

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

MONDAY, 15 OCTOBER 1888

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 15 October, 1888.

Petitions— establishment of a University— Extension of railway communication, etc., to Yeppoon.— Customs Duties Bill— third reading.— Supply— resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITIONS.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSITY.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH presented a petition from the Hon. Sir Charles Lilley, Knight, Chief Justice of Queensland, and other gentlemen, praying that the House will, at an early date, make provision for the immediate establishment of a university in Queensland, and moved that the petition be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of the HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH, the petition was received.

EXTENSION OF RAILWAY COMMUNICATION, ETC., TO YEPPON.

Mr. REES R. JONES presented a petition from the residents and property-owners in the township of Yeppoon, praying, first, for the extension of railway communication to the township of Yeppoon; secondly, for the erection of a post and telegraph office; and, thirdly, for the establishment of a police station, and the location of one or more police constables thereat. He moved that the petition be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of Mr. REES R. JONES, the petition was received.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith), 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.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith), 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 1888-9.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The PREMIER moved that there be granted for the year 1888-9 a sum not exceeding £1,640, for salaries and contingencies in connection with His Excellency the Governor. The salary of the aide-de-camp, amounting to £300, had already been voted.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was usual to say something about the schedules on the first vote, and he had intended to ask a question respecting the late Inspector of Distilleries, but would defer it. He also wanted some information about the expenses in connection with the Government of New Guinea. The Government was carried on under the assumption that Queensland paid one-third; and he would ask if the Government had received any answer from the New South Wales Government yet as to the payment of that colony's share of the expenses? It was rather more than twelve months since the Government of New South Wales were asked to say whether they would or would not ratify the agreement entered into by their representatives with respect to the Government of New Guinea, but he had never heard of any reply being received.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought the reply had been received before the hon. gentleman opposite had left office. All the work in his office had gone on under that belief.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No; I never even received an acknowledgment of my letter.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that Victoria and New South Wales stood in with Queensland in the matter, and South Australia stood out, as the hon. gentleman knew. He would verify the information he was now giving. He did not remember seeing the document, but all the work in his office in connection with the matter had proceeded on the assumption that New South Wales stood in.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that up to the time he left office no answer had been received from Sir Henry Parkes, though he had tried every means to get even an acknowledgment of his letter.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman would be good enough to take the information he had given, and he would verify it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he had a further question to ask. He saw that £12,000 was put down for the destruction of marsupials, but as the Marsupial Act expired at the close of the session, that amount would not be required.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes. We propose to renew it.

Mr. GANNON said he noticed £350 was put down to provide accommodation for holding the birthday ball.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead): No; there is nothing down for this year. The votes for this year will be found in the second column.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Might I ask why it is left out?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The time passed by and the ball was not held.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that was for last year, but he wished to know why no amount was proposed for the present year. There was no doubt that Government House was not large enough to allow of any large entertainment of that kind being given. A sum of money was voted some time ago for additions to Government House, with a view of enabling the Governor to

give more extensive entertainments than could be given at present; but in the meantime it had been the practice to put a sum of money on the Estimates to allow for the necessary expense of fitting up some place in which to hold the ball. It was considered by some people a necessary and proper thing for the Governor to do—though opinions might differ on that point—but it was not possible for the Governor to give entertainments of the magnitude expected by some people, in the present Government House. If it was expected that they should be given in some other place in the town, money would have to be voted for fitting up or erecting a place for the purpose.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the money voted for the purpose last year was not spent, and the omission of the item for the present year was not made with any intention of declining to provide the necessary accommodation at all.

Mr. GANNON said that he would like to have an understanding as to whether the amount was to be spent at all. He was going to oppose it, because he thought it was time a stopper should be put on the expenditure of the people's money in the entertainment of a certain class of the community. He asked for the information because of his want of experience in the way those things were dealt with, and he desired to oppose that expenditure as much as he possibly could. The people were now to be taxed very highly to carry on the government of the country, and he trusted the Committee would set its face against any expenditure that was not for the good of the colony generally.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it must be borne in mind that the vote was but a recent creation, and he found on looking back to the Estimates for 1882-3 that no such item appeared there. It was only within the last few years it had been put on. If, as unfortunately was the case, they had to have a new Governor, they should not start with him on so luxurious a scale of living—having regard to the altered state of affairs in the colony. The vote, as he had said, was not on the Estimates for 1882-3, and he did not see why they should be asked to vote it now. A number of such items had crept into the Estimates since he had been a member of the House. There was the Governor's salary, a vote for the Governor's country or summer residence, and that vote for the birthday ball, and he thought it was time some of the Government House expenditure was cut off.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman opposite must understand him that the omission of the vote was not a reflection upon his policy at all, though it might look as if it was. He must say, however, that had he given the matter consideration he would have left the item out, and he was quite prepared to stand by the Estimates.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he mentioned the matter, because it was quite certain, under the altered circumstances of the colony, that the Governor could not be expected to give birthday balls or large entertainments outside Government House. He believed the vote of £350 was never more than sufficient, and indeed was not sufficient, to pay for the actual labour and expense of fitting up a place in which to hold the ball. He was quite certain that any Governor who might come here would be greatly relieved to find that he was not expected to give a birthday ball—which meant a great deal of trouble and a great expenditure of money in fitting up a room, as there was not a suitable room at Government House¹. It would be under-

stood that he was not expected to give any such entertainments. The omission of the vote involved that, he was sure.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the practice of putting the vote on the Estimates was begun in 1884-5. It was not, therefore, of any great age, and it was much better it should die young.

Mr. GROOM said that although the item might have appeared on the Estimates for the first time in 1884, he remembered that money was voted on one occasion when the late Sir Arthur Kennedy gave a large birthday ball.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes; the Works office paid the expense in that case.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that money had been paid for the same purpose on several occasions, and the late Government thought it desirable to put the sum on the Estimates openly.

Mr. DRAKE said that before the question was put he would like clearly to understand that in passing that vote they were affirming that the money was not to be expended next year for a birthday ball.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that in passing that vote they were saying that no money was voted for a birthday ball.

Mr. DRAKE said he would like to know whether in passing that item it was to be understood that there would be no birthday ball, or whether in passing it blank now, they were to understand that the birthday ball would be given all the same, and the money be provided in some other way?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member wanted to dive a little too deep. What he said was, that in passing that vote they were to understand that no money was voted for a birthday ball. The Governor could give a dozen birthday balls if he chose, and he (the Colonial Treasurer) could not stop him.

Mr. GANNON said he did not think the item of £300 for a country residence for the Governor, with all the other expenses that followed, was necessary. He could speak pretty confidently in regard to the country residence of the late Governor at Southport, as he was one of the unfortunate owners. He should like to see the vote reduced as much as possible, and thought that amount might be omitted. The £350 for a birthday ball and £300 for a country residence would be substantial reductions.

Mr. MURPHY said he also would like to see the £300 for a country residence for the Governor taken off. He thought the Government should build a residence in the country altogether for the Governor, and make use of the grounds that were now encumbered by Government House for some better purpose. He did not mean to reflect in any way upon the usefulness of the Governor, or to say that a proper residence should not be provided by the State, but he thought the Government might well take into consideration the question of providing a suitable residence for the Governor outside Brisbane, on a better site than that occupied by Government House, and at a place where it would not be so much in the way of the people of Brisbane. The present building might be turned into a very much more useful purpose by converting it into a public library, or picture gallery, and the surrounding park might be thrown into the gardens and made open to the public. The Government might very well take that matter into their serious consideration.

Mr. HODGKINSON said that in 1874 the question of the Governor's salary came under the notice of the Committee. At that time it

was £4,000 per annum, and on a motion he made the salary was increased to £5,000, with the view of placing the Governor of Queensland in what was supposed to be the first class, and also with the view of stopping those extra allowances. He trusted that the hon. member who suggested the reduction of that item would carry the matter to its legitimate conclusion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought it was not an unfair thing to make provision for a country residence for the Governor. He did not see why the Governor should be forced to live all the year round in Brisbane. £300 was a moderate allowance, and as the Governor was expected to spend money in the colony, he might as well spend it in other places as in Brisbane.

Mr. SMITH said they might as well allow the Governor to live some time in the North, so that he might become acquainted with that part of the colony. He (Mr. Smith) would certainly support a reduction of that item unless a residence was to be provided for the Governor in the North.

Mr. DRAKE said that, with regard to the Governor making himself acquainted with other parts of the colony, he would point out that that was provided for in the item of £500 "to meet the travelling expenses of His Excellency and staff on tours of inspection."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was certainly desirable that they should take into consideration the question of building a new Government House. There was no doubt that what had been said by the hon. member for Barcoo was quite correct. The present situation of Government House was not at all what it was when it was first selected. There was a place called the Government Domain outside Victoria Park, which was a very suitable site for Government House, and he thought that the sooner they utilised it for that purpose the better. With respect to that £300, he did not think it was an unreasonable amount. What was the Governor to get? They made a bargain with him before he came, and they must understand that the position was not a very lucrative one. If people expected the Governor to come here and spend money, they must first provide the money for him to spend.

Mr. GLASSEY said he did not agree that an extra house, at considerable cost, should be provided for His Excellency. A person receiving £5,000 per annum was, he thought, well able to provide a country residence for himself; and if the hon. member who first mooted the matter proposed a reduction in the item he would vote for the reduction.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the idea thrown out by the hon. member for Barcoo, with reference to turning Government House into a public library or picture gallery, deserved serious consideration. The grounds now occupied by Government House might very well be used for zoological gardens. They had nothing of the sort in the colony. All the other colonies, even South Australia, had very good zoological gardens, and he thought it was almost a disgrace to Queensland that no attempt had yet been made in that direction. It would be a useful thing if something of that kind were initiated. There was a number of wild animals now being exhibited in George street, and arrangements might probably be made to purchase those by the country, to form the nucleus of a zoological collection for Queensland. The matter was one that it was worth their while to consider.

Mr. GROOM said that if they were going to practice economy in the Estimates they might take some other item than that of £300 for a

country residence for the Governor. He did not see any objection at all to the item. The New South Wales Government had purchased a splendid residence for the Governor of that colony at Moss Vale, the Victorian Government had provided a beautiful country residence for their Governor at Mount Macedon, and in South Australia the Government had erected a splendid house in beautiful grounds on Mount Lofty. He should like to know why Queensland should be singular in that respect. When the Governor's salary was increased from £3,000 to £5,000, it placed Queensland in the position of a first class colony, and it stood so now, and a colony giving a first class salary was, he understood, entitled to a first class Governor.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It covers a pension.

Mr. GROOM said it covered a pension, as the hon. member said. If a Governor retired after occupying the position of Governor of a first-class colony, he was allowed as a pension, half the salary he was last receiving, and this was paid out of Imperial funds. Why they should attempt to economise in a case of that kind he was at a loss to understand. There were certain months of the year when the climate of Brisbane was very hot indeed, and if the Governor desired to go into the country districts that was a very small sum to enable him to do so. Really he thought they should have some respect for the gentleman, whoever he might be, who succeeded the late Governor, and grant him the same privileges as his predecessor.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was not much exercised about providing a new Government House, because there was very much more important work to be done elsewhere. Hon. gentlemen did not seem to consider that a new Government House meant a bigger salary and more expenses.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Why?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said what was the result of putting up a big Government House in Melbourne.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: What was the result?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that a larger amount had to be allowed the Governor for expenses to keep up the big building. The expenses were nearly doubled. So far as Government House was concerned, it was as comfortable a house as there was in the colony of Queensland, and there was quite sufficient accommodation for any gentleman who spent £5,000 a year.

Mr. SAYERS said he did not intend to vote for the reduction, because if they wanted a good man to come here they must give him at least the same position as a great many other gentlemen in the colony had; but if the hon. member who proposed the reduction would go in for wiping out the whole vote he would vote for that. What the hon. gentleman wished to do was to say they did not want a Governor, but he went the wrong way to work.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there were very strong reasons for voting that sum rather than building a big Government House in some other place. There was no doubt a change was necessary to any man who lived the greater part of his time in Brisbane. If the sum was voted in the shape of rent it left the selection of the spot to the particular fancy of the Governor for the time being. The late Sir Anthony Musgrave preferred a residence on the sea coast, whilst on the other hand Sir Arthur Kennedy was inclined to prefer the mountains. If they had a fixed residence it might not be suitable for every Governor they had.

Mr. AGNEW said he quite agreed with the Colonial Secretary. He had a great idea that the next Governor would see his way to live at Sandgate. The Sandgate people had expressed that desire, and he thought it only fair that the Governor should divide his time at the two principal sea-side resorts.

Mr. GANNON said it must be recollected that there were several other items in the vote. "To meet the travelling expenses of His Excellency and staff on tours of inspection, £500," and "Uniforms, forage, remounts, postage, and incidentals, £500." Those things ran into a lot of money. His proposition was only the thin end of the wedge. He hoped to raise the question of having a Governor sent out here at all, and he intended to do what he could towards altering the present system.

Mr. MURPHY said he did not see why they should not reduce those items of expenditure. He noticed that Tasmania was doing all it possibly could to make expenditure come within revenue by reducing salaries, and they might well do the same. He did not mean to decrease the comforts of the Governor, so far as his house in Brisbane was concerned, but he had argued for the removal of Government House to another site which had already been set apart for that purpose. He did that in the interests of the general public; but he did not mean that the Government should build a palace, or a building more like a factory such as had been built in Melbourne. A house should be built in keeping with the position of the Governor of this colony, and with the position of one who had £5,000 a year to spend. He did not wish to reduce the colony from the position of a first-class colony, because it might be of advantage to keep Queensland in that position, so that first-class men might be obtained. What he should like to see would be a new Government House, built in a more suitable position, and the public given the benefit of the land surrounding the present building.

Mr. BARLOW said if that proposition was carried out the argument would be something like this: Queensland is a first-class colony, and it must have a first-class Governor. The initial expense of the building would be £100,000, and about £20,000 more for furnishing would be required. He thought it better to let things stand as they were.

Mr. GANNON moved that the amount be reduced by £300—"rent of country residence."

Question—That the sum of £1,340 only be granted—put and negatived.

Question—That £1,640 be granted for this service—put and passed.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £1,039 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Executive Council.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £3,400 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Legislative Council.

Mr. UNMACK said he desired to call attention to the extraordinary amount they paid for the salaries of messengers in both Houses of Parliament. He had no fault whatever to find with regard to the civility or attention of the messengers of that House since he had been in it, but considering that they had to pay £2,187 for the services of messengers, and of waiters in the refreshment rooms, he thought it required looking into, especially when it was remembered that the House only sat four or five months out

of the year. He did not know whether it was possible to utilise the services of those attendants during the remaining portion of the year, but it seemed an extraordinary amount to pay.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said if the hon. member would allow him he would correct him in one thing. The matter he was discussing would arise when they came to the item including the refreshment rooms. The only thing the hon. gentleman could question now was the amount set down for the salaries of the messengers of the Legislative Council; that was £540, and he was sure it was not too much to pay for attendance on members and officials of the House. The hon. gentleman would be perfectly justified in taking up the subject when they came to the vote including the refreshment rooms.

Mr. GANNON said he hoped they would not start cutting down the men who got small salaries—£60, £70, or £80 a year men. He had no doubt the messengers earned them. He would go for the £1,000 and £1,200 a year men.

Mr. UNMACK said there were no £60 or £70 men in question. He did not grudge the money, but he did grudge paying twelve months' salary for doing four or five months' work. He did not know whether it was possible to utilise the services of those men for the remainder of the year in some other direction, and thus save the amount of their salaries.

Mr. GROOM said perhaps the hon. gentleman was not aware that each branch of the Legislature regulated the appointments and pay of the officers under its own control. If they were to presume to interfere with the Estimates prepared by the other branch of the Legislature, they would immediately bring about a very unpleasant state of affairs. Each branch of the Legislature had its own rules and regulations for the guidance and control of its own officers, and which must be observed if parliamentary government was to be carried on. Each House was the guardian of its own rights and privileges, and would see that its officers were properly paid. When the salary of the principal messenger of the Assembly was increased, and rightly increased, from £150 to £175, they immediately received an application from the Legislative Council to place their messenger on the same footing. The claim was recognised by the House, and the salary was put on the same basis in both Houses. Of course the work in the other Chamber was not nearly so heavy as in the Assembly, and he thought the messengers there earned their salaries very well. They were not overpaid compared with messengers in the other colonies. They received higher salaries in the neighbouring colonies, and were also provided with uniforms at the cost of the State. Under the circumstances he thought it would not be desirable to interfere with the estimates as prepared by the other branch of the Legislature.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he could not quite agree with the hon. gentleman who had just sat down. That House had to vote the funds necessary to carry on the business of not only that House, but the other Chamber and the several departments of the Government, and it was their duty to supervise and discuss every item in which it was likely a reduction could be made. He did not understand the hon. gentleman who introduced the matter to be in favour of reducing the salaries of the messengers, but he had raised a question that they might very well consider. No doubt they were paying a large amount for messengers, and the question arose whether a good deal of the work could not be done by boys. Where men were required he would pay them well, but in many cases the

work of messengers could be done by boys. He did not think it derogatory to the colony to get boys to do work for which they were specially fitted. His remarks applied to all Government departments where men were doing work that could be done by boys in half the time. The matter should be well discussed before they parted with it.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that £3,605 be granted for salaries and contingencies, *Legislative Assembly*.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he did not think it wise to allow it to go unchallenged, as an admitted fact, that whenever increases were given to officers of that House the same increases should be made to officers of the other House. He certainly protested against that being assumed. He knew on one or two occasions it had been done, and that the other House had maintained that it must be done, but it was not so in the other colonies. Comparing the work done by the officers and attendants of that House, with that done by the officers and attendants of the other Chamber, it would be most unreasonable to say that their salaries should always be equal. It should be perfectly understood that they could increase the salaries of the officers of that House without a corresponding increase being made in the salaries of the officers of the other House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he quite agreed with the hon. the leader of the Opposition; at the same time he thought the hon. gentleman would be one of the last to suggest a reduction in the salaries of the messengers at the present time.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I did not suggest it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he knew that. He had just said the hon. gentleman would be one of the last to do so.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £8,089 be granted for Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly; "Library, reporting staff, refreshment rooms, and contingencies," and said that the amount was the same as was granted last year.

