

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 3 OCTOBER 1889

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 3 October, 1889.

Petition—loss from railway accident.—Federal Council Referring Bill (Queensland) No. 1—first reading.—Defamation Bill—consideration of Legislative Council's amendments.—Ann Street Presbyterian Church Bill—second reading.—The Sugar Industry.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

LOSS FROM RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

Mr. ARCHER presented a petition from John Bree, of Rockhampton, praying for relief for the loss of his eldest son who was run over by a train on the Central Railway and killed, and upon whom the petitioner and his wife were dependent for support; and moved that the petition be read.

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

On the motion of Mr. ARCHER, the petition was received.

FEDERAL COUNCIL REFERRING BILL
(QUEENSLAND) No. 1.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan), leave was given to introduce a Bill to refer certain matters to the Federal Council of Australasia for the exercise of legislative authority thereon.

FIRST READING.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS presented the Bill, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

The second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

DEFAMATION BILL.

CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S
AMENDMENTS.

On the motion of the HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider the Legislative Council's amendments in this Bill.

On the motion of the HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH, the several amendments of the Legislative Council were agreed to.

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

The report was adopted, and a message was ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, intimating that the Legislative Assembly had agreed to their amendments in the Bill.

ANN STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BILL.

SECOND READING.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate upon the motion for the second reading of this Bill—

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. M. Nelson) said : Mr. Speaker,—I do not see my way to support this Bill, because it seems to me to be entirely at variance with the known constitution of the Presbyterian Church. The intention of the Bill, I believe, is to give a good title for certain portions of land which were granted by the Government of the colony some thirty years ago. I think it is material for us to inquire first of all what was the intention of the Government in making this grant of land. After looking at the deeds in which the grant is conveyed, I do not think there can be the slightest doubt that the intention of the Government of the day clearly was to give as a gift to a certain congregation, known as Presbyterians, a piece of land for the purpose of the erection of a church, and other portions of land for the purpose of the erection of a school and a manse. Well, what is the ordinary constitution of the Presbyterian Church? I think everybody knows it has a very old constitution, with traditions and laws, and that those laws have been in existence for hundreds of years. The principal feature of the constitution is that in its Church government—in its ecclesiastical government—it is thoroughly democratic. I say nothing about its dogma; in that respect it may be too conservative, but with regard to Church government it is thoroughly democratic. In every respect in the spiritual and temporal concerns of the Church the people have to be consulted. There is established for the better regulation of the affairs of the Church a regular constitutional form of government, beginning with an inferior court and leading from that to a higher court, and from that again to one still higher. The government of the Church is carried on first of all by each congregation which is kept separate under a kirk session, subject to the jurisdiction of a Presbytery which comprises several sessions. Then there are a number of congregations included under a Synod, and that is equivalent to a province; and then the whole are included in the General Assembly, which is the highest court of appeal, and whose decisions are in all matters final. Any Church that does not possess this particular form of government can certainly not be called a Presbyterian Church. You may call it a Presbyterian Church, but it really is not a Presbyterian Church. That is the main objection I have to this Bill. A considerable quantity of evidence has been taken on this matter, and the committee report to this House that the preamble of this Bill has been proved. It was necessary that they should do that in order to bring the Bill up; yet when I look at the preamble it is so contradictory to all constitutional Presbyterian principles as, in my opinion, to condemn the whole Bill. After reciting first of all that this land was granted to a certain particular congregation of persons called Presbyterians and now known as the Ann street Presby-

terian Church, and afterwards called in the Bill "the said church;" in the 2nd paragraph the preamble goes on to tell us that certain powers, privileges, and advantages were conferred on the Synod of Australia in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, and the ministers and congregations subject to the spiritual jurisdiction thereof. The next clause goes on to describe what the particular deed of grant was of land for the erection of a church, and then there are two paragraphs describing the deeds of grant of land for the erection of a school and manse. But the next paragraph of the preamble says :—

"And whereas the said church has not in fact ever been subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of the said Synod, but has always been distinct and separate from, and unconnected with, any other church or ecclesiastical body whatsoever, possessing full independent powers of self-government."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is simply an utter absurdity to call that a Presbyterian Church; and to put a clause like that into the preamble seems to me to be an error which puts it beyond argument.

Mr. TOZER : That is only a clerical mistake, and I told you so. That is to be amended.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : I am talking about the preamble, and discussing the principles of the Bill on its second reading. We cannot amend the preamble.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH : Yes, we can.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : The preamble is brought up to induce us to consider the Bill.

Mr. GROOM : Exactly; but the House can amend the preamble if it likes.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : There is nothing here to show that the preamble is to be amended.

