

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 1887

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 27 October, 1887.

Message from the Legislative Assembly—Electoral Districts Bill.—Motion for Adjournment—Gaols Commission Report.—Lady Bowen Lying-in Hospital Land Sale Bill—third reading.—British New Guinea Bill—committee.—Local Government Act of 1878 Amendment Bill—consideration in committee of the Legislative Assembly's message.—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 4 o'clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to make provision for additional and better representation of the people of Queensland in Parliament.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. W. Horatio Wilson), the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Wednesday next.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

GAOLS COMMISSION REPORT.

The HON. P. MACPHERSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—I rise to move the adjournment of the House, with the view of calling attention to the report of the Gaols Commission. I recently asked the Postmaster-General whether it was the intention of the Government to take any steps to give effect to the recommendations of the Commissioners, and I received from him a courteous answer to the effect that the report would have all due consideration at the hands of the Government—at all events, such consideration as its gravity demanded. Since I put the question I have had an opportunity of perusing, to some extent, the report and the very voluminous evidence attached to it, and, without attempting to travel over the very wide field which the report embraces, I should like to call attention to one or two matters which, I think, urgently demand the attention of the Government. The first of these subjects is the state of the lockups. Speaking of lockups generally, the Commissioners say:—

“Instructed to inspect as many of the lockups in the colony as might be convenient, we visited forty-three. These included lockups in the Southern, Western, Central, and Northern districts, and may be taken as representative of the watch-houses of both town and country. Very few came up to the highest standard of requirements for a tropical and sub-tropical country; perhaps a majority might be regarded as fairly adapted to the purposes for which they were built; in a large minority the provision for the healthy and decent detention of prisoners is utterly inadequate. As a rule the cells are too small. In Great Britain the minimum size of each cell according to modern requirement is 800 cubic feet of air space, and we had high professional opinion, with which, after practical inspection of the conditions of incarceration, especially in the North and West, we entirely agree, that the intense summer heat of Queensland demands an air space of at least 1,200 cubic feet in each cell. None of the lockups provide this for single prisoners, and very few come up to the English standard. In the vast majority of the lockups the ventilation is most imperfect, and the suffering endured in summer-time by the unfortunate prisoners must be great. Although at first some of the evidence on this point seemed exaggerated we were convinced, after inspection, that confinement for even a limited number of hours in many of the Northern and Western lockups must endanger the lives of prisoners. And this remark must apply as strongly to some of the lockups we were unable to visit. For instance, at Thornborough the only means of ventilation or light is an opening in the door 6 inches square;

at Palmerville, the same; at Blackall, 7 inches by 6 inches; at Torrens Creek, 5 inches by 7 inches; at Windorah, 8 inches by 16 inches; at Croydon, 8½ inches by 7½ inches; at Cumberland, 9 inches by 6 inches; and at Yaamba, a few auger-holes. Incarceration in such places when the thermometer ranges over 100 degrees must be intolerable, and lead to grave physical consequences. Indeed there is evidence which, if not altogether indubitable, is at least worthy of consideration, that a prisoner's death was caused by confinement in one of these cells."

These remarks apply to lockups generally, but as types of the lockups I will take that part of the report which refers to the Brisbane lockup, and also that which refers to the Townsville lockup. I will read what they say at page 67 in reference to the Brisbane lockup, with which I fully agree, because I consider the place not fit to kennel a dog in, let alone to confine a human being in. Speaking of the Brisbane lockup, they say:—

"The lockup for the city of Brisbane is situated in Elizabeth street. The cells occupy the back portion of the ground floor of the police court buildings. Access to them is extremely inconvenient, three sides of the building having to be traversed before the charge-room is reached, where prisoners are searched, and the crimes or offences with which they are charged are recorded in the books of the lockup. From the charge-room to the cells the corridor is dim and crooked. The open space between the walls of the cells and the adjoining buildings is only a few feet in breadth, and a free circulation of air is impossible. For the same reason little light reaches the gratings of the cells, which are therefore deprived of the hygienic action of the sun's rays. All the conditions of situation are such as to render the cells dark, ill-ventilated, and oppressive, which inspection proved them to be.

