

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 1888

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 24 October, 1888.

Absence of the Premier.—Day Dawn Block and Wyndham Gold Mining Company's Railway.—Queensland Executors, Trustees, and Agency company, Limited, Bill.—Ann Street Presbyterian Church Bill.—Petition—Throwing open to Selection of Glenbora Run.—Motion for Adjournment—The case of Constable Brooks—Appointment of a new Governor—Warden's Court at Charters Towers.—Motion for Adjournment—Chinese Restriction Bill.—Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill—second reading.—Public Works Lands Resumption Bill—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

ABSENCE OF THE PREMIER.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: Mr. Speaker,—I have to announce that Sir Thomas McIlwraith is not sufficiently well to be here to-day, although I am happy to say he is better than he was yesterday. I hope he will be here in a few days.

DAY DAWN BLOCK AND WYNDHAM GOLD MINING COMPANY'S RAILWAY.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) laid on the table of the House the plans, sections, and book of reference of the Day Dawn and Wyndham Gold Mining Company's branch line at Charters Towers.

QUEENSLAND EXECUTORS, TRUSTEES, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED, BILL.

Mr. POWERS presented the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Queensland Executors, Trustees, and Agency Company, Limited, Bill, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of Mr. POWERS, the second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ANN STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BILL.

Mr. REES R. JONES presented the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Ann street Presbyterian Church Bill, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of Mr. REES R. JONES, the second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PETITION.

THROWING OPEN TO SELECTION OF GLENBORA RUN.

Mr. COWLEY presented a petition from the residents of Cardwell, praying that the Government will throw Glenbora Run open to selection, and moved that the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

THE CASE OF CONSTABLE BROOKS—APPOINTMENT OF A NEW GOVERNOR—WARDEN'S COURT AT CHARTERS TOWERS.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to make a few remarks, and I shall conclude with the usual motion for adjournment. I was

very much surprised at a statement made in this morning's paper, to the effect that Constable Brooks was to be transferred to Normanton. It will be recollected that some days ago severe charges were made against this constable, and the depositions and evidence taken in that case afforded room for grave doubt, and the very fact of his being removed, without any further steps being taken, certainly shows that there is a doubt on the part of his superior officers as to his fitness for metropolitan duties. I do not wish to make a long speech on the subject, and I am perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of the Colonial Secretary, who must have perused the papers carefully; but I ask him is it fair that, in almost every instance where there are doubts thrown upon the conduct of a constable he is at once removed to the North? This is not the first instance of this kind. Some time ago there was an officer in the police force named Quinn—I think he was a sergeant—who got into some little complication, and he was immediately removed North in the same way as this man Brooks is to be; and I do not hesitate to say, that the evidence in this case causes very grave suspicion that this man acted most improperly. The legal members of this House have already stated that he acted illegally in making the arrest in the manner he did; and when we consider that though this class of people are not usually anxious to raise objection, and so bring themselves under the notice of the police, yet three people waited upon the officer in charge of the lockup and offered to give evidence, and that the same lockup-keeper gave evidence in support of their statements, which were made at different times, and that this defendant was let out next day, we must come to the conclusion that there was something wrong. When Constable Brooks was asked if he had any witnesses, he answered "No," but thirteen days afterwards he brings up two witnesses, one a cabman and the other a man who signs his name with a mark, and he then brings forward a second charge against this unfortunate woman. Whatever may be the position of those people, it is certainly not to be assumed that they must necessarily be liars, or that a constable's evidence must weigh against that of any person or any number of persons who happen to occupy that inferior position. I do not wish to make a long speech, nor to cite this particular case, but, as I have said, it is the practice in the Police Department, directly a constable in any way offends his superiors, or commits any breach of duty that they do not think sufficient to cause his expulsion from the force, he is sent up North; and that, I take it, is an insult to the North, and a most unfit proceeding for the maintenance of discipline in the force, because a constable in a small township in the North has very great powers. It is a subject which I leave with every confidence in the hands of the Colonial Secretary, and I think his opinion is in accordance with my own. I think the constable's character does not come out in a gratifying manner from the result of the inquiry. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I have taken a great deal of trouble with regard to this case, and I admit at once that it is one surrounded with doubt, as are many of these cases. It was very difficult, indeed, for me to decide in the matter. I read all the evidence very carefully, and I held the constable to have been guilty of a very grave indiscretion in following the unfortunate woman into the house to arrest her. That no one can justify. With regard to the two witnesses, who only appeared fourteen days after the charge was levelled, I inquired into that, and, so far as I can gather, those witnesses were certainly not in any

way obtained by the constable, but offered to give evidence voluntarily. This case is not at all pleasant reading, but there is this to be said in defence of the constable—that this unfortunate woman, whom he charged on this occasion, had on a previous occasion suffered imprisonment through him, and therefore it may not be improper to assume that she had what is colonially termed a "down" on him. I did not think it would be fair or proper to dismiss this constable from the evidence. I quite agree with the hon. member for Burke that, because those women who came forward belonged to an unfortunate class, that, therefore, they are utterly lost, and their word should not be taken. I should be the very last to hold such an opinion; but, at the same time, when we have the evidence of this constable, who had previously borne a good character in the Irish constabulary, supported by the evidence of two reliable witnesses, which are we to believe? I thought it would be sufficient punishment to send him out of the metropolis, as I thought he had been guilty of the indiscretion of following the woman into a house of ill-fame to arrest her. He ought to have known that was illegal, and I thought he should at any rate be removed from a large centre of population. I did not direct that the constable should be sent to Normanton, nor did I direct that he should be removed to any portion of the north of Queensland. I simply wrote a memorandum across the papers that he should be removed from Brisbane. Those are the whole facts of the case, and I leave it to the House to decide whether I was right or wrong. I was placed in a very difficult position; I fully weighed the evidence, and found that I could not condemn the constable to dismissal from the force, but at the same time I felt that he had been guilty of a very grave indiscretion in following the woman into the house and arresting her there.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad to hear what the Colonial Secretary has said, because when I read the statement in the paper this morning—that Constable Brooks, whose case was referred to in this House only the other night, was to be relegated to Normanton for punishment in consequence of dereliction of duty in Brisbane, it struck me as peculiar, and I wondered whether a constable, if he committed such an offence in Normanton, would be sent down to Brisbane as a punishment. I do not think it fair that Normanton, or the North, should be made a dumping ground for people who are found incapable in the South. I am very glad to hear the explanation of the Colonial Secretary, and we may possibly be able to sheet it home to the real authority who ordered that a constable who was unfit to carry out his duties in Brisbane should be relegated to Normanton, as if he could do better there. I do not think it is conducive to discipline in the force. If the constable was guilty of misconduct he should have been discharged; if not, he ought to have been retained in his position.

The Hon. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—As the subject has been mentioned again, I will take the opportunity of saying a few words upon it. Since the matter was introduced on a previous occasion, the Colonial Secretary was kind enough to show me the report he received from the Commissioner of Police on the subject, together with a copy of the depositions, which I read more than once very carefully. I arrived at a pretty clear conclusion on the case, which I will briefly state to the House. The first fact that was quite certain is, that one night this constable, being in plain clothes—and, therefore, not on duty, because constables, except in the detective

force, do not go on duty in plain clothes—in Albert street, took the woman from her bedroom to the lockup, and handed her over to the sergeant of police in charge of the lockup, making a charge against her of using obscene language. She was let out almost immediately afterwards, and no charge was preferred against her then. About a fortnight afterwards a summons was issued against the same woman, at the instance of this constable, for making use of obscene language. When the case came on to be heard, the constable swore that he was going down Albert street when the woman accosted him, using very bad language, and then ran away across the street; that he followed her, for the purpose of arresting her, into her bedroom, and took her thence to the lockup. He called two witnesses, who were passing down the other side of the street at the time, who said they heard the woman make use of obscene language, substantially to the same effect as the constable said she used. In answer to that charge it was sworn by the sergeant at the police court, that on the occasion of the woman's arrest, immediately after her arrival at the station, she made a statement to him to this effect: that she had spoken to the constable at the corner of the street, that he had asked for another woman; that she had said to him "She has gone to the play; will you come home with me?" that they went into the house, and he was in the room with her; that subsequently a disturbance arose between them, and he demanded some money from her; and that on her refusing to give it, he said he would take her to the lockup, which he at once proceeded to do. That story she told to the sergeant at the lockup, having had no opportunity of speaking to anyone from the time the event happened until that moment. She swore in the box that the same thing had happened. The sergeant also stated that when the girl was locked up she showed marks of violence on her neck. He further said, that while she was locked up, and before she had time to communicate with anyone, another girl came to the lockup and complained of the conduct of the constable in bringing the girl to the lockup, stating she was in a room next to the first girl's bedroom, that hearing a disturbance she broke open the door, when she saw the constable struggling with the girl, and the constable took her away to the lockup. She was so indignant that she at once started away to the lockup to complain. That was corroborated by another woman—of very bad character, it is true. It was certain that the story could not have been concocted between the two women. They were separated the moment the constable made the arrest, and could not possibly have had any communication with each other after that event; and yet they both told precisely the same story—a story which could not have been invented by both of them at the same time. The story of the second woman, who went to the lockup to complain indignantly of the conduct of the constable, coincided absolutely with the story told by the unfortunate woman then locked up. Whether the obscene language was used or not is, I think, a very subsidiary matter. My own conclusion is that probably some obscene language was used, but jocularly, and that witnesses in the street heard it used. But the use of that obscene language had nothing to do with taking the girl to the lockup. That was done in consequence of the quarrel that occurred in the house, and the constable endeavoured to screen himself for his misconduct by bringing a charge of bad language against the girl. The matter having got wind he afterwards formally preferred the charge of obscene language. I believe she did use obscene language;

but that she was unfairly arrested entirely in consequence of what happened between her and the constable in the house. That is the conclusion I draw, and, after a careful consideration of the whole facts of the case, I have no doubt that the constable ought to have been dismissed. The facts are inconsistent with his innocence.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to add just one word to the facts stated by the leader of the Opposition. The morning after the woman was arrested she was brought up at the police court and discharged, because the sub-inspector brought no evidence against her. In addition to that, there is no doubt whatever that the constable was not on duty that night, because I am informed, on very good authority, that he was absent from barracks without leave, and that he was brought up next morning and reprimanded.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—I will take advantage of the motion for adjournment to draw the attention of hon. members to a certain paragraph which appeared last week in one of the daily papers, stating that the leader of the Government had, with the knowledge or approval of the leader of the Opposition, corresponded with the home authorities with regard to the selection and appointment of the successor to the late Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave. The question of the right of the colony to be consulted in the selection of its Governor was one of the chief planks in the platform, at the late election, of the National party—who styled themselves anti-Imperialists, in contradistinction to some members of the Liberal party who were termed Imperialists. It cannot be denied that there is a considerable change of public opinion and feeling on the subject. And this colony is not singular in this respect, for we all know that lately the Government of South Australia made a similar demand on the home authorities—to be consulted in the appointment of a new Governor. Whether this should be or not, it can do no harm to ventilate the question whether the colonies of Australia, and Queensland in particular, have a right to demand to be consulted on that question or not. Of course there is imperialism and imperialism. I think there is very little to recommend the imperialism that we find in the colonial government of both the East and West Indies, and that caused the revolt of the American colonies; and the colonies have, to a great extent, the right to be consulted on such matters as the appointment of a Governor without being in the slightest degree disloyal to the British Crown. The imperialism which has governed the colonies of Great Britain has been an imperialism of ruinous commercial exploitation. By it India has been brought to the verge of ruin; so have the West Indies. In the West Indies, as soon as legalised slavery was at an end, the whole industries of the place broke down, so that at the present time the white population and the revenue are decreasing, and the black population and expenses are increasing; so much so that the Imperial authorities are really at their wits' end to know what to do with these two countries. In India itself, every now and then, there is a famine which sweeps off millions of people. In the last famine no less than 6,000,000 or 7,000,000 people were starved to death. When so little State policy—so little wisdom—is displayed in the Imperial Government of the British colonies, and when we find that the same spirit has been affecting the welfare of the Australian colonies also, I say we have a right to consider this matter. There is no doubt that the war of secession in America was waged to a large extent against British Imperial interests—an imperialism which the people of

this colony, as well as the rest of Australia, naturally and instinctively object to. In these colonies the same system would prevail if tolerated. A very desperate attempt has been made of late to lay Australia under the same imperialism—the imperialism of exploitation by means of appropriating large areas of land, and exploiting the soil by means of ill-regulated coloured labour. But thanks to the discovery of gold —

Mr. LISSNER said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. I should like to know whether the hon. member for Rosewood is in order in mixing up the selection of a Governor with the debate on this unfortunate prostitute.

The SPEAKER said: The question before the House is, "That this House do now adjourn," and it has been the practice of the House to allow a great deal of latitude in discussion on a motion of that kind.

Mr. ISAMBERT: Mr. Speaker,—As I said before, this imperialism tried very hard to lay the Australian colonies under the same ban of desolation and ruin by means of appropriating land in large areas and exploiting the soil by means of ill-regulated coloured labour, but through a large European population being attracted here by the discovery of gold that system was prevented from being established, for the moment any man sets his foot on Australian soil with the intention of making it his home—from that moment he displays more statesmanship than the Colonial Office displays in the government of the colonies. The governors who have been appointed to the Australian colonies have all gained their experience, more or less, in the colonies so disastrously governed; therefore there is a feeling that it is almost impossible for those men to be in thorough sympathy with a freedom-loving and loyal people like those of Australia. I am sure that no sensible citizen of Queensland will object to imperialism such as it should be—the imperialism that has mankind for its object—that has for its object "the greatest good for the greatest number." That is true statesmanship, and that statesmanship has been so completely absent in the Imperial policy of the government of the colonies that I think it is full time they should be consulted in the selection of their Governors. For instance, I have heard serious complaints against His Excellency Pope Hennessy—that when Governor of Hongkong he gave anything but satisfaction there, and that when removed to Mauritius he gave similar dissatisfaction. Now there is a rumour that he is to be appointed to Queensland. I think it would be a misfortune that that gentleman should be appointed chief administrator of the colony of Queensland. I do not think anyone would desire to dictate to the home Government what Governor should be appointed; but I think that at least the leaders of both parties should be consulted as to the Governor who is to be appointed.

Mr. GOLDRING said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to refer again to the matter of Constable Brooks, who has been removed to Normanton. I think the explanation of the case by the hon. the leader of the Opposition shows conclusively that that constable is not fit to continue longer in the service. I believe every member of this House will agree with him that this constable ought to be dismissed, instead of being transferred to Normanton. I will add that, in selecting constables for the North, the department should be very careful. It is not there as in large cities, where the constables have only to patrol the streets. They have to go outside, and in addition to knowing the rules laid down for the police they require to be good bushmen. About places like Normanton and other towns in the North, there are

many cases of horse-stealing and such crimes, and the ordinary town constable would be useless in tracing them. I repeat that, in my opinion, Constable Brooks should be dismissed from the service.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member who moved the adjournment of the House in order to ventilate this subject might move for the production of all the papers connected with the matter.

Mr. GROOM: They are not fit to be published.

Mr. MURPHY: They need not be published, but they might be laid on the table in order that members might have an opportunity of reading them. I am certainly of opinion that this constable, instead of being transferred to Normanton, should be dismissed from the force altogether. At the same time, though I am inclined to agree with the leader of the Opposition, I would like to have an opportunity of reading the papers, in order to form my own opinion on the matter. We ought not to arrive at a hasty judgment on the case, I admit, but I am strongly inclined to agree with the leader of the Opposition that this constable should be dismissed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not see it in the same light as the hon. member who has just sat down. We all know that a lawyer can give any sort of colour to a case, and the leader of the Opposition has given this a splendid colour in his own way. At the same time, the Colonial Secretary, who is over the department, has clearly stated to the House that he could not possibly dismiss the constable. I look upon both these gentlemen as honest and able men; but the leader of the Opposition must excuse me if I give the weight of my vote to the head of the department. I believe with him, that there is a very grave doubt as to whether this constable should be dismissed, or even transferred. At any rate, before we decide the case, we should have an opportunity of seeing the papers. If they are not fit to be published, we can read them all the same. As to the statement made by the Northern members, that defaulting constables are sent to the North, that is only partially true. I can assure the hon. member who made it, that a good many defaulting constables, when they get a bit of a "down" upon themselves by the authorities, are sent into the West, into the scrubs and marshy places with old and condemned horses, and after they have been made to stay there for months and years, or until they lose their health, they call upon the Government for compensation, and are dismissed as useless.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I hope this suggestion for the production of those papers will not be agreed to, as it is not at all a savoury case. As the Colonial Secretary says, it is surrounded by grave difficulties, and it came before that gentleman as a perfectly unprejudiced judge, for his consideration. He has been able to weigh the evidence of both sides, and he has told us that after careful perusal of the papers, and such examination as he was able to give the case, he cannot see his way to punish the constable in any way except by transferring him from Brisbane. The constable has been clearly guilty of an error of judgment in following this unfortunate woman into her house and arresting her there while in plain clothes. I think that is fairly met by his removal. The question of the removal of this man to Normanton is beside this matter altogether, and has been done by the Commissioner for Police without any direction whatever from the Colonial Secretary, and purely on the ground that he was removed to a part of the colony requiring the presence of an extra constable. I hope this question will be

allowed to drop, and the decision of the Colonial Secretary adhered to and acquiesced in by the House.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—I had an opportunity of seeing these papers, and I read the report of the investigation appearing in the papers. When I read of it first, it struck me as a very extraordinary case indeed, but when I read the whole of the evidence as given by the various witnesses, together with the report of the Commissioner, the case appeared to me to be still more extraordinary. The opinion I formed on the subject is very much the same as that formed by the leader of the Opposition. I lay great stress upon the evidence of the sergeant in charge of the lockup who asked the constable if he had any witnesses. The constable said "No, I have none"; and if he had any witnesses to prove his allegation, he must have known of them then. I do not agree with the suggestion that those papers should be laid on the table, as they are not fit to be published, and indeed are not fit to be put into the hands of any respectable person, because, as the hon. member for Warrego has said, this is a very unsavoury subject. This constable has brought this about by his own indiscretion and want of judgment, but I admit that his superior officers give him a very high character, and state that during all the time he has been in the force he conducted himself properly until this particular charge was brought against him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That ought to have some weight.

Mr. GROOM: He has also high recommendations from the Irish Constabulary, of which he was a member, and as the Colonial Secretary says, that should have some weight. If the Colonial Secretary has erred at all in the matter it has been on the side of mercy. No doubt this will have its effect upon the constable, and the notice taken of the matter by the House will have a good effect on all the other constables, and deter them from being guilty of such conduct. I think these papers ought not to be produced, and the House may take the Colonial Secretary's word as to what they contain. There is one point in connection with them to which I may refer, and in which I can commend the Colonial Secretary. The Commissioner gave an opinion upon the evidence, and the Colonial Secretary has appended a note to that, to the effect that it is his province to express an opinion upon the evidence. I entirely agree with that, and I think, under the circumstances, the Colonial Secretary has acted wisely in regard to this case.

Mr. TOZER said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Mines and Works to a telegram which appears in this morning's *Courier*, in reference to certain matters at Charters Towers; and I think the Minister for Mines and Works will give me credit for good taste and judgment in not prejudicing, by bringing up any contentious matter, a case about which papers have been called for. But there is one phase of the subject demanding instant notice—that the functions of the administrator of justice at Charters Towers are stopped, the effect being very disastrous to all parties. The telegram which appears in the *Courier* has been confirmed by another telegram sent to myself. I suppose because it was considered that, having an intimate knowledge of the effect of what has happened, I may be able to explain it better than many other members who have not had that experience. I may say that I have no interest, either direct or indirect, in the matter to which I refer. The telegram says:—

"At the adjourned hearing of [a certain] case, in which [a certain person] applied for the forfeiture of the lease,

the warden declined to proceed further with the case. He explained that a telegram had been forwarded to the Minister for Mines by the solicitor for the applicant, a copy of which had been sent to him. He would not read the contents, but the supposed result had been that he had received a wire from the department to hold himself in readiness for removal to the Etheridge. On this account he must decline, unless compelled to do so, to continue the hearing of the case. The court was then closed."

The effect of that, I understand, is that there are hanging about Charters Towers now a score of witnesses who are subpoenaed to attend the court; both litigants are in a state of uncertainty; and the holders of the mine, naturally, are precluded from doing the necessary work in their mine. I take it that the warden has misapprehended the effect of the telegram from the Department of Mines; and the mere mention of it by me will, I feel sure, have the effect of putting the matter right. The telegram to hold himself in readiness to go to another place could not have contemplated that he was going to cease acting in connection with a matter in which he had done a considerable amount of work. It appears from the papers that a vast amount of evidence has been taken, the case having lasted over a period of two or three weeks; and unless the Minister for Mines and Works has some reason for concluding that the warden is acting in a manner detrimental to the interests of justice and of the country, I presume some explanation will be wired to the warden in order to relieve the anxiety of the persons interested, and get the dispute ended.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) said: Mr. Speaker,—The warden at Charters Towers received a wire more than ten days ago that he was going to be removed to Georgetown, and that another warden was being sent to Charters Towers. Since he received that, this case came on for hearing, and I received a wire from him yesterday stating that he had adjourned that case and refused to go on with the hearing, because he was under orders to go from the field. But the two things are not connected at all. I saw the importance of the matter—that if he were allowed to go in that way the administration of justice in the mining courts would be stopped—and I sent a wire immediately ordering him to go on with the performance of his duty in the same way as if he had received no instructions to hold himself in readiness to go. I received an answer to that to-day, which is an apology and an excuse. He now says that he did not say he refused for that reason, but that his mind was suffering from the tension he had been obliged to apply to the case, and that his health was very much impaired. I sent another wire, telling him I was very sorry to hear that his health was bad, but that I hoped he would still continue to do his duty. The case is still *sub judice*, so I shall say nothing more on the matter, as the hon. member for Wide Bay has discreetly refrained from doing.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to refer to the question raised by the hon. member for Rosewood. I have on previous occasions given expression to my views respecting the selection of Governors, and I think as a vacancy has occurred—through circumstances which we all regret—that the Government of the day should at least have some voice in the choice of a new Governor. I am somewhat surprised at the silence manifested by both sides of the House, particularly the other side, on this very important question; and even at the risk of being charged with being to some extent disloyal, I shall say a few words on the matter. I have seen it stated in the public prints that the salary of the Governor is too meagre to enable an individual to do the work efficiently. I do not know what the

opinions of hon. members are, or the opinions of the community generally on this subject, but I will give my opinion, though what the opinion may be worth it is not for me to say. I think, however, that £5,000 a year is sufficient for any ordinary person to live on, and to enable him to discharge the duties appertaining to the office with satisfaction to himself and to the country also. Therefore, even at the risk of being charged with disloyalty, I think we ought to have some say in the choice of the gentleman who is to occupy such a high and important position as Governor of this colony.