Mr. GROOM : The mover has said so.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : We have only an amendment in one clause before us.

Mr. TOZER : There is to be an amendment in the preamble.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : If such an assertion as that is made in the preamble we may as well say that the Presbyterian body is no body at all. The fact of the matter is that if we put the property into the hands of the trustees they are under no jurisdiction at all, and no one will have any control over them. It is perfectly true that the General Assembly does not interfere in matters of this sort as a rule, and that congregations are at perfect liberty to deal with the property belonging to themselves as they please, but the properties should all be vested in the corporation of the General Assembly. If that is not to be the case with this particular property, then it is not the property of a Presbyterian Church at all. The trustees may sell the property, which may be worth £50,000, invest the money, and derive a large annual income from it; but we have no guarantee that the minister of that congregation will be a minister connected with the Presbyterian body, if the principle of the Bill is carried. It is all right at present. No one can find fault with the present incumbent, who is a very old member of the Presbyterian Church, and highly esteemed by everyone. It is quite untrue also, that the congregation is not under the spiritual jurisdiction of anyone, because this incumbent has been, to my knowledge, for twenty-five years, at any rate, under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

Mr. TOZER : It says "of the said Synod."

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It states the congregation is "unconnected with any other church or ecclesiastical body." Could anything be stronger than that?

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It is clearly wrong.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: This Bill has now come before us twice, and it should by this time have come properly before the House. The select committee might have set that right; but when I saw that statement in the preamble I would not consider the question any further. The position of the trustees is simply this: that after the present incumbent resigns or dies—either of which contingencies I hope will not happen for a long time—then without reference to the Presbyterian Church at all the trustees can put in anyone they please as minister, and call him a minister of the Presbyterian Church. The educational requirements for a minister in that Church are very high, but the trustees may obtain an unqualified man and appoint him as their minister. We have no guarantee in the Bill that this safeguard will be secured. The General Assembly would have nothing to say in the matter. The man appointed might be a tinker or a tailor, but he may be called a minister of the Presbyterian Church if we pass this Bill as it stands. I do not think this is a thing which we ought to allow. Even if the preamble is amended I still hold that the proper course for this House to adopt is to convey the property to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, and by doing so we shall get rid of a large amount of responsibility. The Presbyterian Church can then take the responsibility of dealing with the land.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: They cannot do that without an Act of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know they cannot do it without an Act of Parliament, but by vesting the property in them, we should not prejudice the interests of the Ann street congregation in any way.

Mr. TOZER: All the other Churches do the same.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A very large number of them do. If hon. members look at the report of the General Assembly, and notice the list of the congregations and of their properties, they will find that there are a large number of the church properties vested in the name of the corporation of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. I know the congregation I belong to myself, at Dalby, has been in that position for many years. If this congregation are desirous of selling, and the property is vested in the corporation of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, all the congregation will have to do will be to make application to the General Assembly for permission to sell. The General Assembly hardly ever refuse an application of that sort if reason is shown why it should be granted. Of course the Assembly must always be assured that the interests of the Church in general are properly conserved. They take all the responsibility upon themselves; but if we grant possession of this land to four or five trustees without proper safeguards, we cannot be fully assured of what they may do with the land.

Mr. TOZER: I purpose to add those safeguards.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Then what is the use of giving the property to the trustees at all? Why not convey it direct to the corporation of the Presbyterian Church generally? They can carry out the views of the congregation if those views are consistent with the general policy of the Church as a whole, but of which we,

as members of this House, know nothing. The General Assembly meet yearly in the month of May, and if occasion requires they can be called together at other times. I think by placing the property in their hands we should be doing justice to ourselves, and we should save ourselves from a very grave responsibility, which I do not feel inclined to take upon myself. There can be no doubt that the intention when the grant was originally made was, that the land was to be given to the Presbyterian Church. It is alleged that there was a mistake in the deed of grant. Well, I am quite willing that it should be put right; but I consider that the property should be vested in the manner which will be most conducive to the interests of the Church as a whole. Unless it is shown to me that this defect can be remedied in the direction I have indicated, I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill has shown me some amendments he proposes to introduce in the Bill, which will have the effect of meeting the objection of the Minister for Railways. I do not profess to be thoroughly acquainted with the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, but I have some general knowledge of it, and I certainly have always thought that the facts were as has been stated by the Minister for Railways—that every Presbyterian congregation forms part of the general body of the Church, and that it is not an independent organisation. Therefore the hon. gentleman is quite right when he says that the part of the preamble which recites that this church is entirely unconnected with any other church or ecclesiastical body is not correct. The mistake should have been amended by the select committee, but I understand from the hon. member for Wide Bay that the committee were informed that they could not amend the preamble, as that could only be done by this House. That certainly is a strange mistake, because preambles are frequently amended by select committees when the evidence taken proves that they are not correct. The amendment which I understand is to be proposed will read somewhat as follows:—

"And whereas the said Church has not in fact ever been subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of the said Synod, but now forms part and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland."