"Bad as the cells for females are, they are lightsome and pleasant compared with those for males. The latter are five in number. Access is gained to them by a passage running at right angles to the main corridor, which passage, 3 feet 2 inches wide, is barred by an open iron-railed gate. On one side are three cells, each 9 feet by 7 feet by 9 feet at the key of the arched roof, with a cubic air space of 567 feet. There are no windows or gratings to the open air in these cells, the only means of ventilation being gratings in the passage-wall and above the door. They are moreover quite dark, the only light being derived from gas lamps which are kept burning day and night in the passage. On the other side of the passage is a cell, 9 feet by 7 feet by 9 feet. This is used for the confinement of lunatics when any of these unfortunates happen to be brought to the lockup; but the only provision for the safety of such lunatics is a wire gauze covering to the stanchions of the ventilating gratings in the outer wall and above the door. This wire gauze is supposed to prevent the lunatics from hanging themselves."

Then, on page 69, there is this remarkable passage:—

"Between our third and fourth visits to the lockup a man died in the smallest of the two new cells. His name was William Milton, and he was brought to the lockup at five minutes past 8 o'clock on Wednesday, the 25th May, and placed in a cell with another man, to whom he spoke. The constable on duty saw Milton six times between 8 o'clock and a quarter to 1, when the other prisoner knocked at the door and said something was wrong with Milton. On examination Milton was found to be dead."

With reference to the lockup in one of the principal Northern towns of the colony, the leading Northern town, I suppose—that is, Townsville—at page 79 the following occurs:—

"In 1886, 694 prisoners were confined in the lockup—fifteen being the greatest number in one night, and six the largest number placed in one cell. This would afford only 223 cubic feet of air to each prisoner—nothing short of cruelty in the tropical heat of Cleveland Bay. During the year forty-two lunatics were also confined in the cells for one or more nights. No special cell is kept for lunatics, drunkards, or females; but Constable McGrath, the keeper, does his best to put 'drunks,' women, and blacks, in separate cells. Prisoners remanded for eight days are sent to the gaol; if for less they are confined in the lockup, and allowed an hour or two hours' exercise in the yard daily. Prisoners sentenced to forty-eight hours' imprisonment do not get any exercise unless when cleaning out the cell in the morning. Blankets are never washed; when unfit for use they are thrown away and new ones got."

Now, I say such a condition of things as this is a disgrace to any Christian land, more especially to a colony like Queensland, and it should not be allowed to exist. I do not intend to quote at any length from this voluminous report—which is as long as the Bible—I do not want to frighten the House, so I will simply read one or two matters from it, which I think require attention. I shall also call the attention of the House to the state of two gaols, as disclosed by the report; first of all to the state of the Toowoomba Gaol as described at page 48:—

"From the yard access is obtained to what is called the female wing—a two-storied stone building, 41 feet 10 inches long by 24 feet broad. The ground floor consists of a small entrance lobby, a dark or punishment cell, 8 feet 8 inches by 7 feet 2 inches, and 10 feet 6 inches high; and a workroom, 21 feet 6 inches long by 17 feet wide, and 10 feet 6 inches high. There are no windows in the dark cell; ventilation is supplied by auger-holes in the ceiling and two perforated iron plates in the floor. The air when the door is shut is most oppressive, the smell is abominable, and there are no means of communication with officials except by knocking. It is little wonder that when prisoners are shut in here they should become noisy and half frantic, as we were told they often do. The cubic air space in the work room is 3,832 feet, and here as many as thirty-two women are regularly employed sewing. It is also used as a dining-hall in wet or cold weather."

