character; second, it reforms them by developing their intelligence, cultivating habits of steady industry and order; and third, it contributes towards the expense of their maintenance. Objections have been raised to industrial prison labour on the grounds that it is really not hard enough to be penal, that it enters into competition with free labour, and that it equips criminals at the expense of the community for the battle of life more effectually than honest men of the same rank. But labour, even if industrial, may be severe by its continuance, comparative monotony, and constant supervision. Purely penal labour, such as the crank, shot-drill, and the treadmill, is the unreasoning exercise of muscular force, and produces resentment, obstinacy, and hardness in the labourer. It is torture in disguise, can only be carried on for a limited period, and is totally non-reformatory in its effects. That prison labour competes with free labour in a certain limited sense is true, but the labour of the prisoners, if they were at large, would be available in the open market to compete in some direction with that of other free men. Why, then, should not a prisoner compete equally if he is confined and fed at the expense of all free and honest men? Admitting that in certain trades which are best adapted to prison labour there would be competition, individual interests must give way to communal. Gaols must be maintained by the honest and law-abiding; this burden may be lightened by compelling rogues, vagabonds, and dishonest men to maintain themselves by labour in prison. To teach a prisoner to work who has been previously nothing but a parasite on society is to add to the sum of producing power in the community. It is better for the honest man that he should submit to the competition of even prison-taught fellow-craftsmen than that he should be the victim of his cupidity or criminality. No trade or business, however, should be carried on in prison which would involve the purchase by the State of large and expensive plant."

Then it went on to refer to reports from various gaols in different parts of the world on the same subject. He would not now detain the Committee longer, though there were many matters still untouched. He had to thank hon. members for taking the matter up and assisting him in ventilating the question.

Mr. LALOR said there was one matter he wished to bring under the notice of the Colonial Secretary. The Roma Gaol was admitted in the report of the Commissioners to be one of the best conducted establishments in the colony, yet the salary of the gaoler was one of the lowest, namely, £230. He brought the matter under the Colonial Secretary's notice at the present time so that it might be remembered when the next Estimates were prepared.

Mr. JESSOP said he had been informed that the gaoler at Townsville had been suspended or called upon to show cause why he should not be dismissed, and had been refused an inquiry. Was that the case?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was only that morning that a letter in reply to the sheriff's letter to the gaoler in question was placed on his table, and he had only casually read it—he had not considered it.

Mr. JESSOP asked whether the official in question would be allowed an inquiry if he had asked for one?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not tell till he saw what he had to say in the matter.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that when an officer had been such a long time in the service he ought to get an inquiry into the cause of his suspension or probable dismissal. He supposed certain charges had been made against the Townsville gaoler, and he was entitled to have those charges inquired into. He understood that that officer denied almost *in toto* the portion of the report which referred to the Townsville Gaol. He (Mr. Macrossan) had read the evidence, especially that referring to Townsville, and he must say that the evidence and the report did not agree so far as that gaol was concerned, and he took it that the gaoler was entitled to an inquiry, especially as he had been called upon to show cause why he should not be dismissed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said all that had taken place was that after reading the report of the Commissioners he sent a letter to the sheriff stating that some change should be made in the Townsville Gaol. The sheriff was then on circuit at Rockhampton and Maryborough. When he came back he (the Colonial Secretary) had some conversation with him about the matter, and the sheriff said that from what he had himself seen at the Townsville Goal he did not altogether believe the evidence. He then stated that he had written to Mr. Smyth, who had sent down a letter in reply. Portions of that letter were sent to the Commissioners for their remarks. He (the Colonial Secretary) only had those back yesterday, and that morning he received another communication from the sheriff enclosing a letter from Mr. Smyth. Up to that time he was not aware that the sheriff had sent a notification calling upon Mr. Smyth to show cause why he should not be suspended. He (the Colonial Secretary) did not go so far as that, and did not know why it had been done by the sheriff. He had read that letter in the morning, and, as he generally did in such cases, allowed it to stand a short time until he had thought over it. He did not believe in making up his mind hurriedly on matters of that kind. He saw Mr. Smyth in Brisbane, and cross-examined him as far as possible; and afterwards saw Mr. Kinnaird Rose. He could tell the Committee honestly that there was a very great deal of doubt in his mind as to the truth of some of the evidence given before the Commissioners, but he wished to take a little longer time yet before making up his mind.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN asked whether he was to understand that the sheriff had gone further than he was warranted in doing by the Colonial Secretary?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Certainly

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said if the hon. gentleman read the evidence he would find that it was stated that the gaoler showed too

much sympathy with the prisoners, and that he ruled the gaol with a rod of iron. The two things were inconsistent. From the evidence it would also be seen that Townsville Gaol was almost the only one in which the prisoners were kept constantly employed and earned the cost of their keep.