Mr. HODGKINSON, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—If I had known the debate was going to take the turn it has taken I do not think I would have moved the adjournment of the House. I do not see what connection the misconduct of a constable has with imperialism or the choice of a Governor. I am afraid I did not make myself quite clear when I spoke before. What I intended to say, and what I thought I said was, that I did not see how the Colonial Secretary could have acted otherwise. If he had dismissed the constable on the evidence contained in the papers, I think he would have done what he would hardly have been warranted in doing, because there is a doubt about the matter. The question I asked was—"Is it a fact that Constable Brooks has been moved to Normanton?" It is admitted by the Colonial Secretary that the conduct of the constable admits of doubt. It is also distinctly perceptible to every gentleman in the House, that the constable is not transferred to Normanton as a mark of approbation. I did not raise the greater question, whether he should be dismissed or not, because, on that point, I do not see how anybody could have acted in any other way than the Colonial Secretary acted. Though the Colonial Secretary is not directly responsible for the transfer of the constable, stringent instructions should be given to the Commissioner that the North is not to be made the refuge for all sinners in the various departments of the State, as it appears to be at present. With the consent of the House I beg to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

CHINESE RESTRICTION BILL.

Mr. SAYERS said: Mr. Speaker,—I have another matter to bring before the House, and I intend to conclude with a motion for adjournment. The matter I wish to draw the attention of the Government to is a telegram appearing in the *Observer* of to-day, as follows:—

"SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

"Adelaide, October 23.

"In the Legislative Council to-day the Chinese Restriction Bill was further considered in committee, and on the motion of Mr. Scott, it was decided by 11 votes to 8 to reduce the tonnage limitation, so far as the Northern Territory is concerned, from one to every 500 tons to one to 50 tons. By the same majority the clause inflicting a penalty on Chinamen travelling from one colony to another without a permit was rejected. The Council then resumed so as to allow the Government to consult on the matter."

Now, when this Bill was going through the House, hon. members of the Opposition fought hard for the retention of the poll-tax. The Minister for Mines and Works, who represented the colony at the conference, impressed upon the House that an agreement had been come to by the members of the conference, and on that ground they were bound to do away with the poll-tax. He further laid great stress upon the fact that only one Chinaman to every 500 tons of ships tonnage could be brought into the colony under the Bill. Now, it was said on this side, and the Colonial Secretary afterwards admitted,

that there was great danger of the Bill not passing the South Australian Parliament. It now seems that the South Australian Parliament have taken no notice whatever of the fact that certain arrangements were come to in Sydney. They simply have done what they thought fit, and did not care what had been done at the conference. Unfortunately the House has in good faith accepted the statement made by the Minister for Mines and Works, that he believed the other colonies would do a certain thing, and we have done away with the poll-tax. Now, we find that in South Australia one Chinaman to every 50 tons of a vessel's burden is allowed into the Northern Territory. Here the door is opened at once. The South Australian Parliament did not feel bound by the conference. We have done away with the perfect safeguard we have, and now we find South Australia has opened the back door, and will allow the Chinese into Queensland. It is simply impossible for Queensland to guard her border in the West. All the police in the colony, and the Defence Force as well, could not guard it, and I hope, therefore, the Ministry will take some steps in this matter. So far as I know, they may have had some correspondence on the subject, but I hope effective steps will be taken to exclude the Chinese, and prevent them coming over the border.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not know that I have anything to say on this subject. I saw the paragraph which the hon. gentleman has read, and I am sorry that the South Australian Legislature did not see its way to carry out the agreement of the conference; but still that does not affect our position so far as our measure is concerned, because it will be a great deal more effective than the one we have repealed. Very few Chinese will come to the colony under the Bill we have passed, and a great many less than under the previous Act, so that our position is not affected at all; and although South Australia has not agreed to the 500-ton regulation for the Northern Territory, still they have made a great advance in making it 50 tons, when it was previously nothing at all. As many Chinese as like to do so can come in at present to the Northern Territory.

Mr. DRAKE: They have abolished their poll-tax.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: They had no poll-tax in the Northern Territory. It was only in operation in the South. So that even South Australia will be in a better position to keep out the Chinese under that Bill than they were before. We, however, are in an immeasurably better position than we were before.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—We have recently received information of the opening of the Parliament in Sydney, and I find in the speech there is no reference whatever to the Chinese Restriction Bill. Two colonies have not introduced the measure; but seeing that it has been taken in hand here and in South Australia, it would have done the Government of New South Wales no harm to bring it forward. If it had not been proceeded with at once I see no reason for not including it in their programme. I would point out that in Victoria they are apparently finishing up the business of the session, and no reference has been made to the Chinese Restriction Bill.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson): They are going to have a general election.

Mr. DRAKE: I am aware of that, but we ran the Bill through here in a very short time, and there is no reason why that should not have been done in Victoria.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The Government measures are being stonewalled.

Mr. DRAKE: Some measures are being treated in that way, but it does not follow that that Bill would have been stonewalled. I take exception to the remarks of the Minister for Mines and Works with regard to this matter not being of great importance, seeing, as he says, that the Bill we have passed will have more effect than the legislation we have repealed; but the hon. gentleman must remember that his great argument for abolishing the poll-tax was that it would secure uniformity of legislation throughout the colonies. My objection to repealing the legislation that we have is, that we are giving up a certain benefit that we have for something problematical, and all the indications we get from the other colonies point in the one direction—that we are not going to have uniform legislation. I am, therefore, very glad that the matter has been brought before the House, and I think if anything can be done towards suspending the passage of this Bill for a time, until we have some guarantee that the legislation of the colonies will be uniform, it will be extremely advisable.

Mr. E. J. STEVENS said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the hon. member for Charters Towers has been very wise in bringing forward this matter. There is considerable doubt now as to whether we shall have uniform action on the Chinese question, and I am not at all sure that it was a wise thing for us to finally pass the measure until we saw further into it. I, with many others who supported the Government, did so because we thought it was quite an understood thing that all the colonies were prepared to accept the Bill as brought in with regard to the number of Chinese to be admitted. That was to be the safeguard, and now we find that one of the colonies has materially altered the Bill. The only gleam of hope that I can see in connection with the paragraph which has been read is, that this amendment was passed by the Legislative Council of South Australia, and if the Assembly disagrees to it, the Upper House may give way. At any rate, I think, with other hon. members who have spoken, that it will be unwise to do away with our present safeguards, and remain quite alone in the position we have taken up.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—The information received from South Australia shows what position we should have been in had not the clause proposed by the Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith been inserted in the Bill. Of course, as the hon. Minister for Mines and Works says, that will take away the danger of an influx of Chinese from the Northern Territory of South Australia. Still, it is an unfortunate thing that the rest of the Australian colonies should drop away from the resolutions arrived at by the conference. If we are to have an immunity from Chinese invasion, it will be necessary for all the colonies to act in unison. I always approved of the poll-tax, and think we should adhere to it.

Mr. GANNON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad the hon. member for Charters Towers has brought up this matter, and I think the Bill should be held over until we are sure of what will be done by the Governments of the other colonies. I supported the Bill, as brought in by the Minister for Mines and Works, to let the poll-tax go; but if I had imagined that concerted action would not have been taken by the other colonies, I should have been in favour of retain-

ing the poll-tax. I mentioned that a money penalty ought to be imposed upon Chinese who crossed the border.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: So it is.

Mr. GANNON: It was first mentioned in regard to those arriving in ships. I trust that the Ministry will do all they possibly can to have the Bill held back, and that the poll-tax will be retained.

Mr. WATSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry the poll-tax was taken off, for the simple reason that we should first have had a guarantee from the other colonies as to their action in the matter. I may state that several members of this House are members of the Anti-Chinese League, among them the Hon. Minister for Mines and Works, Mr. Isambert, Mr. Annear, and myself, and we were all perfectly satisfied with the appointment of the Hon. Mr. Macrossan to represent Queensland at the conference held recently in Sydney. I may state that we held a meeting after that, and at that meeting the whole of us were convinced that, seeing the manner in which the Hon. Mr. Macrossan had always fought for Queensland against the Chinese, the poll-tax would be retained until such time as we were free from Chinese. In looking over the paper this afternoon, I saw there was an announcement of an edict, which means, probably (so far as we can make it out), that the Emperor of China is going to recall the whole of the Chinese in Australia. If he should recall them, I feel certain that he will make war with Australia, and in that case we shall have to look to our Defence Force to resist the Chinese, should they land here. It is a very easy matter for Englishmen to land Chinese in the North. They can buy up old ships and land the Chinamen on the shores of the Gulf, and they will do so as long as they can make money by it. I may bring to your recollection, Mr. Speaker, the fact that during the New Zealand war white men supplied the Maoris with arms and ammunition to any extent. And I feel confident that it is not the Chinese altogether we need stand in dread of; but the Englishmen and others in Shanghai and Canton and such places, who will obtain vessels and send Chinese here in spite of us. I would, therefore, ask the Minister for Mines and Works to reconsider the Bill, and retain the poll-tax until such time as the other colonies have taken the Bill into their favourable consideration. We have a great and glorious country here, and I have given hostages to the State in the shape of my family, and I do not wish them to be degraded by any intermixture with the Chinese.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—So far as I can judge from these telegrams, I think the action taken by the South Australian Government is to be regretted; but I do not think it need interfere in any way with our legislation. We are, at any rate, keeping faith with the conference that was recently held in Sydney, and have shown our *bona fides* by passing the Bill. I look with grave apprehension at the course taken by the Government of South Australia. If we are to have different laws existing in the colonies, in regard to the introduction of Chinese, we shall have great difficulty in preventing an invasion of our western territory, and will also have to incur great cost. Chinese do now come over the border; but if all the colonies had agreed with the decisions arrived at by the conference, that difficulty would vanish. I agree with what has fallen from the hon. member for Toombul; but the Government have no intention of abandoning the Bill. We intend to persevere with it in another place. We shall at any rate have done our duty; and if we find the other colonies will not follow us up,

and there is to be no unity, the matter will be dealt with in a future session of Parliament in a more drastic way.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree with what has fallen from the Hon. Colonial Secretary in respect to the action of the South Australian Legislative Council, concerning the Bill founded upon the resolutions arrived at by the conference held in Sydney a few months ago, in which this colony was represented by the Minister for Mines and Works. There cannot be a doubt that the action of one Legislature, in practically dissenting from the conclusion arrived at by its duly constituted representative, will have a very bad effect upon that federation of the colonies which we wish to see accomplished before long; but I cannot but feel, while saying this, that we, as a Legislature, are, I believe, responsible to a very great extent for this breach of faith—we cannot call it anything else—which has just been committed, or is about to be committed by the South Australian Legislature. This colony sent home to Great Britain a representative, not so very long ago, as its duly accredited representative, to discuss great questions of State, and certain resolutions were arrived at by the conference held in London. Some of the Australian Legislatures carried out the resolutions of the conference by passing a measure which was intended to secure the more effectual defence of these colonies from invasion; but this Legislature practically repudiated the resolutions of that conference, and refused to pass the Bill which was founded upon those resolutions. I think, therefore, that to a great extent this Legislature is responsible for the condition of things which we find we are likely to drift into now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: But this is a family quarrel.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: There cannot be a doubt but that the other Legislatures will take umbrage at the action of South Australia in departing from the resolutions arrived at a few months ago. While we condemn them for their action in this respect, I think we ought to regard ourselves as being open to a certain amount of censure for having refused to pass the resolutions of the conference held in England. I think it would not be advantageous to revert to the existing condition of things with regard to the introduction of Chinese. With the amendments made in the Bill introduced a short time ago, I think the measure, which is now ready for the consideration of the Legislative Council, is likely to be much more deterrent than the provision which has been in existence for some years past. When the Chinese know that one result of their attempting to evade our laws is to subject themselves to the possibility, at all events, of what amounts to perpetual imprisonment, they will be likely to hesitate before they attempt any such evasion on any large scale. If a Chinaman cross the border now without paying the tax imposed, he renders himself liable to be proceeded against, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and after the six months he is a free man; but I think the proposed provision, without the poll-tax, is likely to have a much more deterrent effect in the direction we desiderate than the six months' imprisonment with the poll-tax.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—This colony having passed an anti-Chinese measure, and sent it on to the Legislative Council in the form agreed to by the Sydney conference, and the South Australian Government having broken faith, I think the Government of this colony should remonstrate with the South Australian Government, and complain of the compact having been broken, particularly as this

colony is exposed to the greatest danger from an invasion of Chinese from that colony. This legislation on the part of the Legislative Council of South Australia—making the number of Chinese to be admitted into Northern Territory one to every 50 tons—is another proof of how rampant this objectionable imperialism is, of which the colonies disapprove so much, and how it still exists in our midst, particularly in South Australia where there are men who are large owners of land in Northern Territory. It is for that reason that the Legislative Council of South Australia is influenced by this imperialism. The English absentees are anxious to exploit their large properties in the Northern Territory by the employment of cheap coloured labour, and it is this which gives us so much bother now.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that it will be time well spent, that we have taken up in discussing this important question this afternoon. As we are told, it is only the Upper House in South Australia who have broken the compact. They have acted the same there as our Upper House did some time ago, in rejecting the wishes of the people of that colony. I think this matter should be well discussed to-day, to let the Government of South Australia see what is thought of their action by people in Queensland. Our expression of opinion, as the representatives of the people of Queensland, may have some effect. We saw a little while ago a conference held in Sydney, of which an hon. member of this House was a member, and the Premier of New South Wales was also a member. If hon. members will read the Governor's Speech, as delivered in the New South Wales Parliament yesterday, they will find that there is not one single word in it which indicates any intention of carrying out the views of the conference—not one word. When I made a few remarks some nights ago I pointed out to hon. members how the other colonies had always kept faith with Queensland. The Colonial Secretary, a few minutes ago, stated that we should keep faith. We have always kept faith in the past, and we have always suffered for it. Queensland has always had to pay the piper for all they have done in that way.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I said we had kept faith.

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. gentleman said we had kept faith. We have always done that, and we have always had to pay for it. I hear some hon. member interject the Naval Defence Bill, but there is plenty of time, I think, yet for the Naval Defence Bill to pass in Queensland. I do not regret to-day the vote I gave on that question—not one iota. I have no fear, as some hon. members have, of any invasion by the Chinese, and what I wish to say is this: That this Chinese Restriction Bill, as introduced into this House, and which is now before the Legislative Council, should not be passed by the Legislative Council, until they see that the other colonies are going to keep faith with Queensland. We have contended that the greatest danger from the Chinese that we have to fear, is from the Northern Territory of South Australia. According to the telegram, they say:—"By the same majority the clause inflicting a penalty on Chinamen travelling from one colony to another without a permit was rejected." It is very evident to me that South Australia has no intention of giving effect to the views of the conference. Victoria is quiet on the subject, New South Wales will say nothing, and Queensland alone has taken up and dealt with this matter. We are the only colony who have done anything towards carrying out the views arrived at by the conference lately held in Sydney; and before we give up the poll-tax of £30 we should pause. We should pause before

we introduce another measure to assist a colony that is going to bring Chinamen in almost to our borders and allow one for every 50 tons to land. It is a very serious question—in my opinion the most serious question that has ever come before this House. As one hon. member said, in three years the Chinese have all to leave, as the Emperor of China says they must return to China. I hope that is true. I should like them all to go to-morrow. They are no benefit to us, but a great injury; and the working classes particularly suffer from the presence of Chinese, and they will suffer still more if the Bill now before the Legislative Council be passed.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think there is any parallel between the Imperial Conference and the Sydney Conference. At the Imperial Conference no representative went from these colonies with authority to deal with matters that would involve us in ten years' expenditure ahead; whereas the Chinese Conference was like a representative assembly—each colony sent a special representative.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: Each Government sent its own representative.

Mr. PALMER: The Imperial Conference was a self-imposed mission. The Chinese Conference was imposed by the people and their representatives. Even if South Australia does not pass the Bill as it was framed by the conference, what has been done shows that they are awakening to the danger which the northern part of South Australia is subjected to with regard to the Chinese, and that they intend to do something to prevent the ingress of them in large numbers there. The hon. member for Maryborough spoke of the danger which these Chinese are to the working classes. Are we not in danger of overdoing this Chinese business? The Chinese in this country are supported more by the working classes than by any other. If we honestly wished to keep the Chinese out of the country we should, to use a modern word, boycott them; we should not deal with them in any shape or form. The Chinese question would then very soon settle itself. But we encourage the Chinese to come here by dealing with them, and then we have recourse to stringent legislation to keep them out—legislation which we shall not be particularly proud about in years to come.

Mr. FOXTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am unable to follow the argument of the hon. member for Carpentaria with reference to the difference in the mode of appointing the gentleman who represented this colony at the Imperial Conference and the gentleman who represented this colony at the Conference in Sydney. In each case the Government appointed its own representative; the mode of appointment in each case was precisely the same. If the members of the Sydney Conference, holding their mandate from their respective Governments, were able to bind their respective colonies, then I say the representatives of the colonies at the Imperial Conference, appointed in the same way, had exactly the same power. If there is anything reprehensible in South Australia not carrying out the arrangement entered into by its representative at Sydney, it was equally reprehensible for Queensland to back out of the arrangement entered into by its representative in London with reference to the naval defence scheme. It has been said that, with regard to this Chinese question, the Upper House of South Australia may give way; and hon. members have instanced the manner in which the Upper House of this colony gives way before popular desires. But they have omitted to take into consideration the fact that in South Australia it is an elective Upper House, and an elective Upper House is much less likely to give way on

matters of that sort than nominee Houses. Experience, both in South Australia and in Victoria, gives force to my argument in that direction. Other hon. members have said that the measure now before this Parliament—which has lately gone up to the other Chamber—is a better one for the purpose of keeping the Chinese out of Queensland than the one which it is proposed to repeal. I beg leave to differ with them on that point; and although I did not speak on the Bill when it was before the House, yet I voted most heartily against the clause which proposed to repeal the poll-tax which exists in the Act at present in force, until we see what we are going to get from the other colonies on the continent. It is quite true that if Chinamen come across from the Northern Territory of South Australia they are liable to a penalty of £50, but before that penalty can be enforced they have to be caught and convicted. That is a very different thing from arresting a Chinaman, under what is practically a Customs Act, on suspicion that he has not paid his poll-tax. The practical working of that Act is that he has to prove that he has paid the poll-tax. On the other hand, if a Chinaman were caught two miles on this side the border of South Australia, you have to convict him of having crossed over the border. How are you going to do that? Anyone at all familiar with criminal proceedings must know that there will be very great difficulty in preventing any influx of Chinese from the Northern Territory of South Australia by the machinery provided in the Bill now before Parliament. It is one thing to arrest a Chinaman on suspicion of not having paid his poll-tax, and another thing to arrest him and obtain a conviction against him on evidence, because the onus of proof rests with the Crown, and it must be sheeted home to him as a criminal charge. Under these circumstances I certainly think it is desirable that steps should be taken to, at all events, so alter the Bill now before Parliament, as to retain the poll-tax until we see that the other colonies are willing to join with Queensland in the rigorous legislation which she has long ago adopted on this question. The Colonial Secretary has said that, if the other colonies fail to join us in this matter, and fail to carry out the agreement entered into at the conference, it will be desirable for us to pass some drastic measure for the purpose of excluding the Chinese. Why not retain the poll-tax until we see what the other colonies are prepared to do? It cannot be said that we have not kept faith, because the action of this House in passing that measure, and the arguments used by the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill, and those who supported him in the abolition of the poll-tax, is quite sufficient to rebut any assumption on the part of any statesman in any other part of Australia that this colony has not desired to keep faith. It has kept faith; this House has kept faith, and this House is the representative of the people of Queensland. I say that when we find the other colonies are not prepared to carry out their pledges given at the conference, it is time for us to look round and shut the door before the steed has left the stable. I think it would be much more desirable to do that than to have to come down to the House with another Chinese Bill next session re-imposing the poll-tax, which we shall have abandoned if we pass the Bill in its present form. I am aware that there may be a little feeling of pride on the part of the Government in having brought that Bill in and passed it through this House; I can quite imagine that they do not desire it to be thought that they have been hoodwinked, but I say the representative of this colony at the Sydney Conference was unquestion-

ably hoodwinked when he trusted to the Legislatures of the other colonies passing the measure that was agreed to at the conference without any alteration. I think, sir, that although it might be an admission that the Government were not altogether right in abandoning the poll-tax before they saw that they had a sufficient guarantee to justify them in doing so, still I believe they will be serving the best interests of Queensland and deserve honour if they reconsider the position and get their representative in another place to introduce amendments in the Bill which will preserve to us the guarantee against an incursion of Chinese that we possess at the present time.

Mr. SMITH said : Mr. Speaker,—Whatever may be the action of the other colonies in dealing with this question, we have the consolatory fact that this Parliament has, at any rate, done its duty. The object in view has been attained so far as we are concerned. If the other colonies do not choose to fall in with the proposal to have uniform legislation on the subject, that is not our fault, and no charge can be laid at our door of not having fulfilled our part of the contract. I think the restriction of one Chinaman to every 500 tons is quite sufficient to prevent an influx of Chinese ; that under it the Chinese in Queensland will soon become a thing of the past, and that the poll-tax is quite unnecessary. As far as the Naval Defence Bill and our obligations in connection therewith are concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as I understand the subject, I am quite prepared to vote for a measure of that description should the Government bring it in. I think we are under an obligation to pass such a measure. We are talking very much of federation and of passing measures which would advance that great movement, and I think the Bill we have passed with regard to the Chinese is a great step in that direction. I also believe that the Naval Defence Bill will be another step in that direction.

Mr. MURPHY said : Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Carnarvon drew a parallel between the way in which the delegates to the late conference on the Chinese question sat in Sydney, and the manner in which the delegate to the conference held in London were appointed.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH : What is the difference?

Mr. MURPHY : The difference was simply this : that the hon. the leader of the Opposition went home entirely on the nomination of the Government, of which he was the leader. At the time he was appointed he was the leader of a practically discredited Government.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : No, no !

Mr. MURPHY : Certainly. But the Minister for Mines and Works went down to the Sydney Conference not merely appointed by the Government, of which the hon. gentleman was the leader, but appointed after conference with Sir Thomas McIlwraith, who was the leader of the victorious party at the polls.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH : He was the only member of the conference in that position.

Mr. MURPHY : He may have been the only member of the conference in that position. I am only going so far as the argument of the hon. member for Carnarvon went.