Mr. GROOM said he would draw the Chief Secretary's attention to the question whether something could not be done with the view of the better circulation of *Hansard* than was effected at present. Hon. members would observe from the Estimates that the reporting staff of *Hansard* cost £4,128, and on referring to the Colonial Secretary's Estimates, Government Printer, there would be seen a further sum of £3,200 for *Hansard*; and no doubt if some other items could be analysed, particularly in salaries of various officers, it would be found that a great part of their time was occupied with *Hansard*. He had gone into the question very carefully, and had come to the conclusion that *Hansard* was costing the country £10,000 a year. That expenditure was intended for some better purpose than merely to supply volumes to members, and to lie on the table and in the Library. The object of establishing a daily *Hansard* was that people outside should have a better opportunity of knowing what their representatives were doing and saying in the House than they could obtain from the reports in the Press, which occasionally put forward very garbled versions of the speeches of hon. members. Without making any charge against any particular newspaper, he might say

that he had seen reports of speeches made in the House by hon. members which were no more like the words actually uttered by those hon. members than the moon was like the sun. Their object in spending £10,000 annually on *Hansard* was that it might circulate amongst the people outside, and that object had not been achieved. There must be some reason for it. He himself, not so very long ago, used to circulate from 900 to 1,100 copies of *Hansard* with every issue of his own newspaper, while at present hardly a single subscriber had sent in an application for *Hansard*. All they had to do was to send in their names, with a remittance to the Government Printer, who supplied them with *Hansard* for the whole session for a ridiculously small sum. He dared say that if the hon. gentleman looked up the figures he would find that the outside circulation of *Hansard* was exceedingly small. They had one of the best reporting staffs to be found in all the colonies. He knew something about the reporting staffs in the other colonies, and he said advisedly that the present Queensland *Hansard* staff was one of the very best reporting staffs to be found in any of the colonies. Was it not a pity that their labours should be lost? and could not some way be devised by which *Hansard* could be circulated amongst the reading public of the colony? He had seen the speeches of hon. members on both sides of the House garbled in the reports which appeared in the Press—he was not speaking of any particular newspaper—while *Hansard*, he took it, was a reliable authority. The gentlemen in the gallery had no object in misreporting, and if any mistakes were made hon. members had an opportunity the following day of correcting them, and supplying their constituents with a correct report of what they really did say. They ought to receive a better return from that £10,000 than supplying members with their own copies of *Hansard* and the volumes for the table and the library; and if the hon. gentleman could suggest some way by which it could be better circulated outside he would confer a public benefit.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member had just asked him the very questions which he had intended to put to the hon. member. They had a *Hansard* costing £10,000 a year, and anybody could have it delivered at his house in any part of the colony for 3s. the session. When they had gone so low as that, and the public did not ask for it, they ought to consider whether *Hansard* was worth £10,000 a year. As to *Hansard* being reliable, he did not know that it was more reliable than the press. He trusted *Hansard* as he trusted the press. When he delivered a speech he never looked at a proof of it, and when proofs were sent to him he threw them into the waste-paper basket. He did not think it a right principle that members should be enabled to revise their speeches, and it would tend very much to improve *Hansard* if the reporting was entirely left to the honour of the staff. He should like to hear some suggestion from the hon. member. There was not a cheaper production in the world than *Hansard*, and when they delivered copies of it at so low a price without success, it was time to ask what should be done? There was not the slightest doubt they were a great deal too extravagant in that item, and he did not think they got the work for the £10,000 they expended.

Mr. PALMER said that one very good reason why *Hansard* was not more widely distributed throughout the country was that the vast majority of the people were quite ignorant of the terms on which they could get it. He would suggest, that an advertisement be occasionally

inserted in the country papers informing the people that, on the transmission of 3s. in stamps to the Government Printer, they would receive a copy of *Hansard* for the entire session. If that were done, he believed a great many persons would subscribe to it. His reason for saying that was that he, having taken advantage of a member's privilege and applied for a dozen copies of *Hansard* every day, had sent them all over the colony, and one daily to New South Wales; and the people to whom he sent them continually thanked him, and told him how very acceptable they were. From that he concluded that a great number of people would be glad to subscribe to *Hansard*, if they knew how and on what terms they could get it. That, in his opinion, could be best made known by an occasional advertisement in the country papers.

Mr. SAYERS said he could bear out what the hon. member for Carpentaria had said—that the general public did not know the terms upon which *Hansard* could be obtained. Indeed, he had not himself known the terms, and he had had lots of inquiries from people. If the Government would insert an advertisement in the papers, or allow some public officer, say the police magistrate, in every district to receive subscriptions, or give information on the subject, *Hansard* would be more largely read than it was at present. Every copy of *Hansard* that he received he sent away, and in every case he received letters thanking him, and asking if they could be got again next year, and when he told them the terms, of course they would be willing to pay for them.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he had applied for forty copies at the beginning of the session, but he had only been granted twelve, which he distributed over the colony. The session before he had made a proposition, and if the Government would take proper steps far more *Hansards* would be subscribed for than at present. He might remind the Premier that, so far as he knew, the annual subscription was 5s., and not 3s.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No, 3s.

Mr. ISAMBERT said if the Government would take a leaf out of the book of the late Minister for Lands, and have cards in large type exhibited everywhere in the public offices, the post offices, and the railway stations, and order the country postmasters to receive orders and subscriptions for *Hansard*, it would be more largely distributed. If a postmaster received orders for two dozen copies of *Hansard* he could get them all in one package, and then deliver them to the respective subscribers. On the Continent anyone could order any newspaper published on the Continent of the postmaster, and on paying in the money that paper would be sent to his house; and such a plan should be adopted here with regard to *Hansard*. He thought the Government need not be so stingy; they might give as many free copies as hon. members would be willing to distribute.

Mr. MURPHY said he certainly would object to the Government giving to every hon. member as many copies of *Hansard* as he liked to ask for, because some hon. members, as they all knew perfectly well, came there with cut-and-dried speeches which they wished to advertise all over the colony without paying for them. He had never sent *Hansard* to a single constituent since he had been a member of that Committee, and he never would. If he did not take *Hansard* in order to read his (Mr. Murphy's) speeches, he would not get one free gratis from him. He did not want *Hansard* distributed among his constituents in that way; and he would suggest to the hon. member for Toowoomba that, if he wanted his consti-

tuents to read *Hansard* cheaply, he should distribute a copy every day with his paper, or every time he published. He did not see why the hon. member for Enoggera should not distribute one with the *Boomerang* every time it came out. It was only 3s. per annum, and what was 3s.? Why should they not distribute *Hansard* with their papers if they were so anxious that their utterances should be read by their constituents? He would like the Government to have a weekly instead of a daily *Hansard*, and not only weekly so far as the publication was concerned, but he would like to see a condensed form of every speech put into *Hansard* instead of having them all at full length, and then they would very soon find the expenditure for *Hansard*, and the Government Printing Office would be very much decreased. They were now in an economical mood, and while they were in that mood he hoped the Committee would agree to make *Hansard* a weekly publication, and have hon. members' speeches only reported in a condensed form. That would very much decrease the cost of reporting and printing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he might take the opportunity of stating, with regard to *Hansard*, what he had intended doing at a later stage of the Estimates. He had some figures in his hand showing the number of copies printed:—

"The total number of copies printed last session was 248,789. Twelve free copies of each *Hansard* are distributed, on application, to members of the Legislative Assembly; six copies of each are forwarded free to fifty-eight schools of art, mechanics' and mining institutes, and working men's and turners' clubs; fifty-nine newspapers also get one copy free.

"In order that the newspapers might be informed as to the reduced scale on which they could be supplied with *Hansard* from the Government Printing Office, a circular, calling attention thereto, was forwarded to all the newspapers in the colony.

"The rates charged for *Hansard* are as follows:—

"Booksellers and others taking 12 and under, 1d. each; booksellers and others taking over 12, 4d. each; booksellers and others taking 100 and over, 4s. per 100; newspapers, 2s. per 100; subscribers, 3s. for the session; and cash sales 1d. each."

Although some hon. gentlemen might think that a high price, he considered it sufficiently low.

Mr. UNMACK said he should like to have some explanation about the item of £824 for waiters and incidentals.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that sum was for the waiters in the refreshment-rooms, whom the Government were kind enough to supply free to wait upon hon. members of that Committee. The amount was for the present large number of members what it was for the smaller number last year. The Government were responsible for the payment of the waiters, as they had been ever since he had been a member of that House. The waiters were found for hon. members, and they had simply to pay for their rations.

Question put and passed.

CHIEF SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) said that the report on immigration for the year was only just received by him in print; and he had only been promised that day the report on the Defence Force. As the Defence Force was one of those items upon which he wished especially to have the opinion of the Committee, and they would need to have all the facts before them, he desired to postpone the Chief Secretary's Estimates for the present. During the week he would have the Agent-General's report on emigration ready—also a subject upon which he wished to have the opinion of the Committee; and he

thought it better to postpone those Estimates till those reports were ready to lay on the table of the House, which would be in a day or two. He moved that the Chief Secretary's Estimates be postponed.

Question put and passed.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £6,320 be granted for the Colonial Secretary's office—salaries and contingencies. There was an increase against the estimates of last year of £685, chiefly caused by the creation of a new office—that of the Assistant Under Colonial Secretary, at a salary of £600 per annum. It was found that Mr. Gray—a most admirable officer—would be overburdened by performing the duties of both offices—that of principal Under Secretary, so to speak, and also that of Under Colonial Secretary. In fact it was proved to be absolutely necessary, for the good conduct of the public business, that an Assistant Under Secretary should be appointed, and that had been done by promoting Mr. Ryder, and giving him an increase of salary of £100 a year. The vacant office had been filled by the appointment of Mr. Woodcock, late police magistrate at Warwick. There were two other items showing increases. The salary of the telegraph operator and clerk was increased from £175 to £200. That officer had been in his present position for between nine and ten years. It was found advisable to give the messenger and office-keeper twelve months' leave of absence on full pay. He had been a long time in the service of the State, and it was almost an act of kindness to allow him that £75. There was a small decrease in the matter of clerks resulting from the new arrangement, which effected a saving of £15 per annum.

Question put and passed.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £8,868 be granted for the Registrar-General's Office, Patents, and Friendly Societies—salaries and contingencies. Hon. members would see that the salary of the Registrar-General had been increased by the addition of £100 for the Registrar of Patents. He was sure any hon. gentleman who had held the position of Colonial Secretary, or Attorney-General, or Minister of Justice, would know that an immense amount of work was cast upon the Registrar of Patents, and up to the present time that gentleman had received no remuneration. He was a capital officer, and was well known to members of the Committee. A sum of £200 appeared for a photo-lithographer. Heretofore that work had been done as occasion required, but it had been considered, and recommended by the Registrar-General, that it would be a saving to place a fixed sum upon the Estimates for that officer. There was a decrease of £100 in the item of "Fees to examiners, extra clerical assistance, postage, and contingencies," for the Patents' branch, and an increase of £25 in the item "Extra clerical assistance, postage, incidentals, and fuel," Registrar-General's branch. Then there was a sum of £10 put down for a messenger for the Friendly Societies' branch. The work in that subdivision had immensely increased, but a reduction had been made of £80 in the item of "Incidental expenses, postage, fuel, and rent." The total increase in the vote was £355.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH asked if the Friendly Societies' branch was thoroughly organised at present?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not know whether it was differently organised from what it was when the hon. gentleman was in office; but he had reason to believe that the appointment of another clerk at £150 would make the office work more smoothly than heretofore. A great deal of work had been thrown upon the shoulders of Mr. Blakeney.

Mr. SMITH said he understood it was the intention of the Government to repeal the Patent Act, and in that case the vote could be reduced. He thought the Premier had stated his intentions to that effect.

The PREMIER said he spoke very strongly against that Act, but did not say he had any immediate intention of repealing it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman had spoken very wildly in regard to the Patent Act upon a late occasion. But it would be a very serious thing for the hon. gentleman to repeal the Act. He did not know of any country where there was no protection given to inventors. The patent laws might be capable of amendment, but to wipe them out would be a very serious thing.

The PREMIER said he regretted very much that he was not present, when that Act was going through the House in 1884. If he had been present he did not think it would have passed at all. He did not intend to wipe that Act out altogether; but he did intend to substitute something better for it. The present laws did not act as a protection to inventors or to introducers of inventions, but simply protected monopolists.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: There must be something radically wrong in their administration. The Act was very carefully drawn to protect inventions.

The PREMIER: It was simply a copy of the English Act.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was not altogether a copy. The Act had been framed to prevent people who were not entitled to patents from procuring them. He had not had the administering of the patent laws for the last three years, but he said that if they were properly administered monopolists would have no chance at all. If the examiners did their duty it was more difficult to obtain a patent in Queensland than in England.

Mr. GROOM said he had received several letters from officers of friendly societies complaining of certain charges made by the Registrar-General with regard to certain returns. Before bringing the matter before the Committee he should have liked to have seen the report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, because he would no doubt embody in his report the reasons for imposing those penalties; but though it was the middle of October the report had not yet been furnished.

Mr. GANNON said that a great deal of dissatisfaction existed with regard to the administration of the Patent Act. He had been inundated with letters complaining of the trouble in getting patents. He did not know whether the administration of the office was at fault or not, but it was a matter well worth the attention of the Colonial Secretary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he hoped the report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies would in a short time be ready to be laid on the table; but if the hon. member for Toowoomba thought there would not be sufficient time for him to get the information he required afterwards, he would furnish it to him before the report was laid on the table. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for

Toombul, he would not wish his enemy any more unpleasant position than that of Registrar of Patents. There were too sides to the question in connection with every patent, and the Registrar generally got the right side.

The PREMIER said the fallacy of the law was that the Act was supposed to be very liberal, and its liberality consisted in giving a patent to the man that claimed it, for a very small cost. That was no liberality at all, because the Government had to do a certain amount of work before a patent could be granted. The Government had to examine and find out whether the applicant was the inventor of the manufacture, in order that the patent might be of any use. The fee used to be £25, and formerly good information was obtained from experts as to whether the invention was a fit subject for a patent; but now the fee was only £5, and experts could not be employed for that. Thousands of applications for patents came in, requiring an enormous amount of work; and the consequence was that they were not inquired into. By chance on one occasion his attention was directed to an application, and he was able to stop the granting of a patent which would have caused the monopoly of a big invention which had been known for the last twenty years and was in universal use. It was only by using the strongest personal influence on the late Treasurer that he was able to prevent the granting of the patent. As he said a few nights ago, there was nothing to prevent him from taking out a patent for the coat he had on his back. There was nothing special in the way it was made; but if he described it and made an application at the office of the Registrar of Patents, and paid a fee of £5, he could get the sole right to manufacture that kind of coat in Queensland for fourteen years. Of course that would not do him any good, it would simply prevent others from making the same kind of coat. What was the use of a law of that kind? Inventors were not protected by it. Those who benefited by it were the patent agents who did business all over the world, and those for whom they obtained monopolies.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the Premier had shown that he knew nothing about the working of the Patent Office or about the provisions of the Patent Act. The effect of reducing the fee to £5 had been to increase the number of applications, also to largely increase the revenue of the department, which was now a good deal more than sufficient to cover expenses.

The PREMIER: Because they do not make the investigations.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that was a matter he heard with surprise, because the investigations required now were more stringent than before. He never yet heard that the persons who acted as examiners, and who received the same fee as before, performed their duties in a less satisfactory way than before; and he felt sure that the hon. member was entirely wrong. He was probably guilty of the common error of hasty generalisation, having heard of one or two instances. During his experience as Colonial Secretary a great many applications were blocked by the examiner. The provisions for blocking contained in the Act were inserted in order that people might object to a patent being granted. Some of them were provisions not in force in England. Every provision was made for preventing the issue of a patent to anyone unless he was actually the inventor. Having had an opportunity of comparing the patent law of Queensland with the patent laws of the other colonies and of England, he was in a position to say that the precautions taken in

Queensland to prevent persons who were not inventors from obtaining patents were more complete than those contained in any other law of which he was aware.

The PREMIER said that while the hon member was in power an application had passed through every stage, and the patent was going to be granted, and he had the greatest trouble in preventing the granting of the patent. The application was for a patent for everything connected with the machinery now being used in the colony for sinking artesian wells, except the engine itself—everything from the crank of the engine to the bottom of the hole. That was a sample of the applications that were made. The fee did not provide enough money for the department to make the necessary investigation; therefore they did not make it beyond the £5, and such an investigation was worthless. In fact, patents granted under those circumstances were worthless; and the sooner the public knew it the better. The law gave people power to secure worthless patents which simply had the effect of frightening away other men from engaging in the manufacture which was patented.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The hon. member is generalising again.

The PREMIER said he had given instances. Did the hon. member want him to give a score of instances? He had administered the department for four years, and several cases came under his notice.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that the old Act contained no provision whatever for getting information. It was simply one clause giving the Government power to grant patents, and was very different from the present law. The hon. gentleman was clearly not familiar with it; and it was unfortunate that in his position he should get up and tell the people who had obtained patents that they were not worth the paper they were written on. If they were obtained by fraud, they were of no value and ought to be no value. He did not remember at what particular stage the hon. member interposed in the case to which he had referred, but it must have been before he (Sir S. W. Griffith) heard of it, as naturally the Minister did not hear of the preliminary stages. That matter, of course, could never have gone through under the present law, except under these circumstances: If the invention was not known to anyone in the colony, and the examiners did not happen to know or have heard anything at all about it. That, of course, might happen in any country and under the best law possible to conceive. A person might get a patent for an invention which nobody in the colony had ever heard of before; but that could not be altered by any law, and there would further have to be added this fact: That nobody in the colony took the trouble of objecting to it. If all those things occurred the Government might be imposed upon, and there was no law yet passed that would prevent the Government being imposed upon under all circumstances. Suppose the patent referred to by the hon. gentleman had been granted, what harm would have been done? The men who were in possession of those tools, and using them for years, would not care two straws about the patent. They would simply laugh at it and go on with their work.