Mr. HAMILTON said he was very glad to hear the Colonial Secretary say that he would inquire further into the matter of the gaoler at Townsville. He (Mr. Hamilton) did not know the gaoler, but had heard him spoken of very highly by the people of Townsville, and he thought it would be a cruel injustice if any official action were taken with regard to his suspension or dismissal without allowing him an inquiry.

Mr. JESSOP said it appeared from the evidence in the report that, in the case of three warders who had been suspended, two months elapsed before they knew that they were discharged. It seemed strange that they should be kept in ignorance of their position so long. Could the Colonial Secretary tell the Committee how that happened?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no knowledge about the suspension of those two warders at the present time.

Mr. NORTON said that, in connection with the suspension of that gaoler, he hardly felt surprised that the sheriff had taken the action he was said to have taken, seeing that the Colonial Secretary wrote to him intimating that some change should be made in the gaol at Townsville. Naturally the sheriff would conclude, unless otherwise instructed, that the suggestion was made in consequence of the report of the Commissioners.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he saw the sheriff when he came back, and he asked whether he (the Colonial Secretary) meant immediate dismissal, and he replied in the negative. The letter with reference to the suspension of the gaoler was written after that.

Mr. NORTON said that when the hon. gentleman stated he did not mean immediate dismissal, the sheriff probably thought he intended that the gaoler should be called upon to show cause why he should not be dismissed, and it was not surprising that he should have put that construction upon the letter. At any rate, if the gaoler asked for an inquiry he was certainly entitled to one.

Mr. HAMILTON said that as they were discussing the question of warders he thought it should be their object, if they wished to have their penal establishments properly conducted, to get the best men available. He wished to refer to an opinion expressed by Dr. Wray, to the effect that warders' families should not reside on the island of St. Helena. In support of that he stated that married men could not perform their duties as efficiently as single men. He (Mr. Hamilton) thought that experience at St. Helena showed that married men did better duty than single men, as the greater number of charges against warders were made against single men. But while Dr. Wray considered it undesirable that the warders should not be allowed to bring their families to St. Helena, he had not the slightest objection to the superintendent and chief warder having their families on the island. In connection with that he (Mr. Hamilton) had received a letter from one of the warders, who put the matter very logically, and he would read an extract from it to the Committee. It stated that—

"Dr. Wray states that there is a possibility of families bringing contagious fevers, etc., on the island. If so, why except the families of the superintendent and chief warder?

"If married warders' families resided on the mainland, would not the husbands visit them; and do not single warders visit married people when on leave? If such danger exists, why not fumigate all articles and persons coming on the island, especially prisoners' clothing, and more especially Asiatics and Malays?

"Dr. Wray places stress on the fact that he knows of no other penal establishment where the families of warders are permitted to reside.

"His want of knowledge on this subject should not cause us to suffer, because, had his experience been greater, he would have known that warders' families reside on Cockatoo, New South Wales, and also at Quarries, in the labour prison of South Australia. In conclusion, I would point out that the superintendent and chief warder are allowed servants, taken from the prisoners, and in case of some fever being brought on the island by one of those families, would not the prisoners, being in close association with such families, be more likely to carry it to the stockade than the families who had no intercourse with the prisoners except through their husbands?"

He did not think there should be any objection to the families of the superintendent, the chief warder, or any other warders, living on the island. He brought the question forward because, if objection was taken and that proposal was put in force, the consequence would be that they would lose some of their most valuable men.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the hon. member for Dalby had asked a question in reference to three warders suspended and dismissed. The hon. member had only to read the evidence of one of those warders, and compare it with the report, and he would find that there was very little worth in the statements made. One warder stated in his evidence that twenty-eight or thirty warders had been run out of Townsville Gaol when he was there, and the return moved for by the hon. member for Dalby showed that there were only four, and that the three men referred to were among the number. He was inclined to think, therefore, that there was very little truth in the statements of the dismissed warders.