Mr. FOXTON : Then is an appointment of that kind no good unless confirmed by the Opposition?

Mr. MURPHY : I say that hon. gentleman went down with the approval of the whole of this House. He was accredited by the whole of the

people of this colony. That is the difference in the position. Nobody ever heard that the hon. the leader of the Opposition was going home to represent this colony at the conference in London until he had almost gone.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH : Because he did not know himself.

Mr. MURPHY : Therefore, the difference between the position occupied by the hon. gentleman and that occupied by my hon. friend the Minister for Mines and Works was this : The hon. gentleman could only speak at the conference in London as the representative of his own party—a very small party as it afterwards proved to be—and as the representative of a Government which did not possess the confidence of the country. My hon. friend the Minister for Mines and Works went down to Sydney, accredited by the whole of this House, and the whole colony. Therefore, he had authority to act as he did on behalf of this colony.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH : He was not the conference.

Mr. MURPHY : Of course he was not the whole conference. I am only speaking of his position at that conference, as compared with the position occupied by the hon. gentleman at the London conference. I should certainly not have voted for the Bill repealing the poll-tax, and imposing other restrictions on the Chinese, had I not thought that we were passing a measure that would be adopted, in its main features, by all the other colonies.

Mr. SAYERS : You were told it would not be.

Mr. MURPHY : Well, I do not think prophecies are worth very much ; and all hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House could do was to prophesy upon this question.

Mr. SAYERS : It has proved to be true this time.

Mr. MURPHY : I am sorry that there has not been unanimity in legislation by the different colonies upon this question. But, of course, it is not settled yet. The Assembly in South Australia may yet insist upon the Bill being passed through in its original form. I agree with the suggestion of the hon. member for Carnarvon, that perhaps it would be as well for the Government to get inserted in this Bill, when going through the Upper House, some proviso for the reimposition of the poll-tax, should this measure not be adopted by the colonies generally. I certainly would never have voted for the repeal of the poll-tax if I did not think the Bill, as passed here, would have been adopted in all the other colonies.

Mr. MORGAN said : Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member has contested a point for the last quarter of an hour, and at the end he has surrendered it entirely. He has been challenging the arguments used on this side of the House, but before sitting down he has admitted that it is quite right that a provision should be introduced in the Bill before it passes for the retention of the poll-tax. When the conference was sitting in Sydney, and ever since, we have been told that the one great benefit to result from it was that the Australian colonies would have a uniform law for dealing with this Chinese question. That argument is entirely dashed by the action of South Australia. New South Wales has done nothing, Victoria has done nothing, South Australia has attempted to do something and has failed, and we in Queensland are to be "uniform," and uniform alone. The law in force up to the present in this colony, and which has proved effectual in decreasing the number of Chinese in the colony, is to be thrown over for a law which can be of no great benefit if the other colonies do not adopt an entirely similar one.

The great object of uniform legislation, such as that suggested by the conference, was that it would have kept the Chinese not out of one colony alone, but out of Australia. South Australia has not adopted this law, and the Chinese may come into that colony; and though we have passed a law inflicting a penalty of £50 a head upon Chinese coming here over the border, that will not stop them. They will come in here over the border; and it is very poor satisfaction to us to know that we are going to fill our gaols and asylums with those we can catch, for we shall not catch them all. There is another way to look at this: This measure, adopted by the conference, is supposed to be at variance with the views of the British Government on the Chinese question. We are told that opposition is likely to be incurred from that quarter, and that these Bills will be reserved for the royal assent. If the four great colonies of Australia took uniform action in this matter, and said: "These are our views, and we have embodied them in these Bills," I doubt very much whether the English Government would dare to refuse to recommend Her Majesty's assent to those Bills. But one colony will have a very much poorer show of getting the royal assent to a Bill of that kind. Unless the South Australian Parliament alters the decision arrived at in the Legislative Council there yesterday, this Parliament ought not to allow the Chinese Restriction Bill to become law, and supersede a law which has hitherto proved effective in dealing with the Chinese evil in this colony.

Mr. PAUL said: Mr. Speaker,—I think this House has sufficient confidence in the Ministry, and especially in the Minister for Mines and Works who represented this colony at the conference, to leave this matter in their hands. I would suggest that the Government should write a despatch to the Premier of South Australia, embodying the views so earnestly, carefully, and eloquently propounded by the Minister for Mines and Works in his speech on this question. I think that if a despatch is sent representing that this is a question in which the federation of the colonies is concerned, it may have sufficient influence to induce the Upper House of South Australia to amend the Bill in such a way as to meet the views of Queensland, which of all the colonies of the group is most concerned in regard to the Chinese question. I am not aware that the suggestion has been made before, but I think it would be well to send such a despatch, in the hope that the Upper House of South Australia might so modify their Bill as to encourage the other Parliaments to adopt a measure which would be really federal in its character.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—An expression of opinion on the part of the members of this Chamber will, in my opinion, produce a far greater effect than any despatch that might be sent. It will take some time for a despatch to reach the hands of the South Australian Premier, and I much question whether very much attention will be paid to any address from a Queensland statesman, however distinguished he may be. But the united expression of opinion by members of this Chamber, representing all classes in the community, will undoubtedly exercise more influence upon the members of the Upper Chamber in South Australia. It is of very great importance, in my opinion, that hon. members should give strong expression to their opinion upon this subject. I asked the Minister for Mines and Works a question with regard to this very matter when the Bill was going through, because I have been watching very carefully the action of the South Australian Parliament. When I was in Adelaide, some months ago, I found

that the people there dreaded the action of the Upper Chamber on account of their high conservative ideas on the subject. Events have proved that the apprehensions of those representing the people in the lower branch of the Legislature in South Australia have been justified. The fact that the efforts and conclusions of the conference have been entirely upset by the action of the Upper Chamber of South Australia is very much to be deplored. Reference has been made to the silence in the Governor's Speech, in New South Wales, upon the Chinese question, but there is a good reason for that. Sir Henry Parkes has passed his measure, and it is a very stringent measure indeed. It has been assented to by Lord Carrington, but the Secretary of State for the Colonies has not yet given assent to it on behalf of the Queen, and Sir Henry Parkes will not withdraw his measure to pass the one adopted by the conference until the latter has been passed by two colonies. Queensland has passed it, but it can hardly be said that South Australia has passed, or is likely to pass it. If we have the Act in the form in which we have passed it, and South Australia has it in an entirely different form, it will be a very good excuse for Sir Henry Parkes not to deal with the subject this session. It is of the very greatest importance that members of this Chamber should express their opinion with regard to the action of the South Australian Upper Chamber, because no doubt telegrams from this city will appear in the Adelaide papers to-morrow morning, and the members of that Chamber will see what is the opinion of the representatives of the people here, and they will understand that they must accept the responsibility of ignoring the voice of public opinion. The information communicated to me is that some of the members of the Upper Chamber of South Australia are largely interested in the northern part of that colony. A large number of them are interested in gold-mining and in pastoral pursuits there, and they employ Chinese very largely. They think that their craft is likely to be injured by the action of the other colonies in this matter, and on that account we have every reason to fear the action of those gentlemen. We have a right to speak our minds very clearly, and to say that we do not approve of the action of those gentlemen. They are going in direct opposition to the unanimous voice of the Australian colonies. I think, with the hon. member for Maryborough, that the time of this House will not be wasted in this discussion, and that expression of opinion by hon. members will have a wholesome effect upon the other colonies. It should be well known that whilst we have any reason to fear an inundation of Chinese from the other colonies we are determined to use every effort we can to stop them. This House is committed to the course it has already taken in this matter, and it will be very much to be deplored if all our efforts are to be thrown away now. I would ask hon. members to express their opinion upon this subject, and show the members of the Upper Chamber in South Australia that they ought not to run counter to the wishes and general opinion of the whole of the Australian colonies.

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—I think I should be wrong if I did not express my opinion upon this subject. During the whole of the time the Bill was going through this Chamber we were told that we could not do this or the other, because of the conclusions arrived at by the conference in Sydney. I felt at that time that we were very much hampered in making sufficient guarantees for the security of this country from the Chinese evil, and when the division was taken to abolish the poll-tax I felt that the last real security on the subject was gone.

I have little to add to what has been said by other hon. members, but I hope it will reach the Legislature of South Australia. I have very little hope that any elective Upper House will pay much attention to it, however, because they are secure in their position; but I trust they will see their way to retrace their steps, and that our own Government will not relax the grasp they have on the poll-tax till they see some way out of the difficulty. I presume it is not too late to strike out the clause repealing the poll-tax, while the Bill is passing through the other Chamber; and I feel confident, as I showed by my vote when the question was before us, that the only real security we have against the influx of Chinese is a poll-tax.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I refrained from saying anything on the question when the Bill was before the House, because I thought there was quite enough said by other hon. members; and I regret to hear that South Australia has not passed the Bill. No doubt the Minister for Mines and Works was sincere when he urged the point that he was almost certain that if we passed the clause doing away with the poll-tax South Australia would also pass the Bill; but many hon. members had grave doubts whether the Bill would pass the Upper Chamber there, when they knew it was only carried in the Assembly by the casting-vote of the Chairman. I look on the invasion of the Chinese with greater horror than the rabbit pest. We might get rid of the rabbits, but it is not so easy to get rid of the Chinamen. We cannot put them on board a ship and say, "You must go," because they are protected by our laws when they are here; and we should have been in a very peculiar position but for the amendment of the leader of the Opposition imposing a £50 tax on those who came unlawfully. I regretted very much—and many of those who voted for its abolition regret it also—that the poll-tax was rejected. If the Government insist on the Bill going through the other House without introducing the poll-tax, I can only say that, whatever it may cost, we must endeavour to keep a guard on our inland border. It must not be forgotten that this House, a few days ago, passed a tariff protecting and encouraging a certain class of Chinamen in this colony—namely, the cabinet-makers. There is a large number of Chinese cabinet-makers in Brisbane, and they have elbowed nearly all the European cabinet-makers out of the trade. We have put on a duty of 15 per cent. to encourage that trade, and we have encouraged the market gardeners by putting a duty of 15 per cent. on vegetables. It is a well-known fact that Chinamen have also elbowed out nearly all the European gardeners, so that we are really protecting the Chinamen who are here to the extent of 15 per cent. It seems that we are likely to be the only colony to pass the Bill practically in accordance with the draft Bill agreed upon at the conference; and I hope the Government will delay the measure now, and see whether the other colonies are going to pass a Bill similar to ours before they allow the poll-tax to go entirely out of our grasp. I agree with the remark of the hon. member for Carpentaria that, if everyone were to boycott the Chinese—it is the course I have adopted for many years; I buy neither furniture nor anything else which the Chinaman produces—if we all did that, there would be very few Chinamen in the colony now; but as long as their goods are bought, and they are encouraged by a good high tariff, so long will the Chinamen flourish.

Mr. GOLDRING said: Mr. Speaker,—It is with great concern that the people of this colony will notice that the Bill passed by the Assembly of South Australia is likely to be

altered by the Upper Chamber of that colony; and I think it shows very bad form on their part not to uphold the decisions arrived at by their representatives at the conference, just as I thought it would have been bad form for this Assembly not to have upheld the agreement to which our representative was a party. It is our desire to keep the Chinese out of Queensland, if possible, and the Bill brought forward by the Minister for Mines and Works would have tended to that end if all the other colonies had kept faith with regard to the agreement come to by the conference. I do not think, however, that any resident of Queensland will lay any blame on this House for having passed the Bill in the form in which it was passed by us. We can now see the error we made in not retaining the poll-tax—I think it was an error—but we gave it up on the understanding that the other colonies would keep faith with us, and we had no reason to think they would do otherwise. I hope that, if possible, some means will be taken to retain the poll-tax. I am doubtful as to whether the Bill will yet be passed in South Australia, but I hope it will. If it is not passed in South Australia, Queensland will have to take some means to further protect herself.

Mr. AGNEW said: Mr. Speaker,—I listened with more than ordinary attention when this Bill was before the House; and although I took no opportunity of speaking then, I claim to take as deep an interest in the question as probably any member of the House. But I saw at that time a tendency on the part of the House to exclude effectually all Chinese; and to my mind the Bill brought forward, with the amendments proposed by the leader of the Opposition, would certainly have had a greater effect than the Act we have repealed. I have listened with great attention to the speeches made this afternoon, and one would imagine that the £30 poll-tax was a more effectual means of keeping out the Chinese than the restrictions which have been included in the Bill. I do not think so. I think that the provision of one Chinaman to every 500 tons will be more restrictive than the £30 poll-tax. That is one point that secures us against an influx of Chinese by water; whereas wealthy merchants or persons interested in the employment of Chinese could at any time, by paying £30 a head, introduce them in any numbers. With regard to the argument of the member for Cunningham that the Chinese would come over our border, and that the gaols would be filled with Chinamen, would not the same argument apply in regard to the poll-tax? If a man would be prepared to go to gaol in one case, would he not in the other? Under the poll-tax provision a man who went to gaol had to serve his time and then became a free man; but, under the Bill as passed, a Chinaman must remain in gaol for ever if he evaded the Act. Therefore, we must certainly be in a better position than we have ever been in the history of this colony.

Mr. FOXTON: Why?

Mr. AGNEW: Because Chinese cannot come into the colony in a greater number than one for every 500 tons of a ship's burden; and, secondly, because the penalty of evasion is much more severe.

Mr. FOXTON: You have to convict the Chinamen first.

Mr. AGNEW: I am aware of that, but you had to convict them under the poll-tax Act.

Mr. FOXTON: No; the onus was on the Chinaman in that case.

Mr. AGNEW: My firm opinion is, that though it is very much to be regretted that the South

Australian Council has gone against the Bill, yet that is not an unexpected surprise to hon. members. We know that of all the Governments in the colonies that was the one we were most afraid of. Within the last two years large contracts have been entered into between wealthy people and the Government which included the employment of Chinese labour, and, therefore, we knew there would be a stronger and deeper-rooted desire in that colony to maintain the Chinese element than I hope will be found in other colonies. I voted for the Bill because I firmly believed that all the other colonies would join in, and because I believed that the measure would have more effect than the law which we have repealed. I still have that feeling, and though we may regret that the action of South Australia is not all that can be desired, yet I think that some of the remarks that have been made have been somewhat premature.

Mr. LYONS said: Mr. Speaker,—I simply wish to say that I voted for the Bill, and am not ashamed of the course I took. I am perfectly satisfied that the measure will prove itself effective in keeping out the Chinese from this colony. I do not think that because the South Australian Legislative Council has interfered with the Bill, that should prevent us from putting it into operation, because I feel satisfied it will prove itself a good measure.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Speaker,—I think hon. members pretty well understood, when the Chinese Bill was going through committee, that it was expected that united action would be taken by all the colonies interested. Now, I would point out, in reply to the hon. member for Nundah, that South Australia has never been sincere in endeavouring to keep out Chinese. I speak from experience extending over the last thirty years. I recollect, and have mentioned it before in the House, when South Australia allowed Chinese to land in thousands on the border of Victoria—Victoria having, at that time, imposed a £10 poll-tax, and the South Australian Government took no steps whatever to prevent them landing. From there they came over to the various goldfields in Victoria in droves of thousands. It is evident to me that the South Australian Government is not sincere, and has no intention of falling in with the views of their representatives at the conference. I am sorry to have to speak strongly in this respect, because when the hon. the Minister for Mines and Works introduced the measure, and when I spoke against the repeal of the poll-tax, I certainly voted for its retention when the Bill was going through committee. I am perfectly sure that the retention of the poll-tax, and the provision with respect to only one Chinaman being carried for every 500 tons of the ship's burden, would have effectually prevented them from coming to the colony. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, has referred to the encouragement which has been given to Chinese furniture manufacturers and gardeners through the tariff which passed through the House during the last few weeks. I endorse what the hon. member said. If we impose a 15 per cent. duty on furniture and vegetables, it will have the effect of encouraging the Chinese; and I only hope, when the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera for imposing a duty of 25 per cent. on Chinese manufactured furniture is brought on for discussion, it will find many supporters. I am very sorry to find that the Legislature of South Australia have not passed the Bill, as agreed to by the conference. I am afraid that Queensland will have a great deal of trouble in the future by Chinese coming over the western border. It will cost a great deal of

money to patrol the border, as we shall have to do, if we want to keep them from coming into the colony. Before sitting down I will refer to what is done in Honolulu to prevent Chinese who have once been there from returning. The Act they have passed provides that, in order to obtain a permit to live in Honolulu, a Chinese must produce his receipt for taxes, his passenger ticket, passports, duplicate copies of his face and profile photograph, besides paying a fee of five dollars. He must also prove satisfactorily to the officer that he is not a vagrant, a criminal, a professional beggar, a user of opium, or a person likely to become a charge upon the country. The permit is not transferable, and the punishment for transferring it is forfeiture and a fine of 200 dollars, or imprisonment with hard labour for six months. Every person concerned in the transfer is liable to these pains and penalties. The Hawaiian press refers to the measure as a check upon Chinese ascendancy, and the beginning of the very radical policy of the exclusion of Mongolians, to which the nation must, in self-preservation, eventually come. If the island of Honolulu can adopt such a measure as that to prevent their people being starved out by an influx of Mongolians, surely the whole of the Australian colonies should agree to some measure which will effectually prevent Chinese coming to these colonies.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the debate closes there is one point to which I wish to refer. I should like the hon. gentleman who had charge of the Bill, which was recently passed by this House, and which is now before the Legislative Council, to give us some assurance that in the event of the other colonies not keeping faith with Queensland he will, at the earliest opportunity, bring forward a measure to reimpose the poll-tax, that is, of course, provided the present Bill is passed by the other Chamber. I believe the hon. gentleman was perfectly sincere in his desire to have that Bill passed and so keep faith with the other representatives who attended the Chinese Conference at Sydney. I voted for the retention of the poll-tax, but I think if I had had the confidence of the colony, and occupied a similar position to that which the hon. gentleman occupied at the conference, I should probably have been equally as desirous to get the Bill passed as it left the conference as he was. I trust, however, that he will give the assurance I have asked for; if he does not I feel perfectly confident that this House will at a very early date take on itself the introduction of a measure to protect the interests of the people of this country.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not rise to prolong the debate; I will not occupy more than a minute or two. I think the greatest danger we really have to fear in dealing with this matter on a federal and united principle is the colony of South Australia. It has always been a great danger, not because the present Government of the colony are not perfectly honest and sincere in dealing with the subject. They are, I am satisfied, perfectly sincere, and the gentlemen who attended the conference in Sydney, I know, were perfectly sincere in the matter. It has always been the Legislative Council of that colony, which represents property holders and gentlemen who are interested in the Northern Territory, that has been the great obstacle. At the present time the Northern Territory is run in the interest of Chinese and a few people of property in Adelaide, and those are the people who dominate the Council in South Australia. Nothing but the pressure of public opinion in the other colonies is likely to have any influence upon them in respect of this matter. During the late election I used language which was thought by

some rather strong, in alluding to South Australia as a colony likely to stand aloof from the rest of the colonies of Australia, but I would not hesitate to follow the course I there indicated if that were the only way to bring them to their senses. I think it would be an unfortunate thing that the small elective Council of South Australia, representing a few property-holders, should be able to thwart the wishes of united Australia. I was going to say that I hope the Government will communicate with the Government of South Australia, but really we know that they are honestly in earnest in their endeavours to pass the measure, and I hope, if the Government do make any communication it will be only to express sympathy with them in their position, and not to suggest any doubt as to their *bona fides* in the matter.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—It has been stated by several members opposite that the Bill which has been passed by this House is quite sufficient to keep out Chinese from the colony of Queensland. If they had said coastwise we should have been at one with them in that respect. We believe that the limitation of one Chinese to every 500 tons of cargo will be quite sufficient to prevent any large influx of Chinese coastwise, but that is not the only danger. We must not forget that we have a large border line between this colony and the Northern Territory of South Australia, where Chinese are now engaged in large numbers on public works. Those works, I understand, will be finished in a very short time, and there is nothing to prevent the Chinese from crossing the border in batches into Queensland, except the fear of six months' imprisonment, which will not act as a very strong deterrent in the minds of Chinese. If we had adopted the principle of the poll-tax, which has just been repealed, and imposed a heavy poll-tax on them, we could then demand that they should prove that they had come into the colony in a legitimate manner.

Mr. AGNEW: We have passed a poll-tax.

Mr. GRIMES: I am quite aware that there is a penalty of £50 for Chinese coming across the border, but that is a very different thing from a poll-tax. Under the Act we have repealed a Chinaman could at any time be called upon to prove that he had paid the poll-tax, but in the case of Chinese coming across the border, contrary to the provisions of this Bill, it must be proved that they have not landed in Queensland in a legitimate manner, before the penalty of £50 can be inflicted. In the one case the onus is thrown on the Chinaman, and in the other on the Government. We must not forget that Chinese are encouraged in South Australia, and that as soon as the large public works on which they are engaged are finished, they will seek pastures new. There is no doubt that our goldfields in the North, and the employment they are likely to get in the North, will attract them to Queensland. Chinese are not boycotted in the North by any means. I am sorry to say that they are encouraged there; it is a class of labour which is much encouraged in some quarters in the North; and I believe the Chinese would come across and be employed in some districts in that part of the colony. I exceedingly regret that we have done away with the poll-tax, which has proved effective in preventing the introduction of Chinese into Queensland. What have we got for it? We have got that which is inoperative. I look upon that clause merely as one to frighten rather than anything else, a mere bogie; but we know very well that the Chinese are not so easily frightened as some people may imagine. They know as well as we do that before we can impose the penalty they have to be caught. In other

words, we have to catch the rabbit before we can cook him, and we may as well try to catch the rabbits crossing our border from South Australia as try to catch the Chinamen. It would be just about as easy. But if we allow the poll-tax clause to remain we shall not have that difficulty.

Mr. HYNE: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order, and I will ask for your ruling. I wish to know whether it is in order to discuss a Bill which has already passed this House before it has been returned from the Legislative Council.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is right if he refers to a Bill which has been previously debated this session. The 85th Standing Order provides:—

"No member shall allude to any debate of the same session upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion, except by the indulgence of the House, for personal explanation."