Mr. ARCHER: It would lead up to a fine lawsuit.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said no serious harm would have been done. Some people would have succeeded in defrauding the Government, but that might happen any day.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: In defrauding the public.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he dared say the law was defective in some points, and where it could possibly be amended was in the direction of giving more publicity.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : And more money.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that was another thing altogether, but the hon. gentleman was denouncing the Patent Act because it produced certain results ; and yet, so far as it went, it went further in the direction of avoiding the evil results he spoke of than any other law on the subject of which he was aware. To say that more money was wanted for administering the patent laws was a very different thing from denouncing them and talking of repealing them.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he quite agreed with the proposal to give the Registrar of Patents an additional £100 a year, as he thought that officer had earned that consideration. There was no doubt he was an efficient and conscientious officer, and discharged the duties of his office as Registrar of Patents in much more than a perfunctory manner. He could not at all agree with the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government in the statement he made with respect to the facility with which applications were rushed into the office and patents granted upon those applications. He knew the Registrar of Patents made a point of carefully examining every application, and every application was referred to a gentleman supposed to be conversant with the matter in connection with which the application was made for a patent, and he got the best advice that could be obtained on the subject matter of the application. If that information was not as ample as might be desired it was not the fault of the Registrar of Patents or of the law. There could not be a doubt that there was some ground of complaint for the rigidity with which the Registrar of Patents applied the law. That officer was certainly not lax in his administration of it. Instances of that had come under his own observation while holding the office of Attorney-General. The Registrar had refused to allow certain applications to be registered, and complaints were made to him, as law officer of the Government, by the applicants, when he found it his duty to uphold the decision of the Registrar. One case of the kind had reference to an application made for a patent for an improvement upon the Bessemer steel process. He thought it would be well if the Registrar of Patents were to follow as nearly as possible the practice observed in Great Britain in the registration of patents. It could not be contended that they were too lax there, and if there was any fault in the administration of the law by the Registrar of Patents here, it was that he was almost too strict in his application of the letter of the law to the cases which came before him. He should advise the Registrar of Patents, in any case where it might be pointed out that the practice of the Comptroller of Patents in Great Britain was one thing, and their law said nothing to the contrary, to follow the practice at home in respect to applications made here.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that the best way to amend the working of the patent laws was to give the examiners proper facilities for knowing what had been invented and what was new. The Patent Office should have all possible information on the subject, including scientific works and records of patents granted. Without necessary information of that kind they could not expect that the examiners could know of the existence of every patent which had been granted.

Question put and passed.

REGISTRAR OF TITLES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £9,159 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the department of the Registrar of Titles. It would be noticed that in the first item there was an increase in salary of £50 put down, and he did not think that anyone who knew Mr. Mylne, the Registrar of Titles, would begrudge him that small increase. He was an admirable officer, and he believed had been promised an increase as long as five years ago. It must be borne in mind that that was a revenue-producing department, and the work was increasing year by year. He might also mention that Mr. Mylne's work would be increased to a considerable extent, owing to his having to inspect, from time to time, district offices, which it was proposed to establish at Rockhampton and Townsville, in accordance with the Act passed by the last Parliament. It would be seen that there was an increase in the number of clerks required, but they might be able to decrease the number in the next Estimate. The work of the office was to a certain extent increased by the creation of the district offices, but not as materially as might be supposed. There was a reduction of £470 in connection with the items of extra clerical assistance, postage, fuel, and incidentals, and there was a new item on account of the creation of the district offices at Townsville and Rockhampton, though the whole vote for those branch offices was reduced, owing to the fact that provision was made for seven months instead of for the whole twelve months. It was proposed to open those offices on the 1st December, as Mr. Mylne had told him that he thought they would be ready by that time. He did not think any hon. member could find fault with the way in which the department of the Registrar of Titles was managed, and he hoped the members of the Committee would see their way to grant the small increase proposed for Mr. Mylne, as it was well earned, and had been promised him for some years past.

Mr. POWERS said he would like to see that vote increased. He presumed it could not be increased on the present Estimates, but if that were so an additional sum could be voted on the Supplementary Estimates. He found that the sum of £3,000 was voted last year for branch registration offices at Rockhampton and Townsville. This year there was only £731 asked for the district office at Rockhampton, and £731 for the office at Townsville, so that taking it all round that was a reduction of £1,530. He drew attention to these facts, because he wished to point out the desirability of establishing a local registration office in the Wide Bay and Burnett district. There was a larger population there than in the district around Rockhampton. If, therefore, it was a benefit to the 40,000 people doing business with Rockhampton that they should have a local registration office, it would also be a convenience to the 42,000 or 43,000 people in the Wide Bay and Burnett district. If a local office for registration would save expense, as he knew it would, then he thought the Ministry might take it into consideration whether a district office should not be established for the convenience of the very large population in the Wide Bay and Burnett district, where there would be as much work as in either Rockhampton or Townsville. He hoped that provision would be made for such an office on the Supplementary Estimates. He was not particular whether it was situated at Maryborough or Bundaberg, but perhaps as Maryborough had the larger population it would be as well to establish it there.

Mr. MURPHY said he would point out to the hon. member that very soon Maryborough and Gympie would be connected with the

metropolis, and would be almost a part or suburb of Brisbane, but Rockhampton and Townsville were much further away.

Mr. POWERS said that for the same reason Rockhampton and other coastal towns would be suburbs of Brisbane, as they would all be connected with the metropolis by the north coast railway. Maryborough, however, was not likely to become a suburb of Brisbane, and until railway communication was obtained he thought they were entitled to a branch office at Maryborough.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said probably the hon. member was aware that the Legislature had not provided for a branch office at Maryborough. With regard to the reduction of the vote for extra clerical assistance and incidentals from £3,000 to £2,530—all he could say was that the Estimates had been framed on the estimates of the Registrar of Titles himself. The sum of £3,000 for branch offices at Rockhampton and Townsville on last year's Estimates was required for special purposes, as was well known to the leader of the Opposition.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Yes; it was to defray the cost of making copies of all deeds.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was how the money was expended, and of course the same outlay was not required this year.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was going to ask the hon. gentleman what progress was being made with regard to starting those district offices. The preparations had taken much longer than was anticipated. He would suggest that it would be more convenient to make a start on the 1st January than on the 1st December, because people could very much more easily remember a date like the beginning of the year than they could the 1st December. Although it would not make any difference in the first few months, still he thought that in the course of years it would be found that it would be more convenient to commence on the 1st January.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the reason why the 1st December was fixed was that it was considered desirable to have those district offices started as early as possible. The Deputy-Registrar had intended to open them at a definite period, similar to that mentioned by the hon. gentleman, only at an anterior date—namely, the beginning of the quarter; but as a strong desire had been expressed that they should be started at the earliest possible moment, the 1st December was fixed upon. He (the Colonial Secretary) had, however, no objection to starting on the 1st January, if that was agreeable to the people of Rockhampton and Townsville. He thought there were reasons in favour of starting at a fixed period, such as the beginning or middle of the year. He might mention that it was the intention of the Government in creating those new offices to promote from the Brisbane office good men, so that not only would good men be promoted, but the offices would also have a good start.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he had intended to ask about that. The question was asked, when the Bill was going through Committee, what was to be done with regard to the appointment of Master of Titles in those district offices. He did not know whether he said so at the time, but it was present to his mind afterwards that those Deputy-Registrars should be men possessed of some legal knowledge to enable them to do the work. The Registrar here was assisted by the Master of Titles, and he did not think a purely clerical officer would be able to perform the duties of Deputy-Registrar of Titles at Rockhampton and Townsville.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was glad the hon. gentleman had mentioned that matter, and it would receive the attention of the Government. He was perfectly certain, from the absolute correctness with which Mr. Mylne performed his work, that he would see that the gentlemen recommended for the offices of Deputy-Registrars of Titles possessed the necessary legal knowledge.

Mr. REES R. JONES said he trusted that there would be no delay in opening the office at Rockhampton. He was informed on very good authority that copies of nearly all the necessary documents were ready to be sent there, and it would be a great inconvenience to the inhabitants of Rockhampton to delay starting the office.

Question put and passed.

POLICE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9, the sum of £146,480, for salaries and contingencies in connection with the police. Though there were some alteration in detail yet there was no material alteration between the present vote and that of last year, or even the vote of the preceding year—1886-7. It might fairly be conceded that in such a growing country as Queensland that vote should grow too. There was no doubt that with the sum at present voted it was very hard work to provide for the varying and increasing requirements of the colony. If the vote for the last two years was not too much it would not be considered that the amount asked for on the present occasion was in any way excessive. There had been a reduction in some items and an increase in others. The Executive salaries remained exactly the same as they were last year. In contingencies there were some alterations, which made up the difference between that vote and the amount granted last year. In the burial of paupers there was a reduction, as also in the items "Fees for examining lunatics," and "Medical attendance and medicines." The reason of that was that the amount voted last year was not required, and it was no use asking for money which would not be spent. On the other hand, in the item "Repairs and general contingencies," there was an increase of £1,000, as the sum of £3,000 voted last year was insufficient. £3,000 would be insufficient, and the insufficiency of a vote dealing with repairs simply meant that the repairs must wait and when made cost a great deal more. For forage expenses there was an increase of £1,000. They knew how the price of forage had gone up during the last twelve months, and when there were so many increases in the stations in the interior that increased cost would to some extent be accounted for by increased carriage. There was also an increase in the allowances in lieu of rations, and the same reasons that applied to the preceding item were equally applicable to that. On the whole Estimate there was an increase of £1,250, and no one who understood the position of the colony would say that that estimate was in any way excessive.

Mr. HUNTER said there was one little item he wished to speak of in connection with police expenditure. At Georgetown there were two distinct departments—the black and white police—and the people of that district complained bitterly of the number of police kept about that district. At one camp where there were two policemen stationed, he could honestly say all the people living about it were one publican and four other men. Then, again, there were a large number of black troopers kept at Georgetown. They were supposed to be kept to prevent invasions of wild blacks, but the blacks were not at all dangerous

in that district at the present time, and the men stationed there were entirely useless and very expensive. The white police were in exactly the same position. The Colonial Secretary had referred to the cost of carriage in the district, and he would point out that the only work in which the police were engaged was in escorting from Georgetown to Normanton. The station for the police was at Georgetown. The carriage for the material they consumed cost £21 per ton to Croydon, and he believed about another £21 on to Georgetown, so that it was really like carrying coals to Newcastle. The people complained very much in reference to having the police stationed at Georgetown—which was about the quietest town in all Queensland—and he thought the camp should be removed to Normanton; or if it was removed to Croydon the police would be very useful there. The people had certainly been complaining for some time about the cost of keeping the black police camp at Georgetown.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was the first occasion on which he remembered to have heard the member for a district ask for the removal of police from his district. As a rule it was exactly the other way. Now, with respect to the black police camp being stationed at Georgetown, and being used for escort purposes, all he knew was that that district had been in charge of one of the most capable outside inspectors in the service, Mr. Douglas, who had done his work faithfully and well, and shown great energy in carrying out some very difficult duties. He had had most to do with the opening up of the Croydon Goldfield, and had given great satisfaction to the department. No recommendation had come in from Mr. Douglas for dealing with the police, as had been suggested by the hon. member for Burke, nor to his knowledge had any application been made from the residents of the district to have such an alteration made. Of course, if such an application had been made it would have been considered, because it would be a great relief to anyone having to administer the police department to have a number of troopers and white police set free, so that they might be allotted to other districts that were inquiring for their services every day.

Mr. HUNTER said when he was in Georgetown a petition was going round, numerously signed, requesting the Government to remove the station. The movement was not a new one by any means.

Mr. PALMER said the remarks made by the member for Burke with reference to the police at Georgetown were not justified. The police made Georgetown the starting point and went hundreds of miles towards the Mitchell, where the blacks were in very large numbers and had proved most troublesome to the settlers. The police were not stationed there for the protection of Georgetown, but for the surrounding districts which had been endangered for many years by the blacks. The Colonial Secretary had complimented the department on there being only an increase of £1,250, and he thought the hon. gentleman might very safely do that. It was a matter of congratulation that in a new country like this the police force had not to be more largely increased, but he would point out one item by which the force might be still further increased without adding to the cost—that was, in the matter of horses. There was one continual complaint that there were not sufficient horses. The horses that the police had were old and worn out, and on several occasions he had been asked to represent the matter to the department. Each man had only one horse, whereas if they had two, or three, or four, the men would be kept continually employed. The amount of £2,500

for horses might be sufficient, but he thought that a slightly increased expenditure would practically secure double the police protection now afforded in the outside districts. He could assure the Colonial Secretary that the complaint was not a needless one. He had seen many of the men idle and useless for want of proper horses, and he knew that station-owners and private individuals had frequently to lend horses to the police, who were sadly handicapped for the want of sufficient horseflesh.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he could corroborate the remarks of the hon. member as to the want of horses. Very frequently a report came in of a black outrage, and the horses being unshod and unfit for work it was quite a week before they could start off. The police then got on to a camp of blacks who had had nothing to do with the outrage, but who were needlessly punished because the police had to punish somebody. With regard to the removal of the station from Georgetown, his hon. colleague, Mr. Hunter, must have better information than he had. He certainly heard for the first time that it was the desire of the people that the police should be removed. He was pleased to hear the Colonial Secretary pay such a deserved compliment to the officer in charge of the station at Georgetown. He was a most admirable officer, and he trusted, now the central point of the district had been removed to Normanton, that proper and adequate accommodation would be provided for that officer. With regard to the horse business, there was not the slightest doubt that the expense and usefulness of the police was nullified to a large extent by the miserable screws that were drafted off to the outside districts. They saw policemen in Brisbane mounted on fine, well-groomed horses, which it must be a pleasure to ride, but in the outside districts, such as he and the hon. member for Carpentaria were familiar with, they would see apparently all the aged, broken-down quadrupeds in the service drafted there for the use of the men. Celerity was the great point in pursuing natives after an outrage; but he could assure the Committee that he had had an outrage reported to him as warden at Georgetown; he had gone out with an orderly to the place where the murder was committed and returned and found the native police still in quarters, simply because they had not proper cattle to enable them to go out and do their duty.

Mr. REES R. JONES said he had noticed several times in the Brisbane newspapers items of news to this effect:—"We have been informed by the Commissioner of Police" that a man had broken his leg, or fallen from his horse and been killed. He should like to know if that was an additional charge upon the Police Department. Did the Commissioner get that information from the police in various quarters of the country at the country's expense?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he believed the telegrams referred to by the hon. gentleman were transmitted on Her Majesty's service; therefore, it was not necessary to put a sum on the Estimates to provide for them. With regard to the paucity in the supply of horses, and their bad quality, it must be remembered that for the last two, three, or four years they had suffered from very bad seasons, and the cost of forage had been so great that he could easily understand horses in the districts least favoured by Providence being in very poor condition. The cost of forage had been enormous. With respect to the purchase of horses, he was informed by the Commissioner that whenever they could be obtained near the locality where they were required they were bought there, but it often happened that suitable horses could not be

obtained near the stations, and in that case they were bought at the nearest point possible and sent out.

Mr. HYNE said he believed the system, unless it had been changed very recently, was to buy horses for the outside districts in Brisbane and send them out there.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am told it is not so.

Mr. HYNE said he had been requested to ask whether that was the practice.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had not gone very minutely into the question, and could only rely upon the information he received from the responsible head of the department in answering the question. He was informed that the custom had been to purchase suitable horses at the nearest possible point to where they were required.

Mr. NORTON said, while on the subject he wished to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the necessity for stationing police at Calliope. He did not say that was necessary in consequence of occurrences that had taken place there lately, but because there had been a large increase in the population settled in the neighbourhood. The mining population had very largely increased; large quartz-crushing plants were being erected which would not be put up unless there was likely to be a considerable accession of miners; and as he understood that there would be no great difficulty in arranging the matter, he hoped it would be done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, if the hon. gentleman would only write a note to his office, if there was a policeman available he would be sent to Calliope.

Mr. ANNEAR said he wished to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the number of police stationed at Roma. If he would inquire into the matter he would find that there were plenty there to send to the district of Port Curtis. He was at Roma about twelve months ago, when Sub-inspector Durham was in charge there, and being struck with the quietness of the place one moonlight night, he asked a constable what was the number of the police stationed in the town. The reply was 13 men and 1 inspector. Now, Roma was only a village compared to some of the towns of the colony. He was at Maryborough some few weeks afterwards, and asked Inspector Lloyd how many police he had at that time available for duty in that town. His answer was that 4 men was the utmost force he had to do duty in that place at that time, and 2 of them were then out of town 50 miles away on important duty. He therefore thought Roma must be very much over-manned. He did not claim an extra number of police for Maryborough; 4, he believed, were quite sufficient, on account of the orderly nature of the people there, but still it was a very large district. Inspector Lloyd had charge of Bundaberg, the Burnett, Eidsvold, Gympie, and yet, should anything have arisen in Maryborough at the time he spoke of, that officer would only have had 2 men to rely on. On the other hand, they had 13 at Roma. He thought that was a waste of public money. There could not be work for that number of men to do in Roma, or 100 miles away, because if they went to Mitchell, Dulbydilla, or Charleville, they would find policemen stationed at each of those places. He thought, if the Colonial Secretary would look into the matter, he would see that it was wasteful expenditure to keep such a large number of men in a quiet little village like Roma.

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Mr. PAUL said he thought the hon. member for Maryborough must have been in Roma under somewhat similar conditions to those which occurred there many years ago, when nearly the whole Police Force was concentrated there. The Commissioner of Police, 4 or 5 inspectors and sub-inspectors, sergeants and troopers of all descriptions were there on duty at that time trying to catch that ubiquitous man called "The wild Scotchman." He thought when the hon. member for Maryborough was there there must have been some cause for the concentration of the number of the police there that he had mentioned, because he (Mr. Paul) was an old resident of Roma, and had been there very recently, and he was perfectly certain that there was nothing like the force stationed there that the hon. member had stated. With regard to the remarks of the hon. the junior member for Burke as to the large number of police stationed about Georgetown, he might say that he (Mr. Paul) was there about twelve months ago, and he was perfectly surprised when he was asked: "Are you not armed?" He said: "Why should I be armed?" The reply was, "Because of the blacks; they are very bad." He said, "Blacks bad after twenty-three years of settlement?" The answer was, "Yes, they are bad all over the country." He could quite understand why they were so bad there. It was because they had such secure retreats in the lava country and extensive scrubs that it was exceedingly difficult to track them. Therefore they had always been bad about there, and if the native police were removed from that district there would simply be a repetition of that which had caused the formation of the native police—namely, attacks and reprisals between the blacks and the settlers. Something ought to be done by the Government for rationing the blacks in those districts, seeing that they had taken all their best country from them. He was surprised to read in the *Courier* a short time ago a most exaggerated account of the way in which the blacks were treated. It was said—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the question of the blacks came on under another vote.

