

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 1888

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 26 October, 1888.

Questions.—Case of Mr. Walsh.—Motion for Adjournment.—The case of Emma Barrett.—Motion for Adjournment.—The case of Captain Wright.—Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill.—committee.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTIONS.

Mr. GANNON asked the Secretary for Railways—

Is it a fact that the Government propose to continue the Valley Railway to Mayne, and are making arrangements to that effect?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. M. Nelson) replied—

Not at present.

Mr. PALMER asked the Secretary for Railways—

If he will consider the advisableness of ordering a survey of a railway from Burketown southwards towards Camooweal?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

Yes.

Mr. ADAMS asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is the permanent survey of the first section of the Bundaberg-towards-Gladstone railway complete?

2. If so, when will tenders be invited for its construction?

3. If not, is it the intention of the Government to invite tenders for its construction when the survey is complete, and how long is it contemplated to take to complete the survey?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. No.

2. No.

3. It is expected that the survey of the first section, about 32 miles, will be ready about the end of the year, but tenders cannot be invited until the working plans are ready—probably in about three months from date.

CASE OF MR. WALSH.

Mr. PAUL presented the report, together with minutes of evidence, of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the case of Mr. Walsh, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

THE CASE OF EMMA BARRETT.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to bring a certain case under the notice of the Colonial Secretary, and I shall conclude with the usual motion. On the 25th October, 1887, a man named Thomas Barrett, with a girl passing under the name of Emma Barrett, and presumed to be his daughter, arrived at Thursday Island as full-paying steerage passengers in the steamship "Dorunda," and from Thursday Island they proceeded to Croydon. At Thursday Island a person named Martha Ford received a complaint from the girl that she was suffering from diarrhoea. They remained at Normanton for a short time, and arranged with a carrier named Carr to convey them to the Croydon Goldfield. During the journey the man, Thomas Barrett, became jealous and annoyed at certain attentions paid to the girl by Carr, and at one stage on the road, in order to separate the girl from Carr, he left the waggon in which they had been travelling and made other arrangements for arriving at Croydon.

When they arrived at Croydon the man started an aerated waters manufactory in a small shanty, and sold lemonade and drinks of that nature. There is no evidence in the case to prove that there was any quarrelling between the deceased, Emma Barrett, and her presumed father, but there is very strong evidence that Thomas Barrett had, on several occasions, threatened this man, Carr, that if he found him hanging about his tent, or trying to obtain interviews with the girl, he would split his head open with a tomahawk. I mention these circumstances to prove a motive for the succeeding transaction—that is, jealousy existed in this man's mind with regard to Carr. This man, Carr, I may say, bears the highest character in the district, and there is not the slightest doubt that credence will be given to his statement, corroborated by one witness, that he had engaged to marry this girl on Saturday, 8th January, 1888. On two or three occasions prior to that date the girl made complaints to certain parties in the neighbourhood that her relations with Thomas Barrett were unsatisfactory, in consequence of the addresses paid to her by Carr. There is no doubt this couple, whatever their real relations were, were either living as man and mistress or were living in a state of incest. On more than one occasion the girl had stated that Barrett was neither her father nor her husband, nor would he ever be her husband. At the same time, it was a well-known fact to the neighbours, owing to the arrangements of the tent and circumstances which I need not detail, that this couple were living on terms of extreme intimacy. At half-past 6 on the morning of the 6th January, 1888, the girl, Emma Barrett, was seen by respectable witnesses at the back of the tent evidently collecting firewood for domestic purposes. At or about 11 o'clock Detective Lawrence, owing to certain suspicions which had been excited, visited the tent. He did not go inside, but he heard moans issuing from the interior of the tent, and ultimately, the attention of the neighbours having been excited, the man, Thomas Barrett, proposed to go to town to get medical assistance. He called upon Dr. O'Doherty, who had just returned from a journey. He did not represent to the doctor that the case was one of vital importance, and the doctor did not arrive at the tent until a very few minutes before the girl's decease. Immediately the girl died the man, Thomas Barrett, was arrested for murder, and after inquiry before the local bench, was committed to take his trial at the Supreme Court, Normanton, some time about the 7th or 14th May. It came out very distinctly in evidence that there was a motive for the crime—if a crime was committed—in the jealousy apparent between Barrett and Carr. It also came out that for some time, some two or three days prior to the decease of this unfortunate girl, the man, Barrett, spread a report in the neighbourhood that she was in the habit of drinking to excess and taking doses of morphia, or preparations of opium in different forms. Every witness who was examined at the inquest, and also at the first trial before the magistrates, contradicted this, and the evidence amounted to this—that, although the girl had suffered very slight illnesses, evidently caused by rapid transitions from one climate to another, and in form of life, that she was a particularly cheerful girl, and, in the opinion of those witnesses, one of the last who was disposed to commit suicide, and that she was extremely well developed and vigorous, and enjoyed more than the average state of health. There were certain suspicious circumstances connected with the death. In the first place, at 8 o'clock in the morning of the 6th January, the

date of her death, moans were heard from the tent by people passing in the vicinity; and a little girl, who called to get change for some notes, also testified to the fact that she heard the moans of a woman or child inside. It was a remarkable fact that within a quarter or half an hour after the detective had left the tent, at 11 a.m., about two hours before her death, this little girl, about nine years of age, and a very intelligent child, whose evidence was, perhaps, the very best that could have been produced, swore that she saw this man, Thomas Barrett, walk from the tent and place a package under a rubbish heap. This fact was related to the detective, and the little girl took the detective to the spot, and after examination he found the bundle, which contained several bottles. The result of the magisterial inquiry was the committal of the prisoner, Barrett, for trial at the ensuing Supreme Court Assizes at Normanton. I may state, before going on to the next subject, that Dr. O'Doherty, who made the *post mortem* examination, deposed that he first saw the deceased at 1 o'clock p.m. Now, the prisoner was supposed to have left the tent to obtain medical assistance shortly after 11 o'clock, and the distance from his tent to Dr. O'Doherty's residence was not anything like sufficient to account for the time between 11.30 and 1 o'clock. When Dr. O'Doherty attended the girl, he stated that he formed the opinion that the girl was dying from an overdose of morphia; but he acknowledged that his judgment was affected by the statements made to him of what had taken place that morning. I need hardly say to this House that the remuneration given to medical men for making a *post mortem* examination in up-country districts is quite insufficient to warrant a gentleman, enjoying such an extensive practice as Dr. O'Doherty, in making a *post mortem* with the extreme accuracy that such a case as this requires. At any rate that was Dr. O'Doherty's opinion. The stomach and a portion of the intestines were put in bottles, sealed, and transmitted to the Government Analyst, Mr. Mar, who made an analysis, and stated that he detected in the stomach, or contents of the stomach, traces of morphia. He also made an examination for strychnine, but failed to detect any. I need hardly state that in cases of either narcotic or mineral poisoning it is sometimes impossible to detect traces, even when the quantity is large, unless the examination is made immediately after the death and before time has been given for the absorption of the poison. In many cases of poisoning it is most important that the liver should be analysed, as in cases of narcotic poisoning the analyst can often detect the poison in that organ, and sometimes the spinal cord and the tissues of the body should also be sent for analysis, because the stomach, even in cases of almost instantaneous death from large doses, has been examined without finding any perceptible trace of poison. But in this case there was only about 1 oz. of the contents of the stomach forwarded for analysis, and according to the very best authority in medical jurisprudence—Dr. Taylor—numerous cases have occurred where such a portion of the contents of the stomach as that would be perfectly useless. Although this man was committed for trial, and the Government Analyst, in common with about twenty witnesses from Croydon, went to Normanton, the Government Analyst went without the evidence that would have enabled him to give his testimony—that is to say, he went to Normanton without being in the possession of the portions of the body which had been submitted for analysis, and on which alone he could be sworn and examined.

Mr. PALMER: Whose fault was that?

Mr. HODGKINSON: The hon. member for Carpentaria asks whose fault it was. The object of my addressing the Colonial Secretary on the subject is to find out whose fault it was. There is a strong public opinion in this matter at Croydon, where the circumstances surrounding the case are much better known than they are here, and it is a fact that about twenty witnesses went to Normanton for this trial, and the Government Analyst, after the country had been put to the expense of preparing for this trial, went to Normanton without the portions of the body, which would have enabled him to give his evidence. From inquiries I have made—not exactly of an official nature, but in official quarters—it appears that it has hitherto been the usual custom for the police to take charge of these exhibits after the Government Analyst has done with them; but in this case the police did not call upon the analyst, and he went to Normanton without these exhibits. Hon. members will understand that the accused was committed for trial on the 14th May, and that all those witnesses were summoned, and a bill was filed by the Crown Prosecutor in the case; but owing to the fact of the Government Analyst not having these exhibits with him, the case was remanded for five months, until the next sitting of the Supreme Court, and the country was put to the expense of bringing all the witnesses to Normanton again on the chance of bringing this man, if he really were criminal, to punishment. In addition to the difficulty of detecting poison after such a lapse of time as had occurred between the death and the time of analysis, the results of the analyses were not available, and the man was remanded for another five months, and during that period the Crown Prosecutor, having reason to believe that he would be unable to establish the case, declined to file a bill. The consequence has been that a large amount of expense has been incurred, and the Government have sent an officer from Brisbane to Normanton for a useless object, and after all the Crown Prosecutor declines to file a bill. Of course it is not for any member of this House to pretend to pass an opinion on the guilt or the innocence of the man accused; but it is well known that morphia is frequently administered to hide the effects of strychnine. It is a strange coincidence, therefore, that the parcel secreted by this man, Thomas Barrett, in the heap of rubbish pointed out by the little girl contained three bottles of strychnine. The Government Analyst, in his report, refers especially to three exhibits—the bottles marked E, F, and H—in which quantities of strychnine were found. I am not in the secrets of manufacturers engaged in this business; but I believe it is possible that strychnine may have been employed in the business practised by the accused. I believe it is occasionally used in infinitesimal quantities to make bitters; and there is the fact that he had in his possession no less than three bottles. The bottle containing the morphia, from which the deceased was supposed to have died, was pointed out to a detective in a box at the head of the bed where the girl slept; and that would naturally be the action of the accused had he been conscious of any suspicion. His evident course was to establish the theory he had set afloat two or three days previously; that the deceased died from an overdose of morphia; but, I think, looking at the just suspicion with which scientific evidence is regarded by the best authorities—the evidence in the celebrated case of murder at Rugely, where the medical testimony of the highest authorities was decidedly antagonistic, must be familiar to hon. members—I think it a great pity that this man was not brought before a jury. The case is surrounded by very suspicious circumstances, and public opinion is very strong in the belief that

there has been to some extent a miscarriage of justice. I am not going so far as that, however, because I, in common with everyone who has the honour of knowing the Crown Prosecutor, happen to know what a careful man he is; but I distinctly affirm that it is a matter requiring an explanation from the Government. We ought to know how it is that the country was put to the expense of bringing witnesses to Normanton, and how it was that the testimony of the Government Analyst—whose evidence was probably more important than that of all the other witnesses together—was rendered valueless simply because he, or someone else who should have been charged with the duty of bringing the exhibits on which to found his evidence, failed to perform that duty. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: Mr. Speaker,—The evidence connected with this case is so voluminous and of such a character that I have not had time, even if I had the ability, to so dissect it as to be able to deal shortly with the question. I therefore asked the Crown law officers, in whose department the matter lies, to give me a *précis* of the whole case. I hold in my hand that *précis*, and I think it will save time, and probably give hon. members a clear exposition—on the part of the Crown law officers, at any rate—as to the position of the case, if I just read this to the House, with a few remarks by the way. This is what the Crown law officers say:—

"The accused, Thomas Barrett, came to Croydon with the deceased, Emma Barrett, in November, 1887. He stated to the neighbours that Emma Barrett was his daughter. They kept a soft-drinks shop in the town, and he cohabited with her. Emma Barrett became acquainted with a carrier named Robert Carr, who asked her to marry him, and on Tuesday, the 3rd January of this year, she consented. Barrett seems to have been very jealous of Carr, and threatened that rather than let Carr have her he would kill her."

That would indicate that he had some design on her life under certain conditions.

"On Thursday, the 5th January, the deceased said to a neighbour that she had told her father she was going to be married on Saturday, and he took it greatly to heart. Both the accused and deceased were drinking pretty freely on this day, and spent most of the day in bed. Next morning the deceased was seen at 6.30 picking up chips outside the hut. Shortly afterwards, at 1 p.m., the girl was dead, all the symptoms, according to Dr. O'Doherty, pointing to morphia poisoning."

With regard to that it will be just as well to read the evidence of Dr. O'Doherty. He says:—

"The pupils of the eyes were completely closed. I endeavoured to arouse her from her state of torpor, and got people to get some strong coffee for her. As she seemed to rally a little, I galloped down to the surgery and brought back the stomach-pump and a strong emetic, and was in the act of giving her some of the emetic when she died."

Then he says—

"The chest, abdomen, pelvis, and the brain were all in a healthy condition. The only abnormal sign I came across was a very congested condition of the brain."

As this case is not yet settled I am not going to discuss it or express any opinion—whatever my own opinion may be—as to whether the result of the diagnosis shows that death was occasioned by strychnine or not. I will simply give the facts of the case. Dr. O'Doherty goes on to say:—

"The body did not present any signs of injury or disease. It was very clean. I took out the stomach, having previously tied it at both extremities, and handed it to the sergeant with its contents."

So that, as far as Dr. O'Doherty is concerned, he took every precaution to have the whole stomach and its contents handed over to the proper authorities. Then he goes on to say:—

"I believe from the symptoms, the girl died from an overdose of morphia. Of course my judgment is affected by the statements made to me of what had taken place that morning."

I do not want to hide anything; I want the House to know just as much as I do.

"Half-a-dozen grains of morphia would probably kill a young person of that age if unaccustomed to take it. Death would ensue within a couple of hours. Morphia has a very bitter taste. Within half-an-hour of taking such dose a person would most probably be unconscious, although moaning. Morphia is frequently given to counteract the effects of strychnine. The *post mortem* gave no evidence that she was in the habit of taking drugs or drinking to excess.

The Crown law officers say further:—

"A little girl saw accused put something in a rubbish heap on the day of deceased's death. The only poison that was found in this bundle was chloroform and strychnine."

I assume that the word "bundle" means the rubbish heap.

"A bottle of morphia, however, was given by Barrett to the police out of a box at the foot of the bed. If he had poisoned deceased he would naturally have hidden the morphia, and not the strychnine, that is, supposing Dr. O'Doherty and Mr. Mar to be right in their conjecture, that she died of morphia poisoning."

I think there is a great deal in that contention; however, I am not here to either defend or prosecute.

"The accused alleges that the deceased was in the habit of taking morphia for neuralgia and sleeplessness."

It must be borne in mind that both Dr. O'Doherty and Mr. Mar, the Government Analyst, are of opinion that the death of the unfortunate woman was caused by poisoning with morphia.

"The accused alleges that the deceased was in the habit of taking morphia for neuralgia and sleeplessness. The case was very carefully considered by the Crown Prosecutor (Mr. Power) and Sir Samuel Griffith, in the absence of the Attorney-General. Sir Samuel was of opinion that there was not sufficient evidence for a prosecution, but that the Crown Prosecutor should proceed to Normanton before finding a 'no true bill,' in order to ascertain if any fresh evidence had been obtained or was procurable."

With regard to that, I am informed he did try to get further evidence, but up to the present time has failed to obtain any; therefore affairs remain in the same position they were in when Sir Samuel Griffith was consulted.

"On arriving at Normanton, the Crown Prosecutor found that the Government Analyst had failed to bring the exhibits with him, amongst which were the bottles of strychnine found in the dustheap. The Normanton police said there was morphia in the bundle, and the accused was remanded. When the Crown Prosecutor returned to Brisbane he examined the bottles with Mr. Mar, and found he was right in saying that no morphia had been hid by the accused. The accused was then discharged by the Minister of Justice."

I think most of us know that Mr. Power, the Crown Prosecutor for the North, is not the sort of man to allow any criminal to escape if by any chance it can be prevented. I feel certain of this, that had he seen his way at that time—of course at some future time the prosecution may come on again—to secure the conviction of this man—whose character, by the way, is not such as to commend him to the respect of any individual in the country—he would have done it. I at once admit that I am not competent to analyse such a mass of evidence as there is here, so as to arrive at a just conclusion, and if I were I should not like to oppose the opinion of such a very capable criminal lawyer as Mr. Virgil Power, whose opinion, so far as I can learn, has been endorsed by probably the most astute lawyer in the colony, the leader of the Opposition. There may possibly have been a miscarriage of justice. Upon that I can offer no opinion; but I am certain that, so far as the Crown law officers are concerned, both of the present and the previous Government, I am certain that no stone was left unturned by them, if this crime was committed by this man, to bring it home to him. If further

evidence is forthcoming, this man is still liable to be prosecuted; and the danger of a debate of this kind, and why I rather deprecate it, is, that the man, if he really be the criminal, is warned and may leave the colony and so defeat the ends of justice.

Mr. HODGKINSON: He has cleared out already.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have now set forth the facts as I have them here, and I believe the Crown law officers have followed the course that would have been adopted by any Minister of Justice or Attorney-General.

Mr. HODGKINSON, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—Previous to bringing this matter before the House I was aware that the man had left the colony. I am glad to find that the Colonial Secretary looks upon it exactly in the same light that I do. With regard to the law officers of the Crown, no one has a higher respect for the Crown Prosecutor for the North, and his legal opinions, than I have. The object of my remarks is to show that the Government have been prevented from giving this man a fair trial. In addition to the details which the Colonial Secretary has given, I will, in justice to myself and to public opinion in the district, give a little more information, which I did not wish to give before. I called upon the Government Analyst in order to be perfectly certain that what I said on this case might be corroborated by him. Before opening the conversation on the subject I told him not to say one word to me that I was not at liberty to make public, and he understood that I intended to make it public, to show how justice might have been defeated. The Government Analyst says that on the 24th February, seven weeks after the murder, he received a small vial containing about two ounces of the contents of the stomach of the deceased. If hon. members will read any authority on medical jurisprudence—and we have the standard authority in the library—they will see that analysis under those circumstances was perfectly useless. In cases of narcotic or irritant poisoning, a certain time after death has taken place, the contents of the stomach are virtually of no good whatever, and it is in other organs of the body that that search must be made if you wish to have any chance of detecting the poison. Mr. Mar received this paltry vial of the contents of the stomach on the 24th February. About the end of the following month—that is, March—he received a second consignment, containing the stomach and intestinal tract of the deceased, and a bottle of chloroform and three bottles of strychnine. He made a special search for strychnine, but detected none, either in the intestinal tract or in the stomach itself. Then, after some details about the trial, with which I will not trouble the House, this is what our Government Analyst says upon this question: "Morphia would tend to mask strychnia if exhibited in large doses; that is to say, it would in a measure subdue or reduce the spasms produced by strychnine, and if taken in excess the *post mortem* appearances would be those typical of morphia, and not of strychnine." I am just as chary as the Colonial Secretary is in expressing an opinion on this case, but I take it that where circumstances have occurred to defeat the best scientific evidence available as to the presence of a poison, men of common sense can only judge from the circumstances surrounding the case. And the circumstances surrounding this case are particularly ugly. Then the Government Analyst goes on to observe:—

"Moreover, strychnine is principally found in the liver after death, and is often absorbed by or eliminated from the body. The Government Analyst got about an ounce of the contents of the stomach in a glass bottle, which was practically useless."

That is the opinion of the authority upon which this case was determined. He says distinctly that the exhibit he got was useless for the purpose for which it was sent. He says it was—

“Practically useless unless a large amount of strychnine was present in the body.”

Then he says he wrote to the Commissioner of Police for the liver, spinal cord, spleen, the duodenum, kidneys, blood, the intestines, and muscular tissue, and all he got was the exhibit to which I have alluded. Of course, I hope my object in bringing this case forward, will not be misapprehended. I only trust, that should similar circumstances arise, the Colonial Secretary will take care that the officer upon whose fiat the result of the analysis is to be determined will be furnished with those portions of the body he requires before he can form a valuable opinion, and that, if he is subpoenaed to attend a distant part of the colony at large expense, proper steps will be taken that the responsibility of producing the exhibits at the trial will fall upon shoulders that can be recognised, and who, if they fail in their duty, will be liable to punishment. I beg to withdraw the motion.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the motion is withdrawn I should like to say a few words on the subject. I was present in the Supreme Court at Normanton when this case was called on, and am interested in it in a small way. The hon. gentleman who has just sat down, in his concluding remarks, advised the Colonial Secretary that when such cases occurred he would like proper precautions taken to see that the exhibits were sent up with the evidence. Now, I need not remind hon. members that this case did not happen in the time of the present Colonial Secretary at all; the trial took place in the time of the ex-Attorney-General, before the elections, so that if there is any fault in connection with the administration of justice it lies with the late Administration. As I have said, I was present in court when this case was called on. The Government Analyst, Mr. Mar, the Crown Prosecutor, the judge, and all the other officials and witnesses, who had been summoned from all parts of the colony, were there; but the whole machinery failed through the exhibits not having been sent up to the Government Analyst. That was the only plea put forward for not going on with the case—that the exhibits had not been sent up. Who was to blame for that? I believe the fault lay in the Department of Justice, that proper orders were not given for the exhibits to be sent up. The Government Analyst says he could not be held responsible because he was not ordered to take the exhibits up. At any rate justice completely failed for want of the exhibits; and, as time goes on, justice is still more likely to fail, because time will tend to obliterate the evidence, and help the criminal. Certainly very great blame attaches to somebody for the case not having been gone on with. Witnesses came down from the interior hundreds of miles—some from Camooweal and the borders of South Australia—at great expense, and have been subpoenaed to attend the court again. If no other end is served by bringing the case forward it may help to show who is to blame in the matter. Perhaps, as the hon. the Colonial Secretary has said, justice will be completely defeated by the publicity now given to the matter, because the criminal, whoever he may be, will get timely notice of his danger, and escape by going to another country.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He has gone.

Mr. PALMER: I know at the time the case was before the court there was less attention paid to it than there was to the affair of Sub-

Inspector Brannelly, who failed to pay proper attention to the judge when he landed at the Gulf. Everyone in court was very much surprised at the distinction made between the two cases—at the failure of justice in an important criminal case, and all the trouble and bother about a paltry matter of an officer not paying the judge proper attention. That was the expression of public opinion. I know the man who was engaged to the unfortunate girl who was murdered. He is a horse-driver of mine, has been in my service for a great number of years, and is as honest, capable, and industrious a man as it is possible to find—a man in whom I have every confidence. I know he is almost broken-hearted over this case. He was one of the witnesses, and had to leave his load on the road to the station, and go back to give evidence, and has been subpoenaed to attend at the next sittings of the court. I think it is a great pity that justice should have failed through want of attention on the part of somebody in Brisbane to the requirements in such cases. I think it is very problematical now whether justice will ever be sheeted home to the criminal, because as time goes on traces and evidence will become obliterated, and distance from the scene will also help in that direction. A ten days' journey by steamer does not help to forward the ends of justice.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker,—I regret that I was not in the House when my hon. friend, the member for Burke, brought this matter forward, because I should like to have heard all he had to say on the subject. I do not think, however, that the hon. gentleman who has just sat down helps the matter by trying to draw invidious comparisons between the amount of culpability that should be apportioned to those at the head of the Department of Justice now and formerly, and the Crown Prosecutor. The hon. gentleman assumes a great deal, and I have always noticed that there are none so ready to dogmatise about matters of this kind as those who have the least opportunity of knowing what they are talking about. I have frequently known in my experience in connection with the administration of justice the great annoyance that arises from persons who assume to know a great deal—who know so much as to be able to prescribe exactly the line of duty to be followed by those in charge of the administration of justice, who generally have a great deal more information at their disposal than the parties who assume to criticise their actions.