I may point out that it has not escaped my observation that some hon. members have, during the discussion this afternoon, referred to the debate on a Bill which recently passed this House; but I have not referred to the matter because I assumed that the House considered the subject that has been brought under discussion one of sufficient importance to allow hon. members to refer to a previous debate; otherwise my attention would have been called to the fact. Therefore I did not interrupt any hon. member when he was speaking; but it is clearly out of order to refer to previous debates that have taken place in the same session.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—Speaking to the point of order, I have been quite aware, and the Government have been also, of the way in which the debate has been carried on; but if any member of the Government had called attention to the fact, he would immediately have been accused of trying to gag hon. members, and put down the liberty of discussion. We, therefore, allowed hon. members to go on with the discussion, knowing that they were breaking the Standing Order which you have just read.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—I am rather surprised that I should have been interrupted, and that your attention should have been called to this matter by my hon. friend the member for Maryborough. I was not aware that I was transgressing the Standing Orders in my remarks, and I shall endeavour not to do so. I think we have been unfortunate in legislating in this matter, on the understanding come to at the conference that similar measures would be passed by the other Legislatures throughout Australia. If they had done so, we should have been comparatively safe. But we have been trusting to an understanding that has turned out a misunderstanding, and I hope it will be a caution to us in future, to follow our own course and make our own laws quite irrespective of the other colonies. It has been said that we should boycott the South Australian people, but I think it will come with a very bad grace for us to boycott South Australia, seeing that we, in the first instance, were the ones to break through an understanding in reference to the Defence Bill. We should look very small in endeavouring to boycott South Australia, or in any way reflect upon that colony, seeing that we have been guilty of the same conduct. The Colonial Secretary referred to this as obstruction. I do not think it was quite fair of him to talk about obstruction. I am not in the habit of obstructing; and when I have anything to say I speak seriously, and I like it to be taken in a serious manner. I am not obstructing, as this is the first time I have had an opportunity of speaking on the Chinese question, and

I thought this was a good opportunity of doing so. I would remind the Colonial Secretary that by interjections of that sort he is courting obstruction. The Colonial Secretary must be aware, from his own tendency to mischief and playfulness, that when he suggests a thing of that sort, if there is any playfulness or mischief in the minds of hon. members on this side of the House, they are very likely to take up the matter and follow out obstruction. Now, I am not playful nor mischievous in that respect, and I do not wish to prolong the debate in answer to the invitation the Colonial Secretary has given us. I sincerely trust that, before this Bill leaves the other Chamber, some action will be taken to insert a clause providing for a poll-tax such as is in the Act we are attempting to repeal.

Mr. SAYERS, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry that this discussion has taken so long, but I think a great deal of the discussion has been caused by some hon. members referring to the conference held in London, and contrasting it with the conference held in Sydney. That prolonged the discussion, and I am sorry that matter was brought up, as we were not dealing with that matter at all, but with the action of the South Australian Legislative Council. Some hon. members on the other side have expressed feelings this evening that I really believe are their true feelings, and although on a previous occasion they spoke differently, I believe they were, to a certain extent, led away, and so committed the error. I do not wish to say anything against the hon. gentleman who represented this colony at the conference. Although I may not always think he is sincere, I think in this instance he was sincere. I am sorry that he gave way and did not stand out for what he believed. He believed in certain things, but, unfortunately for this colony, he gave way upon them. I consider that, after what has fallen from various hon. members, the Ministry will only be doing what is the wish of this House and of the country if they take steps to see that no danger arises to this colony from the action we have already taken. I beg to withdraw the motion with the permission of the House.

The SPEAKER: Is it the wish of the House that this motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No!

Question put and negatived.

MARSUPIALS DESTRUCTION ACT CONTINUATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Mr. Speaker,—In moving the second reading of this Bill, I desire to point out the necessity for its continuance. It must be borne in mind that the Act of 1881 was continued in 1885, and again in 1887; and, unless a Continuation Bill is passed, the operations of the Act will cease at the end of this session. I do not wish to take up time in discussing this measure, because it is only to continue the operations of an Act which has been some time in force in this colony; and I think it is clear to hon. members who have taken any interest in this subject that it has done a great deal of good in the colony. When I state that since 1881 about 6,000,000 kangaroos have been destroyed—of course I include wallabies and kangaroo rats as well as kangaroos—when hon. members bear in mind that that number has been destroyed, it shows the necessity for such an Act being continued. Had that number remained alive, and continued to increase as they did some years previously, by this time the greater part of the colony would have been overrun with marsupials, and the land rendered almost valueless for pastoral occu-

pation. During the year 1882, 975,927 marsupials were destroyed; in 1883 the number was 1,046,004; in 1884, 950,915; in 1885, 801,239; in 1886, 756,593; and in 1887, 512,753. So that there has been a gradual diminution in the number destroyed, which, I believe, is a good deal attributable to the existence of the Marsupials Destruction Act. There are not the number to be destroyed that there were some years ago, and I venture to say that if the operation of the Act is suspended, in a few years we should have as many as ever in the colony. It would be a pity to discontinue such a good work. If the Act is renewed now I believe that in no long time the marsupials left in the colony will be very few indeed, and those few will be easily kept down. Another good reason for the continuation of the Act is that in the Continuation Act of 1887, a clause was inserted extending its operations to rabbits, which it was entirely optional for any marsupial board to adopt. Some of the boards near the border—Bulloo, Paroo, Murweh, and Wallumbilla—have already applied to have that provision extended to them. Notwithstanding all that has been done in the way of trying to prevent rabbits from entering the colony, I venture to say that it will take very close and careful scrutiny by the boards, assisted, of course, by private enterprise, to keep down the number of those now in the colony; and we cannot have a more simple means of dealing with the pest than by extending the operations of that Act. The Government have not yet had sufficient time to mature their plans with regard to the introduction of a Rabbit Bill which will deal with the rabbits effectually. During the present session there is not the slightest chance of the introduction of such a Bill, which requires great consideration. In the meantime this Bill, if passed, will enable the good work that has been commenced to be continued. The Bulloo Board has levied the highest rate possible under the Act, which means, of course, a large subsidy from the Government, and they are expending nearly the whole of it in the destruction of whatever rabbits make their appearance in that part of the colony, and knowing the members of that board, as I do, I have a conviction that the money is being well spent. A few hundreds of pounds wisely spent now in exterminating or keeping down the number of rabbits in the colony may be the means of saving the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds in the future. I trust, therefore, there will be no opposition to the continuation of the Act. The destruction of marsupials is an important question, but still more important, perhaps, is the destruction of rabbits, and I believe that by the operation of this Act the boards, along the southern border especially, will be able to do very good work indeed in that direction. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to know whether this marsupial tax is to be levied on all the districts in the colony—on the inside settled districts, or only where there are marsupials.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The Act applies to all the boards in the colony.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is not required in the inside closely settled districts, and has not been for many years.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: With the permission of the House I will make a short explanation. The entire colony has been divided into marsupial districts, but in many of them the Act has become inoperative, because they do not require to raise funds for the destruction of marsupials. They do not levy the rate because there is no necessity to spend the money. Where

there are no marsupials there will be no money to spend upon them. In short, the Act will be inoperative wherever there is no necessity for it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I know that in several of the closely settled districts there have been no marsupials for years. As the boards, if appointed, have power not to levy a rate when there is no necessity for it, I shall offer no further opposition to the Bill. If it had been proposed to levy a tax on the inside settled districts, I should have opposed it. My own idea is that it ought to apply to the outside districts only.

Mr. MELLOR said: Mr. Speaker,—There is a little more in the hon. member's contention than he seems to think. There are a great many marsupial boards in the Western districts which are levying the tax upon every settler who has a small herd of cattle, and the settlers have no voice in the expenditure of that taxation. They must have a certain number of head of cattle before they can be taxed; and persons are not eligible for election to the boards unless they possess 500 head of cattle, and I forget how many sheep, so that a great many taxpayers who paid this rate are being taxed without representation. I know that has been a serious complaint in some parts of the country—that they should be called upon to pay that tax without having any say in the matter. Marsupials are not any trouble to settlers as a rule, but they are to squatters generally. I quite agree with the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill that the Act has done an immense amount of good in the colony, but I do not think that it should be operative for ever. The hon. gentleman said that if it were withdrawn at the present time the country might become overrun with marsupials again. I believe the intention of the late Government was to let the Act lapse for a time, and then if the necessity arose by marsupials increasing to any large extent it could be passed again. It must be borne in mind that the settlers of the country pay a large portion of this tax, and as the operation of the Act is to include the extermination of rabbits, it will be a greater tax still. I do not say that it might not be a fair tax if properly regulated. But I think there must be a time when there should be finality to the operations of the Act. I believe it would be better to let it remain in abeyance in certain districts. It would not be so bad if the settlers of the country had a voice in the representation—if they had a say whether the tax should be put in operation or not. That is a matter that I think ought to be considered in connection with the principle of the Bill.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—There is another matter to be considered in connection with this subject, upon which I should like some information when we get into committee. I understand that marsupial districts include closely-settled as well as sparsely-settled country, the small settlers having actually no voice on the boards; whenever they were troubled with marsupials they had to destroy them the best way they could. In many cases they protected themselves by enclosing their holdings by paling fences before the Act came into force, and practically it is now of no use to them; but still they are joined on to some marsupial district, and are taxed all the same. I am not prepared to say how far that extends, but I shall ask for information on the subject in committee. As far as the tax itself is concerned, I believe it has been of very great use to the country, and that it would be a mistake to let it drop altogether. I think wherever there are marsupials it ought to be kept up until they are exterminated.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to bring another matter under the notice of the

Minister. When this marsupial legislation was first introduced, marsupial skins were practically of no value whatever—could not be sold—but I see that now large skins bring as high as £7 10s. a dozen in the Sydney market.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Only very large ones.

Mr. MORGAN: I know there are plenty of men in the country districts who are making better wages marsupial-hunting than they could get in any other employment just now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: On Canning Downs.

Mr. MORGAN: I am not alluding to Canning Downs. I know that in exceptional cases very high wages were made there. I might tell the hon. the Colonial Secretary, as the hon. member for Stanley told him the other day, that one swallow does not make a summer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: And one Canning Downs does not make the country.

Mr. MORGAN: I have said that I am not referring to Canning Downs at all. I am referring to facts within my own knowledge. I could mention plenty of instances in the southern portion of the colony, even where marsupials are scarce, where high wages are being made by quite a number of people by killing kangaroos, not for their scalps but for their skins. I think that fact ought to be remembered in passing legislation now. The Minister in charge of the Bill has told us that during the last five or six years the number of scalps paid for has shown a steady decrease. I believe that is so, on the whole, and while I cannot say whether this applies to the whole country, yet I know that in many districts whereas the scalps of the larger animals show a steady decrease, the scalps of the smaller varieties show a steady increase.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: No.

Mr. MORGAN: I know it is so in some districts, and the conclusion to be adduced from that is this: That the larger varieties are being killed off, and the smaller varieties, which are the chief pest to the smaller settlers, have not received that attention from scalp hunters in the past that they are now doing.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Therefore the necessity for this Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: I was just coming to that. I think the marsupial boards ought to have their attention directed to that matter—if not by Act of Parliament, by an expression of opinion from the Minister that a higher rate per scalp should be paid for the smaller varieties than has been paid hitherto. The boards have chiefly devoted their attention in the past to paying a high rate for getting the larger varieties exterminated. In order to do that they have been paying as much as 9d. for kangaroos, while the average has been as low as 3d., and 2d. for the smaller kinds, which are almost as great a pest as kangaroos and wallaroos.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Much greater.

Mr. MORGAN: Much greater in districts where there is scrubby country; but in the open plains the larger varieties do more mischief. I think, too, Mr. Speaker, that since the title of the Bill has long since become a misnomer, inasmuch as it now includes dogs and rabbits, we should go a little further and extend its operations to bandicoots, which are a very great pest indeed to small settlers, particularly in heavily-timbered country or on the edges of scrubs. There has been no tax on their scalps hitherto, and they have increased so largely as to be a great nuisance, particularly to farmers, and as these men have to contribute to pay for the destruction

of kangaroos, which are no trouble to them, I think they should have a small measure of protection extended to them, by having the bandicoot outlawed in the provisions of the Act.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman who has just sat down pointed out that whereas the number of large marsupials killed under the Act was steadily decreasing, the number of the smaller marsupials killed was steadily increasing. That showed the necessity for the Act. The larger kangaroos are killed, no doubt, because their skins have now a commercial value; but the skins of the smaller marsupials, paddamelons, and wallabies, having no commercial value, there is no inducement to kill them, beyond what is provided by this Act. If we allow this Act to become extinct, we shall see a state of things such as has already been seen in this colony, where large and valuable pastoral districts were entirely laid waste, not by the larger marsupials, but by the wallabies. The value of the Act to the colony is more in the direction of the destruction of the smaller marsupials than of the larger, and for that reason, if for no other, we should re-enact this measure. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley, I may say that though there may be a district where there are no marsupials included in a marsupial district, it is not necessary that the residents and stockowners should appoint a board, and if there is no board appointed, there will be no rate levied under the Act. It is an entirely voluntary affair, and need not be put in force except in a district where there are marsupials. There is some difference of opinion amongst pastoralists as to whether it was wise to bring the rabbits within the Act, because it might have the effect of inducing the boards on the border to entirely neglect the marsupials, and spend all their money upon the other pest, which for them had much greater terrors than the marsupials. Although one of those who supported the inclusion of rabbits in the Act, I have now some doubts as to whether we were wise in doing that; but as it is part of the Act now, I think it would perhaps be as well to leave it as it is. I hope, however, the rabbits will be eliminated as soon as some measure is introduced by the Government to deal with them.

Mr. ALLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not agree with the hon. member for Barcoo that we should eliminate the rabbits from the Bill, as I think that one of the best measures which ever passed this House. It has had a good effect, and had we had better seasons lately, its advantage would be more apparent than it is now. I trust the House will have no hesitation in continuing this Act. In the district I come from, a great number of young men occupy their spare time in killing kangaroos, and they do not confine themselves to the larger marsupials, but kill all marsupials that they come across. The hon. member for Warwick spoke of the necessity of giving a bonus for the scalps of the bandicoot, he said, but he is mistaken; he should have said the kangaroo rat, as they create a great deal of destruction among growing crops. If the prices paid for their scalps were higher, it would be a great advantage to the agricultural districts. The price paid now for kangaroo rat scalps, will not pay the cost of the ammunition. Mention has been made of the complaint of small settlers, of having to pay the tax, but it is an insurance fund for those men, as if those outside do not kill the marsupials they will spread and the small settlers will suffer from them. I trust the House will have no hesitation in extending this Act.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I hope this Act will be renewed in its present form. One hon. member has stated that the large kangaroos have been killed in greater numbers than the smaller ones, and I find on referring to a return prepared by Mr. Gordon, that the destruction of kangaroos and wallaroos and wallabies and paddamelons has been at about the same ratio for the past four years; but last year the numbers killed of kangaroos and wallaroos and of wallabies and paddamelons had both decreased very largely as compared with former years. I would much sooner see the larger kangaroos and wallaroos eliminated from this Act, and the Act applied only to the destruction of the smaller varieties, because there is sufficient inducement for the destruction of the larger marsupials in the profit to be derived from the sale of their skins. In the case of the smaller and more dangerous animals, whose skins are utterly valueless, some such inducement as is provided in this Act is necessary for their destruction. I trust the Act will be continued.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—I have always looked upon this Act as class legislation, because it forces the general public to contribute for the benefit of a class. Several times we have attempted to have included in this Act other vermin that are a nuisance to the agriculturists, but we have not been able to manage it. If we could have done that, the Act would have been more general and a greater number of people would have benefited by it. At the present time we pay something like £12,000 a year out of the revenue to destroy vermin for the pastoralists only.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: And for farmers.

Mr. GRIMES: They only benefit to a trifling extent from the expenditure. The hon. member for Cunningham mentioned the kangaroo rat as a nuisance to the farmers, but it was the bandicoot he should have said; and though we have tried several times to get the bandicoot included in the Act we have not succeeded. We tried more than once to get the flying-fox included in the Act also, but without success, and the duty of destroying that pest is thrown upon the divisional boards, and the fund contributed by the rate-payers for that purpose is not endowed by the Government. I had hoped the pastoralists would have been content with the time the Act has been in force, and the amount of money that has been contributed by the State for the destruction of marsupials, and that they would have allowed the Act to lapse now. I sincerely hope it will not be extended. It has run long enough, and it should now be allowed to lapse, and let each class provide for the destruction of the pests from which they suffer.

Mr. LITTLE said: Mr. Speaker,—This Bill provides not only for the destruction of the kangaroo, but also of the paddamelon, wallaby, and kangaroo rat, which are very injurious to the agriculturist. I think there can be no agriculture in the district represented by the hon. member for Oxley, or he would not say that the Bill was of no benefit to the farmers.

Question.—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

Committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PUBLIC WORKS LANDS RESUMPTION BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Speaker left the chair, and the

House went into committee to consider the amendment made by the Legislative Council in this Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that, when the Bill left the Assembly, it was complete for the purpose for which it was introduced; but the Legislative Council had inserted a new clause repealing the 34th section of the principal Act, and providing that the costs incident to every arbitration should be settled by the arbitrators at the time of making the award, and that each party should bear his own costs if the award was less than £50. He thought that was a wrong principle. A man was entitled to costs, no matter what might be the amount of the claim, if the award of the arbitrators was in his favour; therefore, he did not intend to agree to the amendment. He moved that the Committee disagree to the Legislative Council's amendment.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he quite agreed with the motion. He did not see why, if a man's property was worth less than £50, he should not get his costs, provided he was awarded as much as he asked for, or more than was offered. With regard to the costs being fixed by the arbitrators at the time of making the award, that might be impracticable, because it might not be known at the time whether the party was entitled to costs or not. The clause in the principal Act was a transcript of an old English Act which had been in force for many years, and had worked extremely well, and he did not see why it should not be retained.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had disagreed to the amendment of the Legislative Council.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the report was adopted, and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council, with a message intimating that the Assembly disagreed to the amendment of the Legislative Council—"Because section 34 of the principal Act deals with the question of costs in a more equitable manner than that proposed by the Legislative Council's amendment."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Speaker left the Chair, and the House went into committee to further consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS.

SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. H. Black) moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1888-9, a sum not exceeding £9,980 for Secretary for Public Lands. Hon. members would see that that was £240 in excess of the vote for similar purposes last year. The additions were made up of some small increases in salary to some of the junior officers of the department, whose services were considered to entitle them to increases. There were seven of them who received increases of £20 to £30 a year, none of whom received more than £150 a year. It was found, in order to retain the services of those young men, who were willing to take positions in the department at a low rate of salary, that it would be necessary to give them a fair amount of remuneration, otherwise their services would be lost to the department. The increases amounted in all to £165, and were compensated, to a certain extent, by the resignation of one of the officers who was in receipt of £200 a year, and whose services were now performed by the junior

clerks in the department. The vacancy caused by that resignation had not been filled up, nor was it intended to fill it up, and there was thus a saving of £35, notwithstanding those small increases. The contingency vote was increased by £200, the vote last year for contingencies, advertising, fuel, and incidentals being £3,200, and this year £3,400.

Mr. MELLOR said he wished to ask the Minister for Lands how appointments were made in the department—whether by merit or favour, or what guided the hon. gentleman? He understood that appointments were made that were not very encouraging to those who had been a long time in the office. For instance, not long since the Land Agent for Brisbane resigned, and a person was appointed to the position over the heads of others. It gave great discouragement to those who had been in the office for many years to find themselves passed over for juniors. The principle lately established in the Railways Bill was one that would lead to very good results in the service. There was no doubt that competitive examinations tested, to a great extent, the officer's ability to fill certain positions. He was quite certain the hon. gentleman would not for a moment see any injustice done, and would be able to say on what system the promotions took place.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he understood the hon. gentleman wished to know the principle on which vacancies were filled up. The principle that he adopted, and which he believed every member of the Committee would admit was the right one, was that of promoting the junior officers as vacancies occurred, of course, taking into consideration the special fitness of applicants for the position. He certainly considered that it was only right to discourage in every possible way the appointment, political in many cases, of people outside the Civil service whenever vacancies occurred. With reference to the appointment which the hon. member referred to, that of Mr. Watts, who took the place of Mr. Shepherd, the land agent who had resigned, he might mention that almost immediately on his coming into office that vacancy occurred. The officers in the department at that time were, to a certain extent, unknown to him, and he had attempted, as he thought every sensible man would do, to obtain the best information he possibly could from the heads of the department. One gentleman whom he consulted was Mr. Rule, the Land Commissioner, a gentleman very well known to every hon. member, and a thoroughly straightforward honourable man, and he recommended Mr. Watts as the most suitable man, in his opinion, for the position. He (the Minister for Lands) accordingly was very pleased to be able to give Mr. Watts that promotion, which, as far as he could ascertain, he was thoroughly entitled to. There was another gentleman, Mr. Bennett, who was very highly spoken of, and he supposed that was the officer to whom the hon. member alluded as having been overlooked. But he could assure hon. members that both officers were most highly spoken of, and he should only be too happy to recognise Mr. Bennett's merits in the same way as Mr. Watts's ability had been recognised when the opportunity offered.

Mr. COWLEY asked how many years Mr. Watts had been in the department?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Twelve years.

Mr. SMITH said he wished to point out what he considered to be one of the great faults in the administration of the Lands Department during the last two or three years. He noticed that the amount set down for

advertising last year was £2,700, and the same sum was proposed again for the present year. He thought that not to give the greatest publicity to land sales was a serious mistake. The more they advertised the sales of land the more likely were they to get competition and high prices. Any man in business who had a commodity of any description to sell always let the public know the fact; if he did not the competition would be restricted, and prices reduced in proportion. The public lands of the colony which were to be sold should be largely advertised, at any rate throughout the districts in which the lands were situated. He hoped, therefore, that the Government would see their way to advertise lands more largely in future.

Mr. GANNON said he was waiting to refer to that subject until the vote with reference to sales of land came on for consideration; but, as it had been mentioned now, he might say that, having been Government auctioneer for some years, he knew that the State lost thousands and thousands of pounds through not spending sufficient money on advertising. He had had sale after sale in his auction mart at which there was no attendance, and in many others persons only who were on the look-out for them attended, and they got great bargains. He believed that, if the Government had advertised their sales properly, they would have gained from £25,000 to £30,000 a year. He noticed that in the last sale the present Government had avoided that mistake and advertised well, and the result was a splendid sale.

Mr. BARLOW said there was a good deal of force and truth in the remarks made by the members for Bowen and Toombul, and the Minister for Lands would no doubt excuse him for saying that those land sale advertisements might be put in a much clearer form than they now appeared. No doubt the hon. gentleman's business experience would enable him to draft them in a way that would be more intelligible to the public.

Mr. BUCKLAND said that subject of advertising had been referred to each year during the last three years, and it had been pointed out how inadequate was the method of advertising land sales by the Government. He could confirm the remarks made by the hon. member for Toombul as to the paucity of attendance at Government land sales in Brisbane and the low price obtained for the land, the reason being that the sales were not properly advertised. The Government might take a lesson out of the books of the auctioneers in that matter. If they did the returns to the Treasury would in many cases be tenfold. He was very glad to hear that recent Government land sales had been better advertised.