Mr. JESSOP said he had before stated that he was prepared to take a great deal of the evidence with a large pinch of salt, but he would call attention to the return laid on the table of the House. He called for a return of all officers dismissed from Townsville Gaol from the time of its commencement up to date, and the three men referred to were bracketed together and a memo. put opposite their names that they had been before Judge Cooper; but how many men were brought before a judge and declared innocent? It did not show that they were guilty of any offence simply because they were brought before a judge. If they had been proved guilty that would have been a very different matter, and no doubt they would have suffered severely, but he saw no reason in calling particular attention to that fact. It showed that someone had desired to injure the characters of those men. The fact remained that those men were under suspension for two months without receiving any salary, and at the end of that time, by accident as it were, they were told that their services would not be required any longer.

Question put and passed.

ST. HELENA.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum not exceeding £10,940 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Penal Establishment of St. Helena. There was a slight increase of £280, caused by the appointment of three warders and one paid instructor.

Mr. NORTON said he noticed that the warders were paid their allowance for the length of service. It appeared that the unfortunate railway men were the only men who did not get the increase in pay to which they were entitled. There was a curious mixture in the last item of

gratuities to prisoners and postage stamps. Why should they be mixed up together? The item above that was for provisions and incidental expenditure—why should not postage stamps be included amongst incidentals? Were the stamps those used for prisoners' letters?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Possibly.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to know what the connection between the two items was?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he believed that last year £7 was the amount expended on postage stamps. It was an old item, and appeared on the Estimates every year.

Question put and passed.

REFORMATORIES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum not exceeding £2,210 be granted for the Reformatories at Lytton and Toowoomba. That item was the same as last year.

Mr. JESSOP said some remarks had been made with reference to the reformatory at Toowoomba, and it was only fair to state that he had visited that institution and found it kept in splendid order. In reference to the daughter of the gaoler, Miss Blaney, being employed as turnkey, she was a young lady who did a very great amount of good work amongst the young girls in the reformatory. There was no truth whatever, he believed, in the statement made that the girls were allowed to mix with the older prisoners. He did not think such a thing was possible under the system pursued there. He could only repeat what he had said before—that female prisoners should not be sent to Toowoomba at all—that the gaol should be used entirely for a reformatory. The work done there amongst the girls was excellent work, and fitted them for useful work when they came out.

Question put and passed.

BENEVOLENT ASYLUM.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum not exceeding £10,138 be granted for the Benevolent Asylum, Dunwich. There was a slight decrease on the whole sum, although there was an increase in the contingencies, provisions, incidentals, and medical comforts.

Mr. NORTON: What does the engineer do?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the engineer was employed in connection with the water supply.

Mr. S. W. BROOKS said the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, had asked him, if that vote came on after he had left, to mention a matter which had come under his notice while on a visit to the island on Saturday. He referred to the case of old couples—old men and women who had in some cases lived together for forty or fifty years, and when they arrived at Dunwich they were separated. The hon. member for Ipswich when down at Dunwich on Saturday was asked to bring that matter before the Committee, and see if some arrangement could not be made by which those old people might be allowed to spend the last of their days together. They might be allowed to live in some of the cottages there. There might be some prudential reasons why young married couples should not be allowed to live and work together in workhouses, but he did not see any reason why those old people at Dunwich should not be allowed to smooth each other's declining days.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he agreed with the hon. member, and would like to see the suggestion carried out, but there was no convenience there at present for carrying it out, though in one case he thought it was done.

Mr. JESSOP said he had gone to Dunwich the other day, and he must confess he was much pleased with the arrangements there, and thought no fault could be found with the management of the institution. The old people there were a great deal better off than they had been before they went there. He was surprised to find that the gentleman in charge had not an assistant, and he was glad to see the Government were going to appoint an assistant.