Mr. PALMER: Why did not you send up the exhibits?

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: I know very little of this case personally. The first I knew of it was when depositions taken at the magisterial inquiry into the cause of death were forwarded to the Crown law officers in due course. I read those depositions and formed the conclusion, which I have continued to entertain, that this was a case of grave suspicion against the individual who was living in the house with the girl who died. I am not sure whether the police anticipated me in the matter, but if they did not, it was in accordance with my instructions that an information was laid. An inquiry was then held by the magistrates at Croydon into the charge preferred against the man and he was committed for trial to the Circuit Court. Hon. members must be aware that in cases of committal for trial to the Supreme Court in the Northern district, the Crown authorities in Brisbane are not those who have control of the criminal trials following those committals. There is a Northern Crown Solicitor at Bowen, and all officials who have charge of depositions,

taken in cases where committals are made to the Supreme Court in the Northern district, forward them to the Crown Solicitor at Bowen. He communicates with the Crown Prosecutor in Brisbane, and in all cases, I must say, in justice to the Northern Crown Prosecutor, Mr. Power, where serious charges have been made, and committals have followed, and there were matters of doubt as to whether a true bill should be found or not, he invariably came to consult me. In this instance it appears that I was at Rockhampton on circuit, or at Charters Towers seeking re-election, and he had not an opportunity of consulting me. However, I am given to understand, he consulted others whose judgment he considered it was discreet to rely upon, and he, therefore, did not, as he considered he was justified in doing, proceed to find no true Bill upon the facts as he had them, exhibits and all. Taking the advice given him, and also following what his own judgment pointed out as the best course to pursue, he resolved to defer his final decision upon the case until he had reached the spot and ascertained for himself whether the evidence, that was so weak that it would be impossible to convict a man upon it, could not be supplemented by further evidence procurable on the spot. So far as I can gather from a conversation with that gentleman a few days ago, that further evidence was not procurable. The hon. member must not fall into the error of supposing that, because those exhibits were not brought from Brisbane—*ergo*, there was a failure of justice. The Crown Prosecutor knew very well what could be proved by the Government Analyst before he left Brisbane and in view of what he knew the analyst could say, the inclination of his mind was that he could find no true bill in the case, because the evidence was so weak as not to warrant his doing so. I am pointing out to the hon. member that the Crown Prosecutor knew very well before he left Brisbane, and even at the time he was in doubt as to whether he could find a true bill, what the Government Analyst could prove. It was not because the exhibits were not forthcoming at Normanton that there was what the hon. gentleman calls a failure of justice, but because there was not that further local evidence the Crown Prosecutor expected to be able, or thought he might be able, to obtain. The hon. member, no doubt, takes up a very great deal of what has been said by parties out of doors, who fancy they know all about it. There is a very great disposition on the part of some people at Croydon to attach blame to somebody in connection with certain matters. I had a very serious charge laid before me by certain people of Croydon against a well-known gentleman of this colony, Dr. O'Doherty. They actually wanted me to proceed against him for some imaginary offence arising from negligence that he had committed in respect of a woman who died. Some critics are very fond of saying, "This would not have happened if that had been the case," or, "That had happened because such a thing was not done." There was too much disposition to jump at conclusions in that way, and form erroneous judgments upon very insufficient data. I am not familiar with all the facts of the case in connection with what transpired at Croydon; but I have sufficient confidence in the gentleman who performs the duties of Crown Prosecutor to say that it was through no neglect on his part that there was what is called a failure of justice. With regard to the Government Analyst, the Northern Crown Solicitor had the conduct of the case, and there was no failure on the part of anybody in the Crown law offices in Brisbane to do whatever was necessary. I am quite certain in my own mind that the hon. member is not correct when he imagines that because certain

exhibits the Government Analyst had at his disposal were not produced, therefore the trial was not proceeded with and the man got off. The Crown Prosecutor had not made up his mind when he left Brisbane whether a true bill ought to be found or not, and the further evidence he thought he might possibly obtain was not procurable. There was not, in the depositions, as I am informed, even with the exhibits, sufficient evidence to warrant his finding a true bill. I did not read the depositions myself; it was not my duty to do so. They never came to the Crown Law Office in Brisbane. The hon. member must not lose sight of this fact: that it is very often very great wisdom on the part of a Crown Prosecutor not to immediately put a man upon his trial simply because there was a case of strong suspicion. A man might be put upon his trial upon weak evidence and probably he would be acquitted; the man could then go outside and boast of how he had committed the crime, and nobody could lay a hand upon him. It is often a very wise thing to decline finding a true bill, and give the police in the mean time an ample opportunity of making all inquiries and investigations into the case, and then produce an array of facts which will be sufficient to sheet home the crime to the guilty person. There is nothing to prevent the crime being brought home at the next sittings of the court at Normanton, if the suspected man is guilty, and if he can be found. If he has gone away it is all the better for the country, than that he should remain here and present himself as a man who has been pronounced by a jury not guilty of any offence at all. I deprecate these attacks being made upon officers who have the charge of very difficult and delicate matters in connection with the administration of justice, who are not here, and their being charged by the hon. member for Carpentaria with having been accessory in any way to the failure of justice.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to make a personal explanation. I heard the Crown Prosecutor himself state in the Supreme Court at Normanton that the reason why the case was not gone on with was that there were no exhibits there.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House, I will withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN WRIGHT.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it is in accordance with the wishes of the House that I should ask the Colonial Secretary to make an explanation concerning a subject which is just now agitating the population outside, and I think it is a subject upon which the hon. gentleman can give us some additional information. I shall conclude with moving the adjournment of the House. The case of Captain Wright of the "Gayundah" is one of such an extraordinary character, and one which has never occurred before in the history of the Australian colonies, that the public outside are very anxious to know the true facts concerning it. The matter is of extreme importance to the colony, and also of extreme importance to those now in charge of the "Gayundah"—if the contention set up by Captain Wright is a correct one. It could scarcely be supposed that an affair of this kind would occur without the attention of Parliament being directed towards it, and it would be only fair not to have any discussion upon it until we are in possession of the facts. I am quite sure the

Colonial Secretary, from my intimate knowledge of him, and the probity with which he has acted in the matter, will be able to satisfy the House and the country that he has taken the only course which could be taken in the interest of the public. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—The whole of the gist of this matter is of course contained in the papers laid before the House. There are some matters which led up to the correspondence contained in the latter part of the papers, which the House is not at any rate officially aware of, and therefore I am glad to have an opportunity of stating exactly what occurred yesterday afternoon. At half-past 2 o'clock, to be accurate, I had the intimation given to me that the "Gayundah" had been coaled—that thirty-five tons of coal were put on board of her, and there being fifteen tons already on board she was thus given a twelve days' supply of steam power. I was also informed that the vessel had been provisioned and that it was thought an attempt would be made to take the ship to sea. This, after the action of Captain Wright as shown in these papers, led me to think the matter was one that should at once be inquired into. I instructed the Assistant Under Secretary, Mr. Ryder, to go on board the "Gayundah" and ascertain if possible the truth of these statements. Mr. Ryder went on board the "Gayundah" and confirmed what, at any rate, I may term the "reasonable suspicions" raised in my mind and in the mind of my hon. colleague the Minister for Mines and Works, whom I consulted in the matter, that an attempt of that sort was going to be made. Under these circumstances I considered that prompt action, and nothing but prompt action, would frustrate the object sought to be attained. I then put myself into communication with the police authorities, and so arranged that if any attempt was to be made, at any rate the Government would do their best to frustrate it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It appeared to me, and it appears to me now, that the intention of Captain Wright probably was, if he could have got away, to have taken the ship down to New South Wales, and hand her over to the admiral. After his peculiar procedure some days previously—two days, I think—when he refused to recognise in any way the right of the colonial authorities to in any way interfere with him, I thought it was right that we should in a case of this sort, where an immediate necessity appeared to arise, assert our authority.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In that direction I acted, and the papers will show what course of action I pursued. I admit at once the instruction I gave to Mr. Commissioner Seymour was a very strong one, and I intended it to be a very strong one. I fully intended, had there been any resistance on the part of Captain Wright, to have had him removed from that ship, no matter what it would cost, as I would not have this gentleman, who is paid by the taxpayers of this colony, acting in defiance of the recognised authorities of this colony.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I formed the opinion that there was that intention on the part of Captain Wright on, at least, the strongest circumstantial evidence. I formed the opinion that he had acted in a way which I do not believe could conduce highly to the reputation or honour of that gentleman, in victualling

his ship yesterday in the surreptitious manner in which he did. At any rate, I found from the voucher, which will be found on page 5 of the papers, that Captain Wright, utterly regardless and in defiance of the orders issued by the late Government, and which have been continued in force under the present Government, ordered the steward on board the "Gayundah" to get stores for the vessel outside the paymaster. That is to say, he directed that the vessel should be victualled, and that it should be done in secret. This being so, I think there can be but little doubt as to what the intentions of Captain Wright were. The action taken by the Government yesterday was certainly taken only on grounds of grave suspicion; but I think that to-day I have laid before this House documentary evidence to show that the conclusion arrived at by the Government was not an erroneous one. In a matter of this sort, when we find that an officer in our service acts in the contumacious way in which Captain Wright has acted—in actual defiance of authority—what alternative have we? Was Captain Wright going to manage and control the Government, or were the Government to step in and put him down? I think there can be little doubt that Captain Wright's conduct in the past did not demand from the Government that he should be treated with peculiar consideration. At any rate, that peculiar consideration has not been extended to him. I believe that Captain Wright—and I judge from the last letter he has written to the Chief Secretary—shelters himself under one of those remarkable pretences called a "flag." Sometimes it is white, sometimes blue, and sometimes it is red. I would like the House to know the way in which Captain Wright, I assume, endeavours to shelter himself—that is to say, how he endeavours to be allowed to do just what he pleases—to obey when he likes and disobey when he chooses. The 6th clause of the Colonial Naval Defence Act, which is an Imperial Act, passed on the 7th April, 1863, and which certainly contains very strong grounds in favour of the contention of Captain Wright, reads as follows:—

"It shall be lawful for Her Majesty in Council, from time to time as occasion requires, and on such conditions as seem fit, to authorise the Admiralty to accept any offer for the time being made or to be made by the Government of a colony, to place at Her Majesty's disposal any vessel of war provided by that Government, and the men and officers from time to time serving therein; and while any vessel accepted by the Admiralty under such authority is at the disposal of Her Majesty, such vessel shall be deemed to all intents a vessel of war of the Royal Navy, and the men and officers from time to time serving in such vessel shall be deemed to all intents men and officers of the Royal Navy, and shall accordingly be subject to all enactments and regulations for the time being in force for the discipline of the Royal Navy."

That places Captain Wright, comparatively, in a very strong position. There is no doubt that clause gives him a power, one would think, paramount to the power even of the Legislature of this colony; but I think when Captain Wright bases his—"immunity," we will call it—under the 6th clause of that Act, he forgets there is another clause—the last clause in the Act—which is like the sting in the scorpion's tail, and which reads as follows:—

"Nothing in this Act shall take away or abridge any power vested in or exercisable by the Legislature or Government of any colony."

That clause, if it means anything, means that the Government had a perfect right—subject to the revision of the Legislature unquestionably, which all acts of the Government are subject to—to dismiss Captain Wright. That course they have adopted, and what has followed I have explained to the House. What may follow no

one can tell; but I know this: The Government are not prepared to recede one inch from the position they have taken up.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Our action has been to enforce the rights of a free people, and we intend to enforce them. Our servants shall be our servants, and not our masters. I think I have stated fully and clearly the whole of the circumstances surrounding this case. It has not been a pleasant case, except in one thing, and that is with regard to the position of the present officer in charge of the "Gayundah," Lieutenant Taylor. I would point out that the white flag still flies on the "Gayundah," and Lieutenant Taylor is still an Imperial officer, and will continue to command the vessel. We have no desire for him to cease to be an officer of the Royal Navy, or to cause trouble between this colony and the Imperial authorities; but Captain Wright deserved dismissal. Most hon. members will agree with me that he has only been treated as he deserved; but that is not to say that we are going to bring on in any way trouble between ourselves and the mother country. As I have said, we have had trouble with this gentleman before, and having now got rid of him, we put the next Imperial officer in charge of the ship, and he will no doubt remain in charge of her. That officer called upon me this morning, and he is quite content to accept the position, although he said that at first he saw difficulties in the way, but that now those difficulties are removed. This wonderful pennant of Captain Wright has been hauled down, and that of Lieutenant Taylor has been hauled up. I did not ask Lieutenant Taylor as to what was the difference between the pennants; but as it appeared to be a matter of some consequence, I passed it by. I do not think it was anything as to the texture, but it seemed to be a matter of some importance to Lieutenant Taylor; but I was told that the pennant of Captain Wright has been hauled down with his own consent—I daresay it might have been removed in some other way. However, it was hauled down with his consent. With regard to a statement which appeared in this morning's *Courier*, as to the steward (Smith) and Sub-lieutenant Russell having been dismissed, that statement is not correct. They were simply—and I think very properly—when Mr. Gray, the Under Colonial Secretary, was on board the ship, told by him that he thought they had better go on shore, as their conduct was likely to be inquired into. Their conduct will be inquired into, but at present there the matter rests, and there has been no idea of vengeance or punishment proposed in the one case. One case is a serious one, but the other was a very trivial thing indeed. Those persons have not been dismissed, but their cases will be inquired into, and the result of the inquiry will be made public, and it will be in the power of this House to agree or disagree with the action taken. All through, this matter has not been pleasant for the Government, more particularly as it has been thrown upon myself and my colleagues, at a time when the Premier was so unwell; but I can say that in what we did we thought we were doing what was best for the country, and we were determined to put down our foot and insist that our rights should be recognised as regards Captain Wright, and as regards our right to the "Gayundah."

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—In this case I am only speaking for myself, and I think it would be a very graceful and patriotic thing if hon. members on this side of the House backed up to the hilt the action taken by the Government in this matter. We must all agree with the action of the Colonial Secretary, and I am sure we are all proud to recognise that he

has acted in a spirit of true nationalism, and with a degree of energy and strength of mind in maintaining the right and authority of this Government, no matter what the consequences may be. I hope and believe I speak the sentiments of every hon. member on this side of the House, in stating that whatever may be our opinions as to the technical points involved in this dispute, the one grand principle of maintaining the power of this House has been insisted upon, and that the Colonial Secretary has only expressed the feelings of the country in what he has done.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SMYTH said: Mr. Speaker,—I am glad, in reading the correspondence in this case, to find that the Colonial Secretary's action is in accordance with the views we held when on the opposite side of the House. Although there may be certain Imperial rules—lines drawn up by which we might not have entire control over the case, we should see that we are not snubbed by any gentleman sent out from Great Britain, seeing that we have to pay for this war vessel, and are directly interested in the vessel. I am not an Imperialist, and do not pretend to be one; but I believe in the Naval Defence Bill, and I believe it would give a certain measure of protection to this colony; but I believe the line should be drawn here. We should not allow any gentleman to come out and dictate to us what we shall do when we have to pay his salary. When the conduct of Captain Wright came before the late Premier that hon. gentleman did not receive the support of hon. members opposite that he should have received. But now that the matter has come before the present Colonial Secretary I can assure him that, so far as I know from private conversations with hon. members on this side, he will receive our entire support. I am proud to see an Australian like the Colonial Secretary stand up for our rights and privileges, and I hope we are not going to be dictated to by any autocrat who may be sent out. I believe Captain Wright is a plucky man, and that he would fight, if necessary. I believe he has all these qualifications, but he has also certain disqualifications which we cannot put up with. He would do good service if he were required to, but we cannot put up with him doing what he has done. According to the evidence put into our hands to-day, and the evidence we had last session when the late Premier tried to dismiss Captain Wright, he is a gentleman capable of fighting; but when it comes to his interfering with local matters, then I say we cannot stand it, and the Colonial Secretary will receive my support in putting down any such snobbishness as was seen in this instance.

Mr. UNMACK said: Mr. Speaker,—I feel most thoroughly convinced that Captain Wright is one of those gentlemen who will fight—and fight to the last and to the best of his ability for his salary, and for the allowances which may be made to him by the Government. The only thing I wish to refer to is this—that the Government have been most liberal in their promises to Captain Wright by offering him three months' salary in anticipation of his leaving. I trust the Government, under the present circumstances, will not pay him that salary in advance and pay his passage money.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He is dismissed.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that if any further testimony was required to show the necessity for not passing the Naval Defence Bill, which was mentioned by the hon. member for Gympie, it is to be found in the action taken by Captain Wright. I feel perfectly sure that if we have had such difficulty in a small

matter such as this, we should have tenfold more difficulty if that Bill were passed, and, therefore, I most certainly think the House should see that we do not thrust larger powers upon the Imperial authorities by passing the Naval Defence Bill, and I shall offer all the opposition I can to that measure.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—I did not quite catch the reply of the Colonial Secretary to the hon. member for Toowong. Is it proposed to pay Captain Wright's salary to the end of December?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. SALKELD: Is it proposed to pay his passage home to England?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He has ceased to exist as an officer of the service in any way whatever.

Mr. SALKELD: There is no doubt that nothing more sensational in connection with naval officers has taken place in Australia than what has just occurred in connection with Captain Wright; but there is not so much to be surprised at after all when we look back on the action of that gentleman on a previous occasion. This action of Captain Wright's will, no doubt, have very great influence on public opinion in this colony in regard to the naval defence scheme, and to many people it will demonstrate the undesirability of going on with the Naval Defence Bill. As one of those in favour of the Bill, I feel that Captain Wright has done a great injustice to the colony generally, and to Great Britain as well; because matters of this kind are not always weighed calmly. They cause irritation, and people are apt to form exaggerated and incorrect opinions in connection with such matters. I am sure that no one wishes to see any bitterness between Great Britain and the colonies; but while we are not desirous of any estrangement, we are determined to insist upon our full powers in managing our own affairs. Though we are an integral portion of the empire, the people of the colony, through their representatives, must be allowed to exercise supreme authority in matters of local concern not affecting any other portion of the empire; and I thoroughly endorse, so far as I am aware of it, the action of the Government in this matter.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—This little storm in the tea-cup points out one thing very clearly—that is, the great mistake made by the late Government in placing our colonial ships under the white ensign, because if they had not been placed under the white ensign they would have been entirely under our own control, whether inside or outside of any of our harbours. But once having hoisted the white ensign they become subject to the Imperial authorities—to the Admiral who has his headquarters in Sydney; and I think it would be a good thing for the Government to seriously consider the advisableness, having hauled the pennant of this little warrior down, of also hauling down the white ensign, and taking the vessel entirely and exclusively under our own control. I am sure hon. members will give the Government their support in the action they have taken, and I am sure that the country will support them also. I am rather glad that this difficulty has occurred, because it perfectly justifies the members now sitting on this side in the action they took last year with regard to the Naval Defence Bill. It proves that we were justified in not rushing headlong into such an agreement, and not allowing ourselves to be carried away by the sentiment that carried away the southern colonies, and made them rush into an agreement which some of

them already regret, and which they all will regret before many years are over. Undignified as this little storm in a teacup is, I am sure it will have the effect of opening the eyes of the people of the colony to the possible effect of rushing into such an agreement as was proposed last year.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—It is extremely gratifying to find the House unanimously supporting the Government in the action they have taken in this matter, and I only hope that the House will be as unanimous in supporting them in any action it may be necessary to take consequent upon this, because I am inclined to think that we have not seen the end of this business. I think we are just at the commencement of a chapter the end of which we may not see for some time. There is no doubt that the Admiralty is a fearfully and wonderfully constituted body; and I should not be surprised if, after a lot of protests, memorandums and despatches, the Admiralty decide that Captain Wright is technically right in the action he has taken.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He is out of the ship, any way.

Mr. DRAKE: Whether they decide that he is right or that he is wrong, I maintain that we have other rights which do not depend on Admiralty rules; and I hope the Government will insist upon maintaining those rights. If they insist on maintaining those rights, I am sure they will have the support of the House and of the country.

Mr. HYNE said: Mr. Speaker,—I should not have spoken but for the remarks of the hon. member for Barcoo, who sought to cast the blame for this difficulty on the late Government; that is, on the present leader of the Opposition. On whatever subject that hon. member refers to here he always tries to throw the blame upon this side.

Mr. MURPHY: I put the blame on the right shoulders.

Mr. HYNE: I am a Britisher, and a loyal subject, and yet I stand up here and heartily support the action of the Colonial Secretary, and I only trust that he will extend that action, and put his foot down firmly upon other servants of the people who have shown a tendency to show a little opposition to the properly-constituted authorities.

Mr. SAYERS said: Mr. Speaker,—Like all the previous speakers, I support the Colonial Secretary in his action. I brought up a matter the other day in the House, and it was stated that, although the individual I mentioned was a servant of the Crown, that neither the Government nor anyone else had any power to interfere with him. I should like to see the Government apply this action to all servants of the public. Everybody who receives money from the Treasury should be under the control of this Parliament, but I do not like to see one man let off, after defying the Government, and another man punished. I want to see the same punishment meted out to every individual who offends in that way, and if the Chief Secretary had done that to the individual I refer to, his action would have met with the same approbation that was shown with regard to his treatment of Captain Wright.

Mr. GROOM, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—After what has transpired, the Colonial Secretary will see that I was justified in asking him to make the statement that he has made to the House. It will be extremely satisfactory to the country to know that the action of the Colonial Secretary is unanimously endorsed by both sides of the House. That was the object I wished to attain by raising the discussion this afternoon,

With regard to the other officers whom he mentioned, and whose conduct is under inquiry, I would point out that A. P. Smith, the chief steward, in answer to the paymaster, said, "In answer to your inquiry as to why I provisioned the 'Gayundah' yesterday, I beg to state that I did so by direct orders of the captain, who signed the orders on board the ship." It is quite possible that if Smith had not obeyed the instructions he might have been put under arrest, and possibly in irons.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The matter will be carefully inquired into.