Then, at page 49, the Commissioners say:—

"The accommodation is utterly inadequate for the number of prisoners confined here. The daily average number in 1884 was 693 males and 3574 females; in 1885, 16 males and 35 females; and in 1886, 1428 males and 372 females. The daily average number for the first six months of the present year was 15 males and 50 females. The nominal accommodation provided in the gaol is for 34 females and 16 males, although the sheriff in his evidence says there is room for 66 prisoners. In the large dormitory in the female wing, there are 24 beds—boards on small trestles and covered with a mattress. The cubic air space in the ward is 5,712 feet, so that with only 24 prisoners confined there, each would have no more than 238 cubic feet of air—about a fourth of what is demanded in the cool climate of England. But on one occasion as many as forty-one females have been huddled together in this ward—some on the boards and the remainder on the floor. It was stated by a witness that when so full it was impossible to move without stepping on some one, and in retiring for the night those privileged to have boards had to turn in before the others could make up their beds on the floor. This would give to each a cubic air space of only 139 feet; and to that they were condemned daily for thirteen and a-half hours. Even in the daytime, when the ward has had time to air, and when only a score were sleeping in it at night, the atmosphere was close and offensive. Such conditions are bound to lead to physical and moral deterioration.

"Classification with such limited accommodation is impossible. The only attempt made at it is to separate the women who have only been convicted once from those who have served one or more sentences. But little good is accomplished by this. Great as the evils are apparent on the surface from the want of classification, we confess we were hardly prepared for the terrible revelations made as to what is possible in the associated wards or cells. Allowing very much for exaggeration and for the loose talk of debased and prurient minds, enough remains to shock and horrify. Apart from the vile practices and the awful language which are indulged in, there can be no doubt that improper influences are brought to bear on less hardened females to abandon themselves to a career of immorality and crime when they shall have attained their freedom. Our firm conviction is that no woman can enter Toowoomba Gaol without becoming degraded, losing self-respect, and being made infinitely worse than before she stepped within its walls. In no sense are the officers of the establishment to blame; they seemed anxious to do their utmost to check evils and to influence the less depraved for good. It is the system which is at fault, and until that can be altered and female prisoners confined separately, with classification for work purposes, we may regard the gaol as little better than a manufactory of abandoned and criminal women."

I shall only draw the attention of the House now to the state of the Townsville Gaol, as described at page 57:—

"The largest number of prisoners confined at one time was 135, or more than twice the number for which there was nominal accommodation. When so over-

crowded three men were placed in each single cell, eight or ten had to sleep in the corridor; the women were put in single cells of their own division, and the associated ward in the female division used for male prisoners. As many as seventy men have been placed in the large associated ward, which has nominal accommodation for thirty. Boards are furnished as beds—one set in each cell and thirty sets in the associated ward. When three men were in the single cells two slept on the floor and one on the boards. Forty men slept on the floor in the associated ward, and thirty on boards. Of course, under such circumstances, even a pretence at decency is impossible. There are no bed-boards in the female wing, and the women all sleep on the concrete floor. At one time bed-boards were conceded to them, but they used the boards to climb up to the gratings, through which they signalled and showed themselves to the male prisoners in the adjoining yards. This induced the gaoler to take away the boards. The ventilation of the associated wards is defective, and they have a close fetid smell. The single cells are, however, cool, airy, and sweet. There is no classification beyond an attempt to separate committed from sentenced prisoners, but that is at times impossible. The committed men are all placed together in a yard, but sentenced black prisoners are herded with them. The reception-house for lunatics has now been opened, and that class of confinement is no longer sent to the gaol. It is in evidence that in the associated cells the prisoners every night participate in 'rows,' indulge in the most filthy language, and engage in the vilest and most obscene practices. The revelations made by prisoners, who must be believed, are of the most revolting character, and condemn, as nothing else could, the associated system. The danger of association in the facilities it affords for organising conspiracies is also shown in the plan made for breaking out of the gaol in April last."

Then the report goes on to speak of the sanitation, as follows:—

"The drainage of buildings and yards is all that could be desired. Not a drop of water lies even after the heaviest rains. The yards are models of cleanliness and order, as are also the front paddocks. The cells and wards are scrupulously clean, whitewash and paint are freely used, and not a speck of dirt was anywhere visible in any of the buildings. The pans and buckets are cleansed daily. The system seemed effective, and there was no offensive effluvia. Bitter complaints were made by many prisoners that the blankets were exceedingly dirty and that they smelled badly. One prisoner alleged that his blankets were so foul that for ten days he preferred to sleep on the bare concrete in his ordinary wearing clothes to covering himself with the blankets. It was also generally said that the blankets were covered with vermin, and that white prisoners on admission to gaol were handed filthy blankets, which had been previously used by Chinese, Cingalese, and Malays. The blankets which we noticed during our round of inspection did not appear to be very filthy, but a female prisoner alleged that, although she had spent most of her time in the gaol during the past nine years, she had never seen so much washing and scrubbing as during the two or three weeks before the visit of the board of inquiry."