Mr. GROOM said it was quite correct that that subject had cropped up three or four times during the last four years, but he could speak with much more freedom on it that evening than he could on previous occasions. The present mode of advertising Crown land sales was introduced by the late Minister for Lands, Mr. Dutton, and neither the persuasion of the Committee nor the representations of private members had had the effect of altering his views on the subject. He (Mr. Groom) could quite understand that the Government lost considerable money by it. The reason for the adoption of the present plan had been recently communicated to him, and it was but fair that it should be placed before the Committee. No doubt the records of the Lands Department would bear out what he was going to state. There had been previously a very considerable amount of extravagance and partiality shown in the advertising of land sales by the department. He remembered

one particular case where the proprietor of a newspaper, published at Allora, accidentally met the then Minister for Lands and asked him to advertise Crown land sales in his paper. The Minister not, perhaps, thinking what the purport of his answer was, said, "Well, the land sales affecting your district you may take from the *Government Gazette*." At that time large advertisements of land sales were appearing in the *Gazette*, and the proprietor of the paper went and copied the whole of them, and the result was that the paper came out with nothing but Government land sales advertisements. Whether that sort of thing was general or only isolated he did not know, but the Minister seemed to think it was general all over the colony, and the result was that he cut down the advertisements of Crown land sales to a solitary inch. He (Mr. Groom) could mention one particular sale that took place in Toowoomba, last May twelve months, the proceeds of which amounted to £3,000, and yet the advertisement of that sale in the local papers was only an inch in length. He would ask whether any private gentleman, disposing of property of the value of £3,000, would order his agent or auctioneer to advertise in an inch of space? That was what was done in the case he alluded to, and intending purchasers were referred for particulars to the *Government Gazette*, which could only be seen at the court-house. That was the system adopted in the country districts; there might be some alteration in Brisbane, but there was none in the country. There was simply a small inch advertisement announcing that a land sale would take place, say, at Warwick, on a certain date—"for particulars see *Government Gazette*." How many persons saw the *Gazette*? Even magistrates had lately had it taken away from them; so that a person who wished to know anything about a sale, had to ride perhaps a great distance to the local court-house to see it. There was, therefore, room for improvement in that direction. He wished members to understand that he was not now talking "shop," though the matter did affect him a little, but he was speaking in the interest of the public. He had seen losses sustained by the country through the injudicious mode of advertising he had referred to, and had mentioned it at the time to the Government. With the hon. member for Toombul, he noticed that a recent land sale, conducted by Mr. Bell, had been managed better in that respect. Whether at the direction of the Government, or whether it was done by Mr. Bell himself, he did not know, but the sale was conducted on commercial principles—it was well advertised, and put before the public in an attractive form—and the result was that it was one of the most successful land sales held in Brisbane for some years past. He did not advocate indiscriminate advertising such as occurred in the particular case he had cited, but he would point out there was a medium course which could be taken, whereby the necessary information could be given to the public without asking them to look at the *Government Gazette*.

Mr. ALLAN said an instance came under his notice about fifteen months ago, when travelling out West, showing the effect of the system of advertising which prevailed. It was in the town of St. George, the capital of the electorate represented by the Colonial Secretary. He was standing in the middle of the street between half-past 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning, with the police magistrate and Mr. Macalister. Mr. Shand, the clerk of petty sessions, came up, and the police magistrate asked him where he had been. Mr. Shand replied, "Oh, I have had a land sale." They said, "A land sale?" and Mr. Shand answered, "Yes, a land sale; I had seventy allotments to offer." They asked,

"Where?" and he said, "At the court-house." "Did you sell?" they inquired. "No," he said, "I had to call in a policeman to witness that I had put them up and there was no one present to buy." That was an absolute fact. There was no advertising there, and he did not believe there was a *Government Gazette* in the town except at the office of the Clerk of Petty Sessions.

Mr. AGNEW said it was a remarkable fact that in a district in which land was to be sold, though there might be a local paper, the sale was never advertised. Some land was thrown open for selection, and some offered for sale in his electorate a short time ago; but it was not advertised in the local paper there at all. Many people in the district knew scarcely anything about it. He hoped the Minister for Lands would give attention to the matter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the matter had already been attended to. It was necessary that the Government should make their advertisements attractive if they wished their sales to be successful—just as necessary as it was for ordinary auctioneers. Full descriptions of the land to be sold should be inserted in the advertisements, and, in many cases now, he allowed the auctioneer to whom a sale was to be entrusted to suggest the form of such advertisement. In connection with a large sale which was going to take place at Cairns, there had been ample advertising, and when he mentioned the auctioneer's name, Mr. Macnamara, the Committee might be sure it would be properly advertised, not only in Queensland, but in New South Wales and Victoria. The matter occupied his attention as soon as he had had it brought under his notice, and the Committee might be certain that he should continue to carry out the views he had expressed.

Mr. SMITH said his reason for referring to the matter was that he did not see any increase in the vote for advertising. He remembered one instance in Brisbane where a gentleman was living beside a piece of land he wanted to buy; but it was not advertised in any of the papers, and he never saw the *Government Gazette*, so the land was sold before he knew anything about it. The Government lost thousands of pounds in that way.

Mr. GROOM said he wished to know when those new instructions had been given. Within the last six weeks he had seen Government land sales on the Darling Downs advertised in the old way—"For particulars see *Government Gazette*."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said instructions were given by him within one month after he took office.

Mr. GROOM: They have not been carried out in all respects.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know they have in some cases.

Mr. HODGKINSON said, when he was Minister for Mines he had noticed the very small care there was then exercised by the Lands Department in putting up land for sale—land of a mineral character. He had to write some very warm letters in regard to some allotments ordered to be sold in the centre of Charters Towers, where great inconvenience had been experienced already through the alienation of land. The head of the Geological Department in the North, Mr. Jack, recommended that a large tract of country in the Cook district should not be alienated, in consequence of its mineral character; but no steps had been taken to preserve that, so far as he was aware. There was always a class of people who tried to secure the freehold of land which might become valuable in future, through

contiguity or mineral characteristics. The hon. gentleman at the head of the department would find there were good reasons for watchfulness in that matter. The people he had referred to were always anxious to acquire freehold in all gold-mining townships, for instance; but he supposed when an Under Secretary saw a good chance of obtaining a considerable amount of revenue by disposing of a piece of land, he did not trouble himself much whether it was of a mineral character or not. He was speaking from his own experience within the short tenure of office he had. On more than one occasion he had to fight most strenuously against that spirit.

Mr. GANNON said he wished to intimate to the Minister for Lands that he thought the upset prices were too high in the cases of some Government lands that were offered for sale. If they were lower there would be a great deal more competition, and higher prices would be realised, especially if the advertising were to be on a larger scale. He was speaking from special experience in regard to Government land sales.

Mr. MURPHY said what had been stated by the hon. member who had just spoken was quite correct. Many allotments, especially in country towns, which had been offered for sale time after time were not sold for the simple reason that the upset prices were a bar to their sale. If land had been offered for a certain time, and was not sold, any person of common sense would reduce the upset price continually until buyers were found. Working men would buy allotments were it not that the upset price was practically a bar to their purchasing them. He was sure if the Minister for Lands gave his attention to the matter he would find that in most of the older settled inland towns there were still a great many allotments lying idle, and upon which houses might be built, and a great deal more settlement take place, if he accepted the hint given by the hon. member for Toombul.

Mr. GLASSEY said he did not know whether he was quite in order in referring to a paragraph which appeared in the report of the Lands Department of this year. The paragraph referred to the preservation of documents and important records, and read as follows:—

"Attention is again directed to the necessity for a strong-room for keeping books and records in, as, were a fire to occur (a not uncommon thing in Brisbane), a very heavy loss to the Government might, and endless trouble, delays, and complications would certainly be the result."

He mentioned the matter because there was considerable uneasiness in the minds of certain persons in regard to it. He hoped the Minister would give his attention to it.

Mr. ADAMS said he had to confirm the statement made by the hon. member for Toombul. The upset price of land was put too high, and people would not bid at the sales. In one case the upset price had been fixed at £20 an acre, while land all round was obtainable at £5 per acre; and no one had bid at that sale. If Crown lands were put up at an excessive price few people went to the sales, and the consequence had been that those who had money and went, had bought the pick of the allotments. It had been the habit of the Minister for Lands to take the opinion of his officers, and perhaps he was right in doing so. If the upset prices were fair and reasonable, more people would bid, and the spirit of competition being keener, the lands would bring better prices. As to advertising, the hon. gentleman had stated that the scheme was going to be extended, so he would say nothing on that subject.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that with regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Bundamba about a strong room, steps were being

taken in order to remedy the defect. The danger would be very great in the event of a fire breaking out in the Lands Office, and the damage to the whole colony would be almost incalculable.

Mr. MORGAN said the Minister for Lands had told the Committee that there were some ten or twelve increases for junior clerks. He would like to ask how many of those clerks receiving rises were in places outside Brisbane.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that vote referred to the Lands Office in Brisbane, and there were seven increases in the department in Brisbane of £30 each. There were two other increases which they would come to later.

Mr. G. H. JONES said that, with the hon. member for Cunningham, he would impress upon the Minister for Lands the desire in country districts to have auctioneers appointed where practicable to conduct the land sales. He was confident such a step would pay well.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he wished to ask the Minister for Lands whether he had taken the advertising under his own care? Last year, it would be remembered, the late Colonial Secretary under the last Government had been badgered a good deal about his advertising, and ultimately it had been found that he had really had no control over it, but had delegated that power to someone else, and no one knew exactly how the advertisements got into the papers. It was also a well-known fact then, if not now, that a great number of advertisements had been inserted in papers having a very small circulation. He thought that the good of the country should be studied rather than parties, and if one paper had a larger circulation than another, that paper was entitled to have at least a share of the advertisements. He hoped the Minister for Lands would take that matter into consideration, and advertise in the very best mediums, independent altogether of parties. He simply threw that out as a hint. He was not a newspaper man, nor was he connected with any paper, but he thought it was only fair, independent altogether of parties, that the best mediums for advertising should be used by the Government just as commercial men did.

Question put and passed.

LAND BOARD.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that the sum of £1,000 be granted for the Land Board. The only increase on that vote over that of last year was in the salary of P. W. Shannon—from £125 to £150.

Question put and passed.

DIVISION OF RUNS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved, with the permission of the Committee, that the sum of £3,000, instead of £4,000 as stated in the Estimates, be granted for the division of runs. In connection with that vote he might state that, the work being nearly completed, it would not be necessary to have so many dividing commissioners.

Mr. GROOM asked which of the dividing commissioners' services were to be dispensed with? There had already appeared in the press an intimation as to whom one of those gentlemen was to be, and, perhaps, the hon. member would inform them what other commissioner he was going to dispense with.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said Mr. Golden was one. That gentleman had already finished his work, and he had received notice that his services would not be required; and Mr. Commissioner Gibson had also received notice that his services would not be required after the end of the year. Those were

the two, and that left Mr. Palmer and Mr. Harrison, whose services would be required in dividing the runs in North and South Kennedy, all the other runs in the scheduled districts of the colony having been already divided. Those two would be retained. It had always been understood that the great expense incurred in connection with the division of runs should only last as long as the runs were being divided; and, as hon. members would understand, the work was nearly completed, and therefore their services could not be retained any longer.

Question put and passed.

SALE OF LAND.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that the sum of £10,431 be granted for the sale of land. There were some small increases in the vote, and a net increase of £140 on the whole amount voted last year. There was a clerk to assist at Cairns, £40; a land commissioner and land agent at Normanton, £50; a clerk at Townsville, £40; a clerk at Bowen, £25; a messenger and clerk at Rockhampton, £25; a clerk at Toowoomba, £25. There was a decrease of £400 in preparation of deeds of grant, and an increase of £200 for allowances and incidental expenses. He ought to state to the Committee that it was not Mr. Gibson but Mr. Harrison who had received notice that his service as dividing commissioner would be no longer required.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE asked on what principle the services of those dividing commissioners were dispensed with? Was it at the arbitrary selection of the Minister, or because they had finished their own particular work?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said those two commissioners happened to have finished their work, while the two commissioners who were retained had not finished their work in the districts where they were employed.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he would point out to the Minister for Lands that near Normanton there were two areas of land very well adapted for settlement. They were almost the only lands in that district fit for the purpose. To throw them open for settlement would do a very great deal of good in the district, especially as there would soon be extensive railway communication.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he should be very glad to receive any suggestion from the hon. member, who must be quite familiar with the country there. The Government had already taken steps to throw land open for settlement near Normanton, and they had received a great deal of information on the subject from the commissioner, who was now in Brisbane.

Mr. MORGAN asked how many officers in the service of the Lands Department, in Brisbane, had received increases of salary, and how many elsewhere throughout the colony?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied that he had already mentioned seven in Brisbane, and in addition there was a clerk in the pastoral occupation branch, and the Government botanist, which would come on in a later vote. Outside Brisbane there was an increase at Rockhampton, at Toowoomba, and at Normanton. He was very sorry the funds at the disposal of the Government were not sufficiently large to give a great many more increases. Some of the officers of the department were receiving little more than a bare pittance. The amount was ridiculously small in many instances. The only increases he had been able to recommend were to young men who were really not receiving sufficient to enable them to live decently.

Mr. MORGAN said he had no doubt that everyone of the increases recommended by the Minister were deserved; but there seemed a

tendency to bestow the increases only on those who were very near the Minister's elbow. That was the natural result of the opportunities those young men had of communicating with the Minister, or through the under secretaries, and pressing their claims. When an officer in the back blocks applied for an increase of salary, he was officially informed that the finances would not allow it to be granted; but a young man nearer the Minister's elbow, went to the officer next in command above him, and he went to his immediate superior, and so on until it gradually reached the Minister, and such a pressing claim was formulated, that the old stereotyped excuse about the finances not permitting the increase, which was applied to the country man, did not hold good in the case of the city man. They had got out of the Minister that in Brisbane alone there were nine increases, and throughout the rest of the colony there were only three. He did not know whether that state of things prevailed in all the other departments; he hoped it did not, but he would endeavour to find out as each estimate went through. He knew it was not intended to do injustice to officers in the outside districts. He was sure the young men in Brisbane were entitled to the increases, and he only brought the matter forward in justice to country officers.

Mr. POWERS said he should like an assurance from the Minister for Lands that the reduction in the vote for preparation of deeds of grant from £1,350 to £950 did not mean that people residing in the country were going to be kept out of their deeds for a long time, as had been the case previously. He believed there was not a country member who had not cause of complaint, on behalf of his constituents, that deeds were not received as quickly as they thought they should be. He knew there were a great number of deeds passing through the office, and also that there had been some improvement lately in the time taken in getting them through, but still he thought country members would like to be assured that the reduction he had mentioned did not mean that as some officers were going to be dispensed with, that greater delay would take place in getting deeds through. He also wished to draw the attention of the Minister for Lands to a wrong that he thought might be righted by making the land commissioners receive applications in the districts where the applicants resided, so far as was possible. The Land Commissioner at Gympie went down to Maryborough at convenient seasons to receive applications there, because he was commissioner for both districts. He (Mr. Powers) referred to his own district, because it was the one with which he was best acquainted, and he wished to point out that when a commissioner had railway communication at his disposal, he might go a little further when important cases occurred. His reason for mentioning the matter was this: When some land was thrown open in the Isis scrub lately there were three times the number of applicants that there were selections, and many of these men had to go to Bundaberg to put in their applications. For the one man residing in Bundaberg who wanted to put in an application, thirty or forty might have to go there in order that their applications might be received. Then, if thirty-six men applied for only twelve pieces of land, twenty-four must be disappointed, in addition to which they had to suffer loss of time and expenses. He thought the commissioners should go, not only to important centres where there was railway communication, but that they should also try and meet the convenience of settlers by going to the districts in which they resided, so that they might not lose time in lodging their applications.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said, with regard to the reduction of the item for the preparation of deeds of grant, the reason why he had asked for £950 instead of £1,350 was that only £789 2s. 9d. was spent last year. The hon. gentleman was quite right in saying that more expedition was used now than previously in issuing deeds of grant, and he thought that still more expedition would be brought about. With regard to what the hon. gentleman had stated respecting the Land Commissioner at Gympie going to Maryborough to hold courts, he was very glad his attention had been called to it. He did not see any reason why that practice should be perpetuated. They paid the land agent at Maryborough £300 a year, and he might as well be called "Land Commissioner" and hold his own court, leaving the Commissioner at Gympie to hold his. The matter would receive proper attention.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he had seen by the newspapers that a young man, employed in the Lands Department at Rockhampton, had pleaded guilty to a charge of embezzling a large amount of money, and when sentenced, he stated, in extenuation of his crime, that he had been in receipt of only £100 a year, and the temptation had overmastered him. He should like to know whether the attention of the Minister had been directed to that case, and also to the necessity for making provision by which officers who had large amounts of money passing through their hands should not receive such a salary that they would be tempted to supplement their income by embezzling public money, or to so arrange that officers who had such small salaries should not have the manipulation of large sums of money. The system by which underpaid young men had the control of large sums of money, by which they were tempted to embezzle the Government funds, was a very bad one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the young man referred to was not really a clerk, but a messenger in the office, and he was one of those who was receiving pay altogether too small for them to expect efficient performance of duty. Instead of £100, he was receiving only £65 per year, and it appeared that the commissioner had certainly allowed him latitude which should not have been allowed to a young fellow in that position. Hence the deficiency in the funds. He found that the remuneration paid was so small for such an officer in a place like Rockhampton that he had increased it on the Estimates to £90, especially as he had good accounts as to the way in which the officer referred to was doing his duty. But before that young man was enabled to reap the benefit of the increase he committed the offence mentioned, but the increase would be available for the new messenger or clerk who would be appointed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said perhaps he might be allowed to say a few words about that case. It was quite true that the unfortunate young man referred to had committed the crime mentioned. It was also quite correct, as had been stated by the Minister for Lands, that he was in the receipt of only 25s. a week, that large sums of money passed through his hands, that he was tempted and fell, by taking certain money belonging to the State. There was this, however, to be considered: that he admitted his crime, and was now paying the penalty. He was only newly-married, and about twenty-two years of age. In the meantime, he (the Colonial Secretary) had recommended his case for the consideration of the Government, to see whether he might not be allowed to get the benefit of the Offenders' Probation Act, which, he thought, would be a very proper thing in such

a case. He did not think any blame could be attached to Mr. Young, because he had to be away from his office on official business, and had no other assistant but that youth, at the low salary stated. He thought that case showed the necessity of strengthening the hands of officers at such important places as Rockhampton by giving them higher-paid assistants than the poor young lad in question. He was very glad the matter had been brought before the Committee, because he felt very sorry indeed for the young fellow, who, as the hon. member for Charters Towers had stated, was tempted, and the temptation overmastered him. However, as he had stated, he had in view recommending that he should be liberated under the Offenders' Probation Act.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Mr. ARCHER said he was very glad to hear what had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, because he had known that young lad as a very civil and obliging young fellow ; and it was certainly a great cut to those who knew him to find that he had done wrong at all. The very fact of his admitting his fault, and not trying to defend himself—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : He gave himself into custody.

Mr. ARCHER said that that fact showed that his was one of those cases in which leniency should be shown, and that lad should be allowed his liberty under the Act referred to by the Colonial Secretary. He was not one of those who pitied men who did such things, but he did think that if that young man was allowed out under the Offenders' Probation Act he would probably live to become an honest and honourable citizen. He was well-known and generally respected in Rockhampton, and those who knew him were very sorry to learn that he had committed a mistake.

Mr. ANNEN said he understood the Minister for Lands to say that it was not his intention to let Mr. Board, the Land Agent at Gympie, go down to Maryborough. That was a great mistake, as Mr. Board, in going to Maryborough, went as an arbitrator between the land agent there and the people. The Land Agent in Maryborough, he thought, should go to places like Tiaro and the Isis Scrub. Days should be named on which persons requiring land could put in their applications, and be in attendance, and the land agent could be there, as he could go by railway to all those places. They all knew that there was often friction between a land agent and the selectors of his district, and if Mr. Board was allowed to go to Maryborough, he would go as a conciliatory person, and could do the business of the office connected with the granting of certificates and the holding of land grants, and he was admittedly a valuable officer of the department.

Mr. BARLOW said the same principle might be very well applied in some of the districts around Ipswich, where selectors were sometimes put to considerable inconvenience and delay. Such a system would be a very good thing for that district where railway communication was so general. He was exceedingly glad to hear the remarks of the Colonial Secretary about the case of that unfortunate young man at Rockhampton. He had been much distressed on reading the report of the case, and finding that, owing to the very small salary that young man had been receiving, he had been led into trouble. The case also confirmed what he had previously said in that House as to the advantage of the Offenders' Probation Act.

The Hon. W. PATTISON said he was very pleased that the late Attorney-General had brought that case before the Committee. He knew the young man Vize from his childhood, and had known his parents before they were married. He could confirm all that had been said by his hon. colleague in the representation of Rockhampton, Mr. Archer. He blamed the foolish policy of the late Minister for Lands for the state of affairs existing in the lands office at Rockhampton. At all events, since that gentleman took office, Mr. Young had to his knowledge, time after time, brought the wants of the office before the notice of the department. Mr. Young had actually been without a draftsman for some years, and had to do the whole of the work himself. He (Mr. Pattison) knew of his own knowledge that the plans in the Rockhampton land office, prepared many years ago under the 1868 Land Act, were now almost worn out, and the Lands Office in Brisbane had refused, or at all events had failed, to send up a draftsman to prepare fresh ones. In addition to failing to give Mr. Young sufficient assistance, the late Minister for Lands had saddled him with the duty of travelling to Clermont to do the land office work there, and there was no one to do the work in the Rockhampton office, in his absence, but that boy Vize, who was receiving the paltry sum of £65 per annum. Was not that temptation enough to have led him astray ? He thought the Minister was to blame for such work having to be done by that boy. During the absence of Mr. Young he had to do all the work of the office, and he was the receiver of all the March rents, and sums of money exceeding £10,000 went through his hands during the last week in the month of March. Then the lad, who was newly married, was tempted by some pressing want, and took money which did not belong to him. It might be said that officers in the employment of the State had no right to get married until their salaries reached a certain amount ; but for all that he blamed, not only the late Ministry, but the present Ministry, for neglecting to send up an officer to fulfil the duties of that office during the absence of Mr. Young. He had presented a petition to the Colonial Secretary, signed by the mayor and leading residents of Rockhampton, in connection with the case of young Vize, and he was very glad to hear the Colonial Secretary say that he intended to recommend that the provisions of the Offenders' Probation Act should be extended to Vize. If that were done it would give great satisfaction to the inhabitants of Rockhampton, where the lad was well known, and was now receiving the deep sympathy of almost every member of the community.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he was exceedingly pleased to hear the Colonial Secretary state that that case was under his consideration, and that the result would probably be that the provisions of the Offenders' Probation Act would be extended to that unfortunate lad. He was sure that in his case there had really almost been an offence committed by those who had placed him in the position of temptation in which he was. While he did not concur in what the hon. member for Rockhampton had said in regard to the culpability of the late Minister for Lands in connection with the case, still he thought it showed how Ministers were placed in an awkward position when required to make sufficient provision for the public service and the due administration of the departments, and, at the same time, practice the most rigid economy. When they incurred the expense necessary for the efficient working of the departments, they were cried out against from one end of the country to the other by their political opponents

for extravagance. It was quite possible that that cry could be overdone, and the case before them was an example of it. The late Minister for Lands was not any more to blame than the present Minister, or any preceding Minister; it was the system that was wrong. He had been under the impression that Vize was getting a salary of £100 a year, and he was astounded to find that he was only getting 25s. a week. He thought that the provision made for his successor was not nearly enough; and that some arrangement should be made by which his successor should be placed beyond the temptation to supplement his income in the way Vize had done. The system was wrong, and should be remedied so that they might have no repetition of that kind of offence.