Mr. SHERIDAN said he had recently visited Dunwich and seen a great many persons there, and among them people he had known many years ago. He had had conversation with several of them, and the unanimous opinion was that they were as comfortable there as the circumstances would permit. He had heard no complaint whatever, and the place was orderly and clean.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to know if any of the inmates of Dunwich had relatives who could afford to keep them?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that when anyone went there their antecedents and relatives were found out, and the superintendent informed the Curator accordingly, and he looked up the matter, and made the usual application and did in some cases get something towards the maintenance of inmates.

Mr. NORTON: How much has been obtained in that way?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not able to give the hon. member the information that night.

Question put and passed.

STEAMERS "LUCINDA" AND "OTTER."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £6,274 be granted on account of the steamers "Lucinda" and "Otter." There was a small increase in the vote, caused by the salaries, for a cook and a boy extra, and a decrease in the amount for coals, stores, etc.

Mr. NORTON said he thought, considering the magnitude of the subject dealt with that evening, they had made fair progress, and as there were some matters in connection with the vote for the "Lucinda" and "Otter" which required discussion they might very well adjourn now.

The PREMIER: We do not want to go any further than this vote to-night.

Mr. NORTON said they did not want to go any further than they were now.

The PREMIER: I know there is a lot to be said about the next vote.

Mr. NORTON said there was a lot to be said about the vote now proposed, and half the members had gone home.

The PREMIER said that when they found three months of the session had gone past and they had not yet got through the Colonial Secretary's Estimates, it was quite clear they would have to sit later than they had been in the habit of sitting. They had been longer than he had known on any previous occasion in dealing with the Colonial Secretary's Estimates, and they were not through yet. It was not surprising, under the circumstances, that hon. members should be asked to sit later than usual.

Mr. NORTON said that if the Government had brought forward their Estimates earlier, instead of going on with the discussion upon railways that were not going to pass, they would have got further on with the Estimates. The time of the House had been wasted over political railways one night after another, when they might have been doing good work.

The PREMIER: Two evenings have been devoted to railways up to the present.

Mr. NORTON: Yes; and they were to have another. Besides that, there were other matters which might very well have been disposed of. He did not feel inclined to discuss the present vote that night, and he had in fact allowed some matters connected with the last two votes to pass simply to get done with them. As to the length of time taken in discussing the Colonial Secretary's Estimates, it was a great deal owing to the hon. gentleman failing to give necessary information.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; I have given you all the information required.

Mr. NORTON said the hon. gentleman had not given nearly all the information required. Only just now the hon. gentleman could not inform him what was the amount received from the friends or relatives of inmates of Dunwich towards their maintenance, and that was information which the hon. gentleman should have been in a position to give the Committee. There was likely to be a good deal of discussion on the vote before them, and under the circumstances it would be well to adjourn.

Mr. JESSOP said he hoped the Government would see their way to adjourn, as he understood there was to be some discussion upon the question before them. There was no doubt that the debate upon the gaols question had been made considerably shorter than it was anticipated it would be, simply for the reason that the session was so far advanced. Considering the work they had done that evening, the Government could well afford to adjourn now.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Government would do well to accept the proposition of the hon. member for Port Curtis and adjourn. Many hon. members imagined that they would not go any further than the Gaols Estimates that evening, and on that account several of them had gone home. He knew there was a good deal to be said in regard to the vote before them, and at that late hour of the evening, and considering the good work they had done, it was a fair thing to adjourn. As to the state of the Estimates, it was not the fault of members of the Opposition that there had not been greater progress made.

Mr. BLACK said that, although it was getting late, it was evident that unless they sat later they would not get through the business on the paper before the new year. He had never known the Colonial Secretary's Estimates occupy so much time as they had that session. What the cause was, need not be referred to, as there seemed to be a slight difference of opinion on the point. They held one view, and the Colonial Secretary held that he was the most intelligent Colonial Secretary who had ever occupied that position. But that they need not discuss. Would the Government tell the Committee what business they proposed going on with that session, and at what time they would like the session to come to an end?

The PREMIER: Next week.