I have no doubt that was when the whitewashing was done too. I have thought it my duty to draw the attention of the House to these statements, which relate to a most shocking condition of things. It is quite possible that the language may be somewhat exaggerated; but I have no doubt, if the evidence is to be believed, that the statements in the report are borne out by it. There is another matter to which I wish to draw attention, and that is the statement in the report that there is no uniformity in the treatment of prisoners under committal or on remand. The Commissioners say, on page 21:—

"There is no uniformity in the treatment of prisoners under committal or on remand. In Brisbane they are kept as far as possible apart from sentenced prisoners; a yard is allotted for their special use, but frequently they are compelled to sleep in association with sentenced prisoners. In Rockhampton untried prisoners sleep in single cells, and have a separate yard for exercise. In Townsville they are as far as possible placed in single cells at night, and put into a yard in the daytime with black sentenced prisoners. At Roma, committed and remand prisoners are placed in single cells at night, but mix with sentenced prisoners in the exercise yard. At Toowoomba, committed prisoners in the female division are placed with offenders sentenced for the first time;

but in the male division sentenced and committed men are placed together. In the police gaols no difference whatever is made between sentenced and untried prisoners. There is also the same variety of treatment of untried prisoners in regard to food, which in some lockups amounts to bread and water only, while in others and in certain gaols it consists of whatever victuals the prisoners choose to order from the nearest public-house, or their friends like to bring. We recommend that one of the first reforms to be made in the administration of all the gaols should be the complete separation of untried from tried prisoners."

I shall not detain the House any further on this subject, because if I were to deal with all the matters embraced in the report it would keep the House till midnight, but I have said enough to show that there are certain matters which demand searching and immediate inquiry at the hands of the Government, if they have not already received it. So far as the Townsville Gaol is concerned, I am sure that if the Postmaster-General reads that evidence for himself he will see that a most searching inquiry is urgently necessary. There is no doubt that to carry out the recommendations contained in the report will involve much expense, and to carry them out properly will be a work of time. But I do trust that my hon. friend the Postmaster-General will see his way to effect some reform in the matters which I have indicated. I think it might be desirable that an inspector of prisons should be appointed. I do not know that anyone discharges that duty at present, but I think that would be a step in the right direction. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—The matter to which the Hon. Mr. Macpherson has drawn attention will, of course, receive great consideration—in fact, the report is already under consideration; but these things take time. However, I can promise that everything will be done that can be done, in order to carry out those portions of the recommendations which are considered advisable.

The HON. W. F. TAYLOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—I certainly expected that this report would have been discussed in this Chamber before now, but I was rather surprised to hear the matter brought forward this afternoon. The report is very voluminous and it would take a long time to read it thoroughly, but there are certain points to which one may refer, and which may be considered with a certain amount of advantage. One of those points is in regard to the condition of the lockups, so forcibly referred to by the Hon. Mr. Macpherson, more especially the want of accommodation for lunatics in up-country lockups. I have lived up-country for several years, and it has been my lot sometimes to have to send very worthy men—in fact, gentlemen—to lockups, where they had to remain for some time before they could be transferred to the reception-house at Rockhampton or Brisbane. So far as I am aware, there is no place outside of Brisbane, with the exception of Rockhampton, where proper accommodation exists for lunatics. In almost every other place if any person becomes insane, whatever may be the cause, the lockup is the only place where he can be shut up; and it is well known that most of these lockups are by no means proper places for unfortunate lunatics who are unable to take care of themselves. In order to prevent them from doing injury to themselves they are obliged at times to be handcuffed with their hands behind their backs, and treated in the roughest possible manner. The walls of those lockups consist of rough hardwood boards, and the unfortunate creatures knock themselves about, sometimes causing their own death. I have often represented the matter to the autho-