Mr. GROOM: I am sure justice will be done. I am only pointing out what might have happened if the chief steward had refused to obey the instructions given to him by the captain. I am one of those who heartily endorse the action of the Colonial Secretary, and I think it is to be regretted, when we are all so unanimous on the matter, that strictures should be thrown upon the late Government, and that it should be said that they were to blame for what had occurred. It would have been better to have left that out, and it is to be regretted that there should be a single jarring sound heard. My object having been attained, with the consent of the House I beg to withdraw the motion.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The House is so unanimous, and things are so pleasant to both sides, that it would be a pity to let the motion go without a remark or two from me. I may say that I am also in unanimity with them, and entirely agree with the action of the Colonial Secretary; and more still, with the statement of the hon. member for Fassifern, Mr. Salkeld, who says the country is determined that it shall have the management of its own affairs. Had I known that there would have been such unanimity of feeling I would have gone a little further and put a motion on the paper that we should go in for Home Rule. Probably, if I find that the House keeps in this good spirit for a few weeks I may put a motion on the paper similar to that which was carried in the Canadian Parliament for Home Rule for Ireland. What is good for one country is good for the other; and if the Irish people had taken the same action that the hon. gentleman—a young colonial—has taken for his native country, things would have been different. I agree that no blame should be thrown on the leader of the Opposition, because he had his trouble, too, with this man, and showed an immense deal of firmness. The action taken by the Colonial Secretary will, I believe, be a great blow to the federal naval defence scheme that some persons want us to have. I am determined to oppose any Bill that may be brought in for that purpose. I again say I am thankful for the unanimity of hon. members in favour of Home Rule for Queensland, and I hope it will be extended to all parts of the United Kingdom.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the motion is withdrawn I should like to say a word or two relative to a very common misapprehension, as to the colour of the flag. There seems to be an idea that the colour of the flag worn by the "Gayundah" has something to do with this matter. The colour of the flag has nothing whatever to do with it, and I cannot understand why people are so stupid as to think it has. The position of the "Gayundah" as a man-of-war—as a ship recognised as entitled to the consideration given to a man-of-war of an Imperial Power—is conferred under the Imperial Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865. We, of course—as has been pointed out more than once this session—can only give authority to our own officers in our own ships while they are within our own waters,

that is, within three miles of our shores. A man-of-war that could only operate within three miles of the shore would be a farce. That was long ago foreseen. In order that the colonial men-of-war may be of practical use it is necessary that authority should be given to them on the high seas as well as within our own waters. And in order to enable that to be done an Act was passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1865. Under clause 6 of that Act Her Majesty may authorise the Admiralty to accept the offer of colonial ships of war. That was done in the case of the "Gayundah," and it was the only way in which that vessel could be made of any practical use. The result of that is that when the "Gayundah" is on the high seas her officers and men are under the Naval Discipline Act; while they are in our waters they are also under that Act, because it is so provided by the Defence Act, so that wherever she is she is under the same discipline. That being so, the question arose what flag was she to wear? Merchant ships wear the red ensign, the Imperial Navy the white ensign, and ships of the Naval Reserve the blue ensign, which has been considered to be, to a certain extent, rather inferior to the white, indicating a sort of second-class concern. In order that the "Gayundah" should be fully recognised as a ship of the British Navy, as she is, we asked that she should be allowed to wear the white ensign. It does not make the slightest difference practically whether it is the red, the blue, or the white. It is simply a matter of courtesy, so that she should be entitled to receive the same courtesy from vessels of any foreign power as vessels of the Imperial Navy. In order that the recognition should be real, not a grudging recognition as of something inferior—a colonial article—we asked that the white ensign might be worn. That permission was granted, but it made no difference whatever in the status of Captain Wright or his relations to the Government of this colony. There is no question whatever that the officers of the "Gayundah" hold their offices during the pleasure of the authority by whom they are appointed—that is, the Government of this colony. That is expressly provided by the 31st section of the Defence Force Act:—

"Commissions of officers in the Defence Force shall be granted by the Governor. . . . All officers shall hold their rank during pleasure."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The 10th clause of the Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865 gives overriding power over clause 6.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That clause says:—

"Nothing in this Act shall take away or abridge any power vested in or exercisable by the Legislature or Government of any colony."

No interference has ever been attempted or suggested. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the difficulty has been to get the Imperial authorities to move—even to advise—in these matters. They entirely disclaim any right to interfere in any way whatever. I was not in the colony when a court-martial was held in connection with an officer of the "Gayundah." I know there was great difficulty to get the authorities to move in that matter, and I think it is unfortunate that that court-martial was ever held.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: There was no occasion for it; we could have dealt with it ourselves. I have no doubt whatever, that the Government have a perfect right to deal with any officer of the "Gayundah," in the same way that they have a right to deal with any other person holding office during pleasure. They may be dismissed for misconduct. It is

not usual to dismiss an officer in the navy without a court-martial, but it is sometimes done. I took the trouble to ascertain that when there was some difficulty with Captain Wright about twelve months ago, I ascertained that, although it was not usual, still it may be done, and that there would not be the least difficulty made if we considered the circumstances in any case justified us in dismissing an officer without court-martial. So that we may laugh at all the bogies that have been raised. We are perfectly free, and nobody wants to interfere with us.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MARSUPIALS DESTRUCTION ACT CONTINUATION BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson), the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider this Bill in detail.

On clause 1, as follows :—

"The Marsupials Destruction Act of 1881, the Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Act of 1885, and the Marsupials Destruction Act Amendment Act of 1887, shall continue and remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, and thereafter until the end of the then next session of Parliament."

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the leader of the Opposition had kindly pointed out to him that there was an amendment necessary in the clause. While on the subject he might inform hon. members that it was the desire of certain gentlemen that a clause should be inserted in the Bill enabling marsupial boards to pay for the scalps of bandicoots. He had not the slightest objection, and would accept any amendment in that direction which might be proposed. He moved that the words "as amended by" be inserted after the figures "1881," in the 1st line.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. MORGAN said, when the Bill was on its second reading, he had made certain remarks on behalf of the country districts. There was a great desire that bandicoots should be brought under the provisions of the Act, as they were a very great trouble to farmers, particularly in the scrub country. The Act at present included kangaroo rats, and he did not see any reason why those more troublesome little animals he had mentioned should not be included. He moved the insertion of the following new clause :—

The term "marsupial" in such Act, shall include the bandicoot, and the rate of bonus payable in respect of the scalps of bandicoots shall be twopence.

Twopence was the rate paid for the scalps of kangaroo rats, and he hoped there would be no opposition to his proposed new clause.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he had not the slightest objection to the proposed new clause, but he did not know whether the hon. member had put it in the best form. He was sorry the leader of the Opposition was not there to assist them. He would suggest that the new clause should take the following form :—

The Minister, at the request of the board of any district, may authorise the application of the funds standing to the credit of the account of the district in payment of a bonus for the destruction of bandicoots, at a rate not exceeding twopence for each scalp. When any such authority is given, it shall remain in force until withdrawn by the Minister on the like request.

Then it would be in similar form to the clause inserted in the Act of 1885 dealing with dingoes.

Mr. MORGAN said he would like to make the clause compulsory so as to meet cases where the pastoral interest predominated, and

where there would be a desire to pay attention to the larger variety of marsupials only. If the power were only permissive those smaller vermin would be allowed to remain. He preferred the amendment in the form he had put it.

Mr. GRIMES said he thought the form suggested by the hon. member for Warwick was preferable, because the farmers were chiefly interested in the destruction of bandicoots, and they did not own enough cattle or sheep to entitle them to be represented on the boards, as a rule, and therefore the boards would be formed of those who were not interested in farming.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said there was no recommendation from the Administrator of the Government to cover the expenditure of that 2d. per bandicoot. Perhaps the hon. member remembered the case, when on a similar Bill, they had inserted such a clause without a recommendation, and they had to leave it out again, and then get the recommendation and reinsert it.

Mr. MORGAN said he did not know whether the hon. gentleman was serious in his objection.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH : It is the law.

Mr. SALKELD said he supposed the clause would have to lapse, seeing that there was no authority from the Administrator of the Government. When the Bill was on its second reading he made certain remarks concerning the way in which marsupial districts were constituted. Some localities with totally different interests were included in districts, and people who received no benefit from the expenditure had to pay the tax. He had ascertained since that there was a way to remedy that, as the Governor in Council had power to alter a district, and where a clear case was made out, no doubt it would be done. He was very sorry the amendment of the hon. member for Warwick could not be put, because it was a very desirable amendment, as the bandicoot, especially where there was cultivation, was a greater nuisance to farmers than anything else.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said there appeared to be a wrong impression in the minds of some members with regard to the people who had to bear the burden of the tax. The tax was levied upon all persons who had more than a certain number of cattle or sheep, and to include bandicoots would be to some extent a departure from the principle underlying the Bill, that persons who had stock and benefited by the destruction of marsupials should bear the tax. If they included bandicoots and flying foxes, as suggested, then the agriculturists would have to be included amongst the persons who would have to pay the tax.

Mr. MORGAN said he had no intention of doing anything which would arrest the progress of the Bill, which he thought was a very necessary one ; and, therefore, since it was necessary to employ the sledge hammer of the constitution to drive a tack like that, and they could not go on without employing it, he begged to withdraw the clause he had proposed.

New clause, by leave, withdrawn.

On clause 2—"Short title"—

Mr. MELLOR said he would suggest to the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill that he should postpone the consideration of it for a day or two, until the necessary recommendation could be got from the Governor in Council. He made the suggestion because he considered the amendment a very good one, and it would give great satisfaction to many people who now had to pay the tax without reaping much benefit.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said that was a fair suggestion, and the hon. gentleman would be just as far forward with the Bill on Monday if it was adopted. There was no one going to oppose the Bill, and the delay would make no difference.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he would accept the suggestion, and move that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he would like to call the attention of the Postmaster-General to the clause in the principal Act, which read as follows:—

"Any owner of not less than 500 head of cattle or 2,500 sheep in any district, shall be qualified to be elected a member of the board of such district; and any owner of not less than 100 head of cattle or 500 sheep, may vote at the election of members of the board of such district."

There was a manifest wrong in that clause, as it debarred many persons who paid rates from voting for or becoming members of the board. Many farmers had not sufficient stock to entitle them to vote, but they were taxed all the same. There might be some provision by which the stock held by several farmers could be counted and the qualification for voting and sitting as a member of the board granted in that way. He hoped the Postmaster-General would see his way to propose an amendment that would meet that difficulty.

Mr. SALKELD said the suggestion of the hon. member for Rosewood was worthy of consideration. The effect of the clause was that many people who should have the right to vote had only the right to sit still and be taxed, and ask no questions. It had been thought the Act would soon be allowed to lapse, or some decided action would have been taken in that matter, as there was widespread dissatisfaction at that provision, which gave those who were taxed no voice in the decision of the matters for which they were taxed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the clause was an open violation of all the rules laid down by political economists, that only those should pay taxes who had a voice in the management of the matters for which they paid the taxes. When people paid taxes, and had no voice in the expenditure of the revenue they provided, they were actual slaves. There was a fine principle in the question raised by the hon. member, and he hoped it would not be lost sight of.

Mr. MURRAY said that if the Act was to be continued in force it would be desirable to amend the qualification for a member of the board. At present it was necessary a man should have 500 cattle to entitle him to sit on the board. That ought to be reduced to 100, as the effect at present was that people living in the closely settled districts were not represented on the marsupial boards.

Mr. MURPHY said he thought the suggestion thrown out by the last speaker was a good one, and that the qualifications both for the voter and for a member of the board should be reduced. He was afraid, however, that if the Postmaster-General made any serious alteration this session it might end in the Act ceasing to exist. If there were time he would support the hon. member in reducing the qualification both for members of the board and for the voters; and if he had not time this session he hoped he would re-enact the measure as it was now, and introduce an amended Bill next session.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported progress.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND WORKS—BUILDINGS.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the sum of £121,670 be granted for buildings.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said perhaps the hon. gentleman would inform the Committee what additions to the Parliamentary Buildings were intended to be made by that amount of £13,000?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the intention was to make a new wing at the Alice-street end of the building so as to carry out the original plan. The proposal was to erect a new wing.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: That will cost £50,000.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said it might cost £50,000 before it was completed, but he hardly thought so. It certainly would cost more than £13,000. Additional accommodation was to be provided. On the basement floor there was to be the providore's cellar, and accommodation for machinery for lifts, etc.—that was underneath the surface. On the ground floor there were to be five large rooms, messengers' rooms, an area for a lift, two bath rooms, lavatories, etc., for members sitting on Select Committees. There would also be two servants' sleeping rooms and urinals. On the first floor there would be a Ministers' room, two private rooms, and three other large rooms, a smoking room, a dining room, bath rooms, lifts, and stairs. That was on a level with that Chamber. On the second floor there would be a large room for reporters communicating with the gallery, and having accommodation for six officers. Then there would be a kitchen, scullery, pantry, servants' rooms, stairs, and lifts. The plans were now in hand, and could be got ready within a month. The leader of the Opposition knew that there was some money in hand which had already been voted for the purpose. That was why they were only asking for £13,000.

Mr. GROOM said that a sum of £20,000 had been voted from the Loan Estimates of 1884 for erecting Parliamentary refreshment rooms. He desired to take up a few minutes on that question, as he would not have another opportunity of speaking, and he was sure that the Committee would accept his opinion from his personal knowledge, as he had had considerable experience of the subject. There was an extreme want of accommodation for hon. members in that building. It was deficient in every respect. If a gentleman called upon a member, and desired to see him, there was no place where he could be taken; and with regard to witnesses attending upon the select committees down stairs, there was no accommodation whatever for them—they had to sit out in the lobby, and a good many of them had contracted severe colds. In fact, he had no hesitation in saying that there was better accommodation in many of the police courts for witnesses than in that building. He considered those additions very necessary. On a previous occasion he had heard some hon. members speaking in condemnation of the proposal, but he thought they had probably so spoken more from the want of knowledge than from any desire not to give effect to it. He was sure that the hon. the Speaker, who was now in a position to speak from experience, would bear him out in saying

that there was nothing like the accommodation required for the accommodation of hon. members. If a gentleman called and wished to speak with an hon. member, there was no place to do so. If that had been the case when there had only been fifty-nine members, still more was additional accommodation required for a House of seventy-two members. There was simply no accommodation at all. Hon. gentlemen who had been in the Houses of Parliament in the other colonies, and more particularly in the Victorian House of Parliament, must have seen there, in the large and handsome lobby, eight or ten tables where hon. members could go and see any of their constituents at one of those tables. He might have a dozen of his constituents there, and no one else would know what took place. As far as hon. members here were concerned, they had to go out into the lobby when anyone wished to see them, or into one of the committee rooms, or into the little room for members outside. He asked if that miserable sitting room were sufficient accommodation in a climate such as this? It was extremely desirable that some additional accommodation should be provided for hon. members.

Mr. HYNÉ said that, in looking over the Estimates, he was at first surprised to see such a small amount put down for bridges; but since then he had learned something which it was very satisfactory to know—that a certain promise had been made by the Premier in reference to the construction of important bridges. A bridge connecting Maryborough with East Maryborough was very much wanted; and last session a petition containing over 2,000 signatures was presented to that Chamber in connection with the proposed bridge. East Maryborough had a population of about 1,000 persons. He knew of other important bridges—at Mackay, across the Endeavour, and across Ross Creek, at Townsville—which were built by the Government without asking assistance from the local bodies, and he often wondered why Maryborough should be made an exception. The reply given recently by the Premier to the deputation that waited on him with reference to a certain bridge, was that he was willing to give half of the amount, provided the local authorities subscribed the other half. He (Mr. Hyné) was authorised to state that the local bodies interested in the proposed bridge at Maryborough were prepared to pay the one-half of the cost; and, therefore, he concluded that the Government would find the other half, and that the bridge would soon be an accomplished fact. He would now read the Premier's words in reply to the deputation to which he had referred, so that they might appear in *Hansard*. According to the *Courier* of the 9th instant, the Premier said:—

"His proposition, when a site had been determined upon, would be that the Government should pay one-half of the cost and the corporations interested the other half, the Government finding all the money and the corporations repaying it in time. These were the terms he would propose in other cases of a similar kind, and he would not be granting any better terms to Brisbane than to other places where it was considered advisable that bridges of importance should be built."

Several bores had been put down, and the result of those borings had been forwarded to the department. He had visited the drafting office and had seen that the plans were under way. He hoped the Minister for Mines and Works would push on as quickly as possible with the work. It was wanted to connect East and West Maryborough. He might mention that, in 1883, an amount for building that bridge was placed on the Estimates, but he had not been able to find any record of it; he was assured that such was the fact. It was a special Estimate laid on the table, and afterwards withdrawn. The bridge

was very necessary, and he trusted the proposal would be accepted—that the Government should pay one-half the cost and the local body the other half.

Mr. ANNEAR said that at the opening of Parliament in 1883—the last year of the McIlwraith Administration—an estimate was laid on the table, providing for the construction of six bridges in different parts of the colony. One of the items in that schedule was a sum of £35,000 for a bridge from Maryborough to Granville. He did not know whether it was a bogus estimate—the last dying speech of that Ministry—but it was laid before Parliament. If that bridge was necessary then, it was much more necessary now as the population of East Maryborough had increased tenfold since that time. He hoped the Government would take the matter into their serious consideration. It was a very liberal offer to find one-half the money. He did not think that at Townsville the local body paid half the money for their bridge, or at Mackay, or at Cooktown, or at the Annan River.

Mr. POWERS said the hon. member, Mr. Annear, had spoken about a bogus estimate; he would explain how the matter stood. When the McIlwraith Government presented their Estimates for 1883-4, there was money put down for six bridges to be constructed out of surplus revenue. What was the result? The McIlwraith Government went out of office, the Griffith Government succeeded, and since then five out of those six bridges had been built, the only one left out being the bridge from Maryborough to Granville. He did not think it was the fault of the McIlwraith Administration. If there was a surplus now, Maryborough would have a claim to the bridge at the cost of the country. They now offered to find one-half the money, so as to be placed on the same footing as Brisbane.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Burrum was stating what was not the fact. The McIlwraith Government never asked Parliament to find the money to construct those bridges. It was the late Government that asked Parliament for money to construct the bridges over the Annan, the Endeavour, the Pioneer, and Ross Creek. They got the money and carried out the work.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he hoped they were not going to have a protracted debate about who found the money and who did not; it was the country that really found the money. What the hon. member for Burrum had said with regard to the estimate was perfectly true. They had then a surplus revenue, which was in existence at the termination of the administration of the McIlwraith Government. When that Government met Parliament in 1883 they brought down an appropriation of that surplus fund. What became of it he did not remember; he was not a member of the Government at that time. He knew it included certain bridges; but whether there was one for Maryborough he could not say. That surplus revenue was not allowed to be appropriated in the way proposed. The Estimate was not even allowed by the House to be printed; it was actually printed, but it was withdrawn as a parliamentary document. The same surplus revenue was afterwards appropriated by the late Administration, and three bridges were taken up, the Annan, the Pioneer, and Ross Creek—£30,000 was taken out of the surplus revenue for them. As to the general policy of the Government finding half the money for large bridges he could say nothing. If it was to be the Government policy a Bill would have to be brought in and approved of by Parliament. If that was to be the policy he had not the slightest doubt that the Maryborough people

would get the advantage of it, the same as every other part of the colony where important bridges were required. The money he had at present for bridges was not distributed in that way. He did not give one-half, but generally one-third of the money required, the divisional boards having to find the other two-thirds.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I do not think you have given anything yet.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had reduced the vote very considerably since he had been in office. He was afraid it would be all melted away before he could get another loan vote. He could not afford to be so liberal, because he had not the money to spend. Besides that, he preferred distributing the money he had for bridges over a large area of country, building small bridges, instead of spending nearly the whole of it upon one or two bridges; so that large bridges would have to be made by a different policy, which must be adopted by that House.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. gentleman was quiet correct in his statement. As he had stated, the Estimate referred to had not been printed or made a record of the House; but the hon. member for Burrum and his friends had always maintained that it was a record of the House, and that if the late Government had remained in power that bridge would have been built. He thanked the Minister for his explanation. As he said last night, they had now a separate department under a bridge engineer. Several sums of money had been voted from time to time for bridges, and unless he was mistaken, none of those works had been carried out for the first estimate given. The Townsville bridge must cost a tremendous sum of money to make the approaches; and they saw by the newspapers that during the last fresh that took place in one of the rivers up North, the bridge over it was twisted into the shape of a boomerang. He would like the hon. gentleman to tell the Committee if the bridge over the Pioneer River, at Mackay, was completed; also, whether the bridges over the Annan River, the Endeavour River, and the one at Townsville were completed. He would also like to know whether those works were finished in accordance with the estimate, and, if not, how much would the estimate be exceeded in the case of each bridge? He did not wish to cast any reflection on the Engineer of Bridges at all, but they saw that in connection with every work undertaken in the colony by that gentleman something always appeared in the papers to the effect that a fresh vote would have to be asked for. None of the bridges were completed. In fact they were in a state of chaos altogether. No doubt other hon. members would refer to the Breakfast Creek bridge, which had come to a standstill also.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could give the hon. gentleman all the information he asked for, but before doing so he would read a few lines from vol. 41, page 12, of *Hansard*, which would at once settle the matter of the bridges spoken of by the hon. members for Burrum and Maryborough. In a speech delivered by the then Premier, Sir Thomas Mcllwraith, in moving the estimate he said:—

"I propose that for the repairs of bridges in the different divisions £50,000 be spent; that for new bridges over the Mary River at Maryborough, over the Burnett River at Bundaberg, over the Pioneer River at Mackay, and over the Annan River near Cooktown, £150,000 be spent."

That settled the matter about the bridge over the Mary. The bridge over Ross Creek, at Townsville, was not finished yet, and might not be finished this year, although it was expected to be

finished by the end of the year. The bridge over the Annan was not finished; that over the Endeavour had been nearly washed away, and was being put in order, so that it could not be said to be finished either. As to the cost, the estimate of the Endeavour bridge was £4,692, the actual cost, £6,224. The estimate of the Mackay bridge was £23,000, the actual cost, £31,462; the estimate of the Annan bridge was £20,626, and the expenditure to date, £16,480. He expected that it would cost £24,000 or £25,000 by the time it was completed. All those bridges cost considerably above the estimate.

Mr. GANNON said the Breakfast Creek bridge had been mentioned, and he should like to know from the Minister if he could give any assistance in the way of money towards the work. Of course they all knew that there had been a bungle in connection with that work, but he did not intend to go into that matter now. The estimated cost of the bridge was £6,400, and the tender accepted was £8,500, but he believed it would cost £9,000 or £10,000 before it was finished. When the late Minister for Works, Mr. Miles, was in office, after a good deal of persuasion, he granted £1,000 towards that bridge, and he (Mr. Gannon) would like to know from the Minister whether he could not help them a little with it. Even if he gave one-third it would be a considerable help. The traffic over that bridge was something tremendous, it being the leading thoroughfare from the city to the suburbs in that direction. In fact, there was no bridge except the Victoria bridge over which such an amount of traffic passed. He hoped the Minister would see his way to grant them some assistance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could not make the hon. member any promise to find money to build that bridge. The Government were bound to find £1,000, but if there was a bungle he did not think the country should be called upon to rectify or pay for the mistake. If the mistake had been made by the Government Engineer, of course it would be a different matter.

Mr. GANNON said when that £1,000 was offered to them, the cost of the bridge was estimated at £6,400; but they knew very well that the real cost would be over £9,000, or nearly £3,000 above the estimate of the Engineer for Bridges.

Mr. ANNEAR said he would like to know from the Minister for Mines and Works, if the Engineer for Bridges and his staff were employed in preparing plans for the iron bridges, for the second section of the Cairns railway. If so, were they paid out of the railway vote?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said they had been employed upon that work, but were not so at present.

Mr. ARCHER said the hon. member for Toombul had stated that there was an immense amount of traffic over the Breakfast Creek bridge. Now, they had been trying for a long time to get the people to depend more upon themselves, and less upon the Government. Although it was a long time since the Divisional Boards Act was passed, and he had been for some time out of Parliament, he thought he remembered a clause giving power to boards to levy tolls on some bridges. If that were so, the Breakfast Creek bridge was a case where that principle could be applied. In a division where the people were wealthy who would use the bridge, they might see if they could not, at all events, raise the interest on the money until the debt was paid off, and when that was done it could be thrown open to the public. That would be a desirable plan to

try, and he did not know any place in the colony where it could be applied with such a certainty of success.