Mr. LITTLE said he was pleased to hear the hon. member for Leichhardt refer to the blacks. It was well known how very bad the blacks were in his district before 1881. In that year the then Colonial Secretary visited the district, and on his return a sum of money, amounting to only £60 a year, was voted for the amelioration of the condition of the blacks. Two tribes were brought in by some of the residents, and since then neither man nor beast had been molested by them. But there were five other tribes there yet to be brought in. He had promised his constituents that he would endeavour to influence the Government to do something for those five tribes. They had taken the homes and lands of the blacks, and it was only fair and just that they should do something for them. When a boy in Brisbane forty years ago he had seen hundreds and hundreds of blacks. During the last four months he had only seen three black women, two picannies, and two black men. Where had they all gone? He fully endorsed the action of the Government in connection with the native police, because they kept the aborigines in subjection. Remove them, and the depredations would at once begin again. He was prepared to assist to bring those people in, and there were many others who would be glad to take part in the work. He had never injured a blackfellow, although they had cost him thousands of pounds, and he had never allowed a man in his employ to do so. He hoped the matter would be taken up by the Government, and a short Bill dealing with

it passed through Parliament that session. He would himself go to the blacks' camps and help to bring them in, and the residents in those districts would only be too glad to help.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the discussion on the blacks had better be taken on another item of the Estimates.

Mr. UNMACK said he had no desire to object to the total sum asked for, but it was certain that next year's Estimates would have to be very considerably increased. In his capacity as chairman of the Civil Service Commission he had sent out confidential circulars to the men of the Police Force, and he had been quite unprepared for the voluminous correspondence which had come in in reply. They seemed to have taken up the matter most earnestly. He did not wish to pre-judge the case. He was only giving the impression conveyed by those letters when he said that they seemed to be suffering such serious grievances that it was a wonder to him they had suffered so long. There were many things they complained of, two or three of which he might mention.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question is *sub judice*.

Mr. UNMACK said that perhaps he had better say no more on that question at present. He would merely call attention now to this vote for forage—£8,000—which was an increase of £1,000 on the amount voted last year. With the increased tariff he did not think it would be sufficient.

Mr. DUNSMURE said he wished to inform the hon. member for Maryborough that Roma was not a small village, as he called it, but a place of considerable importance. It was the centre of a very large district, and a place where the Supreme Court and the District Court held their sittings. No doubt there were more police in Roma than in the other places named by the hon. member, but there were not more than were required for a place which was the gaol for the whole of the Western district.

Mr. ANNEAR said that according to the official statement there were 13 policemen at Roma now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that at the present time the number was 10, or even less.

Mr. ANNEAR said that that number was six too many. There were policemen at Mitchell, Dulbydilla, and Charleville, and how could Roma be the depôt for those places?

Mr. SALKELD said that last year there was £250 voted for allowances to witnesses attending courts of petty sessions, whereas this year the item was omitted. What was the reason for the omission?

Mr. GANNON said he wished to call the Colonial Secretary's attention to the ridiculously low salaries paid to a section of the force that should be well looked after—the detectives. Their salaries started at £140 and went up to £200 a year. Those men had very hard work to perform.

Mr. SALKELD said he wished to call attention to the fact that this year there were no allowances to witnesses attending courts of petty sessions, while last year there was a sum of £250.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that he might tell the hon. gentleman that the sum voted previously was not nearly sufficient, and so the vote was allowed to lapse. It would require £2,000 or £3,000 if all witnesses were to be paid; and as the sum voted was quite insufficient, it was thought better to omit it altogether and pay nobody. The voting of £250 year after year was simply a farce.

Mr. BARLOW said he was quite aware that that was a very large question. He had been specially requested during his election campaign to bring that matter forward. A case of very great hardship had come under his notice in the police court at Ipswich—arising from the non-payment of a witness in a case heard by way of preliminary investigation. He quite agreed with the Colonial Secretary that a very large sum of money would be required to pay all witnesses at courts of petty sessions, but still they paid jurymen, and it was a great hardship that witnesses were not paid too. He did not exactly see how the matter was to be faced, but he trusted it would receive attention at an early date.

Mr. GLASSEY said he should like to draw attention to the salary of the Commissioner—or rather to the fact that there was set down a sum of £200 in lieu of residence for that gentleman. Of course, that amount was on last year's Estimates also, but surely £900 was a large salary for the Commissioner to receive, particularly at a time when almost everything the people used was being taxed; and seeing there were so many people in that department paid at a very low rate, he thought the item was excessive, and that out of £700 he could find a residence for himself.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Commissioner for Police was a very old officer in the Government service, and for many years past he had been furnished with a residence; but he had been deprived of that residence, which was given over to the Commandant of the Defence Force, and it was thought unfair by the Government for the time being that, because the house and its surroundings were required for Defence Force purposes, he should lose part of his emoluments, because it practically was a loss of emoluments. He did not think that £200 was too much, because the house was a very good one, and to make up for the loss of that residence the £200 was allowed.

Mr. SAYERS said he wished to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the fact that the number of police in Charters Towers was insufficient. In the report furnished by the Commissioner for Police last year the number of police there was set down as 10. At present there were an inspector, a lockup-keeper, a senior-constable, and 3 or 4 men. At times, especially during race meetings, the men were often on duty twelve and fourteen hours a day; and when they had to work in that way they could hardly be expected to do their work properly. If the Colonial Secretary would only look at the number of police at Townsville and Rockhampton, where the population was about the same, he would find there was a great discrepancy. Those men suffered great hardships. He had seen a man go into the police court, and in his evidence say that he had been on duty the previous night, and then he had his duty during the day to perform. In a climate such as they had at Charters Towers it was impossible for him to go on next night and do duty. Although there had been very few complaints made, he thought they should increase the number of police at Charters Towers. He believed the police there did their duty very well, and to his knowledge there had been only two complaints made, but sometimes troopers had to go out after some cattle-stealers, and the town was left with a very small number of police to patrol. Certainly there was no need except when there were strange characters in the town, but they had to parade the streets, and the town extended over a large area. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would look into the matter, and give them a couple more men.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was very happy to hear the hon. member for Charters Towers pay a deserved compliment to the people of Charters Towers. From what the hon. gentleman had said, there was no immediate necessity for increasing the police stationed there, as even under extraordinary circumstances the inhabitants behaved remarkably well. He was sure the Government, in case of any emergency, such as a race meeting, would increase the number, and every effort, he was sure, had been made by the Police Department to meet the wants of the people.

Mr. SAYERS said he thought the Colonial Secretary hardly understood him. Charters Towers covered a large area, and two policemen could not afford a sufficient amount of protection at night. That was all the police protection that had been available for weeks and weeks at nights. The town consisted of a great number of streets, and those two policemen had always to keep within hail of each other. He knew there had been complaints that the police were never seen in certain districts, but it was impossible for it to be otherwise with the small number of men there were.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, when the hon. member assured him that there was good cause for increasing the Police Force at Charters Towers, and the police were available, his request would be attended to. If any necessity arose, the matter would be looked into at once.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he wished to draw the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the necessity that existed for increasing the police protection in the suburbs, more especially upon Sundays. He had mentioned the matter before when the Estimates were going through, and had not seen that any improvement had taken place up to the present. On the Ipswich, Logan, and Cleveland roads, and all round the city, the population had considerably increased, and there was no more police protection than there was two or three years ago. There had been a great increase in the amount of furious driving and riding every Sunday, and in many instances of bathing in a nude state close to main thoroughfares. He hoped those matters would receive attention, and that the main thoroughfares would be patrolled by mounted police, as was promised last year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they could not make a pint measure hold more than a pint, and they could not do everything with the number of men at their disposal. All that could be done with the police available would be done in the direction the hon. member wished.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said there had been some serious complaints made as to the treatment of blacks by the police in the Northern districts, and no doubt the hon. gentleman had seen them. He did not know what was being done at present; but terrible statements had been made as to the way in which the native police had conducted themselves. He never believed all those stories; but it was as well that they should be contradicted. He could not give the details of any case; but the outrages referred to were said to have taken place about Cairns and Georgetown. Arrangements were being made when his Government were in office to break up the native police, and attach black trackers to the white police camps. Did the hon. gentleman know how many stations there were of native police?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, in regard to the first part of the hon. member's speech, he might say that it was utterly impossible for him to answer any indefinite charge that

might be made as to any outrages. If the hon. member would mention any particular case he would guarantee that it would be inquired into. He could assure the hon. member that if outrages had been committed, as rumour said they had been, a thorough investigation should be made, and prompt punishment should follow. The Commissioner of Police informed him that he had heard of none. With regard to the employment of native police, the system commenced by the hon. gentleman was being carried out, and the black police stations would be broken up.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: How many native police stations are there now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no information beyond that in the return furnished to the Committee, except there is now one near Windorah.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the native police stations were to have been broken up and replaced by white police, with trackers attached, so that the system under which a body of native police should go out with only one white man should be done away with. That old system gave rise to, if not serious irregularities and outrages, at any rate to danger. By the measure he had suggested the native police stations with only one white man in charge could be done away with. They could not shut their eyes to the fact that the colony had drawn upon itself great disgrace in the eyes of the civilised world through the actions of the native police. He had never assisted in the circulation of those stories, and believed that every Government that had been in power had been equally desirous of preventing any of those abuses which it had been said had occurred. He hoped, now the hon. gentleman had taken the police thoroughly in hand, there would be no further recurrence of those charges brought against Governments in the past.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that up to the present time it had not come to his knowledge that any outrage had been inflicted upon the aboriginal races of the colony. Should any come under his notice, or under that of any member of the Government, inquiry would be made, and if there were offenders the punishment would be sharp and short.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he might call the recollection of the Colonial Secretary to a case that occurred not long ago in the Normanton district, where it was well known that a detachment of native police went out in charge of the camp-keeper, and there was not the slightest doubt, although legal evidence could not be produced, that there were several blacks shot down upon that occasion. In fact, the Government took such notice of the matter that the officer in charge of the station was removed. It was also a fact that when a sergeant of police or a senior-sergeant got into difficulty in Brisbane he was removed to one of the outside districts. That struck him as being very inexpedient. A sergeant or senior-sergeant of police was a very important official in a small town, and had the power of interfering very much with the comfort and the liberty of the residents. It would be better to keep them in the place where the error was committed, so that they might be more under the supervision of their officers and fellow-constables, and their power to do evil would be limited. He would also call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to a singular case that occurred in the Brisbane police court the other day, where a charge was made against a woman of using obscene language, and although the person had been let out of the lockup on the day following that upon which the charge was first made, some three weeks afterwards she was brought up again and fined, and a counter charge

was brought against the constable. The case deserved inquiry. He did not see why it should be taken as a matter of course that a constable's evidence was more worthy of credence than that of other individuals.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that with regard to the first case mentioned by the hon. member for Burke, the incident occurred during the régime of the late Government; and Sub-inspector Poingdestre's conduct was probably inquired into by them. With regard to the large question raised in the last part of his remarks, he was not inclined to disagree with him. He thought that considerably more credence was in the habit of been given to constables in the witness box than to ordinary individuals by the Police Magistrate in Brisbane. With regard to the number of native trackers, he had a list showing that though provision was made for 200 only 95 were employed. As a rule the number of trackers in charge of one white man was very small, but in several places in the extreme North the numbers in charge of one white man ranged from four to nine. He agreed with the leader of the Opposition that if punishment had to be inflicted on the blacks, responsible officers should be in charge, so that if anything improper took place or any wrong were committed evidence might be obtained.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the numbers given by the Colonial Secretary showed that at several stations there were a good many more native police than was intended by the late Government when they gave instructions for a reorganisation of the system. It was evident that the instructions had not been carried out; and he hoped the hon. member would take the matter in hand. He was aware that the force of passive resistance was opposed to any attempt at reform in the matter, but he believed the Colonial Secretary had sufficient energy to overcome any passive resistance that might be offered. The hon. member for Burke had referred to a case showing a serious defect in the administration of what might be called the punitive branch of the Police Force. A person was charged with an offence and discharged; then, that person was again brought up after a lapse of several weeks and fresh evidence was forthcoming, which, in the nature of things, was highly improbable. Having had some experience of weighing evidence, he might say that he thought the preponderance of evidence was strongly against the prosecutor in that case. Another instance occurred not long ago in which a great want of discretion was shown. A charge was made in a newspaper that a serious capital offence had been committed. Without any communication with the person on whom the offence was said to have been committed, a person was arrested and preliminary evidence taken. The principal person concerned was not examined for some time; and when at last that person was examined it was found that there was no foundation whatever for the charge, and the only result of that extremely ill-advised prosecution was to injure the reputation of a woman. A case of that kind should never have occurred, and it was a disgraceful scandal on the Police Force that such a thing should occur. It was all very well for newspapers to publish sensational reports, but if the person made no complaint and there was no reason to suppose there was any collusion or any attempt to suppress evidence, it was entirely wrong of the police to take proceedings which would needlessly injure a person's reputation. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would take the matter in hand. He might say that, during the whole of his experience since he had been

in the Assembly, he had not been more shocked than by the two instances to which he had just referred. Before he sat down he wished to ask the Colonial Secretary how many second-class sub-inspectors there were? Though twelve had been set down on the Estimates for many years, he believed there were not so many actually employed. When in office he had frequently been asked to recommend his colleague to appoint an additional sub-inspector, but he had always been told by the Commissioner of Police that there were quite enough already, and there was no need to appoint any more. He understood that the number on the Estimates was to be reduced to the number actually required.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the number of second-class sub-inspectors was only ten. He might possibly be considered guilty of a dodge, because he intended to apply the salaries provided for two other sub-inspectors to putting on more policemen. They could do better with more policemen than with more sub-inspectors, because, and he believed hon. members would agree with him, the force was fully officered already. The number of second-class sub-inspectors had been increased from eight to ten by the appointment of Senior-Sergeant Mathers, of Townsville, and Senior-Sergeant Driscoll, of Ipswich, to that rank. Both of them were excellent men, who had done good service, and their appointment would show others that they had an opportunity of rising from the ranks. With regard to the cases referred to by the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Burke, he thought it was quite right that the attention of the Committee should be called to those terrible blunders, which were over and over again committed by the police. A terrible blunder was committed in connection with that horrible murder near Gladstone.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Who knows?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said a terrible blunder was committed as far as the police were concerned. The police-sergeant there set himself to get drunk immediately he found the crime had been committed. He was sorry that officer was not dealt with so sharply at the time as he had been dealt with since. Whenever a crime was committed, there was apparently a great desire on the part of the police to fasten it on somebody—the first one they could get hold of—and the sooner that sort of thing was checked the better.

Mr. GANNON said he noticed the item for rations for native trackers was put down at £6,000. That seemed a large amount for 200 men.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It appears there are only ninety-five.

Mr. GANNON said that if there were 200 it would be equal to £30 a year, and they could get white men to work for about half that in the interior. There was something radically wrong in the vote.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had inquired very carefully into that matter. He found that the vote applied, in addition to the trackers, of whom there were ninety-four, or something approaching that number, to those employed in escort duty. He had had the figures made out, and he found that the native police spent considerably more than the Estimate showed. He thought, with the hon. member for Toombul, that £6,000 a year to supply even 200 trackers was too much altogether, but when he had the figures before him he found that the native police cost nearly £12,000 a year.

Mr. GANNON said the amount could be easily reduced. It was too much altogether and might easily be reduced by £2,000. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would go into the matter thoroughly once more and see if he could not reduce the item.

Mr. PALMER said he noticed the vote for gold escort expenses had been increased from £600 to £1,000, and he did not know whether the Colonial Secretary was aware that the old-fashioned system of gold escort, with one tracker to each packhorse, still prevailed. The packhorses were loaded with as much gold as they could carry, and while they were going through the bush they had a tracker to each packhorse, and yet when they arrived at a town or seaport the whole of the gold was given into the charge of one constable to be taken on board the steamer. That old-fashioned system of gold escort was a most expensive one, especially when they took into consideration the cost of forage which would be largely increased now by the additional taxation which the Darling Downs farmers had been able to carry out. That old system should cease, and the system of carriage of gold by coach should be adopted. He believed Cobb and Co. were willing to contract for the work, and could do it at half the expense of the present system.

Mr. HODGKINSON said that that matter had come under his notice while he was Minister for Mines, and he believed the gold escort work was now done by Cobb and Co. The old system was very extravagant, and involved the maximum charge with the minimum of accommodation to the public. One fault in connection with the old system was its great expense, and the officers and constables employed on escort duty got double pay. They were entitled to it, of course, but the tendency was to continue the system which had been established in Victoria. During his last visit to the North he saw no less than seventy-six horses employed in carrying about 20,000 ozs. of gold, and that from a goldfield with which there was tri-weekly communication by Cobb and Co's coaches. He believed the old system had since been altered so far as regarded Croydon. The system was not only a very extravagant system, but it was very bad for the horses engaged in the work, as gold was such dead weight that it gave the horses sore backs, and they had to be given a spell of several months after such work. Cobb's coaches were now running from Georgetown right to the coast, and if they were made use of a great deal of expense would be saved, and the services of many constables on the stations would not have to be dispensed with as at present during the time the escort was running. During the running of the escort under the present system a great many of the police stations were almost denuded of men, who were required for escort duty. He did not agree with his colleague in the representation of Burke in this matter, as in any part of the North with which he was acquainted the complaint was always that they had too few police, and nearly every policeman and every available horse were taken away from the stations when escort duty had to be done. The system complained of was a relic of the old Victorian system, and he believed that since the change of headquarters from Georgetown to Normanton the gold was carried by Cobb and Co.

Mr. DRAKE said that before the vote passed he would like to add a word or two to what the senior member for Burke had said about the case that had occurred in Brisbane the other day. The hon. member had referred to the fact that a woman, after having been discharged on a charge brought against her, was brought up again after a lapse of some weeks and punished.