rities, and endeavoured to get proper places provided in which to confine these unfortunate people pending their removal to the reception-house, either at Brisbane or at Rockhampton. I believe, even at Warwick at the present day, there is not such a thing as a proper cell for the reception of lunatics, which is a condition of things that ought not to obtain. Some provision ought to be made for keeping these unfortunate people apart from the rough cells in which persons are put indiscriminately. There is this one other point I may refer to, and that is that it appears to me that the evidence in many cases is a little overdrawn. I think that no doubt a great many abuses have occurred in the whole system of gaol and lockup administration in the colony; but I do not think the state of affairs is so bad as it is represented here. However, there is an urgent need for a very marked reform. It appears to me that the main point to be looked to is the proper supervision of these lockups and gaols. So far as I am aware there is no supervision whatever, and the local authorities treat their prisoners pretty much as they think they ought to be treated. I do not say they treat them harshly or roughly; but there seems to be no regular rule by which these institutions are carried on. Of course, I know that all the lockups and gaols are supposed to be under the immediate supervision of the sheriff; but I also am aware that that superintendence does not extend very far, and I think the time has come when an inspector should be appointed, with full powers, to investigate and inspect all these places, and institute the necessary reforms so far as he possibly can. In connection with this matter, it is perhaps as well to mention that this inspector might also be charged with the duty of inspecting the various up-country hospitals. A great many abuses have crept into the administration of these hospitals, and they are a very considerable item in the annual expenditure of the colony. The colony contributes a large sum of money towards their maintenance, and there is no actual supervision over their management. The offices might be combined as they are in other countries. I remember when I was in Canada, there was an inspector of gaols and hospitals, and I have no doubt that here an appointment of that sort will be productive of very great good in regard to the administration of those institutions. That is a matter that has often occupied my attention, and in my opinion it is a thing that has long been required in this colony. I hope the Government will take up the question and deal with it in an effectual way.

The Hon. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—The report is a very voluminous one, and I must admit that I have not read it all through. Nevertheless, I have dived into it here and there, and I must say that a very large proportion of the evidence had been better never taken, and much better never printed. Still there is much that is very instructive. It shows that we have passed through the transition stage that most colonies and States must of necessity go through. We began with a few dozen prisoners and a little lockup, and gradually the numbers have increased until a system that might have been all very well in our primitive condition is totally inadequate to our advanced state. I do not find fault with those who are in charge of those institutions, because there is an advanced condition of affairs now which requires an advanced State system and many modifications. Amongst these modifications one thing we must pay some attention to is the variation of the prisoners' diet. I have had experience in those matters, and it goes to show that if you give men one kind of diet, you get them, not so much into a

condition of actual bad health as into a condition of chronic dissatisfaction, and it is extremely difficult to manage them and to do any good with them. You may bring any influence you like to bear upon them; but unless the men are kept in a proper condition you will not do any good with them under any regulations. Another thing is, there ought to be more constant and regular employment for all the prisoners. They should never be allowed to be idle, and they should be also able to earn some small wage during the period of their labour in the gaols to make provision for them when their sentences expire, so that they will be able to maintain themselves for a short time while they are seeking employment. We see that when a number of men are discharged they do not find employment readily, and they just quietly commit an offence in order that they may be sent back to gaol again. With the inauguration of a new system it will be very important that whoever is placed in charge of its establishment should first have an opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the system adopted in the Imperial prisons. The system we adopted in Western Australia was certainly one of the most successful in practice of any I have yet heard of. There we were compelled to take the better class of prisoners out and send them to the public works. There was next to no absconding, although the prisoners were not kept in any kind of confinement. In one case more than 100 men were sent out from the prison in the charge of simply one officer with two freemen. That officer was established at a place 100 miles away from any place from which he could get any important assistance from the police, during two years, and I think only one instance occurred of anything like insubordination, and in that case a majority of the men wished to be allowed to settle the question. They did so effectually, and the refractory ones had not a chance of being again refractory. This is one of those cases in which reformation cannot be established instantly. There are a number of reforms pointed out by the report, but there are some practical matters which I think the Commission have hardly been even aware of, and therefore have not touched upon them. One matter is in regard to the internal administration, and the management of the men. I know, of course, that the women are more troublesome to manage. It takes three times the number of warders to manage 100 women that it does to manage 500 men; but I do not profess to have had any experience with that class of offenders. The matter of classification is also very important. It so chanced that you find a greater number of cases of actual reform amongst men who have been sent to prison for serious crimes. Those who have been imprisoned for petty offences seldom reform, and in Western Australia we made it a rule when we employed prisoners in the country always to select men who had committed what were in the eye of the law very serious crimes. To my mind it simply showed that the men had perhaps rather irritable tempers, and committed themselves very seriously, and though it was necessary that the law should be maintained, and the safety of everyone should be properly attended to by administering the law, still it was the petty offender who was the worst, and he should be kept, so far as possible, apart from the other class of men. I think inquiry should be made into these matters, in regard to the mode in which prisons are carried on elsewhere. I do not mean that a special visit should be made, but information should be acquired in connection with the interior details. A great improvement might be made in our system without involving a very large expense.