Mr. BUCKLAND said it was too early yet to pass sentence upon the action of the joint board formed to erect that bridge. The case had been referred to arbitration, and until the arbitrator had decided who was in the wrong, it was too soon to judge the case. It would be recollected by many that the late Minister for Works, Mr. Miles, promised £1,000 out of the bridge loan for the construction of that bridge, and, as had been observed by the hon. member for Toombul, the lowest tender—that of Messrs. Overend and Co.—for £8,500 was accepted. The Engineer for Bridges estimated the cost at £6,400, so it was evident that someone was in the wrong, who, he was not going to say at present; but from what they had heard and read of other bridges constructed by the Government, it was quite possible that the error might have occurred with the officials in the bridge department. The hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Archer, had referred to the imposition of tolls on bridges. The Divisional Boards Act provided that they could collect tolls on bridges, or on other public highways. It would be a mistake to commence that sort of thing in Queensland, unless, as he had often stated at board meetings, they could exempt ratepayers. The travelling public who made use of roads and bridges principally were people who were out for pleasure, and it was quite fair that they should pay a proportion of the expense of keeping those bridges and roads in order by tolls. It would be known to many hon. members that in the city of London, previous to the abolition of tolls, free men of the city driving up to the Temple Bar and other places where tolls were collected, were exempted if they had on their vehicles, whether private or for use in their business, the city arms. That was quite sufficient to exempt them from tolls, and perhaps some such system might be adopted here, although to revert to the system of tolls would be to return to the dark ages. Under the Local Government Act they had ample provision, with the assistance of the Government, for the construction of public works.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was afraid the hon. member was rather too sanguine in his expectations. The Breakfast Creek bridge question had not yet been referred to arbitration, he was sorry to say. He had asked both the contractor and the bridge board to nominate an arbitrator, or else allow him to nominate him. The bridge board had nominated Mr. Kirk, the late city engineer; but the contractor had made no suggestion. The contractor had nominated the Government Engineer to be arbitrator; but, seeing that the Government Engineer was one of the parties, he (Mr. Macrossan) certainly could not consent to that. So that they had not arrived at the happy condition yet of having the matter referred to arbitration.

Mr. BARLOW said he was very glad to hear the Minister for Mines and Works propose such a scheme for bridges as he had; but he would like to bring before him the case of the town he represented. He had brought the matter of the Ipswich bridge before the House, perhaps with a zeal that outran his discretion, on the first day of the session. Hon. gentlemen who had seen that railway composite bridge would probably be aware that it was a sort of creature of circumstances. It was in an exceedingly inconvenient and unapproachable situation. The approach, as hon. members would be aware, at South Ipswich side was very tortuous and very difficult, and when the bridge had crossed the river it did not lead into any main street, but between two streets.

The arrangement was a very inconvenient one, and had greatly exaggerated the need for a new bridge. Had the railway not started from Ipswich in the first instance, and had it not been wrongly planned so as afterwards to need the Sadler's crossing deviation, which reduced the railway bridge to a mere connection with the "yards," probably a bridge on very different principles would have been constructed connecting two main thoroughfares. He did not intend to offer an opinion as to where the proposed new bridge should be, as that was a matter which must be decided by the citizens themselves. He had been exceedingly pleased to hear the Minister for Mines and Works speak of a plan by which the Government might find one-half of the money, and the town interested find the other half on a system of deferred payments. On a previous occasion he had spoken strongly against the £13,000 for additions to the Parliamentary Buildings, but when he found that was in addition to a loan vote, he thought it would not perhaps be too much to expect that Parliament should retrace its steps and apply some or the whole of that money to the pressing want of bridges, on the lines indicated by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Works Department, as they were of very much more stern necessity to the country than the proposed additions to that House. The bridge at Ipswich was a constant source of danger, and in his opinion—though he was not qualified to speak as a professional man—was subject to a very undue amount of oscillation. On the last occasion, when a large concourse of people were going across that bridge, the oscillation was positively a source of alarm. The necessity for a new bridge would confront the municipality at an early date, as the present structure was a very old one, and must have been up since about 1864. He hoped that next session a measure would be passed to deal with such cases on the lines suggested by the Minister for Mines and Works.

Mr. WATSON said he was on the board at the time acceptance of the tenders for the Breakfast Creek bridge came before them. They thought the bridge could be built for between £6,000 and £7,000, and they were very much surprised to find, when the tenders were received, that that of Overend and Co. for £8,500 was the lowest. By the time that bridge was completed it would have cost £10,000 or more through the error that had been made. He would like to ask the Minister for Mines and Works how it was that the Northern bridges cost more than the amount set down for them—whether it was because they had been too short or too long? The hon. member for Maryborough had stated that one of the bridges up North was like a boomerang. It would be a very good thing if many of those bridges were built like a boomerang up stream, as they would stand better where good abutments were put in. No doubt some serious blunders had been made, and he would like to hear from the Minister how it was those Northern bridges cost so much.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said they had certainly been troubled with a disease of having bridges too short lately. It was a very extraordinary disease, and a very costly one. The bridge over Bulimba Creek, called the Richmond bridge, had to be lengthened 12 feet, and, of course, anything of that kind always added to the cost, though it did not add to the strength of a bridge. The bridge at Clermont had to be lowered 3 feet. It was 3 feet too high, and the approaches to it cost £344, and that amount was owing to its being still too high even after it had been reduced as he had stated. The Endeavour River bridge cost a lot of money, and that was the "boomerang"

bridge mentioned by the hon. member for Maryborough. That bridge was found to be too high and had to be lowered. It was a high-level and low-level bridge, and during a flood was made like a boomerang. Then there was a bridge called the Surat bridge, and that had to be taken away from one place and put somewhere else. The Mackay bridge was one of those which were found to be too short, and was the one in connection with which someone in that House had suggested they should cut a piece off one end and put it on to the other. The Ross Creek bridge was not yet finished, but he was certain it was too high and would be far better if it was 2 or 3 feet lower. The approaches to that bridge were very costly on account of its great height. Then there was the Annan River bridge, and that was an exception to all the others inasmuch as it was found to be too long. It was 200 feet too long! It was no laughing matter whatever. Bridges that were estimated to cost so many thousands would actually cost nearly double before they were finished; and he must say that he was thinking seriously of altering the system of building short bridges and long bridges, and of trying to get bridges the exact length. He was afraid the disease had also been brought down as far as Breakfast Creek. That bridge was said to be too short. Whether it was or not he did not pretend to say, until some expert had reported upon it. That was the reason of the cost of some bridges having been so excessive.

Mr. MELLOR said that what the Minister for Mines and Works had said about the blunders in the construction of bridges was a very serious matter. He did not know who was to blame for it—whether it was the Government Engineer or not—but it was a matter of great consequence to the taxpayers of the colony. He was glad to hear from the hon. gentleman that there was likely to be some scheme adopted for making grants towards large bridges. Such a scheme would meet with a great deal of approbation. He would like to ask the Minister if he was agreeable to make the same concession to other parts of the colony that had been given to places in and about Brisbane? Breakfast Creek bridge had been mentioned as having received a grant of £1,000. He believed that bridge was being built by the joint local authorities, who collected the rates, and were subsidised £2 to £1 by the Government. That would, he supposed, be about £4,000 out of the £6,000 the bridge was to cost, that would be contributed by the Government. He would like to know if the Minister would grant the same concession with regard to other bridges—that was, give a grant in the first instance, and also subsidise the local contributions at the rate of £2 to £1? Of course, the £2 to £1 was scarcely sufficient help in itself in the construction of large bridges, although it was better than giving half the amount, as had been proposed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that he could inform the hon. gentleman that the policy which had been adopted would be carried out throughout the whole of the colony.

Mr. SMITH said wonderful discoveries had been made by the Committee that evening in what had fallen from the Minister for Mines and Works in regard to the construction of bridges. There must be something radically wrong if the bridges had been so badly constructed. He should imagine that the gentleman who had control of the construction of those bridges was not capable of filling the position he occupied; and he would like to ask the Minister if he intended to take any steps to remedy the evils which existed? It was

no wonder that other parts of the colony, where bridges were much required, had to go without them when such excessive expenditure was allowed in making bridges which had to be reconstructed. The whole of the colony suffered from that evil. If the Engineer for Bridges committed such things he could not be competent. It had been found very convenient in some parts of the colony where railway low-level bridges were being made to have them of extra width, so as to allow of wheel traffic crossing there. That would be a great advantage, and the extra cost would not be much. He asked the Minister if he were in favour of such a scheme when the population and the traffic were sufficient to warrant the outlay, and whether he would grant a sum of money for such a purpose?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the construction of railway bridges was under the control of the Minister for Railways; but he believed the railway engineers were against such a combination. He could not say any more upon that subject, but he must say he was not desirous that that system should be introduced. As to doing anything to find out what was the cause of the extra cost of those bridges, and who was to blame for it, he was doing his best to get at that. He was trying to find out whether the Engineer for Bridges was to be blamed or not, and when he found that out he would act upon it.

Mr. ADAMS said that he had nothing to complain of, but he had been rather surprised to hear the senior member for Maryborough speaking about a bridge from Maryborough to Granville. He wanted to get a sum of money placed on the Estimates, and wanted to have a promise appearing in *Hansard* to that effect. There had been a certain amount put on the Estimates for the purpose of making that bridge across the Mary River some years ago. Since he (Mr. Adams) had been in that House he did not think the hon. member had mentioned it on a single occasion. There had been a sum of £30,000 put on the Estimates for a bridge across the Burnett River, and when he had asked about that he had been told by the late Premier that that was a plum he need not expect. He was surprised the hon. member for Maryborough had never said anything about that; and he thought the hon. gentleman's constituents were well aware that he had supported the very Government who had actually taken that money off the Estimates and spent it elsewhere. He was perfectly satisfied that the Government would do all they possibly could to deal out justice to all parts of the colony alike. He had confidence in them, and he thought that if they had continued in office before things would have been much better.

Mr. ANNEAR said it was too bad of the hon. member to say that he had voted against the McIlwraith Government in connection with the proposed bridge at Maryborough. How could he vote against the McIlwraith Government on the matter when they were not able to bring it to maturity? The country did not allow them to live long enough, and they had no opportunity of bringing the vote forward. There were many promises made at election times; and in a few day's time, when the slaughter of the innocents took place, it would be seen how the promises made by that hon. gentleman and other supporters of the Government had been fulfilled. He (Mr. Annear) had never voted against anything for the people of Bundaberg. When he was there some time ago the mayor, the chairman of the divisional board, and several others told him, in the presence of the hon. member, that they had made an offer to the Government to pay one-half

the cost of a composite bridge over the Burnett River; and he thought he was correct in saying that the late Government placed £80,000 on their Loan Estimates for a bridge across that river; so that he did not see what the hon. member had to complain about. Bundaberg was well looked after by every Government. It was only the other night that the Committee voted £300 for the gardens at Bundaberg, and now it was proposed to vote £6,500 for additions to the Post and Telegraph Office at that place. It seemed that the present Government intended to be good to their political supporters, at any rate. As to taking up the time of the Committee, if the hon. member did not detain the Minister for Mines and Works longer than he (Mr. Annear) did, the Minister would not be detained very long over his Estimates. He had called attention to a very important matter, involving the loss of thousands of pounds through incompetence, and he hoped the Minister would find out who was at fault, and mete out justice accordingly.

Mr. ADAMS said there was no doubt that a great many blunders had been committed in the construction of bridges, and it was time to find out who was to blame; but there were other departments also in which blunders were made. Not many months ago, the municipality of Bundaberg wanted a loan from the Government for the construction of a Town Hall. An application was sent down, accompanied by the specifications, but it was rejected on account of the unreasonable objections of the late Colonial Architect.

Mr. GRIMES said he had no objection to assistance being given to local bodies in the matter of building bridges, because he knew that a great many divisional boards were unable to undertake important works of that kind without assistance; but care should be exercised as to the circumstances under which the money was granted. It should be understood, when the Government made a grant of money, that it was on the condition that the bridge should be free. If local authorities wished to collect tolls they should obtain the money for the construction of bridges under the Local Works Loans Act. In one or two cases tolls were collected on bridges where Government grants had been made; but he thought that, if the Government provided part of the money for a bridge, the public should have the free use of that bridge.

Mr. AGNEW said he thought the present system under which divisional boards, municipalities, and joint local authorities obtained assistance from the Government was wrong. When the Minister for Mines and Works was applied to for assistance in connection with any bridge, he based his contribution on the estimate provided by the engineer, and left the local authority to supply the difference between that and the cost of the bridge. He thought it ought to be the other way about—that the local authority ought to subscribe a fixed sum, and the Government ought to find the balance. In the case of the Breakfast Creek bridge the estimate of the engineer was £6,506, and the then Minister for Works promised £1,000, or, as he thought, about one-sixth of the cost; but the lowest tender was £8,500, so that, instead of the contribution promised by the Minister being one-sixth, it was less than one-eighth of the cost of the bridge. He was astounded at the monstrous waste of public money that had taken place throughout the colony in the erection of bridges. The blunders committed by that officer—whom he never saw in his life—would, if committed in the service of any private firm or company, have led to his dismissal at once. With regard to the Breakfast

Creek bridge, taking into consideration the fact that both ends of Brisbane were now blocked up by bridge bungs, he would ask the Minister for Mines and Works what the people of that district and all along the route were to look forward to? How long were they to wait for that bungle to be settled? He should like the hon. gentleman to make short work of it as soon as possible. Something had been said about Overend and Co., the contractors for that bridge. He did not think they were to blame. If there was a jumble in the specifications, it was clearly not the business of the contractors to supply the deficiencies. They were well known as a very honourable firm, and if a jumble had been made in the specifications, they would act like all well-conducted firms—they would take advantage of it. They had no right to be mulcted in any extra expense. He trusted the Minister for Mines and Works would see his way to give some additional assistance to the Breakfast Creek Bridge Board over and above the £1,000 originally granted. It was a special hardship, and one that had not been brought upon them by themselves. With regard to the old bridge, which was condemned by some Government official, he had travelled over it a great many times, and never considered it to be unsafe, and he had never spoken with an engineer about it who considered it unsafe. If the bridge was condemned by that Government Engineer, and the municipality was on that account bound to provide a new one, the Minister for Mines and Works would be doing an act of grace in giving a little extra assistance over and above the £1,000.

Mr. HODGKINSON said nothing was easier to any man than to rise up and condemn a professional man, without any knowledge of the circumstances and perhaps without competence to discuss the details. The Minister for Mines and Works had a reputation for carrying out his own will if he saw sufficient reason, and it would be much better to leave the matter to him. The hon. gentleman had stated that he was endeavouring to find out the exact facts of the case, and that as soon as he had done so he would take action. It was unfair to sit in judgment on a case about which they really knew nothing. He had heard statements about the case, which he was not going to mention, which would put a very different light upon it from that put by the hon. member. He had no doubt the Minister for Mines and Works would ascertain whether it was really the fault of the Government Engineer—who did not voluntarily undertake that responsibility, but who had it forced upon him—or the fault of some private individuals who, for the furtherance of their own ends, had diverted the bridge from the spot on which it was originally intended to be built.

Mr. LUYA said he protested against judging any man before he was found guilty, and before they even knew the circumstances of the case. He believed that if they did they would not be so ready in dealing out censure. Divisional boards and municipalities had a great habit of altering their specifications for bridges after their first estimates were made up, and he had no doubt that, when all the facts were ascertained, it would be found that something of the kind had occurred there. As to the bridge difficulty itself, he happened to know something about it, but he should reserve what he had to say on the subject until all the circumstances of the case were known. He would ask hon. members not to condemn a man before he was tried.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that last night he promised to afford an opportunity for discussing the question of bridges that evening. They had been dis-

cussing it for over an hour, and he thought his promise had been carried out. He would suggest that they should now proceed with the item for the Parliamentary Buildings.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he had listened to the explanation given by the Minister for Mines and Works about the provision made for that building, and he thought that the additions proposed, from the description he gave, would not be of the slightest use to remedy the inconveniences they were now labouring under. No doubt there was insufficient accommodation for members. When the House was first built there were only thirty-two members. What was proposed was to put up additional rooms at one end of the building. That might be following the original plan, but in the original plan those rooms were intended to be Government offices. It was never intended that the refreshment rooms and the offices belonging to the building should be put at one end of the building. Imagine the inconvenience it would be to members of the Legislative Council. How were they to get through? There were no means of through access from one end of the building to the other. The matter had been under consideration a great many times, and plans had been submitted to the Parliamentary Buildings Committee. There were some very good plans prepared about ten years ago for the refreshment rooms, but the then Government, of which he was a member, thought they were more expensive than they were justified in putting up, and they contented themselves with erecting the present refreshment rooms, as a makeshift only.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: And they are a danger to the building.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said they, no doubt, ought to be removed. In 1884 £20,000 was voted for additions, and, no doubt, hon. members who were then in the House would not have forgotten the discussion about extending the library, which had become too small. There were plans for putting the library at the back, away from the breeze, and very inconvenient for many reasons. Another proposal, made by himself, which received favour at the time, was to extend the middle of the building forward and put the library there. They really wanted additional accommodation for members, not merely for their personal convenience, but there should be something like a lobby—such as there was in the House of Commons and in most other Houses of Parliament—where members could meet people who called upon them. He thought a lobby could be easily made, midway between the two Houses, by an alteration of the staircases. Then they wanted new refreshment rooms—not of wood—and more rooms where members could meet together. At present there were only two committee rooms available for that purpose, and they were too small for the present number of members. They also required a few spare rooms, such as they had on the third floor of the House of Commons. A wing in Alice street would no doubt be very useful, but it would not supply the wants that were most pressing. He thought it would be advisable to call the Parliamentary Buildings Committee together, and get their advice on the matter, which was one in which the Legislative Council had a right to be consulted. He hoped the Government would not proceed to carry out the scheme the hon. gentleman had suggested. There were two other schemes in the Works office, either of which was better than that now proposed. What they wanted was an extension of the centre of the building, so as to provide a lobby and the other rooms he had referred to. A new library would also have to be taken into consideration. There was money

voted for the work, and the reason the late Government did not undertake it was because times were bad, and they tried to economise as far as possible. He thought a lobby could be made back from the library, and that they could have plenty of rooms without interfering with light or air. Writing rooms were also required; also rooms where members of each side could meet and consult. As he had said, the committee rooms were too small, and inconvenient for that purpose. He sincerely hoped the Government would take those matters into consideration before running into the expense proposed, because what was proposed to be done would not help them at all. He might take that opportunity of saying that lately there had come into the colony many architects of very considerable skill. Some of the works they had carried out lately would be a credit to any city in the world, and he thought they might take advantage of their presence in dealing with that matter. He did not see why they should be confined to the experience of one official, and in a case like that, when they were proposing to add to one of the principal public buildings of the colony, he thought it would be worth while to call for designs, and get the advice of those professional men. He believed it could be got at comparatively small cost, which no one would grudge, and by so doing they would probably get such an extension of the conveniences of the House as would be a great advantage to members, and conducive to the carrying on of public business.

Mr. NORTON said when the subject of additions to the Parliamentary Buildings was mentioned to him, the same thought occurred to him that had occurred to the hon. the leader of the Opposition. He was under the impression that members of the other House would object to any additions which would include refreshment rooms to be used by members of both Houses, unless they were placed in some position which would secure a recognition of the rights they now enjoyed. He was, therefore, under the impression that probably some such plan as the hon. gentleman had suggested would have to be carried out; that was to have the additions placed half-way between the two Chambers. However, when the President of the other Chamber was consulted on the matter, he immediately expressed an opinion that it was not desirable that the buildings should be carried out in that way. He expressed his satisfaction with the additions being on the Alice street side, as now proposed. Of course, one great objection was to get rid of the present temporary wooden building, which was a great source of danger and objectionable in many ways. After a good deal of consultation between the Premier, the President of the Upper House, himself, and the Minister for Works, it was decided that it would be more convenient to extend the building on the Alice street side. Of course there were many additions required, not merely for the personal convenience of members, but to enable them to carry on the business they were bound to transact. Additional committee rooms were required by the Assembly. They were not required by the other House, as they had sufficient accommodation of that kind. A good deal of inconvenience had arisen in connection with select committees, which, in some sessions, were very numerous, one having to wait until another vacated a room before they could transact their business. Not only was the inconvenience felt by members of Parliament, but also by witnesses, for whom there was no accommodation provided, and they had to wait about the passages during the whole time they were detained. The proposal, therefore, was to get plans of the proposed additions drawn up as quickly as possible, in order

to be submitted to the Buildings Committee during the time the House was in session. He was under the impression that those plans would be ready, and it was rather unfortunate that they were not, so that hon. members, as well as the Buildings Committee, would have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on them. The additional accommodation required on the same floor as that Chamber would include rooms for Ministers and the clerical staff, whose quarters would be removed into close vicinity of the Chamber, where they would not be disturbed by people coming in and out of the building. The rooms now used by the clerical staff would be used as writing rooms for members, and as places where they could receive persons who came to see them on business, or as committee rooms. In addition to that a further room was required for the messengers. It was also proposed to provide rooms for the meeting of members such as the hon. gentleman had referred to. There would be a committee room which members of the Opposition might claim as their own, and in which they could hold all their meetings. He could scarcely carry in his mind all the details of the accommodation; but in the addition on that floor it was proposed to place the refreshment rooms. The balcony would be extended, through the old buildings being taken down, the whole distance round, and there would be entrances also from Alice street, and from the back yard, for hon. members who wished to approach in that way. The refreshment room would almost be at the end of the building, and the lavatories and smoking room would be there also. It was proposed to have the kitchens on the upper floor and the servants' rooms underneath. Near the present reporters' rooms there would be additional accommodation for the *Hansard* staff, and also an additional room for the reporters in connection with the public Press. He did not know that it was necessary for him to say any more. Of course, the idea was to have the plans ready, so that hon. members might have an opportunity of expressing their opinions in regard to them; but, from what the Minister for Mines and Works had said, he took it that those plans would not be ready before the House concluded its labours. Possibly they might be so far advanced that hon. members might be able to give an idea of the additions it was proposed to carry out, and be able to express an opinion, which opinion would have a great deal of weight. The expenditure of the money was a matter with which the Government were concerned; but he thought the accommodation which was proposed to be given would be sufficient for a long time. It would not include an additional library; but it would include a room in which certain books would be stowed away in such a place that they might be got at when they happened to be wanted. At any rate, the building would be free from the files and almost useless books which were stowed away in cupboards, and could hardly be got at when they were wanted. He might also state that the plan which the hon. member referred to for extending the library over the roadway was brought up, and the general opinion seemed to be strongly against it.

Mr. PAUL said he wished to know if provision had been made for a post and telegraph office at Rolleston?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said no provision had been made. That was a matter entirely for the Post and Telegraph Department.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he would like to hear what the Minister for Mines and Works had to say about those additions to Parliament House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could add scarcely anything to what had been said by the hon. the Speaker. The plans would not be ready in time. The idea of calling for competitive plans was entertained for some time, but it was at last abandoned.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said what was proposed to be done would be a great mistake, as it would have to be abandoned, and would not be a permanent arrangement. The matter had been discussed very often in that Committee before, and a proposal of that kind was condemned from the first. An essential addition was a room where members could see their friends without leaving the House; but, with the proposed arrangement, that would be 200 yards off—at any rate, as far away as the Belle Vue Hotel. They would have to go along one balcony, then along another balcony, and that was not at all the sort of thing that was wanted. What was wanted was a room that would be accessible easily from the middle of the building.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said, if the hon. gentleman had been speaking in the interests of the members of the Legislative Council he would have been right. But the President of the Council had been consulted upon every occasion, and did not entertain the idea that the leader of the Opposition did. Besides, that hon. gentleman must recollect that the members of the Legislative Council were only about one-half in number of those of the Legislative Assembly. As for the additions being 200 yards away, that was a mistake.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was not speaking in the interests of the Legislative Council, but had spoken in the interests of the members of the Legislative Assembly, and those members of the public who wished to come and see them. It would be extremely inconvenient for them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the proposed accommodation would be more convenient for members meeting their friends.