That was not the most serious feature of the case, which he thought was one into which an inquiry should be made. The constable admitted that he was in plain clothes one night several weeks ago—he was quoting from the *Courier* report of the case—and saw the defendant at the corner of Albert and Charlotte streets, and hearing her make use of obscene language he attempted to arrest her. The woman ran into a house and the constable followed her into her bedroom, and after a struggle succeeded in arresting her and taking her to the watch-house. It was an extraordinary thing for a constable in plain clothes to follow a woman into her bedroom to arrest her. The woman's story was that the constable went with her to her house and seized her there and took her to the watch-house, where she made a complaint to Sergeant Hannigan of having been roughly handled by the constable, and the sergeant, to some extent, corroborated her statement by saying that he saw marks on her neck when she was brought in.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Who were the magistrates, and what was their decision?

Mr. DRAKE said the magistrates were the Police Magistrate and Messrs. Petrie and Macdonnell. The Police Magistrate said that if the charge made against the constable was correct, he ought to be dismissed; but he commenced, he thought, by prejudicing the case of the defendant by fining her, and thereby throwing doubt upon her evidence.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had only a word to say on the subject. Assuming that those magistrates were honest men and arrived at a certain decision, unless the Colonial Secretary's attention was directly called to it he could not seek out such things from accounts of police court cases in the papers. He assumed that the authorities, one of whom was the head of the police, and the other was a police magistrate who was universally respected, no matter what his little eccentricities might be, would communicate with the higher authority if it was thought an inquiry should be made into the matter.

Mr. DRAKE said that without impugning the decision of magistrates in any way, he would just like to add that the magistrates might have been perfectly right in their decision in finding the woman guilty of the offence charged against her; but, at the same time, it was quite consonant with that that the action of the constable might be entirely wrong. There was evidence that the constable being in private clothes acted as was stated, and that evidence was corroborated by Sergeant Hannigan.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would ask the hon. member whether he could suggest how any gentleman who might be Colonial Secretary could get at the truth of matters like that? Was he to read every newspaper report, and act on them? His experience had been that the eyes and ears of the public were always open, and that people made complaint when complaint was believed to be necessary. He was perfectly certain that no Minister ever refused to grant an investigation when a case was made out to him.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he thought it would be satisfactory if the hon. gentleman would undertake to have that case investigated. He did not like to say anything that might have the appearance of prejudging the case, but he had a very strong opinion that it should be thoroughly investigated. Even if the constable's story was true there was something thoroughly wrong in the way in which police constables seemed to go about in plain clothes in Albert-street. It was quite new to

him that a constable in plain clothes should go and arrest a woman in her bedroom, and he hoped the matter would be investigated by the Colonial Secretary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was rather to be regretted that the hon. gentleman did not take up that case earlier.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It only happened last week.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said surely if the woman's character, or the purity of the bench, or the honesty of the constable was at stake, the question should have been raised at once.

Mr. GROOM: It only appeared in the *Courier* on Friday.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that put a different complexion on the case. He would be most happy to make an inquiry into the matter, as he always was in any case where there was a supposed abuse of authority.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would like to know whether the hon. gentleman intended to put a sum on the Supplementary Estimates for "allowances to witnesses attending courts of petty sessions."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it would take some thousands of pounds for that purpose. Heretofore a very small sum had been placed on the Estimates for allowances to such witnesses. Last year the vote lapsed as it was found utterly inadequate for the purpose, and he had not the intention of putting such a sum as would be required on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. HUNTER said there had been something said about Cobb and Co. carrying the gold from Croydon. He thought there was a waggon specially built for the escort, and if that was so it proved his case. Clearly, all those troopers were not required in Georgetown. The escort would only require about eight men, and if Cobb and Co. took the gold there would not be needed more than two or three, or, at any rate, not more than six or eight. Then, what was the use of those men? They were always away on escort duty. At the last general election all the police were in Normanton with the escort, and he supposed that was a time when police were particularly required. There were, he believed, about forty policemen and eighty horses. Of course, people would not tolerate that very long. If, as he had been informed, a special waggon was built for the escort, and Cobb and Co. had now the contract for carrying the gold, that was a very extravagant way of dealing with the matter.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he hoped the Colonial Secretary would not reduce the Police Force as suggested by his colleague.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no intention of doing so.

Mr. HODGKINSON said Georgetown was the central point of a large tract of country, and all the blacks of the district were driven there in a state of semi-starvation through the country being taken up. He need not enlarge on that point, as every hon. member who knew anything about the bush, knew the state to which the blacks were reduced in the northern portion of the colony, and unless there should be a general demand from the district for a reduction in the force, and the Colonial Secretary should be satisfied that there was a superfluous number of constabulary there, it was to be hoped that there would be no reduction made.

Mr. LITTLE said he had much pleasure in endorsing the remarks of the senior member for Burke, and in objecting to the remarks of the junior member for Burke. He could assure the

Committee that there were several black men in Georgetown, and the police were constantly on duty. When they were not on duty on escort, they were patrolling the district. The blacks were a terrible injury to the miners. He remembered that when he was up there about three years ago, men working in mines alongside himself had to lower their provisions down a shaft for protection; they were about thirty-five miles away from the township. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would not reduce the police in that district.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no intention of reducing it.

Mr. CASEY said he would not delay the business more than a moment, but he wished to draw attention to the fact that inspectors and sub-inspectors and sergeants were very much underpaid in this colony, and the result was that the good men were driven to New South Wales and other colonies, leaving this country a class of men not as good as they might be. So far from reducing that vote, he would be very much inclined to increase the pay of the officers he had mentioned.

Mr. MURPHY said he endorsed the remarks of the hon. member for Warrego with regard to the way in which the Police Department was starved, so far as funds were concerned. People in the west of the colony were not in the happy position of the constituents of the junior member for Burke, who complained that they had too much police protection. Out West they had too little police protection. Of course there were certain places in the colony, as there were in any other country, where the people would be only too glad to get rid of the police. They had not to go far from Brisbane to find such a place. He had not the slightest doubt that the residents of St. Helena would be very glad to get rid of police protection almost immediately. Perhaps the inhabitants of Georgetown might be on a par with the inhabitants of St. Helena. He did not say they were, but that they might be. He had never visited the place, and did not know who lived there; still they might be as anxious as the inhabitants of St. Helena would be to get rid of police protection. As a rule—and he was sure that statement would be borne out by most members of the Committee—the Police Force had suffered principally from a want of funds. It had been a rule with every Government that had been in power to starve the Police Force. Not only in many cases were the officers underpaid, but he believed the men were underpaid also. He did not see why in Queensland, where constables had to perform very arduous duties, especially in the outside districts, they should not be paid as well as elsewhere. Their duties in the bush were very arduous, the risks very considerable, and it was necessary to have very intelligent men, and men who were accustomed to the bush. They wanted young men of strong constitution, and the pay offered did not induce such men to join the force. He thought that if the Civil Service Commission who were now sitting were going to be of any use, and wanted to find out the real defects of the service, they could not do better than inquire thoroughly into the working of the Police Department. He hoped they would direct their attention specially, not only to the pay of the men, but to other abuses as well. They wanted the best men procurable, from the head of the department down to the constables—men who were capable of performing the duties they were called upon to perform. Speaking from his own personal knowledge, he knew of men who were utterly unfit to be in the Police Force, or, at all events, unfit to be in the districts in which they were stationed—big,

unwieldy men who could not ride. Now, it was no use sending men to the western districts of the colony who could not get on horses and ride day and night after horse-thieves; but yet they found in those districts policemen who could only travel in a buggy. The police in the districts he referred to should be constantly patrolling their districts. Although he was a large station-owner in the West, and a large employer of labour, he seldom saw a policeman on his property. It might be there was no necessity for them, as his men were all peaceable and well-conducted, but still the police should patrol the district. On the other hand, when he was in town he saw the police loafing about the streets doing nothing. Therefore, he argued from that, that there was some reform required in the administration of the Police Department. The wrong sort of men were sent to the wrong districts. A man who was thoroughly suitable for Brisbane, either as an inspector, sub-inspector, or sergeant, was utterly unsuited to take a position in the outside portions of the colony, and if a little discretion was used by the head of the department in seeing that none but young and active men were sent to the outside districts, there would not be nearly so many complaints regarding the police as there were at present; there would not be so many criminals at large who ought to be in gaol, and there would not be so many failures of justice in the outside districts as there were now. He only hoped that the Civil Service Commission would direct their attention towards those various abuses, or at all events irregularities, in the administration of the department, and give the Government their advice as to the best manner of remedying existing evils.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman who had just sat down had told them that the whole system was wrong, but he had never made any complaints to the department, and he (the Colonial Secretary) had never heard the hon. member discuss the question when the Estimates were being passed on former occasions.

Mr. MURPHY: I did complain.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: With regard to the increased pay suggested by the hon. member for Warrego, all he could say was, that when there were any vacancies in the police, even under existing circumstances, there were plenty of applicants for employment. So that it did not look altogether as if it were an underpaid service. It should also be remembered that the police had certain special advantages which were not enjoyed by other members of the Civil Service, except those who were under the old Civil Service Act. They were entitled to pensions on retirement after a certain period of service. That in itself was an inducement to men to join the service even with lesser pay than was thought by some hon. members was sufficient for them. As regarded the pay to officers, he did not see that it was very extravagant; but it must be borne in mind that in all cases the superior officers above the rank of senior-sergeant were entitled to quarters, which did not appear as part of their salaries. He thought the police were fairly well treated, and that throughout the colony they did their duty fairly well.

Mr. COWLEY said he would like to know from the Colonial Secretary if the £6,000 put down for rations was all for native trackers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: For trackers and troopers.

Mr. COWLEY: This allowance covers the whole number?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. WIMBLE said, with regard to the vote for native trackers, he wished to bring under the notice of the Colonial Secretary the utter uselessness of that force. It had done more to bring the colony into disgrace than any other force connected with it. It was supposed that the native police had been established for the protection of settlers, but, as far as his district was concerned, he could say that they had been of no utility whatever, and the general wish of the settlers was that they should be abolished. If sending out those troopers and letting them march through a district like a small army was protecting the settlers, all he could say was that the settlers looked upon it simply as a farce. True, the troopers paraded the district, but the blacks watched them, and the moment their backs were turned—a few hours after they had passed through—they commenced pilfering and robbing in all directions. Were it not that he did not like to occupy the time of the Committee at too great length, he could give figures in proof of what he had stated. Therefore, he thought the vote for that force ought not to be allowed to pass. In fact the native police ought to be abolished as far as the North was concerned, and he was certain that it would be of advantage to the colony. It was well known that to a great extent it was a system of legalised murder. That was what the black tracker business had amounted to, and that was what it was considered in the North. Many a district had obtained a bad name through the acts of those troopers; in fact one sub-inspector was put upon his trial for murder.

Mr. LITTLE: And acquitted, too.

Mr. WIMBLE: That was all through the acts of the black trackers. So that it amounted to this: that the troopers did not consider they were to protect the settlers, but to protect the blacks. He, therefore, urged that that vote should be abolished altogether, and some better system for the protection of the settlers should be inaugurated.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he wished to direct the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the unsatisfactory way in which the detective branch of the service was worked. The matter was brought under his notice last year, but he had not had an opportunity of bringing it before his colleague, the late Colonial Secretary. It had come to his knowledge that the detective portion of the service, who had very difficult and delicate inquiries to make in their endeavour to discover the authors of crime, had to expend money out of their own pockets, and very often that money had not been refunded to them. He thought all were agreed that the utmost diligence should be exerted in the endeavour to discover the authors of crime that took place from time to time, and often went unpunished. He thought that the detectives, so far from being discouraged in the prosecution of their inquiries by knowing that if they incurred expense they would have to bear it themselves, should rather receive every assistance and inducement to enable them to carry on their investigations in the most thorough manner possible. Whilst he had nothing to say against the detectives who were at present in the employ of the Government, and who were to his knowledge very zealous and capable men, yet he thought the time had come when detectives of a more trained and experienced character should be introduced and employed in the endeavour to unearth criminals. But most certainly he thought the system of detectives having to pay money out of their own pockets was a very unsatisfactory one, and one likely to result in a continuance of the state of things that had been deplored by the public Press—namely, the

commission of crimes which shocked the various communities in which they were perpetrated, and yet could not be brought home to the parties who were guilty of them. The police, he knew, did their work as well as they possibly could, but in order to get at the authors of crime he thought something more than mere routine inquiries carried on by men in uniform should be undertaken. When crimes were committed in other countries one of the most skilled and experienced detectives was appointed to investigate it in his own way, quite irrespective of the police, and according to the best methods he could devise for the purpose of hunting down criminals. If the present unsatisfactory state of things were continued, he was sure that in many cases the authors of crime would remain undiscovered.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not aware, nor had it been brought under his cognizance by what had fallen from the hon. member for Charters Towers, that any exceptional circumstances had occurred during the last four or five months that should induce any change to be made in the framing of the Estimates in the direction indicated. The hon. gentleman had not mentioned any particular cases that had occurred that should lead them to alter the policy adopted during the five years, or nearly so, that the late Government was in office. He (the Colonial Secretary) believed that as many crimes had been committed while the late Government were in office as had been perpetrated during the period the present Government had been in power. Therefore, if the late Government saw no reason to alter the Estimate he held in his hand, which was passed by them, he did not see why the hon. gentleman should suddenly open a new discovery, and say that the present Government should have provided a superior class of detectives, or head detective, to investigate the state of affairs that had arisen since the late Government left office. The hon. gentleman had also said that detectives had to pay money out of their own pockets in order to prosecute the search in which they were engaged in the interests of justice. He would ask the hon. member, had they ever put in a claim, and had that claim ever been refused? If so, it had never come under his (the Colonial Secretary's) notice. If such were the case the men would most distinctly have a grievance, but not one had ever been brought before him. If the hon. member made that statement he was certain he was prepared to justify it, and if it was so the matter should be at once inquired into. It was not the wish of any Government that those men who were employed on really delicate State matters should have to spend money out of their own pockets. He could understand a man sending in a claim for money expended without showing evidence to support his claim, but he could not understand any man who honestly proved having spent money out of his own pocket not having that claim recognised. He could assure the hon. member that if any such claim could be substantiated it should be properly met.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he did not know that they had made formal claims and were refused; he was not in a position to say that; but he was credibly informed that those men had to incur expenditure which was not recouped them. He did not wish to insinuate that the present Government were lax in that matter, nor that there was more crime now than there was while the late Government were in office. As he had said, those matters came under his notice too late to enable him to bring them under the notice of his late colleagues. He had many reasons to believe they were facts, and it was only right that the Colonial Secretary's attention should be called to them.

Mr. STEVENS said anyone reading *Hansard* to-morrow morning, and judging from the general tenor of the debate, must arrive at the conclusion that the entire police force—European and native—was in a highly demoralised state. That was by no means his opinion. He considered the force equal to that in any of the other colonies. Cases had occurred, within his own knowledge, where the police had ridden after criminals hundreds and hundreds of miles, had gone through great hardships, but had never got off the track, and had finally succeeded in effecting an arrest. If the black police were not required in the North, it did not follow that they were not required in other parts of the colony. If the black police were done away with in the outside districts, it would be very much the worse for the blacks. The police force of the colony was quite equal to that of any of the other colonies, as far as his observation went at any rate.

Mr. SALKELD said that with regard to not allowing expenses to witnesses in police court cases, he would point out to the Colonial Secretary that it would work very serious injustice and hardship, especially on men in straightened circumstances, or who were earning their living by daily wages. No provision was made for paying witnesses summoned by the police in preliminary inquiries, and many police inquiries went no further. It had just been stated by the Colonial Secretary that persons should not be put to any personal expense in carrying on the business of the State, and yet any man who happened to witness an offence committed was to be dragged away from his business to give evidence without any recompense, and would lose his day's pay, or perhaps several days' pay into the bargain. It would not affect men who were paid fixed salaries, but only wage-earners. It might happen that a man who had witnessed an offence in a town might be working in the bush when the summons to appear reached him, and he might not have enough money to pay his train fare. What would happen then? The man would be liable to imprisonment. That was not a reasonable state of affairs to exist. A good deal had been said about the difficulty of detecting crime. The result of such a system must inevitably be to induce persons not to give any information as to the commission of crimes, because they would know that their appearance as witnesses meant the loss of so many days' pay. They were spending £146,000 on the police force to protect persons and property; a few thousands more might be very properly spent in the way he suggested. Nothing, of course, could come of the debate, but he trusted the Colonial Secretary would give his attention to the matter, and place a sufficient sum for the purpose on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. BARLOW said that if any sum for that purpose was put on the Supplementary Estimates it would have his cheerful support. It was a cause of real, undoubted hardship on the working classes, who very frequently lost, not only their time but their billets as well, which was a much more serious matter. If the police were to exercise discretion, and only call such witnesses as were absolutely necessary, a very serious grievance would be redressed.

Mr. SALKELD said there was another matter to which he wished to draw the Colonial Secretary's attention. He had been informed that at present married men were not eligible for employment in the police force. Was that so? It might be more desirable to have single men, but surely it was no crime for a man to be married.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman was wrong when he said that no married man was eligible, although preference

was given to single men, and very properly. Anyone at all acquainted with the administration of the Police Force knew that was so. For instance, if a married man were placed in charge of a station there was greater difficulty, trouble, and expense in removing him, and a great many reasons were always brought forward for not removing him. Married men were eligible, but, as a rule, preference was given to single men.

Mr. SALKELD said he believed that, although the Colonial Secretary said married men were not practically excluded, preference was given to single men.

Question put and passed.