Mr. GROOM said that the arguments adduced with reference to the young man at Rockhampton might also be applied to the office at Toowoomba. There was a clerk in that office getting £40 a year, and the Minister for Lands proposed now to give him £75. When Mr. Warner was absent on his duties as Land Commissioner that young man would be in charge; and he would ask whether £75 a year was sufficient for a clerk who had occasionally to take charge of an important office like that at Toowoomba? The previous officer, Mr. Davidson, received £150 per year, but he had received twelve months' leave of absence, and had also disappeared from the Estimates. What that meant he did not know. The present clerk had to do the same work as an officer who previously received £150 a year. In the month of March about £8,000 or £10,000 had to pass through his hands, and it was really placing temptation in his way to expect him to do the work for £75 a year. The hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Pattison, had alluded to the maps in the Lands Office at Rockhampton; and what the hon. member said applied equally to the maps in the Toowoomba office. He could assure the Committee that when gentlemen from the other colonies had called on him for information with regard to taking up land, and he had taken them to the Land Office at Toowoomba, he felt ashamed to show them the dirty smoky maps, which had been in use since the year 1. There were no new maps showing the land thrown open for selection, and there was very little information at all to be got in the office with regard to selection. There was not even one of the books recently published, copies of which had been sent to England. If copies were sent to the country districts they would be just as valuable as in England, because they would enable the people of Queensland, as well as people from the other colonies, to obtain information about land open to selection. As he said before, Toowoomba was in the same position as Rockhampton with regard to maps, and he hoped the Minister for Lands would see that complete sets of maps were supplied to the offices there.

Mr. BUCKLAND said that the remarks which had been made with regard to the absence of maps and information as to land open for selection applied also to the Land Office in Brisbane. He knew that a gentleman from the old country, who was anxious to get land for agricultural purposes, had been twice or three times to the Land Office in Brisbane, but had not yet been able to get the latest Acts or any information at all. The information that should be supplied *ad libitum* to new arrivals had to be dragged out of the officials. With regard to the item "Commission on sales at auction," he wished to know whether that covered commissions for land sold at auction throughout the colony, and what was the rate of commission paid to Government auctioneers for sales of land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that the clerk referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, did not have to receive the rents. He understood the hon. member to say that receiving the rents was a great temptation to the clerk at Toowoomba, but the rents were received by the Land Commissioner.

Mr. GROOM: Who receives them when the Land Commissioner is away?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he assumed that the clerk in question was a likely lad, whose parents were glad to get him into the office, and who was prepared to advance gradually as opportunity offered. He could not of his own knowledge say whether he was underpaid or overpaid. If he was seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen years of age, and aspired to the Civil service—which he never would advise any young man to do—perhaps he was quite satisfied with £75 a year. He had received no complaint on the subject; and he dared say that the young man would be very glad to hear that he was to get an increase from £40 to £75 a year. With regard to the difficulty of obtaining maps and information generally in the Land Office at Brisbane, if the hon. member for Bulimba went into that office now he would see a radical change. It was becoming quite a popular place of resort. Hon. members would hardly expect it, but the place was becoming quite a land exchange; and he had taken great pains to make the place popular, and afford all the information any stranger might require. Anyone desiring information would be shown all the lands in the colony open to selection, whether as grazing farms, agricultural farms, village settlement areas, pastoral land, or areas held under occupation license, and could immediately obtain all the information he desired. And having decided upon what part of the colony he would like to settle in, he would be shown maps by the officer in charge, who also did his best to render the place as popular as possible and give all the information required by the public. He believed that no Minister was ever more anxious to meet the wishes of the public than his predecessor; but he could see at once those things that were requisite, and being in Brisbane, he first effected a reform there. And he (Mr. Black) hoped before long to be able to effect the same reform, and give the public the same advantages in the country land offices as in Brisbane. All he asked for was reasonable time to do what was necessary.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said Toowoomba had always been very fortunate in having so able an advocate to represent it as the hon. member, Mr. Groom, but all the complaints he had made about the Land Office there could be applied with greater force to Ipswich. The hon. member grumbled at the pay of a clerk being increased from £40 to £75 a year, but the unfortunate clerk at Ipswich received not 1s. increase. Besides, there were two land offices in the Ipswich district, one at Stanley and one at Ipswich, and he did not see anything down for a clerk to the Esk commissioner. The commissioners in other places had a clerk, but that officer had to do all the work himself. It was not quite certain that all promotions in the department were awarded on merit. There was very little competition in the Civil service, and the sooner such a system was introduced the better. He wished to point out that the land agent at Ipswich had been there for twenty years, no complaint had ever been made against him, and yet his salary was only £300. Mr. Cameron was one of the ablest men in the whole colony, and his salary had not been increased for thirteen or fourteen years. With regard to the handling of money, the young men spoken of, although they were not supposed to

handle the money, had the run of drawers and offices, and it was a great mistake to allow a lad, receiving only £40 a year, to handle so much money.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he could confirm the hon. member for Stanley in his statement about the Ipswich Land Office. The Minister for Lands must be aware that there was scarcely any land office in the colony that got through so much work with the same number of hands. There were three clerks. A chief clerk, or land agent, at £300, one at £160, and one at £40. Now, the lad receiving £40 had been there over two years, and the salary was very small indeed. It was really not sufficient to keep him in clothing and boots, and the amount of work done would warrant a greater amount of money being given to those clerks. He noticed that the Gympie land agent received £325, and he had not as much work to do as the Ipswich land agent. The Minister for Lands would do well to look into those matters, and pay all the clerks according to the amount of work they had to do. He thought the Ipswich officers were deserving of increases.

Mr. BARLOW said he was happy to confirm the remarks made by his hon. colleague and the member for Stanley with reference to the land agent at Ipswich, and it had been a matter of surprise to him that such an able officer had not received promotion to some other and more important position, where his great abilities would be of undoubted assistance to the country. He was certainly one of the most able men in the Lands Department, and his office was a model of neatness and system.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he was glad to hear that a great improvement had taken place in the department, so far as the map room was concerned, and the method of giving information to the people, because he knew for a fact that a considerable number of agriculturists were leaving Great Britain for Queensland; and when people had taken the trouble and gone to the expense of coming such a distance they should receive all available information. He would remind the hon. gentleman that he had not replied to his question in reference to the vote of £200 for commission on sales of land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the practice hitherto had been to give the clerks of petty sessions or land agents who conducted the sales, £3 3s. for each sale. Where land had been sold by auction, the commission was $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Mr. SMYTH said the comparison made by the member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, between the clerks in the Ipswich and Gympie offices was not fair, considering that in the Ipswich office the work was done by a boy, and in Gympie by a man.

Mr. OSULLIVAN: It is done by a man in Ipswich.

Mr. SMYTH said the amount put down for the clerk at Ipswich was £40. At Gympie, the work was done by Mr. Cole, who took the place of the land agent. The land agent had constantly to go away and visit other portions of the district, and Mr. Cole, who received £150, had to do the work. He certainly thought that sum was not sufficient.

Mr. GANNON said, following up the remarks with reference to the plan office, he had had a great deal to do with the office, and always found it in the hands of a specially efficient officer. A long time before he became a member of Parliament he had a good deal to do with Mr. James, and found that he was able to give information in reference to lands in all parts of the colony. He fancied that the person referred to by the member for Bulimba must have got into the

wrong office, because he was certain that Mr. James would have given all the information that was required.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he was not referring so much to the way in which the maps were exhibited as to the absence of information concerning the Land Act and its amendments. He had had to give the gentleman he referred to all the details he required in his own office.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Gympie did not catch thoroughly what the hon. member for Ipswich said about the position in which the land office at Ipswich was in. The officer at Gympie, who received £150 a year, did the work that was paid for at Maryborough, Ipswich, and Rockhampton at the rate of £300 a year. At Ipswich they had a land agent at £300. He believed that Mr. Rule received £400—in all £800.

Mr. OSULLIVAN: He is the commissioner.

Mr. ANNEAR said Mr. Rule was the commissioner, but he went to Ipswich and held courts and granted certificates. That which cost in other places £300 a year was done in Gympie for £150. Now, he was not in the habit of speaking very much, but when he put a question to a Minister, he should get an answer. He had asked whether Mr. Board was to go to Maryborough or not? The admission made by the Minister for Lands with reference to the system of promotion in the Lands Department was an unfortunate one, and it was to be hoped that it did not apply to other departments of the public service. The hon. gentleman stated that in appointing a successor to Mr. Shepherd he consulted Mr. Rule. He (Mr. Annear) thought that if he had been in the position of the Minister he would have consulted some officer who had been longer in the service than Mr. Rule. They had heard, and he believed there was some truth in the statement, that it took Mr. Rule all his time to carry out the duties of his own office. Why was not the Under Secretary of the department consulted in a question of promotion, or the Surveyor-General, or the chief clerk? The hon. gentleman also stated that now was the only time that persons could get any information in the Lands office; that the arrangements there had been very imperfect until within the last month or two, but now they were perfect. He (Mr. Annear) had gone to the Lands office scores of times to make inquiries for his constituents, and other persons, and he could say that he had always met with the greatest courtesy, and received prompt and reliable information, and from no one did he receive greater courtesy or more prompt information than from a gentleman who was now in the gallery, Mr. Heeney. He hoped the Minister would reconsider his determination not to allow Mr. Commissioner Board to visit Maryborough to hold courts there, because if that decision were carried out there would be very little land selected in Maryborough. There was any amount of good land in the district, but there was a good deal of trouble in getting information at the office in Maryborough. No one had had more trouble than he had in getting information there. He would not say that the information was denied, but it was given in such a way as to be of very little benefit to the applicant.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said on that vote—which was headed "Sale of land," but which ought to be called "Selection of land," because those officers were almost entirely concerned in selection—he thought it was usual to ask for information as to the progress of selection. They had seen the annual report of the Under Secretary for the last year, and he was sure it

would be interesting to the Committee and the public to know what was the rate of selection at the present time, and since the last report was laid on the table of the House. Another thing he would like to know something about, was the subject of village settlement. He was sorry that his hon. friend, Mr. Jordan, was not there that evening. That hon. member did not understand that the land Estimates would come on that day, or he would have been glad to be present, although his health was not very good. He (Sir S. W. Griffith) would like to know something about those two matters—the progress of selection, and the progress of village settlement.

Mr. HYNÉ said he did not exactly agree with what had fallen from his colleague, Mr. Annear. He was afraid the hon. member had cast aspersions on the Land Agent at Maryborough which were undeserved.

Mr. ANNEAR: I cast no aspersions on him.

Mr. HYNÉ said the remarks of the hon. member could be construed in that way. The hon. member remarked that if Mr. Board ceased to visit Maryborough there would be very little land selected. The fact was that if Mr. Hudson, the land agent, had a fault, it was over-zeal in giving information. That gentleman was a most painstaking man, and always ready to give information to applicants. He (Mr. Hyné) was afraid that the remarks of his colleague were rather derogatory to Mr. Hudson.

Mr. ANNEAR said he cast no aspersion whatever on Mr. Hudson. But he did say that that gentleman had a very abrupt manner. When he was last in Maryborough he had to go several times to the office of the land agent with the late Minister for Lands. When Mr. Jordan left the office he said to him (Mr. Annear), "Well, I am not surprised that there is not a great deal of business done in the land office at Maryborough, as I consider Mr. Hudson's conduct very abrupt indeed."

Mr. MELLOR said, with reference to the suggestion made by the hon. member for Burrum, that the commissioner should be allowed to go further out into the country districts and accept applications there, he thought the idea was a very good one. For instance, one part of the Isis Scrub district belonged to Bundaberg, and another to Maryborough, and it was sometimes very difficult for applicants in that district to know which place they belonged to. It would be a very much better plan if a court could be appointed to sit at such places as the Isis Scrub, Tiaro, and other places throughout the district. It would facilitate the selection of land, and be a great assistance and saving of expense to selectors. There was another suggestion he would offer, and that was that land commissioners should have power to deal with selections taken up in another district. For instance, there was a good deal of selection going on in the Nanango district by residents in the Gympie district, and they had to go all the way to Nanango to make applications, and to appear there again on the day their names were called. The journeying to and fro in such cases caused considerable expense and loss of time. His suggestion was that they should allow commissioners to receive testimony in reference to the fulfilment of conditions and other matters in the district where the people lived. That would save the loss of much time and render unnecessary a great deal of travelling. A good deal of irritation was sometimes caused by the Land Commissioners opposing a proceeding of that nature. He made an application himself on one occasion to the Minister for Lands to allow an examination to take place in his district with regard to a selection in the Nanango district, and he

knew that the land agent at Nanango resented it, and gave all the trouble he possibly could. He knew that people living in the Logan district had asked permission to have their business done with the commissioner at Gympie, and it had been granted. As he had said before, it would save an immense amount of trouble and annoyance to selectors if those little matters could be dealt with in the way suggested.

Mr. POWERS said he did not intend to give hon. members to understand that there was any desire on the part of anyone that Mr. Board should discontinue his visits to Maryborough. The whole district was so satisfied with the way in which matters were conducted by Mr. Board that they wished the present state of affairs to be continued. He had simply suggested that the system should be carried one step further, and that the commissioner should not only visit Maryborough, but also the Isis Scrub and Tiaro, so as to receive applications. He would also point out that if Mr. Hudson were appointed commissioner at Maryborough, that would be another office. The office was worked from Gympie at present because that was a central point, and there was no necessity for a commissioner at Maryborough, because the work could not be better carried on than it was at present.

Mr. ISAMBERT said more facilities should be given to intending selectors. Selectors encountered great difficulties and hardships in the matters alluded to by previous speakers. There was a case at present in his hands where a large number of Rosewood settlers went up to Toowoomba to select land under the village settlement scheme at Crow's Nest. They had to go to the expense of getting up to Toowoomba and spending some time there, and then fell into the hands of a surveyor named Hassall. Each man paid £1, supposing that it was part of the money that had to be paid for the land; but they were clearly defrauded of that amount. They had asked him to obtain some redress; but he had told them there was no redress, although he would bring the matter under the notice of the Minister. He thought the Minister should issue instructions to the land agents to make out applications if the persons could not do it themselves. Some better arrangement should be made by which people in any locality could go to the nearest land court and select land in such places where they intended to go in for village settlement.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he should be very glad to give information as to the progress of village settlement and selection, and no doubt it would interest hon. members. Up to the present time there had been 9 village settlements surveyed and thrown open to selection, containing 253 portions of land in the aggregate, and of that number only 64 portions had been selected. In the Brisbane district there was one settlement at Ninderry, where there were 19 portions, and the whole 19 were applied for, and one at Connondale, where there were 28 portions, and only 2 applied for. In the Bundaberg district there was one at Cordalba, where there were 28 portions, and 23 applied for. In the Gympie district there was one at Tuckeko, where there were 14 portions and 12 applied for. In the Inglewood district there was one settlement at Koorangarra where there were 38 portions and not one applied for, and one at South Koorangarra, where there were 33 portions and only 3 applied for. In the Mackay district, there was one at St. Helens, where there were 38 portions and not a single one applied for; and one at Murrinda where there were 27 portions and not one applied for. In the Nanango district, there was one at Taabinga, where there

were 28 portions and 5 applied for. The actual cost of the survey of these amounted to £1,453, and the total rents received amounted to £70 8s. 6d., and the survey fees, which were paid in five yearly instalments, to £68 19s. 6d. So that the total amount of receipts was £139 8s., against an expenditure for the survey of land of £1,453. He was not making any comments, but merely giving hon. members a plain statement of the facts. It appeared to him that in certain districts, where those village settlements were near centres of population, so that farmers could get a market for their produce, they were likely to be successful; but in districts where none of them had been surveyed, away from any settlement, and where it was expected that a selector would be able to make a living out of eighty acres, which was the maximum, of in many cases, indifferent land, it was cruel to the men to attempt to induce them to go on the land, and it was hopeless to think that any good result would accrue. Those were the village settlements which had been already thrown open for selection. The principle was receiving a thorough and fair trial, and he was determined that the steps taken by his predecessor, who was most sanguine as to the success of the scheme, should not in any way be thwarted by any action of his. Wherever initiatory proceedings were taken and surveys made, the system was being carried on, and the land would be thrown open gradually for selection by the public. There were certainly one or two which, to his own knowledge, could only result in failure, as they were situated in parts of the country where there was no chance of expecting settlement on a small scale to succeed for many years to come. Now, at Port Douglas there was a village settlement which he imagined would go off very well—the village of Euluma. That would be opened for selection on the 5th of November. At Roma there was a village settlement—a village called Cogurra. There were sixty farms there and only five had been applied for. Near Toowoomba there was the village of Ravensbourne, and he believed that also would be a success, because it had the advantages which he considered necessary to make it a success. There was good land, and it was within reasonable distance of a market, and a large population was already settled in the vicinity.

Mr. GROOM: It was never advertised except in the *Government Gazette*. People know nothing about it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said there were to be eighty farms, and the land would be thrown open on the 5th of November. Even if they had never been advertised at all, the land would be applied for two or three times over. At Mount Britton, near Nebo, a village settlement, called Dullaarunga, would be thrown open on the 5th of November also. There would be eleven farms there, but he was afraid it was not very likely to be a success. Then, in addition to those, the Committee would understand that they had one at Blackall. That had been surveyed. There was one at Gympie called Brooyar, two at Herberton, one of which was likely to be selected—Allumbah.

Mr. MURPHY: There is one at Barcardine.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said there was one near Mackay, at Cape Hillsborough, another at Herberton, which was not likely to be taken up, and which he had advised that no further steps should be taken in connection with, as it was not very far from one of the other village settlements, and no one had ever applied for a single one of the selections. Some of that land had been open for selection for years at 2s. 6d. an acre, and no one would ever take up any of it, although they could get 160 acres

and upwards. There was one at Maryborough called Teebar, one at Port Douglas, and one at Roma. In addition to those there was a number of other places where the late Minister for Lands had placed on record his desire to have village settlements—one at Blackall, one at Toowoomba, four at Bundaberg, another at Cairns, three at Gympie, one at Herberton, three at Maryborough, one at Port Douglas, and three at Roma, and with regard to all those it was his intention, as soon as he saw that there was any chance of getting people under that system on the land, and any expectation of success, to proceed with the scheme instituted by his predecessor in the department, and in which he knew many hon. members sincerely believed. The total amount up to the present time spent in survey was £4,658, while they had only got back £139 8s.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It is too soon.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the Committee must understand that they could not carry on a large department unless they got some revenue, and they were not getting it from that scheme, although he hoped they were getting settlement. He had placed the real facts of the case before hon. members, and they could see that in many cases settlement was not taking place. If some of those sites had been more judiciously selected, a great saving would have accrued to the country.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: What about general selection?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that he could not give the hon. gentleman the exact areas that were being selected, except up to the end of last June, which would be found in the returns of the department. Grazing settlement had proceeded very satisfactorily. Grazing farms, whenever they had been proclaimed, were applied for at once; and he considered that that portion of the Act was giving general satisfaction. Agricultural settlement was not proceeding as rapidly as he should wish, but that was probably on account of the very bad seasons, and the almost hopelessness of the selector being able to get any reasonable return within a reasonable time. Homestead selection, on the contrary, was proceeding very satisfactorily indeed. In fact, the bulk of the selection taking place was in the direction of what they might call homestead farms and grazing farms; but the selection was not proceeding very rapidly with regard to what were known as agricultural farms—that was farms at higher prices than the homestead selections.

Mr. MURPHY said that he would like to point out to the Minister for Lands that to make some of those village settlements a success it would be well worth while if the department advised the Hydraulic Engineer's Department to start some scheme of obtaining a water supply, and ascertain if some scheme of irrigation could not be devised by which the people could be induced to select the lands surveyed for those village settlements. For instance, in the neighbourhood of some of the Western towns, if they were to grow vegetables by white labour instead of by the Chinese as at present it would be necessary for the Government to see if they could not provide some means of irrigation by which the people selecting those farms could get water for the purpose of growing crops sufficient to supply the demand in their neighbourhood. Of course all the vegetables were grown now by irrigation, but that was only done on a limited scale by the Chinese getting on to some large waterhole and using the water, but they went no further than growing vegetables. If a proper irrigation scheme, such as a bore, were put down in the neighbourhood of those village settlements, all the maize and wheat and

grain of all kinds required for food, and for horse feed in the Western portion of the colony, could be locally produced, and they might by that means make the scheme of village settlement a success; but, unless some assistance were given by the Government in that way, the scheme would fail. He hoped the Lands Department would work with the Hydraulic Engineer's Department in any scheme for irrigation that they could devise. Of course the hon. gentleman pointed to the fact that a great deal of money had been spent in the surveys, and very little revenue had accrued to the Lands Department from that; and, although he had not exactly said so, yet he could tell from the hon. gentleman's tone that he was inclined to think in consequence that the village settlement scheme had been a failure.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. I have nothing to complain of.

Mr. MURPHY said the hon. gentleman had said that, but he did not think it, judging from his tone, and he (Mr. Murphy) was inclined to think, from his very cool tones, that the scheme was not likely to be a success. He did not think that village settlement was a kind of settlement from which the Lands Department should expect a great deal of revenue. The object was to get farming communities settled in close proximity to each other, where they might have schools and other necessities of civilised life within reach. Especially in the western portion of the colony the children of selectors had to grow up almost uneducated. A village settlement would enable those who composed it to work for one another's benefit; they would form a compact, instead of a scattered community. If the Lands Department would try to work with the Hydraulic Engineer's Department in preparing some scheme of water supply, by boring on the site of those village settlements, it would do a great deal towards promoting close settlement in the colony.