Mr. BLACK said that he, as a member living a great distance from Brisbane, did not care how soon the session came to a termination, and was quite prepared to sit till a later hour every evening if they could really get on with the business of the country. The vote now proposed was one which would no doubt involve some discussion. The "Otter" they looked upon as one of their naval defence ships—she carried a gun—and it seemed a somewhat anomalous thing that they should be asked to vote £4,800 for the "Otter," when they had another of their naval defence ships, involving a cost of £7,000 a year, which had been laid up for about four months in the river doing nothing but spending money. Approximately £2,300 had been spent during the last four months on a ship which was laid up in the Garden Reach. No doubt the Chief Secretary would be able to give the Committee some explanation as to whether that ship was to become a white elephant to the country, or what was going to be done with her. When the naval defence vote was under discussion they were given to understand that immediate action was to be taken to utilise that ship in the direction for which she was purchased and commissioned, and that within a very short time she would probably resume the duties for which she was intended, such as exercising the Naval Defence Force at the different ports along the coast. That was a matter on which, no doubt, the Chief Secretary would give them some information. As to the "Otter," he looked upon her as being the more useful of the two vessels, and if one or other was to be retained he would prefer to retain the "Otter," as the other one seemed to be only a sink for money. If the Chief Secretary could explain the matter to the satisfaction of the Committee that night, he for one was prepared to go on with the discussion of the vote, although it was quite likely that there would be a considerable amount of discussion involved.

The PREMIER said they might as well have the discussion then as at any other time, as there was an immense amount of work remaining to be done. The "Otter" was a part of the Naval Defence Force, so far that she certainly carried a gun in her bows and a small gun at the stern; but she could not be in any way compared with the "Gayundah" for defence purposes. The "Otter" was a useful vessel, employed in carrying goods for the Government to St. Helena and Dunwich, and doing a great deal of work for which a cargo boat was required. For the last twenty-five years it had been found necessary to have a boat of that kind in the Brisbane River. As to when the "Gayundah" would leave port for the purpose of visiting the Northern ports he was not in a position to say, for reasons well known to hon. members. The senior officer had been good enough to publish in the papers that he had been called upon to explain his conduct, and the correspondence was not yet concluded, though he (the Premier) apprehended it would be in a very short time.

Mr. BLACK said it ought to be possible to stop the pay of that gentleman until he made a satisfactory explanation. It seemed a most monstrous thing that for four months that vessel should have been lying in the river perfectly useless, during which time £2,300, or one-fourth of the total vote for the "Gayundah," had been entirely lost to the country. How long was that state of affairs to continue? The termination of the crisis seemed just as far off as ever. Had the Chief Secretary no control over the senior naval officer? Did not that officer hold a subordinate position to the Chief Secretary? It was most discreditable to the colony to find that the senior naval officer did not recognise that he was under the control of the Chief Secretary. The position was perfectly ridiculous. Either that officer was right, or he was wrong.

The PREMIER said as things were now it would not be convenient to order the "Gayundah" to sea, especially as she had not a first-lieutenant on board.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said it was nearly a month since the estimates of the "Gayundah" were before the Committee, and the Chief Secretary then hinted at certain charges that were pending against the senior naval

officer. Since then they had seen in the public Press certain correspondence published, perhaps in an unauthorised way, but it appeared to him that it was a case of the mountain bringing forth a ridiculous mouse. Were there really any other charges against Captain Wright except that amount of £189 spread over three years—money not embezzled or anything of that kind, but not satisfactorily accounted for——

The PREMIER: Unauthorised expenditure.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he would like the Chief Secretary to take any one of the departments—the Colonial Secretary's, for instance—and look at the leakage of money that took place there with regard to the advertising bill alone. He guaranteed that if a clerk from the Audit Office overhauled the expenditure of the Defence Force under the Commandant he would find a leakage there also. He had not a word to say against Colonel French in any way, but he believed that if the head of the Government expected to keep up the "pomp and panoply of war" there would be money spent which might be explained satisfactorily to him, but when it came to be carefully audited by a proficient in the red-tape line of auditing it might not. They knew perfectly well that naval and military gentlemen, from the training they had at home, were perhaps not as particular as clerks in merchants' offices, or even as business managers, with regard to money matters. They had other duties to attend to, and were perhaps accustomed to look down without proper consideration upon a few odd pounds, shillings, and pence. They did not look upon them in the same light as a shopkeeper or tradesman did. An officer in that position was an expert, and an enthusiast very likely in his profession, and perhaps was not very particular in looking after the way the money went. He thought if that cheeseparing economy went on, they were not likely to get any capable or efficient men out from the old country to do service here, and they had certainly no one in the colonies capable of taking charge of and keeping in good order a ship of the class of the "Gayundah." He thought it was time the Committee had a full explanation from the Premier of what charges there were against Captain Wright. Was there anything more behind the scenes? Did he accuse Captain Wright of having peculated moneys, or did he not? With regard to the items that appeared in the newspaper, Captain Wright felt it his duty to publish and answer them in self-defence, as it was plainly hinted in that House and generally understood by hon. members that there was some grave charge, amounting almost to embezzlement, hanging over him. If there was nothing more than appeared in that correspondence, he (Mr. Hill) did not see that very much harm or damage had been done.