WATER POLICE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £3,239 be granted for Water Police. Hon. members would notice that there was an increase of £60 in the salary of the inspector, but as a matter of fact, the inspector had previously received £60 from the Colonial Treasurer's Department, and now the salary was being included in one sum, instead of being paid by two departments. It was thought far better to put the whole amount under the head of "Water Police" to which force that gentleman belonged. At Thursday Island there was an increase from £2 to £4 per month for a signal boy. He supposed he had grown since last year—at any rate, he would now receive £4 a month. The only other increase was £52 in rations for the water police, the whole addition being apparently £136, although the real addition was only £76, because, as he had said, £60 of the inspector's salary was taken off in another portion of the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

PETTY SESSIONS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £35,835 be granted for police magistrates, clerks of petty sessions, etc. There were not many alterations in the vote, except at the commencement. It was thought advisable to divide the metropolitan district, and a police court was established at South Brisbane. It was so arranged that it led only to an increase of £310. Mr. Day, the Assistant Police Magistrate, was moved from the metropolitan court and appointed police magistrate in South Brisbane, evidently to the satisfaction of the communities most deeply interested. A clerk of petty sessions was also appointed in South Brisbane, that appointment being given to a gentleman who had also previously held an appointment in the metropolitan court, and who was promoted with an increase of salary. That led to other promotions, and another clerk was appointed as a junior clerk. On page 25 there was an increase of £25 at Aramac owing to the appointment of an acting clerk of petty sessions. At Boonah, which was also called Blumbergville, there was an increase of £25 for an acting clerk of petty sessions. At Birdsville there was a decrease. The officer representing the Treasury in connection with the Customs was now acting as police magistrate at an increase of £160.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Has he accepted it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not know. He thought he was not paid enough for it. That was the only communication he had had from him, and he (the Colonial Secretary) had intimated to him that if it were not enough he would relieve him of the £100 a year. At Bundaberg there was an assistant clerk of petty sessions at £50 a year on the last estimates, and a boy had been appointed, but he had been found incompetent to do the work, and it was

thought necessary, from the increase of business there, to employ a man at a salary of £120, and he believed he was very competent, and that they could not get anyone to do the work for less money and do it properly. With regard to Charters Towers, hon. gentlemen would notice an increase of £25. That was owing to an adjustment of offices made by the late Government, when Mr. Kendrick was brought there from Thargomindah to act as clerk of petty sessions at a salary of £350, Mr. Parkinson, who had been clerk of petty sessions, being appointed as mining registrar. The adjustment of offices had led to the slight increase. On page 27 the next increase was for the assistant clerk of petty sessions at Croydon—£175. The pressure of business made that appointment necessary, and he was sure the senior member for Burke would bear him out in that. The next alteration was at Eidsvold, although, as a matter of fact, there was no increase. Hon. members would see in the footnote that the salary last year was only paid for eight months, although the mining registrar, who was also acting as clerk of petty sessions, was to receive an increase of £25. He would now receive £150 instead of £125. At Killarney there was a sum of £25 for an acting clerk of petty sessions. With regard to Maryborough there was an increase of £30 a year for the assistant clerk. That increase had been strongly recommended by Mr. Rankin, the police magistrate, and so far as he had seen from looking through the papers the increase had been approved of by the late Colonial Secretary. That being so he thought it was not necessary to interfere with it. He did not know the gentleman, but he was told he was a very good officer. At Pittsworth an acting clerk of petty sessions had been appointed. At Ravenswood there was a diminution in the vote, as the work of the acting clerk of petty sessions was being done by the sergeant of police. At Table-Top, on the Croydon Goldfield, it had been deemed necessary that an acting clerk of petty sessions should be appointed. At Warwick there was apparently an increase of £60 for an assistant clerk. But that sum had been paid for the same work previously out of contingencies, and it was the desire of previous committees that the amount should appear on the Estimates. Another item, which was apparently an increase, was £200 for an acting relieving police magistrate for three months; and that £200 would be given to Mr. Buttanshaw on his retirement. Mr. Buttanshaw was a very old servant of the colony, and fully entitled to his retiring allowance. It was simply what had been done on previous occasions. Those were all the other differences that existed between the Estimates of the present year and those of the past.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was under the consideration of the late Government whether they should not abolish the office of police magistrate at Aramac. The work to be done there was extremely little. They had opportunities of doing so once or twice, but had never abolished it. If they were going in for economy that opportunity might be taken.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that under the late Land Act a good deal of land had been taken up in the neighbourhood of Aramac, and that place had revived somewhat. He did not think the Government would be justified in abolishing the office.

Mr. PAUL said that it was the hon. leader of the Opposition who sent a police magistrate to Aramac when he was Attorney-General in the Douglas Ministry, because it was represented that ordinary magistrates did not always deal out justice.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: There has been an improvement since then.

Mr. HODGKINSON said there was a vote in the Estimates of the Minister for Mines and Works of £5,000 for erecting quarters for police magistrates. The salaries paid to police magistrates were not very excessive, and the frequent removals they were subjected to reduced these salaries to still smaller amounts. The average period of a police magistrate's tenure of local office, so to speak, was not more than three years. He remembered that during the years he was in that service he was removed five times. If a police magistrate were a married man he had to lose, at least, £200, and seeing that Custom-house officers, telegraph masters, postmasters, and inspectors of police, and almost all others were allowed quarters, the least that could be done was to allow police magistrates quarters also. It was essential for the welfare of the public service that they should be removed, but it was not fair that they should bear the cost of such removal. In the remote parts of the colony their furniture was invariably sacrificed, as the cost of carriage was so great that moving it would be a greater tax than sacrificing it. He had left his furniture behind him upon more than one occasion. Furniture that cost £200 would not realise £20. The £5,000 which he had referred to would at the most cover the cost of quarters for five magistrates. It was a cause of great discontent that that part of the service which, next to the judges, was charged with the most important duties in the colony, should be exposed to such a financial tax.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Premier spoke to him on the subject very soon after they went into office, and said it was unfair that police magistrates should be removed from one place to another when they had to rent houses, and possibly in some places they would have difficulty in doing that. It was thought that the money should be taken out of revenue, and not out of loan, to meet the difficulty—or rather, in some cases, great hardship that the police magistrates endured. That hardship, to a certain extent, tied the hands of the Minister charged with administering that branch of the public service. The Minister would not like to move a man because he would lose so much; but if, in the course of a few years, the Government could put up buildings in places where they were most required, especially in townships where it was difficult to rent a house, they would not only be doing good for the police magistrates, but good to the public service. He was glad the matter had been referred to.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the matter had been mentioned a good many times in the Committee, and it was only a question of money. Everybody agreed that it was desirable that those officers who had to be removed periodically should be provided with quarters. The question would then arise whether those quarters were an addition to their salaries or not. Of course their salaries would not be reduced by the fact of their having quarters, and the next step would, of course, be to give those who were not supplied with quarters an allowance in lieu of them. He wished to know if the difficulty in regard to the clerk of petty sessions at Charters Towers had been settled. The work at Charters Towers was too much for one officer, and another was to be appointed; so the gentleman who had been police magistrate at Thargomindah, from which place it was desirable to remove him, was sent to Charters Towers as clerk of petty sessions, with the intention that he should not receive any increased emolument. But, by some mistake, extra emoluments were paid him, which made the transfer consider-

able promotion for him. Mr. Kendrick had not done well as police magistrate at Thargomindah, and the late Government thought the best thing to do was to send him to Charters Towers, where he would receive less salary, but by some accident he got a much larger salary. They endeavoured to put the matter right, but before the matter was settled they went out of office. He did not think a man should be promoted for not doing well, and he should like to know how the matter stood now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Mr. Kendrick only drew a salary of £350 a year.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: And one or two other items.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the mining registrar there was Mr. Parkinson, and he had not suffered.

Mr. PAUL said that in the absence of the hon. member for Clermont he wished to bring under the notice of the Committee a case of great hardship. Some time ago the police magistrate of Townsville, who got £600 a year, was removed to Clermont with a salary of £450.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The salary of the police magistrate at Townsville was not £600 a year when he was there.

Mr. PAUL said he knew that the officer in question, who was an old and faithful officer, had suffered great pecuniary loss by the removal.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he found that Mr. Kendrick got £393, instead of £350, as he said before. Mr. Parkinson got £434 a year. It was an arrangement made by the late Government. It was the only item on his Estimates that had puzzled him; but he would ascertain the particulars from the Under-Colonial Secretary, who had the grasp of it, but who was too unwell to be present that night.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he hoped the hon. gentleman would satisfy himself as to how the matter stood and settle it once for all. With respect to the removal of Mr. Morey from Townsville to Clermont, the intention was not to reduce his salary. He was receiving £550 at Townsville; he received at Clermont £450 as police magistrate, £50 for forage as gold warden, and £60 for allowance as land commissioner; so that practically his income was the same at Clermont as at Townsville.

Mr. SAYERS said he should like to know why the clerk of petty sessions at Charters Towers got less than the clerk of petty sessions at Townsville. The officers at Charters Towers were frequently at work till 10 and 11 o'clock at night, and sometimes they worked on Sundays to overtake their work. He thought that officers who worked like that should not receive less than those who did less work.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that a few years ago a great change was made with respect to the emoluments of clerks of petty sessions. They used to be paid to a large extent by fees; but it was arranged that all fees should be paid into the Treasury, and that clerks of petty sessions should receive fixed salaries. It was decided that the salaries at Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Townsville should be £400 a year, and at no other place more than £350 a year. As a matter of fact, £400 a year was less than some of the clerks of petty sessions received under the old system. The officer at Charters Towers had been dissatisfied.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said that the district registrars' fees, instead of going to the clerk of petty sessions at Charters Towers, went to the Mining Registrar now, so that Mr.

Kendrick's pecuniary position was very much inferior to what it was, and Mr. Parkinson was very much better off under the present arrangement.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition said it was the other way.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said that Mr. Kendrick received less than he got at Thargomindah. The officer who filled the position of clerk of petty sessions and mining registrar was now mining registrar only; and with the addition he had to his salary of the fees he got for acting as district registrar he had greatly improved his financial position. If any readjustment was made it should not be to the disadvantage of Mr. Kendrick, who had already suffered a considerable pecuniary loss by his transference to Charters Towers.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) said the hon. gentleman seemed to forget it was the intention of the Government of which he was a member to dismiss Mr. Kendrick altogether, and instead of that they sent him to Charters Towers and disrated him.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said there was no doubt Mr. Kendrick was not a success as a police magistrate, but he was a valuable servant in a subordinate position. No doubt he was unsuited to the position of police magistrate of a place like Thargomindah, but he was a highly efficient officer in the position he now occupied. The late Government had no desire to injure him any more than was involved in his transfer to Charters Towers, and he hoped any change made might not be to that officer's further disadvantage. The only person actually affected was the mining registrar, Mr. Parkinson, whose pecuniary position was improved.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: That was intended.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: I think so.

The HON. P. PERKINS said he did not know Mr. Kendrick, but he gathered from the late Attorney-General that a man who had once been a police magistrate had walked down the ladder until he occupied the position of clerk of petty sessions. If that was so it was time they got rid of such a man altogether.

Mr. STEVENS said he would like to know how it was that the police magistrate of Beenleigh received about £75 less than any other magistrate in the service. He did as much work as the ordinary run of magistrates, and he was entitled to the same salary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that was one of those puzzles which might have been asked of any other Minister at any time within the last few years. He did not know. The estimate was the same as last year, and as it had been for years past. He had asked the same question of the department, and got no answer except that it was there. He had heard of no application having been made by that officer for an increase of salary, and he knew he was a very old colonist and was held in very high esteem. All he could say was that the estimate with respect to him was the same as it had been for years.

Mr. STEVENS said it was only fair that that gentleman's salary should be increased to the same as that of the general run of magistrates doing similar work. He was a very old colonist and did a great deal of work, and had done good service to the colony.

Mr. MURPHY said he wished to say a few words upon the necessity for the appointment of another police magistrate in the western portion

of the colony. At the present time the police magistrate from Isisford had to make a journey, he thought; every three months from Isisford to Stonehenge, on the Thomson, from there *via* Jundah down to Windorah and up to Arrilalah. That gentleman had to travel over an enormous area in the discharge of his duties, and the time he was necessarily absent from the centre, Isisford, where he lived, led to serious inconvenience. Although there were a certain number of honorary magistrates in that part of the country, they were so far from the townships that it was impossible they could be of very much use where the administration of justice was concerned. The police magistrate was sometimes absent from Isisford for three weeks, and he might be a month or two months away, according to the weather. If the Government would only arrange his duties properly and appoint another magistrate to administer justice on the Thomson, independent altogether of Isisford, it would be of immense advantage to the people of the western portion of the colony. It would be of immense service to the people if a police magistrate was appointed at Windorah or Jundah, and would greatly facilitate the administration of justice. The population of that portion of the colony was increasing as more settlement was taking place and more runs were being stocked, and the want of a police magistrate in that portion of the district was much felt. He only wondered that the Postmaster-General, who knew that district as well as he did, and knew that every word he had said was absolutely true, had not advocated that already. It was a crying shame that there had been no magistrate appointed to administer justice in that far-out portion of the colony. He only rose for the purpose of drawing the attention of the Government to the matter, as he knew perfectly well they could not do anything just now. He wished, however, to put the circumstances on record, in order that the next time the Government brought up their Estimates there might be some provision made for a police magistrate on the Thomson.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Then they would postpone the consideration of that subject until the next Estimates.

Mr. WATSON said he would like to know whether it was the intention of the Government to appoint a police magistrate for Fortitude Valley.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was not the intention of the Government that session to appoint a police magistrate for Fortitude Valley.

Mr. WATSON said that the Government had granted to South Brisbane what they would not give to Fortitude Valley. He had pledged himself to his constituents to do what he could to get a police magistrate for that district, and he thought such an appointment should be made. While on his feet he would point out that at the present time the lockup at Fortitude Valley required the attention of the Government.

Mr. SMITH said he would like to know whether it was the intention of the Government to make some allowance to the clerk of petty sessions at Bowen, who had to perform important duties for the sheriff during the frequent absences of that officer on circuit.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was not proposed to make any increase in that officer's salary.

Mr. LITTLE said he thought some allowance should be made to the police magistrate at Herberton, who had to perform very heavy duties, being both police magistrate and land commissioner, and having to visit Watsonville. He had

to go to the Russell River, a distance of fifty miles, to hold a warden's court, and take a man with him to carry provisions. He (Mr. Little) would like to see the Colonial Secretary make some allowance to that officer for the extra labour he had to perform.

Mr. HODGKINSON said the police magistrate at Herberton was no doubt a good servant, and he had received a remarkably good position from the late Government. The locality was a healthy one, and it was in compliance with his own request that the officer, who had a large family, was located at Herberton, a position which, as regarded social comfort, was one of the gems of the service. There were many other officers in the service who had equally as good claims as Mr. Zillman. He (Mr. Hodgkinson) did not know whether the Colonial Secretary had received any complaint from that gentleman; but the last time he (Mr. Hodgkinson) was in the North, Mr. Zillman expressed himself perfectly delighted with the promotion he got from the late Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, considering that Mr. Zillman received £665 a year, he thought that gentleman was pretty well paid.

Mr. HODGKINSON: An increase from £300.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was speaking of that gentleman's present salary.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING, &C.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9, the sum of £30,130, for salaries and contingencies in connection with Government Printing Office and Electric Light. The increase in that vote was very small. There was an increase in the salary of the junior clerk, which was raised from £100 to £125 a year. That particular clerk had been in the Government service twelve or thirteen years, having entered it as a boy, and continued in the employment ever since, and he was a capital officer. He was one of the clerks who took money over the counter and sold the various papers wanted by the public. He was a deserving officer, and in his (the Colonial Secretary's) opinion his salary had been very inadequate for some years past. The next item where there was an alteration was the machinist, there being a reduction in the salary of that officer of £36. That was owing to a new officer having been appointed, or, at least, promotion having been made to that office, and it was not thought necessary to continue the old salary in the meantime. In the item, "Wages, temporary assistance, overtime," there was an increase which was rendered necessary by an increase in the number of members of that Committee. They supposed there would be a good deal more talking and that the expense of printing returns called for by the additional members would require that extra expenditure. With regard to "paper, machines, type, and incidentals," there was a reduction in the amount required for those items, because from year to year they were able to get their paper cheaper. There was great competition now, and they were getting paper at a much less price than heretofore. *Hansard* was the same as last year. Under the heading "electric light," it would be noticed that the electrician was set down at £125 a year. Hitherto that gentleman's salary was paid out of "miscellaneous services," which appeared on page 41 of the Estimates. There it would be seen that the engineer in charge of electric light formerly received £250 per annum. The salary had been reduced by one-half, and liberty was given to the electrical engineer to do private business.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It is a sort of retaining fee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said it was practically a sort of retaining fee. The electrician did the Government work, and he believed there was no one in Brisbane who could do the work he could, and it had been thought better to arrange the matter in that way. He believed the arrangement was made by the leader of the Opposition as it was put before him (the Colonial Secretary) soon after he entered office, and he quite approved of it. Those were the only items in which the vote differed from that of last year.

Question put and passed.

LITHOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted for the service of the year 1888-9 the sum of £3,025 for salaries and contingencies in connection with the lithographic department. There were two increases of £30 each in the salaries of lithographic printers. The increases were very small and were given to skilled men who had done their work well. He did not say it would be hard to supply their places, but it would be inadvisable to make any change, and he was told that they were very deserving workmen. There was also a slight increase in the amount for "engraving, printing, paper, colour, stones, machinery, and incidentals."

Question put and passed.

INSANITY.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a sum not exceeding £23,824 be granted for "Insanity" and "Hospitals for the Insane." The first item "Insanity" remained unchanged. In the next item "Hospitals for the Insane," there were some alterations, but they were consequent, he was sorry to say, upon the increase in the number of patients which the hospitals now included. On line 3 there was an increase of £200 in salaries. The chief attendant had an increase, which was thoroughly well deserved, of £20; there was an increase in the number of attendants from forty-two to forty-four, necessitated by the increase in patients. The next item showed a small increase of £5, and in the next there was a reduction of £20 in the messenger's salary, as a boy now did the work that was previously done by a man. The pay of the nurses had been increased at the same rate as the male attendants. At Sandy Gallop the amount asked for was £35 less than last year, and the contingencies showed an increase of £1,500, also owing to the increased number of patients. He was sure that hon. gentlemen who had visited Woogaroo would know that it was conducted with the greatest economy, combined with efficiency, and the estimate, being recommended by Dr. Scholes, might be relied upon. He had had no desire or opportunity of visiting Woogaroo previous to becoming Colonial Secretary, but having been there he could say that they had a most efficiently conducted institution, and one in which every kindness that could be extended to their unfortunate fellow-beings was extended.

Mr. REES R. JONES asked who were the official visitors and the persons who received travelling expenses?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the official visitor was the police magistrate of Brisbane, and the medical visitor, Dr. Hill.

Mr. REES R. JONES said he was informed that the medical superintendent occasionally visited the coast towns to inspect the lunatic asylums. Did he receive any pay for so doing?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said Dr. Scholes visited the various reception-houses along the coast, and, of course, was paid travelling expenses.