Mr. FOXTON said the Government ought to consider the motion very fully before they went in for the proposed expenditure. Probably they had done so. In the year 1884 the representatives of the Legislative Council on the Buildings Committee were the President, the Hon. W. Forrest, and the Hon. A. C. Gregory; and those of the Legislative Assembly were the then Speaker, Mr. Groom, Mr. Stevens, and Mr. Mellor. They brought up a report, which was to be found on page 445 of vol. i. of the "Votes and Proceedings" of that year, and which read as follows:—

"1. The Joint Committee of the two Houses, appointed on the 9th day of July last, for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings, having deemed it expedient, soon after their appointment, to consider the question of extending the accommodation provided by the present Buildings, beg now to report to your honourable House the result of their investigations.

"2. In 1881 a report from the Buildings Committee was submitted to Parliament, in which the existence of wooden structures in close proximity to the main building was adverted to as enormously increasing the risk of fire, and it was then recommended that the present wooden refreshment rooms should give way to a stone building.

"3. The committee found that representations had been made to the Government upon the general question of additions to the buildings by the Buildings Committees of the sessions of 1882, 1883, and the first session of 1884; but that while each session the necessity for the work became more urgent, nothing had been done beyond the preparation of plans by Mr. Robert Ferguson, under direction of the late Government. The correspondence in the matter is appended.

"4. The library accommodation is manifestly insufficient, the want of space making itself felt more and more every time additional books arrive, while the heat, bad ventilation, and limited space of the refreshment rooms is painfully obvious to all who use them.

"5. Under these circumstances the committee decided to advise with the Colonial Architect as to the best method of providing the accommodation required; and the services of Mr. Clarke having been placed at their disposal by the Government for this purpose, several sketch plans were made and considered, together with the plans above referred to. The ultimate form in which it was decided to submit a design for the judgment of Parliament is shown in the annexed lithographs. This design is now recommended for adoption by your honourable House."

He desired to point out that the Joint Parliamentary Buildings Committee of that day having considered the previous suggestions which had been made, and having, apparently, gone very carefully into the matter, brought up an elaborate plan, which they proposed should be carried out. It appeared to him an excellent plan, as it provided very extensive library accommodation, which it was apparent to every member was very necessary, as the present library accommodation was most inadequate. There were immense piles of valuable works—records of the proceedings of other legislatures—piled upon the floor in great stacks, and he submitted that the risk from fire in having such immense piles of inflammable matter packed on the floor, was very considerable. Those books and records should be stored away in a room as nearly as possible fire-proof, as their destruction would be a national loss. The plans submitted by the committee, to whose report he had referred, kept in mind in the language of the report "that the accommodation now to be provided must be sufficient for the requirements of a long future." They did not propose that the whole of the additions, according to that plan, should be proceeded with at once, but they could be gone on with as required, as part of a complete plan of a building which would do justice to the Legislature of an important colony. He thought it very undesirable that, after such mature deliberation, those plans should be set aside, unless more suitable plans could be devised. And from what he could gather from the Minister for Mines and Works, the new plans proposed would not be so suitable, as they would make the building lop-sided, would not provide sufficient accommodation, and would make access to the refreshment rooms and library difficult for members of the Legislative Council. He believed they ought not to be gone on with, unless excellent reasons could be shown for departing from the recommendations of the Buildings Committee in 1884.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had stated that the plans would not be ready for the calling of tenders for some time, but they would, he hoped, be ready for exhibition and inspection by hon. members by Monday or Tuesday. They would be laid before the Buildings Committee for their approval or disapproval, and his opinion was that the Buildings Committee should have a large say in the matter. If they disapproved of them the Government would certainly not persist in carrying them out.

Mr. COWLEY said that on the first occasion on which he addressed the House, he strongly opposed the vote of additions to the Parliamentary buildings, and he did so believing that it simply applied to the refreshment room. He might say that, after listening to the speeches made by the hon. member for Toowoomba, the leader of the Opposition, and the Speaker, and also after the knowledge he had gained of the buildings, he had come to the conclusion that in opposing the vote in the first instance he had

made a mistake. He found it necessary now that the proposed alterations should be made. Believing that the Parliamentary Buildings Committee would have the plans laid before them and would thoroughly consider them, and recommend what they thought best for the requirements of the House, he was prepared to give the vote his cordial support. Looking further down the vote he saw an item, "Brisbane Port Office, cottage for messenger, £400." That cottage might be required, and probably it was the intention of the Government to erect a tasty little building in keeping with the character of the cottages attached to the other public buildings. Further on, however, in the vote he found there was £750 put down for a Custom-house at Cairns, and he would ask the Minister for Mines and Works to contrast those two items. Cairns was a rising place, where they were spending about a million of money to construct a railway connecting that town with a large mineral district, and he would suggest the advisability of their erecting a building that would meet the requirements of the place for years to come; and that they should not fritter away a paltry £750 for a Custom-house in a town on one of the finest harbours in Queensland. There was another item of £350 for "boatmen's cottages" at Dungeness, and he contrasted that vote with the one of £100 for "a cottage" at Brisbane. No doubt the boatmen who lived at Dungeness were married men, and if they were building two or more cottages there for £350 they were not likely to meet the requirements of the people.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he would like to know if the Postmaster-General had called the attention of the Minister for Mines and Works to the necessity for making provision at Charters Towers for a telegraph office. He did not see anything down for Charters Towers, though he understood that representations had been made to the Postmaster-General with respect to the scanty accommodation at Charters Towers for the telegraph offices. There had been a miserably small building there doing duty for some time past as a post and telegraph office, and it had been enlarged during the existence of the last Government. Still the accommodation provided was totally insufficient, and the officers connected with the institution, and those who had business there, were subjected to very great inconvenience. The accommodation was so bad that it must affect injuriously the health of the officers, and interfere seriously with the performance of their duties. The time had come for the division of the Post and Telegraph Offices, and the Chamber of Commerce had made representations to that effect to the Telegraph Department, to see if anything could be done. A sum of money should be placed on the Estimates for the erection of buildings, and he thought the present was the time to draw the attention of the hon. gentlemen to the urgent necessity which existed for proper accommodation in that direction in Charters Towers. In Townsville there was an immense sum of money being expended for a new post office. On the Estimates he found the large sum of £12,000 set down for increased postal accommodation at Rockhampton. He did not grudge that amount, but in Rockhampton there were two buildings which would be serviceable for some years to come in carrying out the work of those two departments. He knew the post-office was somewhat crowded, and he did not grudge that money, but he thought that Charters Towers, which had made so few demands upon the Treasury for public buildings, should receive some consideration, seeing that Townsville and Rockhampton were having large

sums of money voted. Charters Towers was left with a ramshackle kind of a building, which had to do duty for both a post and telegraph office. A place of such importance demanded more accommodation than it was receiving from the Estimates. He would also like to know whether the telegraph office at Queenston, for which tenders had been called some time ago, was being proceeded with, and whether the long-suffering people of that locality were likely to get the amount of attention in the shape of provision for the extension of their telegraphic business which was required?

Mr. ARCHER said he would like to say a word or two with regard to the remarks just made. He had not the slightest objection to the hon. member for Charters Towers advocating any improvements necessary in that town, but he could not imagine why he should have at the same time called attention to the fact that Rockhampton was getting certain things that were not required, seeing he had been a member of the Government which had given them.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: I did not say they did not require them.

Mr. ARCHER said those buildings were absolutely and obviously necessary. The former Government had promised them, and the present Government had likewise promised them now. Surely it was possible for a person in that Committee to advocate the wants of his own constituency without running down the wants of another constituency. He thought the hon. gentleman would have done much better if he had not made a departure of that kind. He knew that the post office in Rockhampton was in a building which could not nearly accommodate the officers engaged in it. They had nothing like room to perform their duties, and additional accommodation must have been absolutely necessary when the late Government and the present Government both approved of it. From the way the hon. member for Charters Towers had brought the subject forward he had been forced to speak about it. He should certainly not make any remarks in contradiction of what the hon. member had said about the wants of Charters Towers, as he did not suppose the hon. gentleman would have said what was not the case. He should certainly not make any remarks deprecating those improvements in Charters Towers, but he thought the hon. gentleman should not have referred to the new buildings to be erected at Rockhampton, seeing he had been a member of the Government which had promised those improvements.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said the hon. gentleman had misunderstood him. He had stated most distinctly that he did not grudge Rockhampton that expenditure, but he had been pointing out the amount of expenditure upon some places in comparison with others. His only object in drawing attention to the present accommodation in Rockhampton was to show that they had got as much accommodation, relatively, for carrying on the business of the post and telegraph offices as the people of Charters Towers had. He complained that while that handsome expenditure—which he did not at all grudge—was being made at Rockhampton, a place which was in as great need was getting nothing. He thought a place like Charters Towers, which had been one of the few places in the colony which had made but little demand upon the Treasury, should have more consideration than it had received.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that when he was at Charters Towers lately he had visited the post and

telegraph office, and he found it was extremely inconvenient; and he had seen that the telegraph operators were obliged to carry out their duties at the expense of health. Nevertheless, they could not put post and telegraph offices at every place in the colony where they were wanted. Nearly all the buildings down on that Estimate had been promised by the late Government, or had been asked for by the different departments during the period of administration of the late Government.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: Some have been asked for since.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there were very few. They were nearly all under the category of having been promised by the late Government. Nothing had been asked by Charters Towers, and he presumed that was the reason there was nothing on the Estimates. He quite agreed with the hon. gentleman that Charters Towers wanted either a post or a telegraph office, and he had no doubt that something in that direction would shortly be done. As to Queenston, the tenders had been called for the telegraph office.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he wanted to call the attention of the Minister for Mines and Works to the third item in the "Building lists"—for Brisbane Hospital, laundry, etc. He wished to ask whether the people of Brisbane had contributed anything besides the £7,000 proposed to be given by the Government?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that he was not aware that anything had been contributed by the public of Brisbane. The Brisbane Hospital had always been treated differently to the other hospitals of the colony, as it was, as had often been stated, the general hospital for the whole of the colony. The £7,000 was to provide a laundry, steam fittings, out-patients' room, and several other conveniences for the hospital, and the present buildings which were used for that purpose were to be converted into wardsmen's quarters.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the people of Brisbane ought to be ashamed of themselves. The people in the outside districts contributed handsomely towards the support of their hospitals; but the people of Brisbane had only to demand money from the Government for their hospital, and it was supplied. It was not long since the Ipswich people spent £1,500 on their hospital, and had had work to get £500 refunded by the Government; and since then they had spent £1,000 on a children's hospital, not a single penny of which was supplied by the Government. If the Brisbane people contributed to their hospital in the way the Ipswich people did to theirs there would not be those yearly demands on the Government for the Brisbane Hospital. The argument that cases from all parts of the colony were sent to Brisbane for better medical advice only applied to a certain extent, because the other hospitals were crowded as well as the Brisbane Hospital, and the Brisbane people should contribute more handsomely to their hospital. On Hospital Sunday the sum of £400 was collected in Ipswich, and only £1,200 in Brisbane, though the population of Ipswich was only one-eighth of the population of Brisbane. The Minister for Mines and Works ought to refuse those yearly demands on the Government for the Brisbane Hospital, unless the people contributed as they should.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said the hon. member was too hard on the people of Brisbane; and if he had lived in Brisbane for the last few

years he would have formed a different opinion as to the manner in which the Brisbane people supported their charitable institutions. Ladies were continually asking for subscriptions towards various charitable institutions in Brisbane, and when ladies came round for subscriptions one could not resist, though one could sometimes get out of it when a male collector came round. But ladies nearly always came round now, and the Brisbane people had to put their hands into their pockets all the year round for all sorts of objects which the country members never heard of. He knew that the Brisbane people were as liberal in the support of their charitable institutions as the people of any other part of Queensland.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. SAYERS said he had intended to say something about the vote for buildings, but he had interviewed the Postmaster-General and brought under his notice the condition of the post and telegraph office at Charters Towers, and obtained a half promise from that hon. gentleman that next year Charters Towers would most likely receive some consideration in that matter. About twelve months ago the late Postmaster-General visited Charters Towers and utterly condemned the present building. Considering that it was a good paying office with regard to both postal and telegraphic work, he was in hopes that something would have been put on the Estimates. The night before last he drew attention to the fact that Bundaberg was put down for double the amount it received last year for the park there; and that little village was to get £6,500 this year for additions to the post and telegraph office. He thought that such an expenditure was hardly necessary there, when places of far more importance were left out in the cold. He hoped the Postmaster-General would see that something was put on the Estimates next year for the post and telegraph office at Charters Towers. It was the principal post office for a district containing a population of about 14,000 people, and the accommodation was altogether insufficient for the business.

Mr. SMYTH said it was not right for country members to be too hard on Brisbane with respect to the hospital. He looked upon the Brisbane Hospital as a central hospital for the whole colony, and he knew that very often patients in the Gympie Hospital were recommended to go to Brisbane to have the advantage of the combined medical skill which could not be got anywhere else in the colony. As a country member he did not begrudge any subscriptions to the Brisbane hospital, nor did he object to the Government subsidising that hospital a little more than country hospitals. It would be found on looking through the Estimates that Gympie was extremely modest in the matter of buildings.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: There is a sum of £5,000 down for the hospital there.

Mr. SMYTH said that was granted conditionally on the people of Gympie subscribing £2,500. The people there did not ask the Government to give the whole of the money. He was referring more particularly to other buildings. There was a court-house at Gympie which did duty for a warden's office, the office of the clerk of petty sessions, and the office of the Government surveyor, and there was very indifferent accommodation for the police magistrate's court and the warden's court. If the Government would kindly put on the Estimates a sufficient sum to erect another story, and make the top story a court-house, it would be a great convenience. Gympie had not asked the Government for anything for

years. Mining towns had not the same push as other towns—the coast towns, for instance—and did not go crying to the Government for a railway here, a post office there, and a court-house in another place. Mining towns did not go in for all those little swindles practised in the coast towns to get what they wanted out of the Government. In that case, at Gympie, it was a real necessity. The Minister for Mines and Works had been there, and must know that the building was most unsuitable for the purpose. All that was wanted was an additional story. Neither the late nor the present Government had done much for Gympie in the way of erecting public buildings.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he could corroborate what the hon. member had said with regard to the court-house at Gympie. He never saw such a disgraceful place in his life. In the first place, there was a hole dug in which the court-house was planted; consequently all the surrounding drainage ran underneath it, and some of it lodged there. That was so bad that, during the short time he was at Gympie, he had to have the floor of the police magistrate's room re-boarded. The boards were absolutely rotten from the drainage water lying underneath. Then the acoustic properties of the court were so defective that it was impossible to hear a case properly. The whole building was the finest possible monument of ignorant expenditure. He would now refer to one or two items on the Estimates. There was an item of £1,000 for additional cells at Croydon. The cells at Croydon, as originally erected, were iron ovens, to which no magistrate would be justified in committing any man. In a climate like that of Queensland a man could only be placed there while the sun was above the horizon with imminent danger to his life. The dimensions of the cells were 10 feet by 6 feet, and they were constructed of galvanised iron. Hon. members might imagine what the sensations of a man would be in a temperature ranging from 108 to 120 degrees, if confined in a camp-oven 10 feet by 6. At Normanton there was an item of £1,200 for quarters for inspector of police. A building was offered to the Government, which was in every respect suitable for the purpose, at the price of £900. Had it been purchased by the Government there would have been no extras, whereas it was almost certain that any estimate for a building, designed by a professional man, would be largely exceeded, perhaps, in that case, to nearly double the amount of the vote. Then there was an item of £1,000 for quarters for the police magistrate at Mount Perry. Why should that gentleman be specially singled out, when at the end of the vote there was an item of £5,000 for "quarters for police magistrates and wardens"? Why should that official have a special vote set down for his own comfort? Would the Minister for Mines and Works inform the Committee in what localities he intended to expend that £5,000? Where the higher salaries were paid, all the comforts of life were obtainable at a moderate cost. The real hardships of life were suffered at the outside townships, such as Croydon, the Etheridge, and other places which would suggest themselves to every hon. member. Was it proposed to expend that £5,000 in those outside places, or in the inside districts where the officers drew larger salaries, and where they could get comfortable residences at a moderate price?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that as the police magistrates came more particularly under the Colonial Secretary's Department, although, of course, the buildings did not, he might be allowed to say a word as to the questions put by the hon. member for Burke. It was

the intention of the Government, in putting that item of £5,000 on the Estimates, to make a start, as it were—

Mr. HODGKINSON: It was put on by the late Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not care which Government put it on; the present Government did not object to follow in the footsteps of the late Government in that direction. Great expense was often entailed on wardens and magistrates on being removed from place to place, especially where they had to abandon quarters in a central place and go to a place where there were no quarters. The object of that vote was to make a start in erecting quarters for police magistrates and wardens in outside places. At present, whenever the Government proposed to remove a police magistrate, a warden, or any other official from a place where he had resided for a considerable time to another place, his contention, and a very proper contention, was, "I have got a house here, furnished—a home—if I go to the place to which you propose to transfer me, it is a wilderness, where I cannot take my wife and family." The Government proposed to make a beginning in providing homes for police magistrates in those outside places, and he believed it was a step in the right direction. With regard to the location of this £5,000—

Mr. HODGKINSON: First of all, take the item for Mount Perry.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Are there not quarters there already? There are lots of places where they are more urgently required.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had been told there were good and sufficient reasons why quarters should be provided for the police magistrate at Mount Perry. With regard to the police quarters at Normanton, as the hon. member for Burke had stated, a certain property belonging to a Government officer could have been purchased for that purpose. He had gone carefully into that matter, and had found that the property in question was about a mile and a-half out of Normanton, that the buildings had been erected by a Government official connected with the Land Office, upon a block of land belonging to the State, as a sort of spec., and that he thought it would be a good thing to sell it to the Government. He objected to the purchase, not for that reason, but for the greater reason that he thought the head of the police at Normanton should have his quarters in the town itself. He believed the late Government also declined to purchase the same property.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: I advised the Colonial Secretary to leave the matter to our successors.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, at any rate, the offer was not accepted. He had read the papers, and he quite agreed with the late Government in that matter. As he had said, he thought the residence of the chief police officer at Normanton should be in the town itself, and another matter that induced him to come to that conclusion was that the riots at Normanton took place when the matter was under consideration.

Mr. GANNON said he was really sorry to see such a large amount for that vote. He would much rather that it was confined to about the amount put down of 1887-8—£30,000—instead of £121,000. His reason for saying so was because he thought hon. members might have exercised a little self-denial and kept down some of the votes—such as that for additions to

the Parliamentary Buildings. No doubt some alterations were required, but £13,000 was a large sum to spend on such a purpose just now when they were so short of money. He knew he should get no sympathy from hon. members, but still he could not help expressing his feelings and his regret that the amount of the vote was so very large, especially as they had a heavy deficiency in the Treasury, and had had to impose a heavy tariff, which was felt by everybody.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Move a reduction of the vote.

Mr. GANNON said he was not going to move a reduction of the vote. He knew it would be of no use to do so, because so many hon. members were interested in it—such as the hon. members for Gympie, Bundaberg, and Croydon. If he thought he could get any support, he would be disposed to move a reduction of £13,000 for the additions to Parliamentary Buildings, because he thought that, having managed with the present buildings so long, they could continue to go on with them for a year or two longer, even if they had a bad refreshment room, and the smoking room was not good. No doubt the Library required extension, because they must have some place for their books, but he had noticed that some rooms downstairs, marked "member's rooms," were never used, and they might be utilised in some way. He should certainly like to see that vote kept down as low as possible. They must make an effort to pay off the present deficit, especially as he knew the Ministry intended by-and-by to reduce taxation if they had the opportunity. There was no doubt that they had come into office in bad times, and were compelled to impose heavy taxes on the people; and, unfortunately, a large amount of that money would have to go to pay for those buildings and to keep things going. He should certainly have liked to see hon. members exercise a little self-denial with regard to the £13,000 for Parliamentary Buildings.

Mr. G. H. JONES said he quite approved of the principle of providing quarters for police magistrates and wardens in country towns. There had been several instances in his electorate in which those officers had suffered a good deal of hardship through the want of proper residences. The police magistrate at Mount Perry had been occupying a residence which he was now required to give up, and he had really no suitable place to go to with his family. In fact, owing to want of accommodation, he had been separated from his family for a long time. The same thing had occurred at Gayndah. He should like to know from the Minister whether any provision had been made in the Estimates for a lockup, court-house, and residence for the warden at Eidsvold?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said if the hon. gentleman could not find any provision on the Estimates, no provision had been made.

Mr. G. H. JONES said he thought it might be included in the £5,000 for "Other buildings" or the £5,000 for "Quarters for police magistrates and wardens."

Mr. SMYTH said he was in a position to explain the item of £1,000 for quarters for the police magistrate at Mount Perry. That officer had been living in a building owned by a gentleman named Stone, who required the premises for himself, and the police magistrate had to find some other quarters. Captain Bennett then gave him temporary use of a house he owned at Reid's Creek, but Captain Bennett now required that place, and the police magistrate had really

no fit residence to go to, because, when copper went down, Mount Perry became like a deserted mining township—the houses going to decay and dilapidation. But since the copper industry had revived the place was going ahead, and Captain Bennett required the house in question, because it was on a mine where between 200 and 300 people were employed, and where in a short time probably 400 or 500 would be at work. He had asked to get possession as soon as possible, and the police magistrate, who was a married man with a family, had no place to go to. That was not the only case of the kind. The warden at Eidsvold had to board at a public-house, and he and the mining registrar had to do business in a stringy-bark humpy, almost like a blackfellow's gunyah. Substantial business premises had been erected there, and why could not the Government build decent quarters on that goldfield? The warden, when removed from Gayndah to Eidsvold, could not get quarters in Eidsvold, and he had, therefore, to leave his family at Gayndah and board in a public-house at Eidsvold. That was equivalent to keeping two establishments going. No warden in the colony could possibly subsist on £400 a year, and keep a house for his family at one place, while he himself boarded at another. He (Mr. Smyth) did not think it was right that any man should be expected to do that, and he hoped the Government would, in that as well as other cases, put up a building for the police magistrate. They generally found that there was £50 down for allowance for a residence for a police magistrate, but in many instances that was not sufficient. He did not think that any warden in any part of the colony was worse treated than the warden at Eidsvold. He was a man who worked very hard, and had to visit Mount Jones and several other places in the surrounding district, and he was very sorry to think that the warden had to do that at a loss to himself; certainly the salary he received was not sufficient to keep himself and wife and family at two different places, and it was to be hoped that some provision would be made to provide quarters for him. He trusted the matter would receive the favourable consideration of the Government.