The PREMIER said it would be extremely inconvenient, when an officer in the public service was being dealt with by the head of his department, that he should be called upon to explain the whole matter to that Committee. Any charge made against Captain Wright would be made in writing in a formal manner, and dealt with formally. He did not think it expedient to say exactly what the complaint was. He might remark, however, that the complaint was not so much of being extravagant in the expenditure of money as of the expenditure of money by Captain Wright without authority apparently for his own benefit—with the exception of one item. He could not give particulars then. Some officers might not be accustomed to economy. They might be extravagant, but surely an officer should know what his own salary was and what his allowances were. That was the gravamen of it. Those amounts were drawn by Captain Wright apparently for his own benefit, and he therefore was called upon to refund them.

Mr. NORTON: You refer to horse-hire?

The PREMIER said he referred to horse-hire and a number of other items—wine, and various things. He did not want to go into the matter further at that time. He had only received Captain Wright's reply to his letter yesterday, and his reply to Captain Wright went to-day—at any rate he had given instructions to that effect—and an immediate answer was called for.

Mr. NORTON said it would be very inconvenient to discuss a matter of that kind while a decision was pending, but it had been a long time going on.

The PREMIER: I gave my answer at once. There has been no delay on my part.

Mr. NORTON said there should be some means of getting an answer quicker. It was a long time since the letter was sent, and surely there ought to have been some means of getting a reply.

The PREMIER: Captain Wright asked for an extension of time to answer.

Mr. NORTON said he thought perhaps the white ensign had something to do with it—that Captain Wright claimed an authority not possessed by anyone else in the colony.

The PREMIER: Not yet.

Mr. NORTON said he thought that, if there was anything of that kind, the sooner they did away with the white ensign the better. He did not want to discuss the matter, but he thought it was quite time it was settled. He had seen a report in the newspapers to the effect that Captain Wright had refused to resign. He did not know whether there was any truth in that. In reference to the vote he saw that there were two additional hands employed, and that there was an increase amounting to £174. The Colonial Secretary had given no information with respect to those matters, except that there were increases. There was nothing to show why it had been necessary that extra hands should be employed. If a certain number of hands could do the work when the colony was in a better financial position than it was now, surely the same number could do it now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the increase of hands consisted of a cook and a fireman.

Mr. NORTON asked if there were any black men employed on board the "Lucinda" now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he believed the steward was a black man.

Mr. HAMILTON said if Captain Wright had had been called upon to resign he thought he had been very unfairly treated, seeing that they had not yet got his explanation. He thought the statement made by the Premier with regard to that officer might be misconstrued, when he said that that money had been obtained for his own benefit. He understood that one of the items was a subscription for the benefit of a charitable object, and Captain Wright paid away the money in anticipation of the vote, but the money was not obtained by him subsequently. That was not for his own benefit. At any rate he read that in some paper.

The PREMIER said it was not in any part of the correspondence published, or in anything that came before him.

Mr. HAMILTON said he had read it somewhere. He would like to ask who was in charge of the guns on the "Otter." They were very

valuable guns—one of them, he had heard, cost £1,200—but they had been neglected so that the rifling had become honeycombed, and the brass portions covered with verdigris. On one occasion, when he was on board, together with one or two other members, they discovered that the gun had not been cleaned since being fired some months before; and a naval man who was present at the time said, after examining it, that he would rather stand 100 yards in front when it was being fired than five yards behind.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the guns were not in the "Otter" now; they were in the stores.

Mr. HAMILTON: Who was in charge of the guns when they were on board?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The captain.