Then the 10th section, which deals with the income and profits of the land to be sold, is to be amended so as to read that the income and profits from the said land—

"Are to be appropriated and used for the church, school house, and minister's dwelling house respectively in connection with the said Church, and for no other purpose whatever, subject to the rules and under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland."

There is no difficulty whatever in modelling that clause to provide that this Church shall hold its property just as other Churches do for those purposes, but subject to the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. The objection pointed out by the Minister for Railways is, of course, a fatal one to the clause as it stands; but there will be no difficulty in so amending the clause as to fully meet it. That the Church is not an independent organisation, but is a part of the General Presbyterian Church of Queensland, there can be no doubt. If we do not pass this Bill the only other alternative is that the Crown law officers take proceedings to take away the property altogether from the Presbyterian Church, for there is no doubt the land is not used for the purposes authorised by the grant. But as I do not suppose the Government intend to do that, I think that under the circumstances the Bill should be

allowed to be read a second time. If it is found impossible to amend the 10th section, it will not be right to pass the Bill; but I can see no difficulty in inserting the exact form of words that will provide that the trustees of that church shall use the property as a branch of, and subject to the jurisdiction of, the General Assembly. I think it would be unjust to throw out the Bill simply on account of the error in clause 10, and of an accidental error in the preamble.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—Several Bills similar to the present have been passed by the Parliament of Queensland. In fact, scarcely a session passes that we are not asked to pass a Bill of this sort. Owing to the original Church grants being in places which the progress of the colony and the settlement of population have rendered totally unsuitable, congregations are obliged to come to this House and ask leave to sell the lands originally granted, and purchase other lands in more favourable localities. And that is the only reason why this Church has come here to obtain authority to sell this particular piece of land. There is no need to discuss the circumstances, for we know them perfectly well. The land has been leased for a certain number of years for building purposes; but it is not the only Church in the colony that has done the same thing.

The PREMIER (Hon. B. D. Morehead): Leased, with power to purchase.

Mr. GROOM: I have made some inquiries into the matter since the Bill was last before us, and I am informed on the best authority that there is no purchasing clause in the lease. It is simply let on a building lease, seventeen years of which have yet to run.

The PREMIER: I have been informed differently.

Mr. GROOM: The gentleman who informed me ought to know, and I am sure he would not mislead me on the subject. That being so, the Ann street Presbyterian Church is only doing what other Churches have done. The Church of England in this city has leased some of its land for building purposes, and there is a terrace of houses upon it, which return a large income. In the other colonies the same thing has been done. In Melbourne, only twelve months ago, the Congregational body leased a piece of purchased land for Church purposes, which brings in an income of something like £3,500 a year. I am also informed that at Paddington, near Sydney, the needs of the Church presided over by Dr. Gilchrist are supplied almost entirely from lands which have been leased for building purposes; and that the salary of the late Rev. Dr. Mackay, of Sydney, was for a very long time derived from rents of buildings erected on Church lands leased for building purposes. So that it has really become an ordinary practice in all the colonies; and if the Ann street congregation have only done the same as others before them, why should they be deprived of the privilege? Why should we step in and prevent them from doing what all other congregations have a right to do? There is something in the argument of the Minister for Railways, that the preamble ought to have been amended by the select committee. I am surprised they were informed that a select committee had no authority to amend a preamble. They have ample authority to do so, and to report to the House why the preamble was amended; otherwise, how can they come to the House and say the preamble was proved, when they are shown, as they have been shown, that some statements in the preamble are not strictly correct? In the recent Church of England Bill the preamble