Mr. ADAMS said he was extremely sorry that there was nothing on the Estimates for warden's quarters at Eidsvold. He was not the representative of that district at the present time, but he had been, and he had received several letters complaining about the warden's quarters there. There were really no quarters at all, because the place that was used by the warden was nothing more than a bark humpy, which a spark would easily set fire to at any time, and the consequence would be that valuable documents would be burned before the fire could be extinguished. It was the duty of the Government to provide proper quarters. With regard to police protection, he knew very little about that, but some time ago a man was caught almost in the act of committing murder, and as there was no lockup at the place they had to chain the unfortunate to a stump. He, therefore, thought that both a lockup and quarters for the warden should be provided. They ought to have something better now than they had fifty years ago, when four sheets of bark were stuck up for quarters of that description.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that, to save further discussion on that matter, he might state that tenders had been called for the warden's quarters at Eidsvold.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he would like to ask a question with regard to one or two items on that vote, and he would do so

very briefly, as it was really time they were getting on with it. There was an item there for a police station at Blumbergville, and another for police quarters and court-room at Boonah. There was some mistake there surely, for on turning to page 25 he found a note indicating that Blumbergville was the same place as Boonah. He noticed a reference in that vote to a lighthouse at Booby Island. Was it proposed to establish a lighthouse on that island? The next item he wished to ask a question about was the police station at Fortitude Valley. Was it intended to put up a decent gaol in the Valley? At present women were kept there, and it was a very unsatisfactory place, as it was next door to a school, and the language used there was sometimes most disgraceful. It was really one of the greatest scandals in the colony, and he found it hard to excuse himself for having allowed it to exist so long. Another matter he wished to ask about was the quarters for the sub-collector at Thursday Island. Remarkably good quarters had been erected there already; they were quite new buildings. He remembered that distinctly. A great controversy took place there in connection with the water-closet for the sub-collector's quarters, and the whole island was in a state of uproar. The question was whether the outhouses belonging to the quarters should be in a place within a conveniently accessible distance from the building, or in a straight line with all the other buildings of the same kind, and at a distance of more than a quarter of a mile from the quarters, to suit the symmetrical eye of the then police magistrate. The only other matter to which he would refer was the proposed quarters for the Polynesian Inspector at Townsville. He thought that was a mistake. He did not think it was desirable to give that officer quarters. He quite agreed that he should get increased pay, but he did not think it desirable that he should be provided with quarters. The inspector received three-fourths of his pay as immigration agent. They might give him £50 a year for quarters, but it would be a mistake to provide quarters for an immigration agent, as the office was not likely to be a permanent one.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the quarters for the Polynesian Inspector at Townsville were really, as the gentleman had said, for the immigration agent. That officer had a very large family, and the quarters had been promised five or six years ago. The money for them was actually put on the Estimates on one occasion, but was afterwards knocked off. For the Inspector to get a house fit to accommodate his large family it would take a very large amount out of his salary, more, probably, than they would like to add to his salary. £700 for quarters would not come to much in a year, and it was more economical to put up quarters than to increase the salary, because the salary could not be increased sufficiently to compensate the officer for a loss of quarters.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: You cannot put up a building for that amount.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said, with reference to Fortitude Valley, that it was proposed to erect a police station similar to that to be erected in South Brisbane, with the exception of the court-room. £4 15s. a month was at present paid for quarters there.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Then the sum on the Estimate does not provide for a gaol at all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said it did not, but for a police station

only. With reference to Thursday Island, the quarters had been asked for by the Customs Department.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: They are quite unnecessary.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the same remark applied to Booby Island. The buildings at Blumbergville and Boonah were asked for by different departments, which called the same place by different names, but the Estimates were printed when the error was discovered.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: You do not want both votes.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the vote for Boonah would be used.

Mr. LUYA said he wished to draw the attention of the Minister to the wants of South Brisbane. He noticed there was no sum down for a police station. It must be remembered that the population now numbered nearly 30,000, and that there were a great number of different divisions, and no place to put a prisoner in. Prisoners had to be taken to North Brisbane, and the consequence was that the place was left without proper police protection. If the people were not so peaceable he did not know what the result would be. The present vote, it seemed, was only for police quarters, and as no provision was made for a lockup it must be an oversight. He would also like information about a courthouse for South Brisbane. A site had been purchased, but there was nothing on the Estimates for the building, or for a lockup at the Five Ways, Woolloongabba. It was two miles from Woolloongabba to Elizabeth street lockup, and that was the only place where a prisoner could be secured. Then, on the other side of the Ipswich road, there was a large population growing up, and only a little while ago great disturbances had taken place in the locality, and there was no way of securing prisoners when apprehended. Very often constables preferred to allow a prisoner to go rather than take him to the north side; he hoped some attention would be given to the matters he had mentioned.

Mr. SAYERS said he wished to know in what places the £5,000 was to be expended for wardens' and police magistrates' quarters? He might inform the Committee that the Government had to pay very high rent on the Towers, and it would be a great saving if police magistrates' and wardens' quarters could be erected there.

Mr. HODGKINSON said in some places the offices of police magistrate and warden were distinct. What did the Government propose to do in such cases? If the hon. gentleman erected buildings for one officer, there would very soon be a request for quarters for the other.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could not tell the hon. member for Charters Towers where the buildings would be erected for wardens' and police magistrates' quarters; but he would take good care that they were erected where they were most required. There were other places where new buildings were more urgently needed than at Charters Towers.

Mr. SAYERS said if the hon. gentleman inquired what rent the Government were paying for buildings on Charters Towers he would find that it would be a saving to the country to erect buildings, even if 6 per cent. interest had to be

paid on the money invested. The hon. gentleman did not take the question of rent into consideration.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did take that into consideration, but in other places they could make the same saving also, and save the officers' health and study their comfort.

Mr. SALKELD said he proposed to move an amendment and get on with the business. He moved that the item "Parliamentary Buildings, £13,000," be omitted. He thought it was a very unfortunate time, when they had lately increased taxation so heavily, to spend money on buildings like that. The wants of some districts were allowed to stand over from year to year because they could not afford to satisfy them, and for that reason he thought it was inopportune to spend more money in Brisbane. It would cost a good deal more than £13,000 to complete the proposed additions to the Parliamentary Buildings, and they had already spent a great amount of money in Brisbane on the new Treasury Buildings and the new Custom-house. They ought to allow the present matter to stand over until they were in a better position than at present; there was no urgent need for it. There were rooms down stairs that were never used, such as members' dressing rooms, which seemed to have been deserted, and they could very well be used for committee rooms. Then the rooms at the other end of the building were not always required by the Legislative Council, and might sometimes be used by the Assembly. It was a crying shame if the Assembly were not to be allowed to use those rooms. He had not had very much to say on the general vote, although he might remark that £12,000 seemed a large amount for a new post and telegraph office at Rockhampton. Then there was the proposed Custom-house at Cairns. Cairns had one of the best harbours on that part of the coast, certainly the best between Bowen and Cooktown, and £750 seemed a very small amount for a Custom-house there. The hon. member for Burke had just interjected a remark, but that hon. member had been talking away by the hour, and pouring out his eloquence like a pump. He could not hear what that hon. member was saying; he talked to the reporters and was satisfied if he saw his remarks in *Hansard* next morning. There was £1,500 down for a post and telegraph office at Cunnamulla. He did not know whether that was required or not; but it was in the electorate of the Postmaster-General, and he ought to know.

Amendment put.

Mr. HODGKINSON said it was very seldom the hon. member for Fassifern rose without saying something offensive either to one side of the Committee or the other. The position he (Mr. Hodgkinson) was in was not one sought by himself. They had been nearly three hours talking over that first item, and during that three hours changes had been rung on nearly every item in the vote from the first to the last. It was his duty, as the predecessor of the hon. gentleman in charge of the vote, to watch the items pretty closely; but the hon. member for Fassifern had had many opportunities of bringing the item under the notice of the Committee and moving his amendment. However, the hon. member had waited until the leader of that side of the House had left the Chamber before he took any steps to propose that reduction. It was admitted by the leader of the Opposition that additions were required to the Parliamentary Buildings, and the only difficulty was as to the nature of those alterations. He should not lose his temper; but he warned the

hon. member for Fassifern that if he attacked him again he should give him a dressing down that he would not forget, and that the reporters would spread all over the colony.

Mr. SMYTH said he did not think it was a time to wrangle. There was a balance of £20,000 of loan money unexpended on account of the Parliamentary Buildings, and as a member of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, he would certainly advise the Committee to consent to those additions that were proposed. The Joint Committee had held several meetings, and had had the opinions of the Colonial Architect, and of several experts, who stated that certain parts of the buildings were dangerous and might be burned down at any time. The addition of the proposed wing along Alice street would give all the necessary accommodation, and would remove a certain danger. The present temporary refreshment room might catch fire at any time, it might spread to the wooden balcony and thence to the library, and if the library and records of the House were burnt they would not be able to replace them at over three times the original cost, if at all. The additions proposed were part of the original plan, and were now required. The money would be spent in Brisbane, and carpenters and bricklayers and stonemasons would receive some benefit from it, so that it would not be thrown away. They did not want to put up a monument of vanity, but of usefulness. He was a country member, but he was not like some other country members; he thought a town like Brisbane should have a decent place for the Parliament of the colony to meet in. The extensions proposed should be built as soon as possible, and until they were built they would run a risk of being burnt out. A spark in the refreshment room would set fire to the whole place. Some time ago, they might remember, the Buildings Committee brought up an estimate of £20,000, which included the cost of an elaborate library. The upper library now was so crowded that they might see books piled up under the benches and everywhere. There was not room for them on the shelves, and they had to be put somewhere.

Mr. McMASTER said he had a question to ask with respect to the Valley Police Station. He wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to build on the present site, as in his opinion it was a most unsuitable one for the purpose, being alongside of a public school. The women sent down to that police station from Brisbane to serve short sentences were not as careful as they might be in the language they used, and it was very undesirable to have such people located alongside of a school. There was some Government land in the neighbourhood, and the Minister for Mines and Works would do well to select some other site for that building, and make an exchange for the land at present occupied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that perhaps he knew more of that matter than his hon. colleague, and could answer the question put by the hon. member. As the hon. member knew, he had taken great interest in that matter. His present feeling was that the women's prison should be erected in South Brisbane, alongside the prison at present there. He was only stating his own opinion, as he had not spoken on the matter to any of his colleagues. Of course, it would be necessary to have a lockup at the present station in Fortitude Valley. He did not say it as a reflection upon the late Government, but it was a matter for regret that they should have allowed themselves to be persuaded to give up a certain portion of the police reserve in Fortitude Valley to the Booroodabin

Board. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Fortitude Valley that the present gaol—for that was what it was—was in a very bad position in being alongside a school, and he could only say the matter would not escape the attention of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he hoped the Committee would not discuss the Parliamentary Buildings vote any more. The vote had been fully discussed in the early part of the evening, while the leader of the Opposition was present, and was one on which there was a general consensus of opinion. Increased accommodation was required, and the late Government thought so when they put £20,000 in the £10,000,000 loan for the purpose. The various Buildings Committees thought so, and the only difference of opinion was as to the plans which should be adopted. As he had said, the plans now proposed would be ready next week for the inspection of the Buildings Committee and of members of the House who wished to look at them. After the full discussion that had taken place, and the promise he made of having the plans ready for inspection next week, the question should be allowed to go to a vote. They had been discussing the matter for three hours now, and they had not passed a single vote yet.

Mr. DRAKE said an alteration might be made in the Chamber, which would add to the convenience and comfort of members, and that was to provide drawers or lockers for papers underneath the seats. The space was wasted at present, and it was very inconvenient for members to be jumping up continually and going outside for papers whenever new business came on.

Mr. AGNEW said it was his intention to suggest that to the Parliamentary Buildings Committee. Both he and the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Smyth, had considered that matter, and it was only that afternoon he had spoken to the Speaker on the subject.

Mr. SALKELD said he would not delay the Committee, and would not have spoken again had it not been for the threat held out to him by the hon. member for Burke. He had not spoken much before, as he was prevented from doing so by other members rising to speak. He did not come to that Committee to ask the permission of the hon. member for Burke to speak, or to ask him what he was to speak about. The hon. member did not ask him when he should speak. The hon. member's threats were idle and out of place, and if he wanted to give him a dressing down he might give it to him at any time. The hon. member had interrupted him when he had said only a few words, and he objected to being interrupted.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Gympie had said he would vote for the additions to the Parliamentary Buildings, because in them the collected wisdom of the Assembly would be assembled; but if members were to insult each other as the hon. member for Fassifern had insulted the member for Burke that afternoon their collected wisdom would not amount to much. If the remark had been made to him he would have taken it up in a very much warmer manner than the hon. member for Burke had done. He was going to vote against the amendment, because, though he was not a member for the capital, he thought their public buildings should be worthy of the colony.

Mr. FOXTON said he would like to ask the Minister in charge of the vote whether, if it was carried, it would be taken to mean that they had

voted for the construction of a building in accordance with the plans the hon. gentleman proposed to lay before members next week. Did the passage of the vote necessarily mean the construction of the buildings according to those plans?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: No. Not according to any particular plans.

Mr. SAYERS said he proposed voting for the amendment of the hon. member for Fassifern, to omit the sum of £13,000 for additions to the Parliamentary Buildings. His reason for doing so was, that he considered the capital was at the wrong end of the colony, and a time might come when it would be moved from Brisbane, and so he thought they were spending more money upon those buildings than was advisable.

Question—"That the sum of £121,670 for buildings be reduced by the omission of the sum of £13,000—additions to Parliamentary Buildings"—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 14.

Messrs. Rutledge, Sayers, Barlow, Isambert, Umnack, McMaster, Grimes, Glassey, Salkeld, Gannon, Goldring, Crombie, Macfarlane, and Buckland.

NOES, 34.

Messrs. Donaldson, Nelson, Macrossan, Morehead, R. R. Jones, Black, Hodgkinson, Smith, Drake, Stephens, Paul, Lissner, Philip, Stevens, Annear, Dalrymple, Tozer, Battersby, Murray, Little, G. H. Jones, Corfield, Laya, Agnew, Smyth, Cowley, Mellor, Archer, Watson, Adams, Dunsinure, Foxton, Casey, and Murphy.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr. GRIMES said there was an item of £5,000 for other buildings, and, on behalf of the hon. member for the Albert, Mr. Plunkett, he wished to ask the Minister for Mines and Works to take into consideration the erection of a court-house near the Coomera police station. It was a large district; the township was a rising one, and there was very great need of a court of petty sessions there. A sum of about £250 would be ample to meet all requirements, and he would like to ask the Minister to spend that amount in that locality.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. gentleman should submit the case to the Colonial Secretary, as such cases came through the Colonial Secretary's office, either with or without a recommendation, to the Works Department. If an application were sent in he had no doubt it would be dealt with on its merits.

Question put and passed.

ROADS AND BRIDGES.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the sum of £6,000 be granted for Roads and Bridges—excepted roads under the Divisional Boards Act.

Mr. MELLOR said he would ask the Minister for Mines and Works how there was an increase in that vote this year? Were there any other roads and bridges going to be excepted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said no other roads could be excepted. The roads were excepted by the Divisional Boards Act. The Minister did not except them—he simply took into consideration the amount asked for by the different divisional boards under the belief that the roads were excepted. The vote of £2,000 last year was quite insufficient. More than £3,000 was spent, and ever so many

applications were refused. He was quite certain that £3,000 would not be enough, and he was only sorry that he could not put down twice £6,000.

Question put and passed.

GOLD FIELDS.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that there be granted, for the service of the year 1888-9, a sum not exceeding £26,335 for goldfields.

Mr. DRAKE said that the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, stated on the previous night that when the vote for goldfields came on he intended to bring under the notice of the Committee certain statements which had appeared in the Press with regard to Queensland mining ventures on the London market. The hon. gentleman, however, had been compelled to go away by the early train, and had asked him to bring the matter forward. He was sure that the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimate, with his knowledge of mining, would not think he was wasting time in drawing attention to such an important matter. The hon. member for Toowoomba wished him particularly to refer to an article which appeared in the *Economist* of the 25th August, entitled, "Gold-mining in Queensland." The article commenced by drawing a comparison between the Indian mining ventures put on the London market and the Queensland mining ventures, much to the disparagement of the latter, he was sorry to say. The writer went on to say:—

"It will be remembered that in the autumn of 1886 companies for working gold-mines in Queensland were introduced to British investors in rapid succession, and the capital asked for was readily subscribed in view of the fact that speculative activity had sent up the prices of shares in some of the earlier-formed ventures to 100 or 200 per cent. premium. Unlike the Indian mines, the Queensland properties had, in nearly every case, been proved, while in the great majority of instances more or less continuous returns had been made by the local owners. Indeed, the statements in some of the prospectuses were of such a glowing description that the colonists seemed to be sacrificing a good deal in the interests of British enterprise. The plea, of course, was that more capital was needed to produce still richer results, and the faith of local owners was evidenced by their taking a large proportion of the purchase money in shares."

Then the writer went on to state that the results in some of those cases appeared to be favourable at first, but were disappointing afterwards; and he criticised in detail the various companies which had been placed on the British market. Further on he said:—

"It would only be wearisome to pursue our investigations into those companies, which have so far done nothing to justify their existence, and in which the prospect of their doing so is a very remote one. The instances which we have cited prove indisputably that the Queensland gold deposits are for the most part of what miners call a 'bunchy' character; and it is, therefore, all the more necessary that great discretion should be exercised in investing money in such an industry. Some of the companies seem likely to do fairly well with competent and honest management; but the best boom in mining shares will hardly be in Queensland ventures. For convenience of reference, we append a table showing the dates of formation, capital, purchase consideration, and dividends paid, where there have been any, by the successfully floated Queensland gold-mining companies; from which it will be seen that the total amount of nominal capital, and approximately of subscribed capital has been £4,855,000, of which the aggregate purchase considerations have absorbed £4,133,900. Five of the companies have paid dividends at varying rates. The list does not include a few prospecting syndicates, and a share trust company which is now in process of liquidation. Otherwise the table is practically complete."

The table was as follows :—

Title.	Date.	Capital.	Purchase.	Total Dividend.
		£	£	s. d.
Disraeli Syndicate	February, 1885 ...	150,000	95,000	4 6
Day Dawn Block	August, 1886 ...	500,000	457,900	2 6
Etheridge*	September ...	70,000	45,000	Nil.
Bonnie Dundee	" " ...	120,000	100,000	"
Canadian	" " ...	90,000	70,000	"
Livingstone	October ...	75,000	50,000	"
Cumberland	" " ...	185,000	169,000	"
Mount Morgan West	" " ...	200,000	175,000	"
Elektron Mount	" " ...	90,000	70,000	"
Kaboonga	" " ...	250,000	220,000	"
Charters Towers South	" " ...	75,000	50,000	"
No. 2 Queen	November ...	160,000	120,000	"
Etheridge Reefs	" " ...	70,000	50,000	"
Mount Britten	" " ...	135,000	115,000	"
Mosman	December ...	185,000	158,000	"
Mount Leyshon	January, 1887 ...	150,000	120,000	"
Durham and Lord Byron	April ...	100,000	65,000	"
Day Dawn P.C.	May ...	470,000	450,000	1 6
Mount Shamrock	June ...	280,000	265,000	Nil
Gympie Great Eastern	" " ...	210,000	210,000	5 9
Gympie Golden Crown	July ...	110,000	100,000	1 0
No. 1 North Phoenix	" " ...	350,000	320,000	Nil
Kilkivan	October ...	120,000	90,000	"
Ravenswood	" " ...	100,000	80,000	"
Mount Albion	November ...	200,000	170,000	"
Mount Perry	December ...	160,000	120,000	"
Bishop's Creek	January, 1888 ...	100,000	90,000	"
Monte Christo	" " ...	150,000	115,000	"

*The original Etheridge Company had returned 5s. per share in cash and 4s. in subsidiary shares of the Canadian and Elektron Companies. These are spoken of as dividends; they are really a return of capital, as they represent portions of a property sold."

He understood that those facts had been reproduced in other papers, more especially in a society paper with a large circulation at home, and had been very strongly commented upon, the evident object being to discourage British capitalists from investing in Queensland mining ventures, by creating an impression that they were not sound and substantial. He thought the Government might very well take into consideration the desirability of establishing some system by which periodical reports, founded upon reliable data, could be furnished to the Agent-General at home, in order to afford the British public an opportunity of getting reliable information, and to distinguish between "wild-cat" ventures and really *bona fide* gold-mining companies.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That would be to give a Government endorsement to a mining speculation.

Mr. LITTLE said Sir S. W. Griffith's "wild-cat" telegram stopped £3,000,000 from coming to North Queensland alone; he knew that for a fact. The English capitalists were quite able to take care of themselves. It was they who were making money out of Australia, not the people in the colonies. If a miner did not succeed in getting gold out of his claim, the Government never did anything for him, and he objected to any Government protecting those men who were well able to protect themselves.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the writer of the article in the *Economist*, although he quoted statistics, did not tell the whole truth. If any fault was to be found at all with the results of Queensland mining ventures, that fault was not to be found with the people of the colony, but with the mining—he was going to call them a hard name, but he would only say—speculators. He would give one instance which would be sufficient to cover the whole ground. He knew a mine the price of which in the prospectus was put down at £187,000. The owners of that mine, who had worked it for years and proved it to be a good mine, were

willing to take £27,000 for it, and all the rest of that amount was to go to the mining speculators in London. That mine would have paid dividends on £27,000, but it could not possibly pay dividends on £187,000. That was a complete answer to the article that had just been read by the hon. member for Enoggera. He agreed with the hon. member for Woothakata, that those men were quite able to protect themselves.

Mr. SMYTH said that he and the hon. member for Wide Bay, Mr. Tozer, had lately been in London, and they knew how things were worked there. It was not the colonial people who made money out of those ventures, but the men at home who swindled the English public. The men who had brains and no money, swindled the men who had money and no brains. A company in which he was largely interested was, against the wish of a large majority of the shareholders, registered at £350,000. The mine was taken to London just before he arrived there, and it was not "irrigated" at all. He was there to sign transfers, produce documents, and do whatever else was necessary. Hon. members would remember that when the Hon. Patrick Perkins returned from England a short time ago, he was interviewed by a reporter, and in what he told the reporter there was a lot of real sound sense. If a man wanted to float a mine in London, he had not only to "irrigate" it, but to bribe nearly every financial newspaper in the city. There was the greatest rascality connected with the financial newspapers of London. The general plan for a man who was floating a mine was to give the editor, or manager, or whoever he might be connected with the newspaper, 1,000 shares on "call." That meant to give him 1,000 shares for two months or three months, and at the end of that time they were to be bought back at par. What was the consequence? The papers published flaming accounts of the mine, making it appear to be the greatest mine in the world, a real El Dorado or a veritable King Solomon's mine. A £1 share might be sent up in that way to 30s., and at the

end of the period fixed upon they would sell the shares, pay back the £1 per share, and put the other 10s. into their own pockets. He was very sorry he ever had anything to do with mining people in England.

Mr. NORTON: You cannot bribe the *Economist*.