Mr. GROOM asked when the branch establishment at Toowoomba would be opened?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Minister for Works would know more about that. He could give no definite information, but would inform the hon. gentleman to-morrow.

Mr. HYNE said people were often arrested on suspicion of being insane, and conveyed to places of safety by policemen. There was nothing which was so likely to make a weak-minded person insane as to be handled by a policeman; and he would suggest to the Colonial Secretary that plain clothes constables should be employed in conveying insane persons, or those suspected of insanity, from place to place.

Mr. GROOM said he wished to direct the attention of the Colonial Secretary to a case which had come under his notice; the case of a railway employé who was placed in charge of a railway cabin at Toowoomba, and within forty-eight hours of his being placed there was discovered to be insane. He was sent to Goodna, and after being there two months he began to show signs of recovery. He was then sent on a message to the Goodna Railway Station, and the sight of a train had such an overpowering effect upon him that he immediately disappeared, and in the course of four or five days his body was found floating in the Brisbane River. He had left a wife and four children totally unprovided for. He (Mr. Groom) did not know whether the hon. gentleman was acquainted with the circumstances, but he thought the case was one deserving of some consideration. The nature of the work that the man had to undergo—there being an enormous number of lines to attend to—was supposed to have completely turned his brain, and had caused the unfortunate man's death.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the matter was one that should be referred to the Minister for Railways. If the man's insanity was caused through his being overworked by the Railway Department, there was no claim against the department he (the Colonial Secretary) presided over. He was certain that Dr. Scholes would never have sent the man out had he known that he was in such a state.

Mr. UNMACK said he was sure the Committee would be very much pleased to hear some explanation from the Colonial Secretary as to whether any steps were being taken to prevent the introduction of insane persons from England. He was sorry to notice in the annual report of the medical superintendent that a large number of people were landed here direct from the immigrant ships and transferred to Woogaroo. He thought such a state of affairs should be altered, and he was sure the Colonial Secretary would be able to give some satisfactory explanation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said every precaution, so far as he knew, was taken by the Emigration Department in England to prevent the sending out of insane people, but no doubt a great many had been introduced under the immigration regulations. All that could be done was done, but when the people were here, what was to be done with them? The best must be made of a bad job. Every precaution was taken to prevent such people being sent out.

Mr. PALMER said the superintendent of the asylum in his annual report showed where the weak spot was with regard to those imported lunatics. He said:—

"The admissions exceeded those of last year by 29, and the special points to be noted in connection with them are:—1. The large number who have been insane and in asylums in Great Britain and whose attacks have

recurred within short periods after their arrival in Queensland. Sixteen persons are known to have been insane before leaving home, and these form over 6 per cent. of the admissions during the year.

"2. The large number of persons who arrive by immigrant ships and are admitted to asylum, some direct from the ships, others after comparatively short residences in the colony:—Twenty-nine persons, many of whom are ascertained to have insane family histories, were admitted during 1887 under the above-mentioned circumstances; these give an additional 12 per cent. of imported lunatics admitted during the year."

Then there was a table showing the conditions under which those unfortunate people arrived in the colony; also showing that during the last year or two the great increase had happened, and that most of them still remained in the asylum. He went on to say:—

"The greatest care should be taken by the emigration authorities at home that neither insane nor crippled people should be allowed to leave for the colony. In one case arriving this year a girl is brought out who was insane and peculiar while waiting shipment in the depot at Plymouth, but who was still shipped, and after a fortnight at sea became violent. She went direct to the lunatic reception house at Maryborough on the arrival of the ship at that port, and now remains in this asylum."

There therefore seemed to be some weak spot in the emigration system at home by which those people could get assistance to come out to the colony and then go direct to our asylums.

Mr. HODGKINSON said all immigrant vessels carried a paid medical officer. In how many cases had they reported that there were insane immigrants on board on the arrival of the vessel?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the case that had just been mentioned was, no doubt, an exceptional one, but still a considerable number had come out who had such a bad record that if there had not been false representations made on their behalf they would not have been able to get to the colony. Of course, hon. members were aware that insanity might remain latent for a considerable time.

Question put and passed.

RECEPTION HOUSES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £2,520 be granted for salaries and incidentals, reception houses. He said some small expense would have to be incurred in providing additional cells at the reception house, as some of them were used for other purposes.

Question put and passed.

GAOLS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that £12,108 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with Gaols. He said there was a small increase of £25 to the salary of the clerk to the Inspector of Prisons, who had been in the receipt of only £100 a year. He believed he was an admirable clerk, and as the increase was recommended by the sheriff he thought it was one that should be made. Another addition to the vote was £30 for a gaoler and matron at Croydon. Then there was the gratuity to the late sheriff, £267, which he should explain. The late sheriff, Mr. Halloran, having served fifty-four years under the Governments of New South Wales and Queensland, it was considered advisable that he should retire; and it was thought better, instead of following the course pursued in some cases previously—allowing him to retire on twelve months' leave—to give him the difference between the pension to which he was justly and honourably entitled and twelve months' full pay. That accounted for the amount put down in the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

PENAL ESTABLISHMENT, ST. HELENA.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving that £10,655 be granted for salaries and contingencies, penal establishment, St. Helena, said that, as hon. members were aware, since the last Estimates were passed, a change had been made in the office of superintendent of the establishment. He thought that Captain Townley was a very fit and proper person to be appointed sheriff, and in appointing the new superintendent of St. Helena he would take upon himself the responsibility of saying that he had appointed the best man who could be found for the position. He had met him only once in his life, but he had gone to a good deal of trouble in endeavouring to find the best man in the public service for the post, as he thought he had, and that opinion was shared by the hon. the Chief Secretary and his colleagues. The deputy superintendent and chief warder was put down for an increase of £50. He was a very old and valuable officer; almost invaluable down there, knowing the whole run of the business, and he had been strongly recommended by Captain Townley for an increase, and also that his title should be changed to that of deputy superintendent. It was thought that title would command more respect amongst the unfortunate people down there than simply "chief warder." The other changes were increases in the number of trade instructors. There was no increase in the number of warders or in their pay, although it would appear so from the Estimates. The increased amount arose from warders getting more pay after a certain period of service, and there being more getting the higher rate of pay than received it last year. The amount for "allowances to warders for length of service" had been reduced from £150 to £25, because the necessity for it did not exist. The total decrease in the vote was about £280.

Mr. HODGKINSON asked if it was the intention of the Government to place the Sheriff in charge of St. Helena as well as the other gaols of the colony? He would also like to know whether some saving could not be made in the item of "trade instructors." There must be some men confined in the establishment who were able to instruct their fellow unfortunates in the various occupations taught by those instructors. Efforts were being made in various parts of the world to reduce the expenses of maintaining criminals, and there was no sound argument against making use of the knowledge they possessed in that direction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, with respect to the first question put by the hon. gentleman, it was the intention of the Government next session to pass the new Prisons Bill which had passed through the Upper House, and which would put all gaols and prisons, including St. Helena, under the charge of a comptroller of prisons. Practically he had taken upon himself, in all matters connected with St. Helena, to consult Captain Townley—in an unofficial way, so to speak; so that it was really under the control of the Sheriff, through the Colonial Secretary for the time being, until the Bill to which he had referred was passed. With regard to the trade instructors, there would be great disadvantages in selecting them from the inmates of the gaol. A free instructor had very much more control over the prisoners, and was much more respected by them than one taken from the prisoners themselves. Further, better tradesmen could, as a rule, be got outside the gaol than inside. With regard to the employment of prisoners, every effort had been made to make the best use of the prisoners, and as a matter of fact a great

deal of good work had been got out of them; and Captain Pennefather was just as anxious to do that as Captain Townley had been.

Mr. UNMACK said that as one of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the Colonial Stores Department, he had occasion to visit St. Helena officially, and he found that, with regard to the two branches under which instruction was given—saddlery and tailoring—there was not one solitary prisoner belonging to either trade. It would, therefore, be utterly impossible, at all times, to find an instructor amongst the prisoners. The Commission also learned while there, and duly reported, that the trade instructor for saddlery was a shoemaker who knew nothing about saddlery, with the consequence that the saddles were utterly spoilt in the making, and that the police to whom they were supplied had to spend large sums of money to make them fit for service, or throw them aside and buy their own. The Commission called upon the then Colonial Secretary, and urgently desired him to immediately appoint a competent trade instructor in saddlery. He did not know whether their request had been attended to, for he had been told only the other day, by a competent authority, that the saddles now being turned out at St. Helena were absolutely worthless. •

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there had been a new saddlery instructor appointed.

Mr. UNMACK said that from what had reached him from a competent judge, he was afraid that a competent saddler had not been appointed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that all he could say was, that the chairman of the Civil Service Commission heard much more than the Minister in charge of the department. No such complaint had been made to him.

Mr. STEPHENS said there was one very fair instructor, a Mr. Smyth, whose services had been dispensed with, and whose successor, on arriving at the island, was found to be so "tight" that he was returned by the same boat. The man who followed him he saw in town the other day, and he certainly looked very sick; he heard that he also had been at the police court. He observed there were now four trade instructors instead of two; what particular trades were those four men teaching?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that of the four trade instructors there was a tailor, a saddler, a shoemaker, and a tinsmith.

Mr. HODGKINSON asked if the Colonial Secretary expected to get competent trade instructors at £2 10s. a week—less than the wages of an ordinary journeyman?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that he had the same hope of obtaining instructors at that salary that the Colonial Secretary in the late Government had.

Mr. BARLOW said that the prisoners who had been trained under the shoemaker-saddler could not be expected to make good saddles in three months. It would take even an intelligent man twelve months to learn to make a saddle.

Mr. MURPHY said he considered himself a good judge of saddles, and the saddles he had seen at St. Helena were, as far as trees and workmanship were concerned, as good as one could get in Brisbane or anywhere else; but the material sent to St. Helena out of which the saddles were made was very defective. He had seen hogskins there which no saddler would attempt to use, and basils and sides which were full of cuts and half-cuts—the refuse of some tanyard—and the inmates of St. Helena were

expected to turn good saddles out of them. The thing was simply impossible. The stuff was the refuse of the Brisbane shops, and was absolutely worthless.

Mr. STEPHENS said the hon. member for Barcoo might know a little about rabbit skins, but it was evident he knew nothing about leather; and what he had just said only served to show his ignorance. Those particular hogskins to which the hon. member referred were imported by Box and Sons, and supplied by them after being passed by the expert appointed by the Government, either Mr. Jarman or Mr. Lade. He saw the leather himself, and it was really first-class leather. If the hon. member would only read the report to which the hon. member for Toowoong referred he would see that they got reports of experts who knew something about saddle-making, and had a fair idea of what they were writing about. They would see from that report that it was rather the system than the material which was at fault. With reference to the inspectors, that one man Smyth had had to do the work of those four inspectors, and he believed he had done the work fairly well; but there had been some trouble down there and he had been made the scapegoat and was discharged. He thought he had been treated harshly by the late Government. They had tried two saddlers since, and he believed they had been utter failures, but he hoped they might be more successful in the future, and that those four men would be found good men. He understood why they could not get good men. Men who went there were not furnished with quarters, so that married men could not be got, as they would not leave their families behind, and in every trade they could not always get a good single man.

Mr. PATTISON said the hon. member for Woolloongabba could not accuse him of getting up to air his eloquence very often. If he did speak at all it was in reference to matters that he understood.

Mr. STEPHENS: I said the hon. member for Barcoo.

Mr. PATTISON said the hon. gentleman could not accuse him of airing his eloquence. He had been one of those who visited St. Helena with the Minister for Lands, the Colonial Secretary, and others some short time ago, and he could quite confirm what the hon. member for Barcoo had said—that good saddlery could have been made but for the very inferior material. They had seen some saddles there that he thought quite good enough to sell in any shop in Queensland, but the leather shown to them, and in no small quantity, was not fit for saddles. The hogskins, if they were not cut, were all riddled with shot, and they could count twenty or thirty holes in them; and while there his utterance was that it was a disgrace to any tradesmen, under any contract, to send such a lot of rubbish down; and he was quite at a loss to understand how any storekeepers could pass such leather as good, unless they thought that anything was good enough for St. Helena. To say that it was good enough for any tradesman to use in his workshop he denied *in toto*. He could only confirm what the hon. member for Barcoo had said, that it was disgraceful, and he trusted the present Government would not allow such rubbish to go there again.

Mr. STEPHENS said he wished to know if the Colonial Secretary and the other hon. gentleman who went with him had seen the leather supplied during the last few months, or the accumulation of the rubbish of the last three or four years. He had been to St. Helena and watched them treat leather and other things, and he must say that they did not treat material there as it ought to be treated. He had seen other articles, in addition to leather, lying

collected for years and years. They had allowed rubbish to gradually accumulate in a corner. He had seen good leather go down, and he had no doubt those hon. members must have seen the accumulation of rubbish. The leather which went there was passed by inspectors in town—by men whom the hon. member for Rockhampton must know were competent judges. He would take Mr. Lade's word against that of any hon. member of that Committee, as he knew he was thoroughly trustworthy, and so was Mr. Gray, the bootmaker.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman was in error in stating that the leather shown to them was what he had described. It was not leather which had been cast on one side. It certainly had been inspected by Messrs. Jarman and Lade, and he knew that the leather was again sent to Mr. Lade, and his report was just the same as it had been at first. He could hardly have been expected to differ from it. He (Mr. Morehead) could assure the hon. gentleman he was quite in error in supposing that it was rubbish which was put before them.

Mr. STEPHENS said perhaps the hon. gentleman could tell them what sort of leather he got with the last two saddlery inspectors?

Mr. COWLEY said he wished to ask the Colonial Secretary if the sugar-boiler had nothing else to do besides his work as sugar-boiler?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he might mention that he did not think there was likely to be any more sugar boiled at St. Helena after this year. He could inform the hon. gentleman that the sugar-boiler would be out of employment as soon as the crushing was over. He was a very good man, and he trusted they could find something else for him to do.

Mr. COWLEY said he would also like to know if the bricklayer had work enough?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was always work for him. In fact, he thought that soon it would be necessary to appoint a bricklayer instructor, as there was a good deal of work of that sort.

Question put and passed.

REFORMATORIES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £2,150 be granted for the reformatories at Lytton and Toowoomba. The only difference was the reduction of £60 in the salary of Mr. Wassall, the inspector down at Lytton, which, as he had already mentioned, was included in another part of the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

BENEVOLENT ASYLUM.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £9,198 be granted for the Benevolent Asylum at Dunwich. The total vote was decreased by nearly £1,000, but there was an increase in the salary of the assistant-superintendent (Mr. Hill), who was a very good officer indeed. Through his services the cost of management had been materially reduced by his judicious looking after the stores. Mr. Hill was an old ship's purser. Hon. gentlemen would see that the vote for contingencies was being reduced from £9,000 to £8,000.

Mr. GANNON said he would just ask one question with regard to the reduction in provisions, medical comforts, and incidentals, which was being reduced from £9,000 to £8,000. He hoped the unfortunate poor people at Dunwich were not going to have any of their comforts stopped by that reduction of £1,000?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the "fortunate" poor people at Dunwich would suffer nothing by that reduction, but would be treated in identically the same way during the current year as they were last year. Dr. Smith, who was certainly a most humane man and a most kindly medical superintendent of an asylum of that sort, considered that he could, under the efficient management of Mr. Hill, do with £1,000 a year less. It was owing to no suggestion on his part, but it was Dr. Smith's own idea. He thought he could do with a less sum than had been voted last year. He had in no way asked to cut down the estimate.

Mr. HYNÉ said he had had the pleasure of visiting Dunwich a few days ago, and was very pleased with what he saw, with the exception of the allowance for the evening meal; and he would therefore make an appeal to the Colonial Secretary to see if he could not indulge the people there in a little luxury in the way of something to eat with their bread. Their breakfast also consisted of a slice of bread and a cup of tea without milk, no butter, jam, or anything else. The dinner was as good as it could be expected to be—soup, meat, potatoes, and bread. They all received humane treatment, and he did not hear a complaint. They were all very helpless, and he was sorry to see there many persons he had known in much better circumstances than he (Mr. Hyné) was in at present. It was right that they should help those who could not help themselves, the old and the imbecile, and it would be a very good thing if the Colonial Secretary would grant the inmates a little more luxury for their breakfast and their evening meal. It would not cost much. He would read a paragraph to show how helpless these people were. With regard to the 173 inmates under 60 years of age, 12 were suffering from phthisis, 8 from heart disease, 15 disabled by accident, 32 were paralysed, 12 totally blind, 5 partially blind, and 20 disabled by rheumatism. The remainder were suffering from various ailments which unfitted them for work. He was making an appeal on behalf of those who could not help themselves, and was satisfied that the country at large would raise no objection to the indulgence being granted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Superintendent of the Dunwich Asylum, in addition to being a kindly, capable man, was also a very able medical man, and had no doubt considered, as others had done, the dietary scale. He thought the people there were very kindly treated, and he did not see why humanitarianism should run riot. The State did a great deal for those poor people. The hon. member interjected that prisoners were fed better; but there was a vast difference between the two positions. There was a certain amount of freedom in one case, and there was none in the other, and prisoners as a rule were a pretty able-bodied lot. In regard to the list the hon. member read, showing that out of the 173 some were suffering from consumption and others from other different diseases, he must state that those people were particularly well cared for, and put into hospital wards, and received a great deal more than a slice of dry bread and a cup of tea in the mornings. Those who required particular comforts received them, and those who were considered to be able to live fairly well on the ordinary dietary scale received it, and that was all they had a right to expect. He knew of no colony where those who had had misfortunes, and had to throw themselves upon the State, were so well treated as at Dunwich, and he had seen most of the benevolent asylums throughout the colonies. He had been down there as a private individual and in his official capacity, and had not heard one single

complaint. Of course he had received complaints of a paltry nature, such as not having enough tobacco, and one had not a flannel shirt, and so on.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said there was one trivial matter he would refer to. Strong representations had been made to the late Colonial Secretary, and he had promised to attend to them—that sleeping curtains were not provided in the female wards. He could not conceive any greater torture than to be in bed without curtains.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, of course the matter would be attended to if any complaints were made.

Mr. HYNÉ said he did not wish to convey the impression that the inmates of the Dunwich Asylum were not humanely treated. He thought they were very well treated, except in the direction he had pointed out. He received every attention from Dr. Wray, who showed him round, and did not in the least wish to convey any charge against the officers in charge. Everything was going on in a most admirable manner.