Mr. GROOM said he could not allow the debate on that subject to close without saying how exceedingly glad he was—and he believed the entire Committee shared his sentiments—to hear the statement which the Minister for Lands had made with regard to the progress of settlement. It was very gratifying, more especially in view of the very bad season the colony was going through. Men who had been in the colony fifty years had assured him that they had never known a season so severe as the present, and they looked forward with dread to what would happen unless a change came soon. It was useless to expect people to take up farming land until that change did take place; they would not do so in such a dreadful season as the colony was now suffering under. He was pleased to hear that village settlement had progressed in the way stated by the hon. gentleman. It was a perfectly new departure as far as Queensland was concerned, and it had not been attempted in any of the other colonies. Where village settlements had been formed in the neighbourhood of towns, or where there was a market easily accessible by railway, a good many selections had been taken up. He was particularly interested in the Ravensbourne settlement, and was pleased to hear that there were already eighty farms open for selection. People were anxiously waiting for that land to be thrown open, and he believed he was right in saying there would be at least 200 applications lodged for it. He knew of eight or ten Lincoln farmers with their families who had been waiting for the last ten months, and as soon as the land was thrown open they would be among the people who would endeavour to settle down there. With regard to the £4,000 spent on surveys, it counted as nothing compared with

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the settlement of people on the land; and if the return in the shape of revenue was small, it should be remembered that the more people were settled on the land the greater would be the consumption of dutiable articles imported through the Custom-house. In view of the present deplorable season the colony might congratulate itself on the fact that settlement was progressing so steadily and so satisfactorily; and the figures given by the hon. gentleman would be read with great satisfaction throughout the colony. He was pleased, also, to hear that the Minister for Lands was going to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, Mr. Jordan, as far as village settlements and grazing farms were concerned. If the hon. gentleman did so, he believed that next session he would have as gratifying a story to tell as he had told them that evening.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that as the instigator of the village settlement scheme, he naturally took a lively interest in its progress, and he could assure the Committee that the statement of the Minister for Lands that the scheme was to have a fair trial had given him great satisfaction—that it was not to be interrupted owing to the change in the heads of the department. If only proper care was taken in selecting suitable land, not too far away from centres of population, there could not be the least doubt that it would be a success. He would suggest that in more distant places, where the land was suitable, although there was no likelihood of settlement at present, the Government should reserve that land for village settlement. They need not go to the expense of surveying it; it would be enough for the present to reserve it, until in the course of a few years it was wanted, as it certainly would be, for village settlement.

Mr. ANNEAR said he had to congratulate the hon. member for Barcoo. They had always been led to believe that that hon. member was a "pure merino," and now they found that he was possessed with a desire to settle people on the lands of the colony.

Mr. MURPHY: So I have always been.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member did not bear that reputation, and he was glad to find that they had been mistaken in him. They had been told that the hon. member was the most pronounced squatter in the colony, and now it appeared that he possessed the most liberal ideas. The Minister for Lands was under a misapprehension with regard to a question put to him by the hon. member for Burrum. The hon. gentleman said he should take the hint, and intimated that for the future Mr. Board, the commissioner for the Wide Bay district, would not go to Maryborough for his court. He took it to be so. The hon. members for Gympie and himself had referred to it, but it seemed that the hon. gentleman was not inclined to extend any courtesy to members on that side of the Committee, and especially to the members for Wide Bay, Gympie, and Maryborough. He certainly thought that, in the interests of his (Mr. Annear's) constituents, and of a good many others living in that district, the Minister, after what he had heard from the hon. member for Burrum, would state whether it was his intention to reconsider the determination he had arrived at in that matter a short time ago.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the hon. gentleman was under a misapprehension in saying that he had arrived at any determination at all. What he had said was that it appeared to be an anomaly that while they had a land agent at Maryborough receiving £300 a year he was not able to hold a land court. First of all,

it was pointed out that great inconvenience was caused by the commissioner having to go from Gympie to Maryborough, and it struck him that, if such were the case, it would be worth inquiring into the matter, to see whether the land agent at Maryborough could not be called "commissioner," and hold courts there. He had arrived at no decision, but simply said he would inquire into the matter. He was going to make himself acquainted as far as possible with the duties of officers away from Brisbane, and any information the hon. member could give him would be received with thanks, and would receive consideration. It could not be expected that he should know exactly what was the best course to be adopted in all cases, and he was astonished at the hon. gentleman stating that he had refused to extend to him the courtesy to which he was entitled.

Mr. ANNEAR : I always speak what I think, you know.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he did not know what courtesy the hon. gentleman expected. He had always endeavoured to be as courteous to him as possible, and if he had wounded his self-esteem or self-respect in any way he was very sorry for it.

Question put and passed.

BAILIFFS AND RANGERS OF CROWN LANDS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS, in moving £5,010, salaries and travelling expenses of bailiffs and rangers of Crown lands, said there was a reduction of £1,050 on the vote of last year, brought about by leaving out the salaries of five rangers whose services would not be required after the end of the year, and £50 less for incidental expenses.

Mr. MELLOR asked if the hon. gentleman could give the names of the rangers whose services were to be dispensed with, and also whether it was intended to give them other employment in the department?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said it had not been decided yet whose services would be dispensed with. The royalty on timber would either have to be collected up to the end of the year, or else the rangers would have to see that new licenses were taken out by those cutting timber. With reference to the five rangers whose services would be dispensed with, one had died, that reduced the number to four. For one of those four employment would probably be found in the Lands office in Brisbane, and he hoped that by the end of the year, they would be able to find employment for the others. At all events they had a right to the first vacancies that occurred in the department.

Mr. HYNE said he thought that might be a convenient time to discuss the new timber regulations. He would like to know whether they were to look upon the regulations as issued as final.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the regulations had been gazetted, and the hon. gentleman would have plenty of opportunities of discussing them in the usual way.

Question put and passed.

SURVEY OF ROADS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS, in moving £1,825—salaries and contingencies—for the survey of roads, said the Estimate was in every way identical with that of last year.

Question put and passed.

PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS, in moving £7,436—salaries and contingencies—in connection with pastoral occupation, said the amount showed a decrease of £2,386 on last year's Estimate. There was an increase of £14 to the messenger, a decrease of £100 in the salary of the officer in charge, and a reduction of £300 in the case of a draftsman whose services were no longer required. The vote for survey of runs was reduced by £2,000, the department having assured him that £4,000 would be ample for that purpose.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE asked the hon. gentleman why the salary of the officer in charge had been reduced by £100? Was he a new officer to whom it was not considered desirable to give the original salary at the start?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the officer referred to had previously received £300 and was promoted to his present position with an increase of £100.

Question put and passed.

SURVEY OF LAND.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS, in moving £37,700—salaries and contingencies—survey of land, said there was a decrease of £26 on the vote of last year.

Mr. MORGAN said he had intended to raise the question of the suspension of Mr. Surveyor Steele on that vote, but he would take another opportunity of introducing the matter, and he hoped a discussion would take place upon it later on. He would like to ask the Minister for Lands about some new system in connection with surveys, which had come into vogue in the last year or two, and by which selectors taking up land, and having paid the survey fee demanded at the time of application, were subsequently required to pay an additional survey fee? That was a matter which was causing a great deal of dissatisfaction at present. It might be capable of easy explanation, but the selectors did not understand it, and that rather increased the grievance they felt. One or two instances occurring in his own district had been brought under his notice. In one case a selector was required to lodge with his application a survey fee of £14 11s., and when he received his confirmation papers he was required to pay an extra survey fee of £3 11s. 11d., making a total of £18 2s. 11d. Previously selectors had only the one demand made upon them for survey fees, and they had not been apprised of any change in the arrangements. The first intimation the majority of them got was an endorsement for extra survey fees upon their confirmation papers, amounting in some cases to a very considerable amount. In another case a man was called upon to pay a considerable increase upon the amount originally demanded. He was called upon to pay, in the first instance, as much for the survey of his block of land as selectors formerly paid, and then he was called upon to pay an additional fee, although, as a matter of fact, there were only two lines requiring to be surveyed on that selection, as there were selections on either side of it, the lines of which had been run. In connection with that matter he might also state that some selectors had not only to pay the additional survey fee, but they found an endorsement like this on their confirmation papers: "Residue of rent, 4s. 11d." How did that arise? What was the extra rent for? The selectors were always told at the time they made their applications what their annual rent would be, and although the extra amount demanded was but a very small item it was not understood by the people. Those were

grievances which were ranking in the breasts of many selectors, and that was a favourable opportunity for the Minister to make some statement which would prove satisfactory or allay a good deal of doubt that had arisen.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said there was no doubt that complaints were frequently made by selectors that the amounts they were called upon to pay for surveys were in excess of what they were stated to be when they lodged their applications. He had made inquiries from the Surveyor-General on the subject, and he was assured they were charged only the actual cost of the survey. No doubt the system was somewhat misleading to the selector, but he was not at present prepared to say how it could be remedied, unless by charging a very much higher survey fee in the first instance. Then, again, the cost of surveys varied very much in different districts, and it varied again where a surveyor had to go out to make a few and comparatively isolated surveys, as in such cases the cost of survey would necessarily be more than where a large number of selections could be surveyed at once. So far as he had been able to ascertain, the selectors were only charged the actual cost of the survey. With regard to the other matter mentioned, of 4s. 11d. for extra rent, he had not heard of that before, and could only assume that there was a small area beyond that surveyed included in the selection and a proportionate rent was charged for it. If the hon. member would bring his memo. to the office he would make inquiries into the matter.

Mr. BARLOW said there was one matter in connection with the survey branch that had been brought under his notice. He was not at liberty to give particulars, but the substance of the complaint was that there were delays in paying the surveyors, and, further, when a considerable amount of money appeared to have been made in a short time by pushing on the work, deductions were made and were carried out in a somewhat arbitrary manner. He was not prepared to make any charge or find any fault, but no doubt the hon. gentleman in charge of the department would give the matter consideration, and see if such a state of things did exist.

Mr. MORGAN said that with regard to the statement that the selectors were not called upon to pay more than the actual cost of survey, that might be true, but he would ask the Minister for Lands if it was not possible that some scheme could be devised by which the selector, when making his application, could pay at once and for all the actual cost of survey? That had been done up to within the last year or two. In the case of a small selector going to the Lands office and being told he would have to pay so much for survey fees, he made provision for that amount, but then an unexpected demand was made upon him for perhaps one-half of the original fee, and for that he made no provision. With regard to surveyors having to survey isolated selections, he could not see why a selector, having selected 640 acres, should have to pay perhaps double as much for his survey as one who went to the district a year or two before him. He did not know whether it was possible to average the survey charges, as, if it was, it ought to be done. Then there were special charges for scrub land and country of that kind, by which a man who took up a very inferior block of land to that taken up by his neighbour might have to pay a much higher fee for his survey. If it was possible to arrange an average rate, and to provide that the payment on application should discharge all liability for surveys, it should be done.

Mr. ADAMS said that during the past year he had received several letters complaining

about the matter brought forward by the hon. member for Warwick, but he had never been able to get any satisfactory explanation. The 44th section of the Land Act of 1884 contained the following provision:—

"1. The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the board, may suspend the operation of so much of the last preceding section as requires the land to be actually surveyed and marked on the ground before it is proclaimed open for selection, and may require the Surveyor-General to divide the land into lots, and to indicate the position of such lots on proper maps or plans;

"2. The land may thereupon be proclaimed open for selection in the same manner as if it had been surveyed, and the delineation of the lots on the maps or plans shall be deemed to be a survey thereof, and the lots shall be deemed to be surveyed lots for the purposes of this part of the Act."

Nearly the whole of the district he represented had been surveyed in that manner; and when a selector chose a piece of land, he had to get a surveyor to ascertain whether he had selected on one or on four lots. On one or two occasions it had been found by the surveyors that the land taken up included a corner, and belonged to four different selections. Therefore it was impossible for a poor man to select land in that manner. It was actually time lost and paper destroyed in marking out the land in that way; and considering that it lay with the Governor in Council whether they would allow that mode of survey or not, he thought it would be wise on the part of the Minister for Lands to see that no more land was surveyed in that way.

Mr. ALLAN said he quite endorsed what had been said by the hon. member for Warwick, and he trusted that the Minister for Lands would, during the recess, arrange that the selector should know exactly what he had to pay for the survey of his land. If it was necessary to make it a larger sum, let it be made larger; but after a certain price had been named, and the selector had taken up the land *bonâ fide* on the understanding that he would only have to pay that sum, it was not right to tell him afterwards that he would have to pay so much more, especially as the selector had to work his hardest to make both ends meet at his start. Being in an agricultural district, those matters came constantly before him, and he hoped they would be rectified—he knew the Minister for Lands was anxious to rectify them—as soon as possible. It would be better, instead of charging too little at first and then asking for more, to charge a little too much at first and return the difference to the selector when the cost of the survey was ascertained. That would be much more satisfactory.

Mr. GLASSEY said he noticed that thirty-two surveyors' labourers received £2,240, or about £70 a year each, and three stone-grinders and labourers in the lithographic branch received £250, or £83 6s. 8d. a year each. If those labourers were full-grown men the pay they received was very small.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the surveyors' labourers were not permanently employed. There were four attached to each camp, and their wages were 6s. 6d. and 5s. 6d. a day.

Mr. GLASSEY: Do they get rations as well?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said they did not; but they were paid for every day in the month, including Sundays, as long as their services were required.

Mr. GLASSEY said that 5s. 6d. a day for a full-grown man seemed a very small amount; and even 6s. 6d. a day for men leading rather a rough life was a very small sum. They had heard a great deal—and he agreed to a large extent with what had been said—about clerks receiving small salaries; but there were very

few comments with respect to the wages paid to ordinary labourers. He thought that men who had to do rough heavy work were entitled to more than 5s. 6d. or 6s. 6d. a day, and he hoped the Minister would take the matter into his serious consideration and increase the amount. If no increase were given to those men, and he happened to be there next year, he would table a motion for increasing the salaries, not only of those labourers, but also of labourers in every department of the Government service where labourers were employed.

Question put and passed.

TRIGONOMETRICAL SURVEY.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1888-9, a sum not exceeding £2,500 for Trigonometrical Survey. It was contemplated to proceed more vigorously with the work, and the £1,000 hitherto voted would be insufficient.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1888-9, a sum not exceeding £2,430 for the Department of Agriculture. There was an increase of £330 on the previous year's vote. The clerk, Mr. Scriven, was previously paid £250 from contingencies, and it was thought more satisfactory to the House to let it be known exactly what the salaries were. He did not believe in contingencies being voted to cover salaries which Parliament knew nothing about. Another clerk who received £30 from contingencies was now also placed on the Estimates, and an addition had been made to the salary of the Government Botanist—Mr. Bailey—an increase which he was sure hon. members would approve of.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he was glad the hon. gentleman intended to have no salaries included in contingencies in the future, but he noticed that, although they had been withdrawn, the contingency vote was not reduced. There was a sum of £1,000 voted last year, and a similar amount was asked for now.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that was quite correct. The vote was practically increased by £500, but the necessities of the department had also increased. A very large expenditure was being incurred by the introduction of seeds and plants, which he hoped would prove of very great economic value to the colony. Anxious as he was to be economical, still, he hoped in the future to be able very much to increase that vote. He wished, as much as possible, to forward the interests of agriculture; and he hoped especially to be able to introduce something into the North that would take the place of that agricultural industry, which, he was sorry to say, was threatened with extinction—the sugar industry. The lands there were suitable for many other tropical productions, and it was not only in the direction of agriculture in the North that he hoped to be able to encourage, but in the South also. He was in correspondence on the subject now, and hoped to be able to give effect before very long to a project adopted with great success in Victoria, of having travelling dairies to teach the farmers who were in a position to turn their farms to account by the manufacture of butter, cheese, and hams, the best and most profitable way of doing it. He was sure the Committee would be only too glad to see the vote increased if he could show that those results had accrued from his project which he believed would accrue.

Mr. GROOM said the late Government were in communication with the American Govern-

ment with a view to importing a professor of agriculture, and six months' salary was voted last year. The correspondence had been laid on the table by the hon. gentleman, and he would like to know whether he had received any further reply, and whether it was the intention of the Government to have a professor of agriculture, and whether the department would be left under the supervision of the Under Secretary. He endorsed what the hon. gentleman had said with regard to travelling dairies. He did not believe there was any branch of agriculture where so much instruction was needed. Hon. members had described some butter manufactured in Queensland as being little more than sour cream, and if a good system of manufacturing butter could be communicated to the farmers, he was perfectly sure the result would be very satisfactory. He thought they ought to make an effort in the direction of obtaining a professor of agriculture. They had already gentlemen in the mining districts who gave information on mining generally, and it was equally necessary that there should be a lecturer in connection with agricultural pursuits. But the mere importation of machinery would be nothing if they had not a practical man to explain the whole details. Mr. Dow, the Minister for Agriculture in Victoria, was an eminently practical man, he had travelled all over the United States, and was conversant with all the improvements introduced, and not only had he given instructions for the farmers to be taught the art of making butter, but also that they should receive instruction as to the selection of cows and the method of feeding them. So that it was absolutely necessary that someone should be employed as a practical man if the department was to be carried on in a vigorous way. He was sure that if the Minister for Lands asked for increased expenditure, it would be cheerfully granted for the purpose of forwarding the agricultural interests. He would like to know whether any information had been obtained with respect to the selection of a professor of agriculture. The letter written by the late Premier indicated the duties that that gentleman was expected to perform, and the salary was to have been £700 a year. Was it the intention of the Government to carry out that idea?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said no further information had been received from Washington in connection with the matter. It was contemplated at first to continue the vote for a professor of agriculture, but considering the chances of that gentleman coming from America, it had been discontinued. No satisfactory reply had been received, and he considered it just as well to dispense with the vote; but if the gentleman should arrive he would be utilised immediately, and, if necessary, his salary would be placed on the Supplementary Estimates, because the House had already affirmed the desire to have a professor of agriculture if a competent man could be obtained. The previous Government decided that they would endeavour to get one from the United States of America. He quite agreed that it was most desirable to get an efficient man, but the matter was one surrounded with some difficulty, owing to the great difference in the systems of agriculture required for the various parts of the colony. A man might be a good tropical agriculturist, and might not succeed if he came to the southern part of the colony, and *vice versa*. It was doubtful whether, even in America, they would get one man competent to deal with the whole colony. He was rather inclined to think that they would require more than one instructor. He hoped the time was not very far distant when they would have an agricultural college, very likely two, one in the southern

part of the colony, and one in the North. It took some little time to mature a department of agriculture, and although he wished to give effect to the wishes of the Committee on the subject, he had not yet had time to do so. They were establishing two test stations or State nurseries in the North. The Under Secretary for Agriculture had taken a great deal of trouble in introducing and arranging for the introduction of a great variety of seeds and plants of economic value. He hoped they would also be able soon to give effect to the travelling dairy system, and get competent men to teach farmers how to cure hams and bacon, and such things as that. The Department of Agriculture was still in its initiatory stage and had not yet assumed any very great importance, but it was hoped that in the course of time it would develop and become worthy of a colony such as Queensland, which embraced an enormous extent of agricultural land. All they required was to ascertain the best purpose to which it could be put.

Mr. ALLAN said one thing that would be of great use to agriculturists here would be the establishment of an agricultural farm. A model farm had been tried in the colony already, but it had been put in a most outlandish place, in the middle of a scrub, where the soil was utterly unsuitable for agriculture. It was situated at a place called Yuelbah, between Dalby and Roma, a locality where no one in the world would ever think of growing anything. What they wanted was to have an agricultural farm started on real good soil, right in the middle of a district where agriculturists were now settled—say, somewhere on the Darling Downs, or at Allora or Warwick. He did not care where it was situated, so long as it was on good soil and in a farming district. They might have three or four such farms—one, say, on the Darling Downs, another in West Moreton, and another at Bundaberg. The best-paying thing they could have in the country was something by which they could find out how to feed themselves and their stock. If they had half-a-dozen agricultural farms such as he suggested, they would all pay, and would succeed far better than establishing experimental farms in country where agriculture had not been tried, as in the case of the model farm to which he had alluded, which was simply a failure and fiasco. The farms should be in the hands of experienced, sensible, clear-headed, practical men, who would be able to teach the farmers in the district how best to utilise their land, how to profitably use irrigation, and how to learn what was best for the soil. The Committee were doing their best by a protectionist tariff to encourage the people of the colony to provide what produce was required, without having to send out of the colony for it, and he believed that if agricultural farms were formed as he suggested, in the middle of good farming districts, they would repay their cost tenfold.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he wanted to know who was at the head of that branch department? Was the Under Secretary the teacher of agriculture?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the Under Secretary for Agriculture was Mr. Peter McLean.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he knew that before. What he asked was whether the Under Secretary was the teacher. The hon. gentleman had stated that they wanted a man who knew a great deal, and could teach farmers how to make cheese and butter. Did the hon. gentleman know whether Mr. McLean was a practical man? Mr. McLean never grew a cabbage. That appointment was the biggest farce imaginable. It was such a farce that he would recom-

mend the Minister to send Mr. McLean to the planet Mars, where it was stated, in a paragraph in one of the local papers recently, that a great deal of irrigation was going on. It was only something like 36,000,000 miles away. Mr. McLean had been a failure in every position in which he had been placed, and was a perfectly ignorant and uneducated man, yet he was getting a salary of £500 a year, and £300 a year allowance in lieu of travelling expenses and forage. Mr. McLean had a very big farm of his own, but could never grow a cabbage on it. Why should an establishment like the Department of Agriculture be created to find a salary for a loafer. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) did not like to take advantage of his position in that Committee to say anything behind a man's back. His general habit was to speak good of a man, but he could not help speaking out when he saw that that man was being fed and kept out of the public revenue of the colony though he had never done work to the value of one shilling for it. What was the use of the Minister for Lands talking about sending to America for a scientific man, when there were able men, and well educated men, in the colony? There was no need to appoint a man who could scarcely write his name. That gentleman had a hand in forming that agricultural farm at Yuelbah.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he was there at the time, and the then Minister for Lands was there also. Mr. McLean was utterly unfit for the office, and they wanted able men.