The HON. P. MACPHERSON: With the permission of the House, I will withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LADY BOWEN LYING-IN HOSPITAL
LAND SALE BILL.

THIRD READING.

On motion of the HON. P. MACPHERSON, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

BRITISH NEW GUINEA BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the President left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider the Bill in detail.

The various clauses of the Bill, the schedules, and the preamble, were passed as printed.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1878
AMENDMENT BILL.

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY'S MESSAGE.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the President left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider the message of the Legislative Assembly relative to the Legislative Council's amendment in this Bill.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said, in moving that the Council do not insist upon their amendment in clause 6, he would direct the attention of hon. gentlemen to the clause as amended:—

“If the number of votes given against the loan is greater than one-half of the number of votes given in favour of the loan, the council shall be forbidden to proceed further with the loan.”

In the clause as sent up in the Bill from the Assembly, the words “one-half” were absent. He would ask the Council not to insist upon their amendment on the same grounds that he urged before—namely, that it was far better in cases of that sort that the majority should rule, and he stated then, that as they had already adopted that principle in clause 256 of the Divisional Boards Bill, which was now law, it would be far better that all law relating to local government should be assimilated in that way. He trusted that that view would be taken by the Council upon the present occasion. There were many divisional boards that were very populous, and there was no reason why the law should not be made as simple as possible, in order that the ratepayers should have no difficulty in understanding it. Hon. gentlemen would see that in a case of that kind, where a loan was required, the first step was to bring the matter before the council of the municipality; and before the loan was authorised, the council, being the representatives of the ratepayers, had to come to the conclusion that the loan was desirable. The council having come to that conclusion, the matter had to come before the ratepayers by a poll, and if a majority came to the conclusion that the loan should be authorised,

that ought to be quite sufficient. He trusted that under those circumstances the Committee would see fit not to insist upon the amendment it had made.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said he must admit that he was still to some extent of the opinion that it was desirable to put as much restriction as possible upon the borrowing of money. It was much easier to borrow money than to pay the loan off afterwards. But when he turned to the reason that had been given by the Legislative Assembly for dissenting from their amendment, and remembered that they had already passed a clause in the Divisional Boards Bill, which had now become law, which required the larger number of votes to veto a loan, it would be better if they did not insist upon their amendment. During the session they had worked very harmoniously with the Assembly in regard to amendments, and the making of mutual concessions would allow that harmony to continue. He did not consider the question as one of vital importance. In the amendment they had made in the Bill, they had simply modified clause 256 of the Divisional Boards Bill; but certainly some inconvenience might arise from there being two different clauses dealing with similar subjects, though under slightly different conditions, and which would necessitate there having to be twice as many voters in favour of a loan on one side of a boundary as on the other. It would be better that the two Bills should be made to assimilate so far as possible, and he therefore considered that it would be better for them not to insist upon their amendment.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Chairman leave the chair, and report that the Committee did not insist on their amendment.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the report was adopted.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, a message was ordered to be sent to the Legislative Assembly, intimating that the Council did not insist on their amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 5 o'clock.