Mr. GANNON said it was stated that several of the inmates had friends and relatives outside the institution who were well able to pay something towards their support, but would not do so. He wished to know if that were the case?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he believed it was a fact that there were people down there whose friends were well able to support them, and in some cases amounts were paid for their support; but it was difficult to get at those who would not pay. The law provided for it; but it was very hard to bring it into practice. Wherever payment could be enforced it was enforced, and a great many contributions were received towards the support of inmates by friends and relatives.

Question put and passed.

STEAMERS "LUCINDA" AND "OTTER."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £6,132 be granted for the steamers "Lucinda" and "Otter." The amount was identically the same as for last year.

Mr. GANNON said he did not wish the vote to pass without entering his protest against the "Lucinda." The time had come when they could well do without that vessel, and he would give his reasons. She did no special useful work, and an expenditure of £100 or £200 would make the "Otter," which was really a better vessel than the "Lucinda," fit to do all the picnic work, as well as the work she did at present. The Government would do well by the country if the vote were dropped. Of course it was asking members, especially the Ministry, to do without a very great pleasure; but he would ask the Committee, in the name of the country, not to vote the money for the "Lucinda." He did not think anyone could point out one single useful service performed by the "Lucinda." She went to the North, to Sydney, and to Southport, taking high officials on picnics; but that was not useful service. If money was so much required they ought to sell the "Lucinda," and spend a couple of hundred pounds on the "Otter."

The PREMIER said there was no doubt that the "Lucinda" was a piece of extravagance. It was not intended when she was ordered to get a passenger ship; it was intended to get a ship to do the whole of the work done by both the "Lucinda" and the "Otter"; but somehow or other she got changed at home, and an explanation of the change had never been given. He did not think, however, that the remedy was to strike it out of the Estimates.

Mr. GANNON said the "Lucinda" cost £15,000 or £16,000, and the interest on that was £6,000 or £7,000 a-year, which was a lot of money to pay for picnics. He reckoned that £5,000 a year of that could be saved by employing the "Otter" only.

Mr. GROOM said the "Lucinda" was ordered by a Government of which the present Premier was the head, and instructions as to its structure were sent from the colony. But the contractors of their own freewill, to show the colony what they could do in connection with the building of steamers, placed in her, at their own expense, a cabin which was not in the original contract. In fact a great deal of the work was not in the original contract. He believed it was a very cheap boat and a very useful boat. She was very useful to hon. members on both sides, besides being very useful for taking the Governor to various places. The colony was about to have a new Governor, who might desire to visit different parts of the colony. Why should he not go in the "Lucinda," instead of going by coasting steamers? He maintained that the "Lucinda" was one of the most useful assets of the colony, and the expenses were more than compensated by the advantages. As to using the "Otter" instead of the "Lucinda," the former was built for the conveyance of goods, but the latter was not intended for that purpose.

The PREMIER: She was ordered for that purpose as well as for carrying passengers.

Mr. GROOM said that no hon. member would like to see the "Lucinda" used for the same purposes as the "Otter." He would be sorry to see the Committee, in a fit of economy, throw aside what was really a useful vessel. He commended the Premier for ordering her, and he was sure that the colony had got a very good bargain.

The PREMIER said he did not like to sit silent under the commendations of the hon. member for Toowoomba. He did not order the "Lucinda." The boat that was ordered was a boat to take the place of the old "Kate," which was not only unfit for the work required, but also unsafe, and a great deal too small. They ordered a boat to cost £12,000, and the money was voted. After they left office in 1883 a cablegram came out, which he thought was misconstrued, asking the sanction of the Government to an alteration of the vessel in a particular way, and that sanction was given. The boat was not built according to the specifications at all; she came out as a complete passenger boat, without any accommodation whatever for goods. If hon. members would look at the correspondence they would see that the mistake arose through misinterpreting the cablegram in regard to certain alterations. As to the bargain the Government got in the "Lucinda," there was not the slightest doubt about that. She was the cheapest vessel ever brought to Brisbane. She was a magnificent vessel, but not the one that was ordered by his Government or by the Griffith Government.

Mr. GANNON said he should like any hon. member to point out one single useful work done by the "Lucinda." It was all very well to say that she was useful for taking the Governor up North, or to Sydney, or to Southport; but that was not useful work, because there were other ways of getting to those places without going in the "Lucinda." He thought he ought to be supported in trying to get the vote reduced. The vessel had been in use about five years, and must have cost, during that time, over £30,000. But during that time he did not think she had done £500 worth of work. The "Otter" had done

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forty times as good work, and was quite good enough to do the picnicking work when it was necessary.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member for Toombul had done good service in drawing attention to that matter, and, if his own friends were in office, he would speak and vote as he intended to do that evening on that subject. As to the boat being useful for taking distinguished visitors about, and that sort of thing, if those visitors wanted to make themselves acquainted with the colony, they should travel in the ordinary boats, and make themselves acquainted with the people of the colony at the same time. He did not know that there was any particular divinity hedging those people about, that required they should have a sumptuous yacht to go about in. The £7,000 a year expended on the "Lucinda" would be better spent in the payment of witnesses' expenses in preliminary investigations.

Mr. HUNTER said that great exception was taken some time ago to the vote of £13,000 for the Parliamentary Buildings, but it would be more beneficial to the country to do away with the "Lucinda" than to withhold the expenditure on the Parliamentary Buildings. He would certainly vote with the hon. member for Toombul on the question.

Mr. GANNON moved that the vote be reduced by the sum of £1,362 set down for the "Lucinda."

Question—That £1,770 only be granted—put and negatived.

Original question put and passed.

CHARITABLE ALLOWANCES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the sum of £59,966 be granted for charitable allowances. That item was considerably increased and the increase would necessarily go on from year to year so long as the present system of subsidising hospitals was continued. On the first item—hospitals generally—there was an increase of £8,000, compelled by the demands made upon the Treasury for assistance to hospitals throughout the country, and in some cases the money had been expended. There was an increase of £716 for drainage at the Brisbane Hospital. He was at first averse to that expenditure, but the hospital authorities pleaded poverty, and they could not allow the drainage to be neglected, and the amount was promised. The next item was a new one, and appeared on the Estimates for the first time. It was for the blind, deaf, and dumb institution, for which £500 was asked, and he was sure no objection would be taken to the vote, contingent as it was upon much less sums as might be raised by private subscription. Coming to the relief committees, there was a new item of £100 for Baccaldine, which was justly demanded, as there was a large floating population there. The amount for Brisbane was increased by £400, and the amount for Thargomindah was a new vote. Those votes might be argued as much as members liked, but in the long run they would have to be carried.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he did not know how those amounts were apportioned to the various relief committees. Blackall received £150, Hughenden £200, Ipswich £300, and Maytown £200, while Croydon was only allowed £100. There was a population of upwards of 7,000 people at Croydon, and there were not more than 200 at Maytown; and at several other places he could mention the population was not one-tenth of the population of Croydon, which only got £100.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman should bear in mind that Croydon

had received considerable sums of money for hospitals and other purposes in excess of other places he had mentioned.

Mr. GROOM asked if the £500 for the blind, deaf, and dumb institution was for the Queensland institution?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; and I may mention that in this respect we have been most liberally treated by New South Wales in years gone by.

Mr. GROOM said that was what he was going to speak about, as in previous years they had voted something for the New South Wales institution, and that sum appeared to have been omitted from the vote.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was a vote for the purpose in the Estimates of the Education Department.

Mr. GROOM said he quite agreed that the amounts for charitable allowances would have to be voted; but it was really a serious question, which hon. members would have to consider before long, as to what should be done with those charitable institutions, the expenditure in connection with which was growing enormously every year. He noticed that Sir Henry Parkes had intimated to the New South Wales Parliament the other day that the Government were seriously thinking of introducing a special measure dealing with charitable institutions and placing them under local control, and giving local authorities power to levy taxation to keep them going. Something of the kind would have to be done here before very long. The worst of it was that the persons who derived most from the expenditure upon hospitals contributed least towards it, and the difficulty was to get at them. He had known persons coming into the hospital in his own district, and after they had been there a week or ten days it was discovered, by letters coming to them, sometimes from the savings bank, that some of them had from £200 to £300 lying to their credit in the bank; yet they came into the hospital pretending that they were paupers, and were maintained at the public expense. The question was how they could make those people pay something towards the hospital.

The PREMIER: You cannot get at them.

Mr. GROOM said they would have to devise some plan whereby those who got most advantage from such institutions should be made to contribute something towards their maintenance.

Mr. SAYERS said he could hardly agree with the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba, that a tax should be levied for the maintenance of hospitals in the various districts of the colony. In the northern portions of the colony it would be impossible to apply such a principle with any fairness, as very many of the patients received into the hospitals were men who came into town sick and without any money, and if people had to keep up the hospital by local rates they would simply refuse admission to such men. But under the present arrangement they were to a certain extent public institutions, and the police magistrate had the right to give an order for admission to patients. Although that vote was a large one, it was money well spent in a great number of cases. Looking down the list of amounts paid to relief committees, he noticed that the largest sums were paid to towns on the coast. He would like to know on what basis the amounts were determined. In many inland towns near to where railway construction was going on numbers of men ill with fever were sent down to the local hospital by the contractor, and it would be unfair to tax the residents in such cases for the maintenance of the hospital. But he would like to know on what principle those amounts were apportioned.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the charitable allowances were based on a fixed principle, an endowment of £2 being paid for every £1 subscribed. The grants to relief committees were paid to the hospital committees except in three cases—namely, Maryborough, Rockhampton, and Warwick, where they were given to the Ladies' Benevolent Society.

Question put and passed.

MEDICAL OFFICERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9, the sum of £4,740, for salaries and contingencies for Medical Officers. The only increase in that vote was caused by the appointment of medical officers in places where none existed before.

Question put and passed.

CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9, the sum of £1,000 for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Central Board of Health.

Mr. PHILP asked whether the secretary received only £400 a year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He is also health officer.

Question put and passed.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9 the sum of £2,500, in aid of Schools of Art. He, as well as other members of the Government, regretted they were not able, in the present state of the finances, to recommend a larger vote. Hon. members might take the word of the Government that when a favourable time came on, increases in that vote would be one of the first that would receive consideration, as schools of art were a benefit to the community at large.

Question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be granted for the service of the year 1888-9 the sum of £26,250. The same remarks that he had made with regard to schools of art would apply, in a minor way, to agricultural and horticultural societies.

Mr. GROOM: Can you not make an exception in their case?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think that was possible, or that the finances of the colony would stand it. He hoped that those and the kindred societies, schools of art, would receive recognition at the hands of the Government in time to come, but at present they must cut their coat according to their cloth. There was a small increase of £250 in the vote for agricultural and horticultural societies. There was an increase in incidental and miscellaneous expenses of £1,000. The item "Loans to cemeteries" was decreased by £200, and "Expenses of elections" were reduced to £500. It might be interesting to hon. members to learn that the last general election cost something less than £5,100, which was the lowest that had yet been achieved. The engineer in charge of electric light would, as he had already explained, in future not appear in that vote, but would come under the Government Printing Office vote. The sum of £4,000 was put down for the Melbourne Exhibition. It would cost more than that, but it was thought wise to put down a fixed sum, and the same remark would apply to the items "Civil Service Commission," and "Revising the Statutes of Queensland." With regard to the sum of £2,700,

for the purchase of land for a court-house and police buildings at South Brisbane, that was inevitable; but there was land retained by the State, which it was hoped would, before very long, recoup that expenditure to a considerable extent.

Mr. GROOM said he was sorry the Government could not see their way clear to grant agricultural and horticultural societies £1 for every £1 raised by subscription. Perhaps the Colonial Secretary would remember that when that matter cropped up last session the then Chief Secretary stated that the decrease in the vote was only temporary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: So we hope it is.

The PREMIER: He had not to face the large deficit that now exists.

Mr. GROOM said he was not one of those who was particularly frightened at the deficit. With the revenue of the country increasing to such an extent as it was now, they would soon wipe it out. He was sure that the hon. gentlemen sitting on the Treasury benches must admit that there had never been a session of Parliament of this colony in which so few applications for money had been made to the Treasury.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Because they know there is none.

The PREMIER: Did you ever see such a deficit before?

Mr. GROOM: Yes, in 1866.

The PREMIER: A deficit of £650,000.

Mr. GROOM said he had seen a worse one, and, of course, applications made for money then were not successful. As far as agricultural and horticultural societies were concerned, a good many of them looked forward with expectation to the present Government to have the vote restored, and he was prepared to accept the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that that would be done when opportunity offered. He understood that the Chief Secretary intended to continue the £2 for £1 endowment to divisional boards, and he could assure him that that amount and more would be required by some of them. He accepted the hon. gentleman's intimation that he would restore the vote for agricultural societies when possible, and hoped the time was not far distant when it would be restored.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he wished to call attention to the amount for the relief of aborigines and the maintenance of reserves. The gentleman in charge of the Bloomfield Station had died. He had been a most excellent man for the position, and something should be done to continue his good work. If the Colonial Secretary knew the state in which the unfortunate blacks were in at Maytown and Georgetown he would make some provision for their relief. At Georgetown there were 300 or 400 blacks camped about the town, and the Colonial Secretary could easily imagine the consequences, not only to the blacks but to the whites. Those unfortunate wretches had to live in a state of semi-starvation. The whole of the country in which they could possibly live was occupied by squatters, and they were dependent upon the people of the district for support. The miners, although very liberal-hearted, were unable to maintain a large crowd of blacks, and steps should be taken at once to authorise some person in whom the Government had confidence to distribute bare necessities, in the shape of beef and flour, two or three times a week to each family. The great point was to get a thoroughly honourable man, with some kindly feeling towards these poor wretched creatures, to look after them. Their ultimate destruction was only a matter of

time, and the least they could do was to ease their path to the grave. The cost of feeding them would not be much, and if a similar station to that formed on the Bloomfield were established on the Gilbert River, it would only require one white man to serve out the rations, say, once a week, so that the blacks should not absolutely starve. It was impossible for them to get a living from the natural resources of the district, and they, therefore, had the alternatives of cadging from the miners, stealing food, or spearing the settlers' cattle. The sum on the Estimates was very small, and he hoped the Government would see their way to make some further provision for the aborigines.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said no member of the Committee would, he was sure, refuse to grant money to carry out such a laudable object as that advocated by the hon. gentleman, and no Colonial Secretary would shrink from taking upon himself the responsibility of spending money, if the necessity arose. He could assure hon. members that if the necessity did arise, additional relief would be afforded. Every member of the community must recognise that they were dealing with a dying race. Not much had been done for them, but, at any rate, more charity was being displayed now. He could assure the hon. gentleman that he might rest satisfied that the question he had raised would receive the attention of the Government, and that, if additional relief was found to be necessary, it would be afforded.

Mr. SMITH said he was glad to hear the Colonial Secretary say that justice would be done to the aborigines. He entirely sympathised with every word that had fallen from the member for Burke, but they required to do a little more than make advances of money and food. The aboriginal reserves should be put under management and control, and the blacks should know that when they were in the reserves they were safe. There was no doubt that if some such scheme was carried out it would result in a great saving, as there would then be no necessity to spend so much money on the native police. He hoped something would be done toward taking steps to create large reserves for the blacks, and that they would be managed so that the poor creatures would come in to them to receive food and shelter, and that they would know they were safe.

Mr. HODGKINSON said one matter he had forgotten to mention, and which he thought attention should be directed to, was the intimate association that existed between the aboriginals and the lepers at Cooktown. The lepers were stationed on the north bank of the Endeavour River, with the view of isolating them from communication with the population. The aboriginals about Cooktown, who were very considerable in number, had also to clear out of the town every night, and very properly so, and go into camp on the north shore, where they had free and uninterrupted communication with the lepers. During the day those blacks were employed by the residents of Cooktown, as blacks usually were, about their premises. There had been very considerable doubt as to whether leprosy was contagious, but from recent investigations in some of the South Sea Islands there was now no doubt that it was a very contagious disease; and it was something horrible to conceive the results that might happen from these blacks associating with lepers all night and then mixing up in the daytime with all classes of the community, for almost everybody employed them. He did not know how it was to be checked unless the lepers were removed to one of the islands close to Cooktown. The only communication they would require would be to supply them with rations and

periodical visits of inspection by the medical officer and the police magistrate. There was a boat at the service of the police magistrate, and if that plan were carried out it would, at any rate, put a stop to the present evil.

Mr. ISAMBERT said if the aboriginal reserves were properly conducted the natives could be made to grow a large amount of their own food.

Mr. COWLEY asked upon what principle the Brisbane Agricultural and Horticultural Society should have £250 of the grant, and other societies only £100?

The PREMIER : Because it is a larger town, I suppose.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the subscriptions were larger. The provision was that Brisbane should not exceed £250, while other towns were limited to £100. Considering the population of Brisbane, he thought £250 was a very low limitation.

Mr. GANNON said he saw two items—one £500 for the Acclimatisation Society—he did not know whether that ought to be allowed to go ; he supposed that as it was a thin House it would ; otherwise he should have had something to say about it. The other was the ever-recurring “revising the statutes of Queensland,” which seemed to crop up pretty regularly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the item for the revision of the statutes had not appeared on the Estimates for a good many years past. The sum now on the Estimates was for the revision now being made by Mr. Woolcock and Mr. Fain. It was nine years since the statutes were revised, and it was time that they should be revised again. He did not pretend to be an expert in such matters, but he had it on the best authority that the work was being admirably done. It must be understood that the amount put down was not a final settlement, but only on account.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER moved : That the chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he must congratulate the Colonial Secretary upon having got the whole of his Estimates through in one sitting, in addition to the “Executive and Legislative.” He did not remember any previous instance of such an achievement in that House, and he would only draw attention to the fact that, whatever the Opposition might be, they were not a vindictive body. They had given evidence of a sincere desire to forward the business of the country.

The PREMIER said he hoped the hon. gentleman would have an opportunity of congratulating two Ministers upon having got through their departments in one night, before the Estimates were done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he must admit that the Opposition had acted admirably on this occasion. He only hoped they would keep up their good conduct.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said : Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. The business to-morrow will be the Railways Bill and the Chinese Bill.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at fourteen minutes to 11 o'clock.