Mr. STEVENS said the hon. member who had just sat down was quite wrong in saying that that department was formed merely to give Mr. McLean a billet. It was formed after very strong expressions of opinion by many hon. members in the House, and by many persons outside of it. A Department of Agriculture was very much needed indeed; and, although Mr. McLean was not a scientific man, he had done a certain amount of good work since he had been in that position. If hon. members would take the trouble to visit that department they would find a great deal of information had accumulated there during the last year or two. In regard to the experimental farm at Yuelbah, the most Mr. McLean had to do with it was breaking it up. The site was chosen by a late Minister for Lands. He had been able to obtain a great deal of very valuable information from the department in question. It was of the highest value to a practical farmer.

Mr. HODGKINSON said it was unfortunate that the Minister who had had charge of that department in the last Government was absent through illness, and that the gentleman who had preceded him was no longer a member of the House. They had recently heard a homily from a member on the Government side as to the impropriety of making accusations against persons in their absence, and of using expressions that they would not like to use outside. He did not think the hon. member for Stanley would say anything inside the Committee that he would not say outside; but, knowing the weight of that hon. member's words, it seemed strange that he should apply such particularly offensive expressions to a man holding a very dignified position in the Civil service of the colony. The word "loafer" was very objectionable. Mr. McLean was no personal friend of his, he did not know him in fact; but, to say the least of it, it was very indiscreet on the part of the hon. member to use such an obnoxious word. He had not the slightest doubt but that there were members in the Committee who knew Mr. McLean. That

gentleman must certainly have some merits, and some hon. members would be able to show that, so far from being a loafer, he had done some very valuable work.

Mr. BARLOW said, after the very serious accusations that had been brought against the gentleman at the head of the Department of Agriculture, the item should be adjourned until there were more Opposition members present. Such charges as had been made against that gentleman should be vindicated from that side of the Committee by those who could speak with authority, especially as the gentleman who had held the office of Minister for Lands for so long was no longer a member of the House, and the late Minister for Lands was ill.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that no charge had been made against the Under Secretary for Agriculture by any Minister. Mr. McLean was so very well known that any vindication of the charge made by the hon. member for Stanley was unnecessary. He had had an opportunity of watching Mr. McLean's career in the department since he had been in the office, and must say that he seemed to fulfil his duties in a most conscientious manner. He did not know what personal animosity there might be between that gentleman and the hon. member for Stanley, who certainly had used very strong expressions; but it did not require the Opposition bench to be filled to vindicate Mr. McLean, concerning whom the hon. member for Stanley, in the heat of debate, had made some remarks which under other circumstances he would not have made.

Mr. HYNE: The term "loafer" is objectionable.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I withdraw it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he would be happy to give all the information he possessed; but certainly did not see the necessity to adjourn the debate.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that he had used the word "loafer" for want of a better word. He had no personal feeling against Mr. McLean, but he had been living on the country for the last thirteen or fourteen years without doing anything; and now he had got a fine salary. What was the good of establishing schools and colleges when they could not find a schoolmaster? Would anyone tell him that a man who could scarcely write his own name, should be a teacher in one of those schools? He and Mr. McLean were on the best of terms; but he contended that he was utterly unfit for the position he held, and he objected to him being pitchforked into a position he was not able to fill. That was all the "down" he had on the man. He thought it was only right for him to defend the public revenue, and he was not going to see public money given to men who were not able or willing to earn it. If he met Mr. McLean in the street he was not afraid to say even more than he had said that night.

Mr. BARLOW said hon. members on that side were not allowed to speak or to make a criticism without being accused of obstruction. A charge had been made that a man in the public service was a "loafer." A serious imputation had been made that a man who could hardly write his own name was occupying an important position in the public service. He did not like to waste time, as he was as tired as anyone, and he did not want to obstruct, but he did protest against the doctrine that no sort of criticism was to come from his side of the Committee. That was unfair, and he thought that ex-Ministers should have been there to answer the charges made. The late Minister for Lands, Mr. Jordan, was very poorly, but others might be there; but he did object to the doctrine that every

word uttered by that side of the Committee was an attempt to delay public business. He wanted to get the session finished and get home, and he protested against that doctrine.

Mr. ALLAN said he wished to say a few words with regard to the attack made upon Mr. McLean. He believed he was the only member who had taken the trouble to visit the Yeulba experimental farm.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

Mr. ALLAN said he had been there two or three times, and he had seen the utter futility of trying to grow anything there, and it was due to Mr. McLean to say that he had saved the country more money than he received in salary by doing away with that white elephant. It was through his instrumentality that that farm was broken up, and they owed him a debt of gratitude for saving that money.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that if he had broken up that white elephant, he had also broken up the late Minister for Lands, and he had nearly broken the Ministry by his conduct as Commissioner for Crown Lands. He had persecuted the farmers till they had petitioned against him, and the late Government had had to take him away, and then they had given him the grand position of Professor of Agriculture.

Mr. GRIMES said that the hon. member for Stanley had let the cat out of the bag as to his enmity to the Under Secretary for Agriculture. The reason why he had spoken as he had, was because Mr. McLean, in the conscientious performance of his duties as Commissioner for Crown Lands, had come in contact with some of the hon. member's friends.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: No.

Mr. GRIMES said that the hon. member for Stanley had made a bitter and a mean attack against Mr. McLean.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: No.

Mr. GRIMES said the hon. gentleman had made a mean attack upon Mr. McLean.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said: I think it is time to interrupt the hon. member. I have already twice said "No;" and now I tell him that he lies—under a mistake.

Mr. GRIMES said no one should be attacked in that way, when he had not an opportunity of replying; and to say that a gentleman in Mr. McLean's position was a loafer, was mean in the extreme. He knew something that had been done in the Agricultural Department. Since Mr. McLean had been appointed as Under Secretary good work was being carried out, and hon. members who knew anything about the matter would see at once that the hon. member for Stanley was not in a position to judge, because he did not know what had been done. Mr. McLean had been no failure in anything he had ever undertaken in the colony, and in some of the things he had taken in hand he had succeeded too well to please the hon. member for Stanley. He believed that the Minister for Lands and Mr. McLean would do a vast amount of good. Good had already been done, and still more good would be done if the department were allowed a little liberty, but it might be that, from want of funds, that liberty would not be had, and the department would be cramped in a great measure. He did not wish to see a better man in the position of Under Secretary than Mr. McLean, although he admitted that he was no professor of agriculture. It was evident from the fact that they had sent to America to get a scientific instructor, that they did not expect to get one in the colony who was capable of fulfilling the duties, although there

were plenty of practical men in the colony who could give a practical lecture; but they wanted a man who would be able to analyse the soil, and give farmers information that would be useful to them in the selection of land for the various products they intended to grow. He did not think they could get such a man in the colonies, and so they had sent to America for one, and he hoped the negotiations that had already taken place between the Minister for Lands and the gentleman in Washington would result in a really good appointment being made; and he was sure that the gentleman who now filled the position of Under Secretary for Agriculture and the Minister for Lands, in endeavouring to get a good scientific agricultural instructor, were making a move in the right direction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he hoped that wrangling as to the merits or demerits of Mr. McLean would cease. They had had quite enough of it, and might just as well go on with the Estimates. He had the assurance of the late Attorney-General, and another hon. gentleman who occupied a prominent position on the other side, that they were not at all averse to that Estimate being finished to-night.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that for that reason he should not trouble himself to reply to the narcotic gentleman (Mr. Grimes) as he had intended to do.

Mr. GROOM said he might inform the Committee that the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, was so unwell that he had not been able to attend, and that the leader of the Opposition was suffering from such a severe cold that he had been compelled to leave the House. As the hon. gentleman expressed it to him, he could stand it no longer. There was no intentional absence on the part of those hon. gentlemen.

Mr. SAYERS said he had never seen or heard of Mr. McLean before, but if there was any truth in the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley, the vote ought not to go through until it was thoroughly sifted. The Minister who appointed Mr. McLean should have been in his place to answer the reflections that had been cast upon Mr. McLean.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he had explained, at the commencement of the wrangle, the reason why the late Minister for Lands and the leader of the Opposition were absent, and if his statement needed corroboration it had been corroborated by the hon. member for Toowoomba. He felt in a very unfortunate position when one of the supporters of his leader coolly got up and said the leader of the Opposition ought to have remained in the Chamber, after the hon. member for Stanley had withdrawn the offensive expression. Everyone on the Government benches would freely acknowledge the indefatigable services the leader of the Opposition had rendered them; and if there had been any matter of moment on the Estimates that was likely to provoke discussion, he was sure that an arrangement would have been made with the Minister for Lands to postpone the vote until he was prepared to deal with it.

Mr. COWLEY said he regretted that there was no provision made for scientific agriculture, and the formation of an agricultural college. In North Queensland the sugar industry was languishing to a very great extent, and perhaps few hon. members were aware of the ravages which grubs were making in the sugar-cane. In his own district hundreds of acres of cane had been destroyed by grubs. He had communicated with and seen the Under Secretary for Agriculture on the subject, and sent specimens down to him, but there was no scientific men in the department to show them to. Mr. McLean had,

however, handed them over to a scientific gentleman, and no doubt they would get some valuable information from him. The Under Secretary had done all in his power, and had expressed his willingness to assist him in every possible way. Still it was really necessary that there should be a scientific agriculturist attached to the department, and it was equally necessary that provision should be made for an agricultural college, where the youth of the colony who desired it could be thoroughly trained in practical and scientific agriculture by capable and efficient instructors. He was aware that steps had been taken to get a gentleman of that description from America; but he would remind the Minister for Lands that there was a first-class agricultural college at Cirencester, in England, which had turned out many really able men, some of whom were holding important and responsible positions in India. If application were made there they could, perhaps, get the very man they required for the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. SMYTH asked what Minister was responsible for the selection of the site for the model and experimental farm at Yeulba?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied that it was the then member for Aubigny. He himself was partly responsible for the selection.

Mr. GROOM said that Mr. Pink, who was then in charge of the Botanical Gardens, and who was considered the best man in the colony at that time to select a site for a model farm, selected the site at Yeulba, and afterwards the Minister for Lands formed a party to go up and see it. For Mr. McLean, he must say that when that gentleman went up to examine the site that had been chosen, he condemned it.

Mr. BARLOW said that when he referred to the state of the Opposition front bench he had no intention of reflecting on the gentlemen who occupied it, or on those who were absent. The hon. member, Mr. Hodgkinson, was not a member of the Ministry at the time Mr. McLean was appointed, and he considered that that gentleman was not in a position to make an effective defence. He had simply appealed to the forbearance of the Government to postpone the debate in order that the attack made upon Mr. McLean might be properly met. He objected to the use of the word "wrangle" as applied to their debates; he did not think it was either Parliamentary or right.

Question put and passed.

RESERVES.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS, in moving £5,385 for reserves, said £500 had been put down for Victoria Park, in order to do something in the direction of making that reserve of 280 acres something more in accordance with what a park should be in the capital of the colony.

Mr. McMASTER said he was very glad to see the amount put down for Victoria Park. He noticed the other day that a deputation waited on the Chief Secretary with a view of endeavouring to get a portion of that park for exhibition grounds, and he was very pleased to see that that hon. gentleman refused, so far as he was concerned, to allow anything further to be taken from it. If that park were cut up there was no other portion of land round about Brisbane that would be fit for a recreation ground. Quite enough had been taken from it already, and he sincerely hoped that the Government, and especially the Colonial Secretary, who was one of the trustees of it, would not allow another inch to be taken from it. He had not altered the opinions he expressed last year with reference to public parks. He thought it would be much better to have those parks

vested in the local authorities, that they should spend a certain sum of money on them, and that the Government should endow them according to the amount they expended. There would then be no danger of those places of recreation being cut away, because they would be granted absolutely to the local authorities as reserves, and could not be sold. The Municipal Council of Brisbane had taken over the Wickham terrace Park, and improved it very much. No doubt Victoria Park was more a national affair than that small park, and he sincerely hoped that the Minister for Lands and the Colonial Secretary would see that not another inch was taken from it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, as one of the trustees of Victoria Park, he could say that he also was very glad to see that a sum had been put on the Estimates to improve and beautify one of the few parks in the city. But he did not agree with the hon. member for Fortitude Valley that that park should be passed over to the local authorities—at any rate, at present. He could assure the Committee that, so long as he was a trustee of that park, not one inch of it should be alienated for any purpose except for the use of the public.

Mr. SMYTH said there was not a decent recreation ground in Brisbane. There was a private one at Toowong, and another called the Albert Ground, but there was no proper public recreation ground such as they had in Sydney and Melbourne. He did not see why their public parks should not be made and improved by prison labour. There were plenty of prisoners in the gaol at South Brisbane doing nothing, and why not utilise their labour in that way, as was done in other parts of the world? He believed they were being used at Townsville for that purpose; and why should not the same be done elsewhere? Victoria Park was handy to the railway, to trams, and could be made one of the best parks in Australia, if only drained and improved. The town of Gympie, the third largest town in the colony in point of population, sometime ago received £300, but that was now reduced to £175. Hon. members might think that that was for one park, but it was for two, one called "The Queen's Park," at the north end of the town, and the other recreation ground at the One-Mile, which was chiefly used for recreation purposes by the people of the Wide Bay district. It was impossible to keep those two parks in order on £175, and he certainly thought the people of Gympie should be better treated in that respect than they were, especially when they saw the sums voted for other places. £300 was put down for Bundaberg, an increase of £150. There was no town in the colony where it was easier to make a park than in Bundaberg. The ground was level and easily worked; in fact it was almost a park without any making at all. Charters Towers got the same as Gympie. There the ground was very barren and difficult to work, but still it was as well to keep up the park, if for no other purpose than to keep children off the streets. Ipswich received £500.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: For two parks.

Mr. SMYTH said Mackay got £200.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Two parks.

Mr. SMYTH said Maryborough got £500, Rockhampton £500, Toowoomba £500, Townsville £500, and Warwick £175. Why should Gympie be so scurvily treated? They did not ask that the vote should be the same as it was formerly, but if they got £250 they could employ men to keep their two parks in order. At present the Mines Department received a rental from the One-Mile recreation ground; and when they considered the land revenue derived from Gympie, he

certainly thought that town was entitled to better treatment. In 1886, according to the last returns, the revenue from the land office there was over £10,000. Very few towns in the colony could show a revenue like that. And the timber royalty in that district yielded about £1,000 more than any other town in the colony. He might also point out that it was now almost impossible to get recreation grounds there, because nearly all the land was taken up under lease. At the present time the Monkland people were trying to get a recreation ground, but were unable to do so. Years ago the miners took their picks and shovels and cleared a place for cricket and other recreations, but some clever individual had applied for the land and got a lease of it for gold-mining purposes; so that the people not only lost the land but their labour as well. He sincerely hoped that the Minister would consider the claims of Gympie, and increase the vote to at least £250.

Mr. SAYERS said he must take up the running from the member for Gympie. That hon. member had said the park at Charters Towers was a barren bit of ground, but it was the best bit they had about there. They had not much agricultural land about there, and it was the more necessary that the Government should help them to make a park there. The sum of £175 was no use to them, and was simply thrown away. What was wanted was a sufficient sum to put the place in order, and that would be a saving in the long run.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he quite agreed with what had fallen from the hon. members for Charters Towers and Gympie, but hon. members must know he could not increase those votes now. They had all been reduced last year owing to tightness of the chest in the Treasury; but he hoped the time was not far distant when their financial position would enable them to increase those votes all over the colony. He knew that it was almost impossible to do any good with some of those votes, but there would be strong objection to them being still further reduced. He hoped by next year to restore them to something near the old votes at all events.

Mr. SAYERS said the hon. gentleman would excuse him if he pointed out that there was an increase of double the amount of last year given to Bundaberg. The revenue from Gympie and Charters Towers would bear favourable comparison with that from Bundaberg, and there could be no comparison at all between the populations of those places. It was an injustice that the vote for Bundaberg should be increased to that extent.

Mr. SMYTH said he might mention that they had a promise last year that the amount for Gympie would be brought up to £250, by a sum being put on the Supplementary Estimates, but the promise was not carried out. The Minister for Lands had not considered economy when he put down that amount for Bundaberg. The park at Bundaberg was a garden already, and did not require the vote; but when it was being considered, Gympie should have received consideration also.

Question put and passed.

BOTANIC GARDENS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that the sum of £2,086 be granted for the Botanic Gardens. The vote was increased by £100, required for repairing asphalt walks.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he would like to draw the Minister's attention to the barbed wire fence that had been erected in the gardens. It appeared to have been put to trip up people,

injure children, tear ladies' dresses, and to do any mortal thing except good. It was too late to say much on the subject, but he did not know why the money had been spent in that way.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had not inspected the wire fence, but he had intended to do so before the vote came on. From what he had heard on the subject, he fully endorsed what had fallen from the hon. member for Burke. He believed a scandalous fence had been put up to tear the skins of innocent children and the dresses of ladies. The fence was put up, he believed, under the direction of those who had control of the gardens, and it was time somebody took notice of such cruel traps as had been erected. He believed the work had been carried out by the direction of a gentleman who was lately a member of the House, and who took a great interest in the management of the Botanic Gardens. The Minister for Lands, he thought, ought to take steps to investigate the matter, and if the statements made concerning the fence were not true they should be contradicted, and if they were true, the sooner the evil was remedied the better.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said his attention had been called to the matter, but, as hon. members knew, he was in no way responsible for the objectionable wire fence. From what he had heard he could promise the Committee that immediate steps would be taken to remedy the evil complained of.

Mr. WATSON said he wished to direct attention to the men who were working in the gardens. They appeared to get very fair salaries, but they had to work ten hours a day. In Melbourne and in Sydney men working in the gardens there had to work only nine hours, and he did not think it was right they should keep those men working ten hours a day; they should not work more than eight hours. He had never asked men to work for him for more than eight hours a day during the whole of the twenty years he had been a contractor. He simply wished to bring that matter under the notice of the Minister, and he hoped he would give it his most favourable consideration.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to ask the Minister for Lands whether nurse girls were allowed to take perambulators into the gardens. He had heard they were not allowed to do so, but he was sure they ought to be.

Mr. BARLOW said he had intended to direct attention to the same thing. Perambulators could do no serious harm to the gardens, which were the property of the people, and it was rather hard that children should have to be kept in the hot streets all day when they might be allowed into the gardens. He hoped the trustees would be instructed to remedy that matter at once.

Mr. SAYERS said he had spoken to the Minister for Lands about the barbed wire fence. He was a stranger in the town, and probably spent more time in the gardens than people living here. While in the gardens he had seen people's hands torn and ladies' dresses treated in the same way, and he had heard some very tall swearing about that fence. The Minister for Lands had told them he was not responsible for the fence, but if, as he understood, the gardens were the property of the public, surely the Government should have some control over them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I wish we had more.

Mr. SAYERS: If we have no control, why vote the money?

Mr. GROOM: It is in the hands of trustees.

Mr. SAYERS said they should not get the money to put up such traps to tear the hands

and dresses of the people who found the money to keep the gardens in order. If the fence were not removed, he would sit up all night next year, if necessary, to prevent the vote from going through.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he agreed with what had fallen from the hon. member; and the Minister for Lands had stated that he would have the matter rectified. With reference to the perambulator question, he was not at one with the hon. member for Port Curtis. If the nurse were allowed to run the child along in the perambulator the chances were that she would leave the perambulator in the middle of the path and go away to flirt with some young man, the perambulator remaining as an obstacle to others going along the path. If it was considered desirable that young children should be taken to the gardens, they should be taken in their nurse's arms and not in perambulators.

Mr. HAMILTON said he did not agree with the Colonial Secretary, because it would be a hard tax on girls to carry children in the hot weather. As to the argument that the use of the perambulator was a premium on flirting, he did not see any objection to that. He thought that the fact of a nurse girl not having a perambulator would not prevent her from flirting, as most hon. members must know by experience.

Mr. HODGKINSON said that the reminiscences of the Colonial Secretary and the hon. member for Cook were very interesting, but he thought the Committee had better get on with business.

Mr. PHILP: Who are the trustees?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said they were the Minister for Lands *ex officio*, the Surveyor-General, Mr. Tully, and Mr. Sheridan. The management devolved practically upon Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. GANNON said he thought it would be a splendid thing for the citizens of Brisbane if a fence were erected along a portion of the gardens by the river side, taking in the second walk from the river, so as to allow a portion to be used as a promenade at night. Hon. members might laugh, but he was speaking on behalf of the citizens, and he considered that what he was advocating would be a great boon to people who had to work hard all day. The portion fenced off would only be a little over a chain wide, and there could be three or four gates, which could be open during the day. The thing was done in the other colonies, and he fancied that the Minister for Lands would fall in with the idea. There could be an ornamental fence, and good gas lamps to provide plenty of light along the promenade.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not see any immediate necessity for what the hon. member suggested.

Mr. PHILP said that, as neither the Committee nor the Ministry had any control over the gardens, it might be as well to hand them over to the municipality. He thought that the municipalities and divisional boards should have charge of botanic gardens and reserves, and find the money for keeping them in order.

Mr. GANNON said he would again bring the question of a promenade before the Committee, and if he did not get an answer there would be such an agitation on the matter that an answer would have to be given. What he suggested was for the good of the citizens of Brisbane. Anyone who knew the lay of the country round the river must know that there was not a place where anyone could take a walk with his wife on a moonlight night, or even in the daytime. He considered that the part of the gardens along the side of the river would

make a splendid promenade, and in a year or two it might be extended right along the river round Government House.

Question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that £565 be granted for Miscellaneous Services. The vote for destruction of Bathurst burr was increased by £200, and £65 was asked for keeping the Forest Nursery at Fraser Island in condition, on the recommendation of Mr. McDowall.

Mr. HYNE said he was sorry that item was not largely increased, as he looked upon forest conservancy as one of the most important things the Government could devote their attention to. He also thought that the services of the rangers might be employed in that direction, and that they might do much useful work by planting scrub land that was not required for agricultural purposes. There was an item, "Clearing town of Kamerunga," which was voted last year, and in connection with that he would suggest that there should be some system adopted when town sites were being cleared, and that all the ornamental trees should not be so carelessly destroyed as at present. He hoped the Minister for Lands would direct his attention to the subject.

Mr. GROOM said he had noticed by the *Courier* that Mr. Bailey, the Government Botanist, had gone to Adelaide with a view of observing what had been done there in the way of forest conservancy. If that gentleman could introduce the South Australian system here it would result in immense benefit to the whole of Queensland. He had read with great interest the report of the Conservator of Forests in South Australia, and while it appeared that last year £8,000 was granted for forest conservation, £10,000 was realised by the Government by the sale of trees, so that really the institution was paying. He hoped the Minister for Lands would allow Mr. Bailey to devote his attention towards forest conservation on a very large scale.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again at a later hour of the day.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the House do now adjourn. To-morrow, after private business has been disposed of, the first Government business will be the Election of Local Authorities Bill in committee, and after that Supply.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at eight minutes past 12 o'clock.