Mr. SMYTH said he did not know about the *Economist*, but he knew of some very big papers in London where persons had received shares on "call." He would give another instance: The Day Dawn Block and Wyndham. That was put on the London market during the time of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. A large cake of gold was placed in the exhibition, and telegrams were sent to London showing every washing-up, and setting out what the returns would be if the mine turned out a certain amount of gold. The financial newspapers were continually puffing up that claim until the shares went up to £3 5s. Well, a certain gentleman who had gone home from the colonies, and was now in London, went to the principal proprietor of that mine, Mr. Mills, and said, "Look here, Mr. Mills, I believe there is something wrong with the title of your land; I'll tell you what you can do—give me 10,000 shares on call." He (Mr. Smyth) believed he got the 10,000 shares. He sold 6,000 at about £2 10s., thus clearing about £5,000, and had the other 4,000 to the good. Many others did the same kind of thing. There were people in London who made their living by that business. He was continually being waited upon by people in London who asked him if he had a Queensland mine, and what he wanted for it. He was interested in two Queensland mines, but he did not take them home; and although it was stated in the paper that had been quoted that No. 1 North Phoenix had paid no dividend, he could assure the Committee that that mine had paid 2s. 6d. dividend every three weeks. That mine had paid over £100,000 in dividends since it was offered to the British public, and it was only because he refused to "irrigate" the newspapers that that mine had not gone off. Then, as to the Mount Shamrock mines, he had paid to go into that mine, and the shareholders had actually received £21,500 in hard cash—something like 5s. 6d. a share—and over £1,500 had been carried to working expenses. In fact, not one-sixth of the money that appeared in that list had ever reached Australia; and whatever swindling was done was done at the other end of the world, and not in Queensland. There were people in London who made their living by promoting mines, and he believed that if he had remained there two or three years longer under their tuition he would have been able to manage the whole financial business of the country. There were very clever people there. Some persons in the colonies thought they were clever, but when they went to London they met with people who could turn them round their little finger. They would shout champagne for their visitors, drive them about, and put them through the mill properly, and make fools of them in the end. From his experience of London and in mining, his advice to those who had a good mine would be to keep it to themselves. He knew one mining proprietary that had splendid offices in London, a secretary, four clerks, and they spent a large sum of money in that way. No. 1 North Phoenix had only a secretary at £150 a year, the directors' fees amounted to about £100 a year, while the expenses of managing some mines in London amounted to about £3,000 a year. It was no use relying upon the reports of financial newspapers; they told deliberate falsehoods, and levied blackmail in all directions. He had spent about £960 on

advertising with one firm—Vickers and Co.—in London, and one day a certain newspaper proprietor came to him and asked for his advertisement. He replied that he could not give it, that it was in the hands of Mr. Vickers, who was one of the largest advertising agents in London, and a most respectable man. This newspaper proprietor pressed him for the advertisement, and ultimately said: "Give me the advertisement, and I will give you a good per." He (Mr. Smyth) said he could not and would not do so, and the result was that when that newspaper came out next day it said the mine might be a good one, but they were sorry they could not advise anyone to buy, because the price was too high. That was the way things were worked in London. In fact, a more corrupt and biased press did not exist in any part of the world than the financial press of Great Britain.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said no doubt hon. members were obliged to the hon. member for Gympie for having enlightened them as to the methods in which business was conducted in financial circles in London, especially in connection with Queensland and other Australian mines. No doubt what the hon. gentleman had stated was perfectly true—that there were some very clever people there; but it was an illustration of the old adage, "extremes meet;" because people who swallowed all the romantic stories that they saw in the public prints of Great Britain about the extraordinary doings of certain very ordinary people of our acquaintance must be very gullible people. He believed hon. members were likely to drift into a long general discussion on the subject of the way in which financial agents in London dealt with Queensland mining properties. He did not think any words could be too strong to express their condemnation of the conduct of those middlemen in Great Britain, who pocketed by far the largest share of the profits of mining transactions, and the only thing they could do was to express their abhorrence of their methods of procedure and explain, as far as they could, to the people of Great Britain how they were made the victims of those people. Having done that, he thought their duty was at an end. He should like to come back to matters nearer home: and first of all he would mention that a serious complaint was made to him at Charters Towers a few months ago with reference to the delays that took place in connection with the survey of homesteads on goldfields. A large number of homesteads had been taken up under the Act passed by the late Government, and there were scores of people on Charters Towers who were unable to fence in their dwellings, and some of them did not think it safe to put up anything like permanent residences, because they could not get a definite idea of where the boundary lines of their lands were. The crying want there—one great want at all events—was to have a sufficient staff of surveyors to get homesteads laid off so that the people might know the ground to which they were entitled. It was no use to say that they should go on building and put up their fencing afterwards. Half the value of those homesteads consisted in the ability of the people to fence in their ground and have their bit of garden, where they grew a few vegetables and fruit and ornamental trees. It must be self-evident, therefore, that if they could not fence in their lands, half the value of them, for homestead purposes, was absolutely gone. The hon. gentleman must have received complaints about those delays, and he hoped the hon. gentleman would take the matter into his consideration and see that delay should no longer be permitted to occur in getting those surveys of homesteads effected. It was felt by the people there to be a serious grievance. He would also

call attention to the fact that the business connected with the Mines Department at Charters Towers had grown to such an extent that there was now found to be insufficient accommodation for the department. The only place where the officers were accommodated now was in some extra rooms belonging to the new court-house. The building was built for a court-house, but many of the rooms was used for offices for the Mines Department. When he inspected them a few months ago he was very sorry to find that the accommodation was very meagre, and altogether unsuitable for the constantly growing requirements of that place. He would also ask the hon. gentleman whether it was intended to prepare a new set of gold-mining regulations, or to amend those which had already been in existence for some time past. The hon. gentleman must be aware that a great many defects had been found to exist in the old regulations which could only be discovered by working under them. His (Hon. A. Rutledge's) colleague, the member for Burke, when Minister for Mines, put himself in communication with one or two of the wardens, and a new set of regulations was drawn up by them, but he was not prepared to say that they were the most suitable regulations for gold mining generally. Some of the amendments suggested were very good ones. He had had a copy sent to him. He had not had time to go carefully through them, but he thought several of them were capable of considerable amendment. If it was proposed to revise the goldfields regulations, he would commend to the consideration of the hon. gentleman the importance of making provision with respect to the subject of men who were engaged in mines, in the matter of having competent persons in charge of winding gear and other machinery. At the present time persons were employed to manage winding gear and boilers and engines who were really not competent to be placed in charge of such machinery, and it was frequently more by good fortune than good guidance that accidents were averted. He thought it was absolutely necessary that provision should be made for requiring persons who had charge of winding gear to show, by having received a certificate, that they were competent for the fulfilment of the offices which they undertook to perform. Those were some of the matters to which he desired to call attention. There were others he might mention, but he would not occupy any further time, as no doubt other members wished to speak on that vote. The delay in the survey of goldfield homesteads was a real grievance, and he hoped steps would be taken to have it redressed immediately.

Mr. FOXTON said the Minister while answering the hon. member for Charters Towers might give him some information in reference to the item mineralogical lecturers. There were two such lecturers down on that vote at £400 a year each and travelling allowances. He saw by the report of the Southern lecturer, Mr. Hooker, that that gentleman had delivered a course of lectures and held classes at Gympie, One-Mile, and Maryborough, apparently with considerable success. He would like to know where Mr. Hooker was now, and whether his services could be made available for the mineral district of Stanthorpe? If he remembered rightly, originally there was a sum placed upon the Estimates by the late Mr. Miles for a school of mines. That was about three years ago. The money was voted, but it was understood that it was to be applied for the purpose of mineralogical lecturers, who were to travel from place to place in order that they might be of more practical benefit in a scattered community of this sort, and the promise was made at that time that, as soon as possible, one of those lecturers should visit the district of

Stanthorpe. Since then valuable deposits of silver had been discovered, and the district really promised to become one of the richest in Queensland. He would like to know when it was probable that Mr. Hooker would be able to go to Stanthorpe.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could not say where Mr. Hooker was at present. He was still a lecturer, and he had no doubt that, if his services were required at Stanthorpe he would go there. He (the Minister for Mines and Works) did not see why a lecturer should not go to Stanthorpe as well as to any other part of the colony. The member for Charters Towers, the Hon. A. Rutledge, had spoken about delays in the survey of homestead areas on Charters Towers. He (the Minister for Mines and Works) had given instructions for a licensed surveyor to be employed to survey homesteads, in addition to the two officers who were under the Government. There was one gentleman who devoted his time entirely to the survey of goldfield homesteads, and he was satisfied to do it for the fees. There was not, therefore, likely to be any cause for complaint in the future. With reference to the want of accommodation for the Mines Department at Charters Towers, he had never heard of it until it was mentioned now by the hon. member.

Mr. TOZER said he rose to speak on the two mineralogical lecturers. He trusted the Minister would cut those off the Estimate, as the country derived no value for this outlay. Everything he (Mr. Tozer) said in that Committee he was prepared to say outside; he knew sufficient in reference to one of the lecturers to satisfy him that he was not a desirable lecturer; but he would make plain to the Minister what he meant without taking advantage of the privileges of the Committee. He alluded to one of the lecturers in the Southern district. With reference to another matter which had been mentioned, if he consulted his own personal wishes he certainly would not make one single observation in respect to it. Why his name was mentioned by the hon. member for Toowoomba, except that he possibly knew most about the circumstances in connection with the English companies, he did not know. However, it seemed that he was called upon to make a short statement, because it struck him that the sending broadcast on the colony of the article from the *Economist* could possibly do no good, and might do a lot of harm, and therefore there was a duty cast upon those who knew the truth to reply. The people at home were quite able to look after themselves, and those articles that were written at home were generally written or inspired by disappointed gamblers for a rise. He happened to arrive in London in December, 1886, and having nothing to do with mining companies of any kind, he found a state of affairs which he would shortly describe. English mining capital had been shut out of America by recent legislation, and at that time the colonies advertised the wealth of Charters Towers at the Colinderies. The English public were ready for some excitement, and a financial paper published this statement at the time, which led to the whole excitement. He thought it was such a novelty that he would read the cause of the mischief that happened. The following appeared in the *Financial News* in London, in fact, formed the leading article:—

"GOLD-MINING AS AN INVESTMENT.

"In the London market four groups of gold-mine shares are engaging attention. It may be taken as an omen that the world is on the eve of another great gold-producing era. Whoever has studied the history of the precious metals is familiar with the fact that gold discoveries seldom come singly, but

in groups. In 1850 California had no sooner started a rush than Victoria joined in with one equally remarkable and unexpected. In two countries, 7,000 miles apart, the earth opened, as it were, simultaneously, and disclosed hoards of auriferous wealth which had lain concealed for ages; the world leaped at a bound out of poverty and depression into wealth and prosperity. Why should not the miracle of 1850 be about to repeat itself? Hoards of gold are being opened which may prove even richer than those of thirty years ago. When you have struck the right kind of reef, working it will be as safe and certain as the mining of coal; the old world traditions about gold manias and mining gambles have lost much of their force in the presence of modern conditions. Yet a proved auriferous vein, with ample capital and appliances to work it, put it under competent management and the winning of gold becomes a far less speculative process than the growing of wheat. What greater certainty would man have? The reef will not move away, a few days' bad weather will not ruin it, its cubic contents can be calculated day by day; the market for the finished metal is never glutted, and the price tends generally to rise, seldom to fall; nothing short of an earthquake can seriously disturb a gold-mine after it is well started."

Well, within a few days after that article was written, a number of persons managed to get in fourteen companies, then down came the earthquake, in the form of Sir Samuel Griffith's cablegram. Not one of those fourteen companies had yet declared a dividend, as the mines they owned were for the most part progressive. There was not the slightest reason for making any further comment at the present time, for this reason, that the telegram sent from this colony had already borne fruit. He might say that since the 1st November, 1886, there had been floated in London the Day Dawn P.C., Day Dawn Block, Great Eastern, Golden Crown, Mount Albion, Anglo-Saxon, Cumberland, Mount Shamrock, Durham, and Lord Byron, Phoebe, and Ravenswood. Every one of those were good mines. They had turned out gold, and already had paid £293,125 in dividends. That spoke for itself. The cause of what the English public complained of existed in bad management, and increased expenses; this they had to get over if they wanted to get anything out of the mines. He only wanted to do away with the impression that the mines of Queensland were as bad as they were described. His attention had been drawn to one of the reasons for the disappointment. He found that in one of the companies mentioned, one of the directors received £12 13s. 4d. per sitting, a second £12 18s. 10d., a third £13 10s., and the fourth £18 6s. 8d.; in all, £1,700 a-year. The best thing for the English investors to do—if there were any—was to go in for economical management, manage the mines as they were managed here, look after the mines and attend less to the emoluments, and then they would find that the Queensland mines were productive. Before complaining, they should look at home first. They should remember that they had spent £10,000,000 in the Transvaal and Indian mines, and although he had shown that the Queensland mines floated since the telegram were returning good dividends, or likely to do so soon, up to the present time only one mine in India had returned a dividend and one mine in the Transvaal—8s. and 6d. respectively. The returns from the Queensland mines could well be compared with those returns. In reference to the mode in which the mines were floated, he should say nothing whatever, but there was one phase of the subject which he wished to refer to. The English companies were beginning to look for additional privileges over the colonial miners. They had sent out many members, and had asked them to intercede either in the House or otherwise, to see if they could not get some provision agreed to by which their mines would be allowed to be amalgamated

in large areas. This was the only safeguard they had against those persons, that they should perform the labour conditions; and he trusted that whatever Minister was in power he would make them perform the labour conditions strictly.

Mr. SAYERS said he had hoped, before that question came on, to have had some papers which were laid on the table of the House, but unfortunately that was not the case. He had had volumes of correspondence, but he did not wish to make any accusations without being in a position to prove what he said. He would, therefore, say nothing on the subject at the present time. He would now ask the Minister for Mines and Works the reason for the warden at Charters Towers being removed suddenly? Of course, many reasons were given for his removal.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would tell the hon. gentleman the reason—to put a much better and more competent warden in his place, Mr. Mowbray. Mr. Haldane had only been a warden for about twelve months. He had had very little experience; in fact, he had had none before he went to Charters Towers, and since he had gone there he had proved himself to be deficient in tact and judgment, both as a warden and police magistrate. His determination to remove Mr. Haldane had not been come to suddenly; he had been debating the matter in his mind for two months, but he did not remove him until he could get Mr. Mowbray to accept the position.

Mr. SAYERS said the Colonial Secretary was not satisfied with Mr. Haldane's performances as a police magistrate. He had known that gentleman for some thirteen years, although he was not an intimate friend of his, and he had never heard anything about his not being a good police magistrate. He had seen him on the bench, and had never heard a complaint against him until within the last three months, and the very people who were hounding him down now were some of his best friends until that time. It seemed a very peculiar thing that there should have been no complaint against him for nine months, and then it was suddenly found that he was not fit for the office. To a certain extent that reflected upon those who put him in that position. He had never seen anything about the man that was not fair and just, and honourable, and upright; in fact, a more conscientious man he had never seen—if anything, he might be too conscientious. As regarded his competency, when he first went there he was hailed as one of the best men in the service, and now the very same persons were crying out against him. He was being sent from one of the best positions in the Civil service back again to the Etheridge. He was sent to Charters Towers in place of a gentleman who was removed to Gympie, and who had been a long time in the service; but he could not please everybody. Mr. Haldane was removed to Charters Towers temporarily, and after three months he was appointed permanently; but he was now to be shifted away into the bush, nobody knew where. He would like to hear something that would prove that that gentleman was not fit for the position he held.

THE HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he was rather surprised at the statements that had been made, concerning Mr. Haldane, by the Minister for Mines and Works, who said that he was inexperienced and incompetent.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the words he used were that he wanted experience, tact, and judgment, and he maintained that such was the case.]

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said whatever the exact words were they left the impression upon his mind that Mr. Haldane was considered incompetent; and he was sorry to hear the Colonial Secretary was of the same opinion in regard to the performance of his duties as a police magistrate. Personally, Mr. Haldane had been a stranger to him until he visited Charters Towers a few months ago; but he had known him by reputation for some time. He was also in the habit of reading the newspapers, and had never heard one whisper, or seen in print, any suggestion on the part of anybody that in any way reflected upon the tact or judgment of that gentleman. Of course Ministers had sources of information not available to other people, but they must receive their information from some source external to themselves. They must obtain information from what they saw of his actions in the discharge of his duties, or from complaints made to them by people who had come into contact with him. Mr. Haldane had been promoted to Charters Towers after being out further North, and it was extremely harsh that after a few months he should be sent on the wallaby track again. He was in favour of occasionally removing wardens and police magistrates; but there was reason in all things. It was one thing not to allow a man to fossilise in one locality for ten years, and form a particular circle of friends and acquaintances, and create an impression in the minds of some that he had friends and enemies; but nobody could convince him that nine months was a decent interval. It seemed like penal discipline. Mr. Haldane was a model citizen, so far as he could gather, and a man who did not bring himself into collision with either sects or parties; he was also singularly free from bias, either politically or in any other way, and those who had had an opportunity of observing him must have come to the conclusion, that unless the Ministry had obtained some special information about some special failure to exhibit the requisite qualities, it was a very harsh and cruel thing to send him back again to the back blocks.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. member had stated that the Minister for Mines and Works and the Colonial Secretary must have obtained information from sources external to themselves. He did not know where the Colonial Secretary obtained his information; but he had obtained his from Mr. Haldane's work, which came before him regularly every day. He had never heard a complaint against him; he complained about the man himself. Charters Towers was the most important goldfield in the colony, and required an extremely good man to govern it, and he had singled out the best man in the public service as warden—Mr. Mowbray. Mr. Haldane was not fit to be warden at Charters Towers; that was not saying that he was a bad man. There were not two wardens in the public service, besides Mr. Mowbray, who were fit to take charge of Charters Towers—he could not put his finger upon a second one. The Hon. Mr. Rutledge said he came in contact with Mr. Haldane and liked him; and the hon. member for Charters Towers (Mr. Sayers) said he had known him a long time. He had known him longer than either of those gentlemen; and so far from not being his friend, he had known him for years before he entered the public service, and had been the means of getting him into the public service. He had been the means of getting him made a mining registrar. Last year when a discussion took place in that House, upon a motion for the adjournment which he made himself, as to the incompetency of the warden who was sent to Croydon, and when the excuse was made by the

Government that they had no competent wardens to send there, he stated that they had competent mining registrars, and he told the Premier, Hon. Sir. S. W. Griffith, that he thought Mr. Haldane should be appointed a warden. He pointed him out, along with one or two others, as a good mining registrar. But then it was a speculation, making a man a warden. A man might be a first-class mining registrar, as Mr. Haldane was, and yet lack the qualities necessary in a man occupying the position of mining warden and police magistrate of a place like Charters Towers. That was the whole sum and substance of the matter. Mr. Haldane was not fitted to occupy the position of mining warden and police magistrate at Charters Towers, but he was fitted to occupy the position he was going to, as he was going where he was before. It was at first in contemplation to send Mr. Mowbray to Charters Towers, but through some bungling he was not sent there, but was sent about the country as relieving police magistrate. He was taken away from work it was difficult to get a man fitted to do, and put to work requiring no special qualifications beyond those required by an ordinary police magistrate. He thought he had done the public service great benefit by putting Mr. Mowbray in that position he was so well qualified to fill.

Mr. TOZER said it was difficult for any person not acquainted with all the facts to form a correct judgment of the motives for the action of Ministers. He did not pretend to do so, but he could not say that he liked the manner in which that warden had been removed. Though he did not approve of the manner of the removal, he was nevertheless inclined to think that the Minister had acted wisely. He had had a little experience there, and it occurred to him when he was at Charters Towers lately, that things were in a very lamentable state. There was great division of parties, and it required the strongest-minded man in the public service to take the position of warden on that goldfield. When he was there before, he could say that the colony had been fortunate in having at Charters Towers a warden who was above reproach, but when he was there last he made the observation—and he had no hesitation in repeating it—that the warden was not strong enough to cope with the new state of circumstances that had arisen in Charters Towers. He did not know Mr. Haldane's successor at all, but whoever he was he had a difficult task before him in Charters Towers; and as a member of that House he would watch, with a jealous eye, everything that went on there. He was largely interested in Charters Towers, and knowing the precarious nature of mining properties, he knew it was absolutely necessary that the warden should be most careful. He had asked a question, and the answer given satisfied him that the Minister must have been misinformed. It was evident the hon. gentleman was under the impression that the warden had not commenced the hearing of certain litigation, to which he would not particularly allude, when he got the Minister's telegram to remove. He found, however, that the warden had commenced the hearing of the case a fortnight before. If he had commenced the hearing of the case after he had received the telegram ordering his removal, that would have been an injudicious thing to do, no doubt; he had, however, since been informed of a very improper thing done by others. The warden had stated from the bench—and it was mentioned in the papers, and corroborated by a telegram he (Mr. Tozer) had received—that during the progress of that judicial proceeding he, whilst acting in the position of judge, received a telegram reflecting upon his character for impartiality; that that telegram had

been sent to the Minister by one of the litigants, and also that the solicitor conducting the case for the plaintiffs sent him, during the hearing of the case, a letter also reflecting upon his character. He trusted the Minister of Justice would take means to prevent any person attempting in such a way to intimidate any officer in the performance of his duty.

Mr. SAYERS said the telegram sent to the warden was sent while the case was on trial. There were a great many peculiarities about the case. Unfortunately, an hon. gentleman in that House, who had at one time taken an active part in that matter, was now occupying a different position. He did not say he would do anything in that position to influence a warden, but it had been asserted that certain things had taken place, and that one of the claimants in the case had wired to the Minister in Brisbane over the head of the warden. That was very bad taste in any man. The Minister sent certain instructions up there, and the matter should be ventilated. The Minister was in a position to say whether certain things took place or not, and if the papers he had called for had been laid upon the table that matter might never have cropped up at all. He would like the Minister to say whether he had received any wire or any letters from any individual in connection with that case, since it had been commenced, reflecting upon the impartiality of the warden?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: What case?

Mr. SAYERS: The case of lease 981. The Minister knows the case perhaps better than I do.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said lease 981 had scarcely been out of litigation for months, and that was why he wanted to know what particular case the hon. member referred to.

Mr. SAYERS: The present hearing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. gentleman asked him for telegrams and letters about a case that was still proceeding. He would give the hon. member no such information; and for the same reason he had called "not formal" to the hon. member's motion for the production of the papers. There were no papers in connection with the case which would not be laid on the table when the case was concluded.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he would like to ask the Minister whether he had in his official capacity revoked the license given by his predecessor in regard to the working of the mine under the Act of 1886? The hon. gentleman, in the course of a speech he had delivered at Townsville with regard to separation, laid very great stress indeed upon the "unwisdom," to use no stronger word, of any Minister or Government revoking the action of their predecessors. The hon. gentleman was aware that there was a law by which persons could receive the leases of streets, the surface of which could not be broken, and the only way to work which would be from the adjoining allotments. In a particular case, which he would not mention, he was informed that the hon. gentleman's predecessor had given a license to the lessees of certain streets to work the lease from the adjoining allotment; but since then the hon. gentleman had revoked that license, and put the lessees in the position that he had forbidden them to work their lease in the only way in which it could be worked, so that they were liable to have their lease jumped by anybody who might put in a claim, on the ground that they had not fulfilled the conditions. If the hon. gentleman had done that probably he (Hon. A. Rutledge) would have another

opportunity of saying something about the matter, as such action would be very deplorable for the public interests.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would state in answer to the hon. member for Charters Towers, who had asked him if he had revoked a license given by his predecessor, that he had done so, and he had done it upon the authority of the hon. gentleman himself. Did the hon. gentleman understand him? He had done it upon his authority—although not upon his authority alone. The hon. gentleman knew the law very well, and he knew that the late Minister for Mines had had no right to do an illegal act—as he had done in giving permission to any leaseholder to fulfil the labour conditions of his lease outside of that lease.

Mr. SAYERS: It is done daily.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had the hon. gentleman's own opinion upon that subject, in which a question was put to him when he was Attorney-General. The question was as to whether it could be done, and he answered it in a very long opinion—which he (Minister for Mines and Works) would read if hon. members thought it necessary—in which the hon. gentleman said that it could not be done, and that the doing of it rendered the lease liable to forfeiture, and to be jumped by any person who would jump it. He had answered the hon. gentleman's question. Permission had been given to work the streets from an adjoining allotment, which was not a portion of the lease; and that was the reason why he had revoked it. He believed the late Minister for Mines had known that his action was illegal before he left office, and that he ought never to have given that permission. Probably he had not seen his colleague's opinion before he took that action. Would he read the hon. gentleman's opinion? The hon. gentleman shook his head as if it were not correct. Well, then, he would read it:—

"The opinion of the Hon. Attorney-General is sought upon the following points, namely:—

"A person holding three conterminous gold-mining leases, of 25 acres each, desires to concentrate his labour, and applies to be allowed to place the full complement of men for the whole area (75) upon one lease, allowing the remaining two leases to be unworked:

"Is it competent for the Secretary for Mines to grant this request, notwithstanding the fact that the said two leases had not been exempted under section 98 of the Regulations?