Mr. HAMILTON said it was disgraceful to put a captain who had no knowledge of gunnery in charge of such valuable ordnance. The guns had been utterly ruined in consequence.

Mr. JESSOP asked why the master of the "Lucinda" received £300 a year and the master of the "Otter" only £252?

The PREMIER said the Government were not in the humour for raising salaries at present.

Mr. NORTON said the Government seemed to be in the humour to put additional men on the "Lucinda." If ten men were sufficient last year, he did not see why they should not be sufficient for the present year. He did not see the necessity for appointing a cook; he supposed the cooking was done somehow last year.

The PREMIER said that as a matter of fact one of the seamen acted as cook. There was a very small complement of men on that ship, and four deck-hands were very few for a vessel of such size. When one of them was acting as cook, it left only three deck-hands, which was not enough. The additional fireman had been asked for because when there was any continuous work one fireman was not sufficient. Except when the vessel was in port it was found necessary to engage men by the day, which was found to be nearly as expensive, and not nearly so satisfactory, as having them permanently ngaged.

Mr. NORTON said they had managed for four years with only ten men, and surely they could manage for another year without an additional man, at a time when they professed to be so very anxious to cut down expenditure. He did not think any sufficient justification had been given for the increase.

The PREMIER said he did not think the fireman was absolutely necessary, so he would move that the vote be reduced by £102. Of course the appointment had not yet been made.

Question—That £6,172 only be granted—put.

Mr. HAMILTON said he thought they should move a still further decrease, rather than allow the vote to increase every year. At a time of depression like the present, when they were dismissing good officers from the Civil Service on the ground of retrenchment—natives of the colony, who had been in the service for many years, and had done good work in the service—it was unjustifiable to go to that expense on what was, to all intents and purposes, simply a pleasure yacht of the Government.

Mr. MURPHY said he thought it was a great pity to go in for that piece of cheeseparing. If they were going to keep the boat at all, they should keep her efficient, and have men enough in her to keep her clean. Her crew was not large enough now to keep her in thorough trim, as a yacht ought to be kept. If they took a fireman away it simply meant that the engines or something would be neglected, and when the boat was really wanted for service she would be found useless.

The PREMIER: We can do without this man.

Mr. NORTON: We are not reducing the number of men on board.

Mr. MURPHY said it was suggested by some hon. member that the item should be still further reduced. Such a thing would render the vessel entirely useless, as there would not be sufficient men to keep her in proper order. When a boat was lowered now it was as much as the crew could do to get her on board again, and a serious accident might happen in the river at any time. If they were going to keep a yacht at all she should be kept properly and efficiently, or else laid up altogether, or sold.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member had made a very good suggestion about laying up the "Lucinda" altogether, or selling her. When Ministers wanted to have a Cabinet meeting down the river they could hire a steamer or go down in the "Otter." Selling the boat altogether would be better than cheeseparing in all directions.

Question—That the amount of £204 be reduced by £102—put and passed.

Mr. NORTON said it did not look very well when they were discharging officers from the public departments to put an extra cook on board the "Lucinda"; but he did not suppose they could do without a cook. The hon. gentleman might certainly be able to do without the extra boy on board the "Otter." He noticed that there was an item of £940 for victualling, which was £140 more than last year. That might be attributable to the increased number of men; still he thought the amount might be reduced to £900.

The PREMIER: £900 will be sufficient; move the reduction.

Mr. NORTON moved that the item of £940 be reduced by £40.

Mr. BLACK said he would ask the Colonial Secretary, when he was submitting to those enormous reductions, whether, under the "Contingencies," the items of "extra labour" would not require to be increased? If they went on in that way they would soon wipe out the deficit.

The PREMIER said £2,735 was spent for coals, stores, extra labour, etc., last year, and they were asking a little less for the present year, in the endeavour to be as economical as possible.

Question put and passed.

Question—That £6,132 only be granted—put and passed.

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

## ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. To-morrow the business will be the report from the Committee on the Electoral Districts Bill, and if it is necessary to make further amendments—although I hope it will not be—the Bill will be recommitted for that purpose; then I propose to ask the House to proceed with the second reading of the Constitution Act Amendment Bill, and after that to go into Committee of Supply

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at half-past 11 o'clock.