"And if it is competent for the Minister so to act, would the lessee be liable to lose his title to the said two leases were application made for the forfeiture thereof under section 84 of the Regulations?"

One would have thought that was a reasonable request. There was a company having three conterminous leases of 25 acres each, which asked to be allowed to concentrate all the labour upon one lease alone, leaving the other two unworked. They still had the same number of men employed, and of course they would be employed only upon the one lease. He knew that was illegal to do, although it looked a very reasonable request to make.

Mr. SAYERS: Most unreasonable.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. member for Charters Towers did not know very well what he was talking about.

Mr. SAYERS: He knows as much as you do about it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the answer of the late Attorney-General to that was as follows:—

"I am of opinion that the Secretary for Mines cannot legally grant the request.

"The area of ground comprised in every lease is limited to 25 acres. The mere accident that the one person is the holder of three several leases of contiguous areas cannot have the effect of amalgamating the several leaseholds in such a way as to render them capable of being considered or dealt with for any purpose as if they were only one.

"By section 12 of the Act of 1874 it is made a condition in every lease, upon the breach of which the lease is voidable, that the lessee shall use the land *bona fide* for the purpose for which it is demised.

"Now, if these three several leaseholds of 25 acres each have been demised for the purpose of mining for gold thereon, it cannot be said that they are *all* used for gold-mining, when, as a matter of fact, no work is done on two of them.

"The fact that the lessee chooses to employ on one leasehold as many men as the Regulations require to be employed on three, *does not in itself afford protection to the lessee against liability to forfeiture in respect of the two upon which no men are employed.*"

Those lines were underlined to show the importance of the opinion.

"The object of the provisions of the Regulations as to the number of men to be employed in working leaseholds is not to ensure that men on goldfields shall find employment, but to ensure that the ground secured on such easy conditions for certain purposes shall be utilised for those purposes; and to prevent persons from holding ground which they do not themselves use to the exclusion of others who would use it if they had the opportunity.

"It may very well be that the lessee in question finds it to his interest to employ seventy-five men on one leasehold for the proper development of a mine thereon, and that he would employ that number of men irrespective of any requirement on the subject contained in the Regulations. Whether this is so or not is, however, immaterial.

"It seems to me that the Act and Regulations are plain and render it imperative that (unless exception is granted) every leasehold shall, irrespective of the identity of the lessee be *worked*.

"It is, of course, for the Minister himself to decide how far the fact of the lessee employing three times the requisite number of men to work one leasehold is a good reason for granting exemption in respect of the other two.

"ARTHUR RUTLEDGE."

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: What is the date?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said it was dated the 3rd of August, 1887. He held that was a good opinion, and that it really was the law that, to fulfil the conditions of the lease, the labour must be employed upon the lease, or else the conditions were not being fulfilled. The conditions of the lease were the same in every case—it did not matter whether it was ten yards or ten chains, or a mile, the principle was just the same, and therefore the opinion was perfectly correct; and in the opinion of the late Attorney-General, and in his (the Minister for Mines and Works) opinion also, and in the opinion of lawyers he had consulted, the Minister for Mines and Works could not legally grant such a request. That request had been granted by the late Minister for Mines and Works—illegally granted. When the matter had been brought before him in an official way he had at once revoked the lease. He had known of the case two months before, but he was not the person to put the law in force. The case must be brought before him first before he could attempt to put the law in force, and he had taken no action until it had been brought before him, when he had at once revoked the permission. The hon. gentleman knew that an Act had been passed in 1886 to allow of the working of streets and reserves from the land adjoining. That Act did not provide the means for working those reserves in contravention to the principal Act, and that was the reason why the license was revoked. So long as the license remained in force they were not attempting to mine on the lease, but as soon as it was revoked they began to mine on the leasehold.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he adhered to every word of the opinion the hon. gentleman had just read, but it was an opinion on a very different subject. The Legislature had given certain parties the right to mine under streets, the surface of which could not be disturbed; and the hon. gentleman ought to know that when any benefit was conferred in that way it carried with it a license to do that, without which the grant was absolutely valueless. It would be an absurdity to grant a lease of certain streets, the surface of which must not be broken, and say they must not put down a shaft anywhere except on the street. He knew that the Minister had no power, by a written license, to override any law, but the Minister who granted the license did so in order that the men might do that without which they could not do that which the law said they must do.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. member could not get out of it by saying that granting a lease under certain conditions would be an absurdity. The absurdity was in passing a law, giving the right to mine on streets and reserves, without providing means by which to work those streets and reserves. The right to break the surface was denied, and the law passed by the late Government did not give miners the right to break the law. The State school reserve was leased in the same way, and £5,400 had been paid by the lessees to mine under it. Those lessees applied to the Minister for leave to break the surface, but that was denied them. They then asked the Minister how they could fulfil the conditions of the lease, pointing out the absurdity of taking £5,400 from them and not affording them the means of fulfilling the conditions of the lease. The answer was: "We refer you to the Act of Parliament." They never had been able to fulfil the conditions of the lease, and the lease had been forfeited. The hon. member for Burke forfeited the lease for non-payment of rent before he left office.

Mr. HODGKINSON: That lease was forfeited *de facto*, the rent not having been paid within the time allowed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said it was cancelled by the hon. gentleman before he left office. That was where the absurdity came in—giving men the right to do a thing, and then depriving them of the power of doing it. If the late Government had passed a law allowing them to go on a reserve and break the surface, as they ought to have done, there would have been no absurdity. But how was the absurdity being got over at the present time? Did not the hon. member know that the men on Charters Towers who wanted to hold a lease of streets or reserves, and wished to mine under them—did he not know that if they had an allotment of their own they surrendered it to the Crown so as to make it Crown land, and then applied for a lease of that with the streets?

Mr. TOZER: You would not grant it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would not do anything to strengthen the title, because he believed they got the title fraudulently, but he did not say he would do anything to make it weaker.

Mr. SAYERS said he was very glad the hon. gentleman had shown his hand. It was anything but creditable for a Minister of the Crown, who had fought the case in that Chamber, simply because he could not succeed, to use his power in the way he was using it now. The dispute was over a small area of ground, there being some freeholders on the one side and some on the other; and when the hon. gentleman brought the matter forward in that Chamber, he made himself the partisan of certain people on Charters

Towers, and it was his supporters who were fighting the case now. John O'Flynn was the person put up to the job. Of course the hon. gentleman would not revoke the license till some move was made, but there were plenty of people who knew that he told his supporters how to put the law in motion, and that, if they would do certain things he would do so-and-so. The hon. gentleman said that if he became Minister for Mines he would use all his influence to get certain individuals that lease. He (Mr. Sayers) could state names if he liked, and get fifty men to prove that they heard the hon. gentleman say the same thing. The hon. member was simply retarding the development of that gold-field, and, no matter how the case went, he would never reap any credit from it, because it was certain, from what he had said, he would do nothing to strengthen their title. Certain people had a lease, and if the Minister for Mines and Works was allowed to act as he was doing now, no man in the country would have any security for his property. He thought he knew as much about mining as the hon. member, and he could bring proof for everything he said. He maintained that, at the present time, there were mines in the colony that could not possibly be worked without a large expenditure of money for the property itself, but which were, up to the present day, worked from adjoining lands; and he did not think it was right for the hon. gentleman, simply because he was backed up by a majority, to act as he was doing. It simply retarded the field for years to come. It would be a source of litigation for years to come, and, whoever won, it would be worth nothing to them, for they could not sink in the street, and would have to sink on some other allotment. It was said the petition was signed by the miners' union. There were not a dozen men belonging to the miners' union who signed that petition. Five or six members of the Committee, who were strong partisans of the great National party, signed the petition, and the Mayor of Charters Towers tried to use his influence in getting the Council to move in the matter, but he found it was not a very good game to work. The hon. member for Kennedy was one of the original directors of the company before the land was actually granted, and he tried to assist the Minister for Mines and Works in the House. He (Mr. Sayers) was prepared to say that certain statements made in the House by the Minister for Mines and Works were false, although no doubt the hon. gentleman did not know them to be false. There was no one to contradict him except the hon. member for Kennedy; and now the hon. gentleman said he would use his influence to ruin a certain company.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He never said anything of the sort.

Mr. SAYERS said it amounted to the same thing. The hon. gentleman said he should revoke a certain license which had been given by a previous Minister, and informed the licensees that if they did not do so-and-so, within three days he would forfeit the lease. Fortunately they were able to get underneath the street. But it was peculiar that the people who were now there never appeared in it before; they were personal friends of the hon. gentleman. For the very selfsame cause the warden was to be removed, and in his belief it was because the warden was not pliable enough.

Mr. LISSNER said the lease referred to by the hon. member—the idol of Charters Towers—was the celebrated Gridiron; and there was a great deal hanging to that gridiron. It was well known to be a job that emanated from the late

Government; and up in Charters Towers the present Opposition were known as the "Gridiron party." The hon. member spoke so strongly, no doubt, because his feelings and his money were involved in the question.

Mr. SAYERS: I have not a penny in it.

Mr. LISSNER said that, as to his connection with the affair, it was well known that, whether at Charters Towers, Gympie, London, or anywhere else, they liked to have an M.L.A. or a lord on the directorate, and the original applicants, John Clark and party, took it upon themselves to put him, as an old personal friend, on the list of provisional directors, as a bait, no doubt, to get other people to subscribe to the company. When he came back from England he knew nothing about what was printed in that pamphlet, but afterwards he was told that his name appeared as a provisional director. He then wrote to Mr. Clark on the subject, and received a reply which showed that his name had been used without asking his consent. He was not a shareholder in the concern, and would be very sorry to be one, because he could see nothing but political bias and litigation in it. If the hon. gentleman who had spoken so hotly on the subject said he was not a shareholder, he (Mr. Lissner) believed he would be all the better for it; but he had strong doubts about it. He did not think any man who had no interest in "the Gridiron" would speak in the way the hon. gentleman had done, about the action of any Government. The action taken by the late Government was very strong. He knew the gentleman the hon. member referred to, the late mayor of Charters Towers, Mr. Russell, who was a supporter of the National party, and a very good man too—quite as good as any man on the other side. He knew that that gentleman was nearly killed in rushing through an electioneering crowd with a gridiron, as representing a job given to the other side, to bring in the two hon. members who now represented Charters Towers.

Mr. SAYERS: State the truth.

Mr. LISSNER said it was true. He did not want to occupy the time of the Committee. It was 12 o'clock, the hour when ghosts began to walk, and he did not wish to frizzle on the gridiron when they had done with it. He merely wished to let hon. members know the reason for the extreme heat that had arisen on that subject. It had been a job for the last three years; it was a job still, and he supposed it would remain a job—for the lawyers.

Mr. LITTLE said he knew a little about that matter, and there was no doubt some concessions were made by the late Government, no matter what the hon. the senior member for Charters Towers, or his colleague, or any other "sky pilot" might say.

Mr. SAYERS rose to a point of order. He wished to know if one member was in order in alluding to another as a "sky pilot."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he thought the hon. member for Charters Towers would show his good sense by taking no notice of the remark.

Mr. LITTLE said he had only used the remark in a jocular way, and he was sure the hon. member for Charters Towers was not so thin-skinned as to take offence at it. He had no hesitation in asserting that political influence had been brought to bear in connection with that matter, and that both the senior and the junior member for Charters Towers had got the benefit of it. The present Minister for Mines and Works had the courage to revoke the action of the late Minister for Mines and Works, who was a

particular friend of his (Mr. Little), and he could not understand how the concession was ever granted. He certainly thought the harsh language used by the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Sayers, was altogether uncalled for.

Mr. DRAKE said he did not like to dash into a discussion on any subject, but he had been waiting for a long time to say a few words in explanation with regard to another matter.

The CHAIRMAN said he would resume the chair at a-quarter past 12 o'clock.

On the Chairman resuming the chair at a quarter-past 12 o'clock,

Mr. DRAKE said he should not have risen to speak had it not been for his desire to correct what he thought was a misapprehension in the minds of some hon. members, and the wrong impression that might be produced on the minds of those who would read to-morrow's *Hansard*. It occurred to him, from what was said after he read the article from the *Economist*, that in doing so it was inferred that he endorsed the statements contained in that article. In reading that he was acting on behalf of the hon. member for Toowoomba, and he thought it was due to himself and the hon. member for Toowoomba that—

Mr. GLASSEY called attention to the state of the Committee.

Quorum formed.

Mr. DRAKE said the hon. member for Toowoomba, when mentioning that matter on the previous evening, expressly stated that he was bringing the matter forward in order to show the Committee what statements, damaging to Queensland, had been made in some papers. Although he (Mr. Drake) believed the *Economist*, from which he quoted, was a respectable high-class paper, the hon. member for Toowoomba certainly did not express the opinion that its articles were always trustworthy; in fact, he expressed the opinion that in some cases they were entirely untrustworthy. The hon. member for Toowoomba, at the same time, expressly stated that in bringing that matter forward he was giving an opportunity to another hon. member—it appeared that was the hon. member for Wide Bay, though the hon. member for Toowoomba did not mention his name—to put forward the other side of the case; and he (Mr. Drake) was very glad that the hon. member for Wide Bay had put forward the other side, and done it so well. He (Mr. Drake) had no desire to circulate any statement that might be damaging to Queensland, except for the purpose of showing what statements were circulated in the old country, and of giving the hon. member for Wide Bay an opportunity of putting the other side of the case before the Committee and the country, and he thought that no harm would result from the fact of his having quoted that statement from the *Economist*.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he hoped there would be no further discussion on a question upon which heat was likely to be displayed, but that they would go on with the Estimates to be able to get home.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had just one word to say before the discussion closed. He had answered the hon. gentleman faithfully as to what he did on the authority of his opinion as he read it. When the matter was brought before him officially the lease was actually forfeited, and might have been forfeited as had been done in many other cases. But he did not forfeit it, and allowed the usual three days' grace.

At any rate, if he had been animated by the animus with which he was credited, he could have forfeited the lease, but the holders were able to perform the conditions within the three days. What he had risen to speak about was this: The hon. member for Woothakata, in speaking of the action of the Minister for Mines and Works, alluded to the hon. member for Burke, Mr. Hodgkinson, as if he had been his (Mr. Macrossan's) predecessor who had given the permission, but he knew that hon. member knew the case too well to give the permission. The gentleman who gave it was Mr. Dutton, who was acting for the hon. member for Burke during his absence.

Mr. SMYTH said the Minister for Mines and Works would have saved trouble if he had laid on the table of the House the papers asked for by the member for Charters Towers. Now, he maintained that the case under discussion was one of the most corrupt jobs that ever took place in Queensland. He knew something about the case. He knew Kirkbride, O'Flynn, and all the rest of the National party concerned in it.

Mr. MURPHY: How about the Orangemen?

Mr. SMYTH said he knew nothing about Orangemen or Fenians, or any other class or creed. He liked fair play for all men, but he was saying that he knew something about the Gridiron case—which should have been decided in the same manner as other cases were decided. He would explain how it arose. There was an application made by certain parties. It commenced with a gentleman named Wyndham Palmer, who applied for the streets. He was backed up by Clark; and according to an Act passed by Parliament certain leases could not be applied for until six months had expired, but if they were applied for those places were to be put up for auction and sold. In that case the application for the streets was rather before the time, but the proper application came from Mr. Kirkbride. The only genuine application was his. Well, about that time there were certain gentlemen at Charters Towers who were "jobbing" around. Then Mr. O'Flynn applied for the forfeiture of the lease. In some cases leases were applied for as streets alongside of which there were certain freeholds, and the previous Government in that case made arrangements by which certain parties who held freeholds should forfeit them—surrender them—to the Crown. Whatever the lease cost, the property was handed over to the Crown. There was one party there who wished to have the street, and so long as they did not break the surface of the street they were quite right. The surface of a street belonged to the municipality, and where there was a municipality that body should have charge of the surface of the streets. But that party would have sunk one shaft only, and would have spent a large amount of money. He did not see why any impediment should have been thrown in the way of legitimate mining; and if the Minister for Mines and Works had done the right thing he would have allowed those people a certain freehold and to sink a shaft. But the Minister for Mines and Works took a very peculiar course, and he would have saved time if he had laid the papers on the table of the House. The hon. gentleman, in all fair play to the mining community, ought to have assented to the request of the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Sayers, and laid the papers on the table of the House. Then members of the Committee would have been acquainted thoroughly with the case in dispute. The case was *sub judice*, and was to be tried at Charters Towers, and if hon. members had the papers before them they would be able to understand all about it. A great injustice

had been done to certain people by preventing them from going on with legitimate work. He had read all the representations made in regard to the case that had appeared in the newspapers, and had found that over £1,000 would have been spent in sinking that shaft.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was not going to answer the hon. member who had just spoken; but would ask hon. members to pay particular attention to the date on which the discussion was taking place, and when the papers were laid upon the table of the House they would see how insignificant and frivolous those papers were. The case was *sub judice*, and no matter how unimportant the papers were, if he laid them upon the table at once he would be establishing a precedent which ought not to be established. The only papers which he would lay on the table would give hon. members no information.

Mr. HODGKINSON said if he had not spoken it was not because he was not well acquainted with the subject under discussion, but simply because he thought it would be perfectly useless. He was sorry that some matters had been imported into the discussion; but he must make some remarks concerning the warden at Charters Towers. It must be confessed that if a Minister were to be held responsible he must not be fettered in regard to the movements of his subordinates. He had a great admiration for Mr. Haldane, and believed him to be one of the best officers in the service, and he could also endorse every word the Minister for Mines and Works had said in regard to Warden Mowbray. It was his intention, when acting as Minister for Mines and Works, to appoint the latter to Charters Towers. There were two goldfields in the colony which required particularly competent officers to administer them—one was Charters Towers and the other was Gympie, and he desired to remove Warden Sellheim, because he had been an unusually long time in the occupancy of the Charters Towers wardenship, to Gympie. There was not the slightest doubt that the officer most competent to succeed him was Warden Mowbray. It was not necessary for him to go into details as to why that appointment was not ratified. Warden Mowbray temporarily discharged the duties; but for private reasons of his own he was not permanently appointed. He trusted Mr. Haldane would not suffer pecuniarily, for many reasons. When he was appointed to Charters Towers, it was to be, pending good behaviour, a permanent appointment; he had a large family, and his object in wishing to be transferred from Georgetown was that he might educate his children.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: His appointment was only supposed to be a temporary one.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he did not tell Mr. Haldane that. He was told that as long as his conduct was such as to entitle him to retain his position, he would remain there. In fact that gentleman distinctly refused to go to Charters Towers, except upon that understanding. In regard to the remark of the hon. gentleman, that a mining registrar might be an eminently capable man, and yet be devoid of the particular qualities that would make a good warden, that went without saying. Having no experience of how Mr. Haldane would conduct himself in the position of warden, he had simply appointed him temporarily, in order to observe how he fulfilled his duties, and while he was in charge of the department Mr. Haldane fulfilled his duties in an eminently satisfactory manner. He was a man of unblemished private character and distin-

guished impartiality, and was seized with a strong sense of duty. In Charters Towers, unhappily, there was such a state of things that it would be impossible for any man, no matter how able he might be, to discharge the duties of warden without incurring odium from some section of the community. In Charters Towers the question of those leases was not so much a question of mining law as of strong political opinion. He was not going to express any opinion on the case before them, and he rose to plead that Mr. Haldane should, at all events, not suffer any pecuniary loss by his removal. He did not know what salary he had been drawing at Charters Towers, but his intention, in appointing him to the position, was that he should receive the salary attaching to the appointment, if he discharged the duties and responsibilities of the position satisfactorily. The hon. gentleman had told the Committee that the only reason he had for removing Mr. Haldane was that he did not consider him strong enough for the position at Charters Towers; and of course the hon. gentleman had a perfect right to place his officers where, in his opinion, they would discharge the duties of their positions in the most satisfactory manner. He was pleading on behalf of Mr. Haldane that, having had a distinct promise from him, when he was in a position to make such a promise, that he should have the appointment and the salary paid to the former warden—Warden Sellheim—the Minister would do what he thought the hon. gentleman would consider was the duty of succeeding Ministers, and carry out, where the public interest allowed of it, the promise given by his predecessor.

Mr. SMYTH said that in connection with the item for powder magazine keepers, he wished to draw the attention of the Minister for Mines and Works to the services rendered by Mr. Thomas Nash to the colony. It was well known that in 1866-7 the colony was in a very bad condition, and, owing to the discovery of the Gympie goldfield by Mr. Nash, the colony got a new start, and thousands of immigrants came to the colony with money in their pockets, and without the services of any immigration lecturers, and they had since assisted in developing the resources of the colony. He would ask the Minister to consider Mr. Nash's claim to consideration in the way of an increase in his salary as magazine keeper, as a just claim, and as a national claim.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member must know there was no way by which they could increase the Estimate; and if the hon. member could make out a good case for consideration for Mr. Nash, he should bring forward a resolution on the subject at some future time, and it would no doubt be fully considered.

Mr. ANNEAR said that was a very important case, but it was one of a sort that was always treated lightly by the House. As it was simply the case of Mr. James Nash, a man getting a salary of £101 per annum, they would not talk of it, but a large majority of the Committee cheerfully voted £800 a year travelling expenses for a judge. Mr. James Nash, as the prospector of Gympie, had no doubt been a public benefactor to the colony, and if his case was not mentioned now, he might be forgotten. The present Minister for Mines and Works would probably be Minister for Mines and Works next year, and if they did not mention that case he would probably neglect to do what he would probably do now that the case had been mentioned—increase the salary of a most deserving man. The hon. member for Burnett, Mr. G. H. Jones, had intended to ask the Minister for Mines and

Works a question in which a large number of his (Mr. Annear's) constituents were interested. It was with reference to when Mr. Rands, the Government Geologist, would be sent to report upon a goldfield in the Burnett district.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he wished to ask for information upon various matters connected with the Mines Department, but, as no one was reported at that hour, he thought there was no use in getting up any further discussion. Hon. members wanted answers to their questions, and he thought those answers should be recorded, but the reporters could not take the questions and answers at that hour. It seemed to him that they might just as well stop the proceedings then.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You can stop them by taking a vote.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he should like to get some information, but the reporters could not take down and have in print everything that was said.

Mr. LITTLE said he had very great pleasure in supporting the proposition made by the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, in reference to Mr. Nash, the discoverer of Gympie. The Minister for Mines and Works doubtless understood that Mr. Nash was the discoverer of gold which had been a great factor in the success of the country. He sincerely hoped the Minister for Mines and Works would make some further provision to help Mr. Nash.

Mr. SAYERS said it had been stated in that Committee that the case mentioned by him was the only one of the kind in the colony. At the present time there were numbers of such cases in the colony where they were working from adjoining lands through to their own leases. There were some at Gympie and some at Charters Towers. They could only get into their mines by being allowed to work from the adjoining land, and that had been allowed by the Mines Department. It was for those reasons that he had thought the matter should be ventilated in that Committee, and to show that that case was not an isolated case, but that the action taken had not been taken in any other case. He simply wanted to let hon. members know that such a thing had been allowed, but that in that particular case a particular line of action had been followed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that he had never heard of such cases. He hoped the owners of leases would take warning from the opinion of the late Attorney-General he had read on that case, and not lose their ground. The hon. gentleman's opinion would be in *Hansard* to-morrow, although he (Mr. Rutledge) thought they were not being reported, and that opinion was distinctly adverse to anything being done. He hoped that the miners would pay attention to the opinion of the hon. gentleman.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn. The first business on the paper on Monday next will be Supply.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at four minutes to 1 o'clock.