was amended. A very important clause was omitted from the Bill as laid before Parliament, and the fact of that clause being omitted was not withdrawn from the preamble as it ought to have been, and the preamble was amended accordingly. There is ample power given to select committees to amend a preamble, but this committee seems to have been wrongly informed by somebody that they had no such power. I am at a loss to understand the objection to this Bill. The hon. gentleman in charge of it has intimated certain amendments that he intends to move, which will go a long way to meet the objection raised by the Hon. the Minister for Railways, who, of course, must be accepted as an authority on the principles which govern the Presbyterian Church. No doubt what he has stated is strictly correct; but if the Bill is to be amended in such a direction as to conform to the wishes expressed by the hon. gentleman, I cannot see what objection there can be to it, unless there is a settled determination to prevent this congregation from having the same privileges that have been extended to other congregations. I may state that I introduced a Bill to enable the German Lutheran Church, Toowoomba, to sell land and buy a site in a more suitable locality; I did the same in the case of the Wesleyan Church at Toowoomba; I know it was done in the case of the Church of England at Ipswich—and why should this congregation be deprived of privileges that have been conceded to other similar bodies? They have not obtained the land in any surreptitious manner. They hold the deed of grant—in fact, they paid £45 for it; therefore what objection can there be to their dealing with it? I cannot understand it, unless it is that the land has become much more valuable than anyone anticipated it would be, and there is a desire that the Ann street congregation shall not get exclusive possession of it—that some other congregations shall also participate in the profits. I do not think that is fair. The unearned increment is fully due to the Ann street congregation.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: To the State.

Mr. GROOM: An hon. member says the unearned increment should go to the State, but we are not discussing the question of the distribution of wealth now, we are dealing with the Bill; and, as I have stated, I am at a loss to know what the objection to it is, because the House has already consented to other Churches doing what the Ann street Presbyterian Church has applied for leave to do. They have leased the land, and seventeen years of the lease has yet to run. That cannot be disturbed, and all they ask is that they shall have power to come to some understanding with the leaseholders to sell the land by public auction, and devote the proceeds to building a church and school in some more eligible locality. The proceeds of the land will be actually devoted to Church purposes, and I do not see why the Ann street congregation should not have that power. I know a Church property which recently was offered for sale, and there being no bid, it is now for sale privately. I do not think there is anything in this case which should lead the House to refuse to pass the second reading of the Bill. In committee it can be amended in the direction the Hon. the Minister for Railways has indicated. I certainly think the House is entitled to more information than has already been given as to the reasons why the Bill is so strongly opposed. I think there must be something in the background that has not been brought forward; and as one who has been asked to support the second reading of the Bill, and has been supplied with certain information on the part of the congregation, I should like to know what the real objections to it are.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not know that I need say very much more on the subject, having spoken when the Bill was before the House on the former occasion. As a member of the select committee, I may inform the House that the preamble would have been amended, only the committee were informed that they could not do it. When I saw that the preamble of the Church of England Bill had been amended by the select committee to whom it was referred, and asked the hon. member for Wide Bay, who is now in charge of the Bill whether it was legal to amend the preamble, he told me it was. When the Bill was before the committee it was pointed out by those interested in it that there was a defect in the preamble, and they asked to have it put right before the Bill came before the House again. The chairman of the committee was very busy at the Supreme Court at the time; he wrote a note to the officer in charge of the committee asking whether it was right to have the preamble amended, and the committee were informed that they could not do so. I do not see myself where the objection to the Bill comes in. If it is because the property is leased on building lease that is a common occurrence. The Longreach property is an example, and it is only a few evenings ago that the Hon. the Chief Secretary called attention to the fact that the Church of England had leased their property in Fortitude Valley fronting Ann street. That has been let on building lease, and, as I said then, I only wish that other Churches that have property in Ann street would do the same. I do not think there can be any objection on that ground. The select committee inserted a clause in the Bill to the effect that the property must be sold by auction, therefore, there is no fear of any private sale being made. The objection raised in the first instance to the Bill was that the Presbyterian Assembly had not given their consent to it, but when the Bill was referred back to the committee they took the evidence of the Rev. Mr. McSwaine, who was clerk to the Assembly when a petition was presented to that body proposing to deal with the property. Mr. McSwaine was asked—

“Was the petition considered by the Assembly? It was. It was brought before the Assembly in the usual way—in the usual legal ecclesiastical fashion—and, after due consideration—and there was a considerable number of books and documents brought up by Mr. Ogg himself—and considerable discussion, the Assembly seemed to think, and agree, and I may almost say unanimously, that the property, as such, was the property of that congregation; but, on account of a mistake in connection with the deeds of grant, which was to the ‘Established Church of Scotland’ instead of the ‘Free Church of Scotland,’ as Mr. Ogg pointed out, it was thought right by the Assembly to give direction to Mr. Ogg and his trustees, or those who had to do with the property, to get those deeds rectified and put into proper form.”

Mr. Ogg and his congregation have been going in that direction all through the matter. Mr. McSwaine, further on in his evidence, told us that all the property of his Church is not vested in the Presbyterian corporation, but that several Churches held their own property. He mentioned his own, as an instance, that though a Church may join the General Assembly, they still retain their own property. The congregation said they had no objection to join the incorporated body of Presbyterians in Queensland, but they would retain their own property, and as a matter of fact the property is now under the jurisdiction of that congregation, and they have sold their Creek street property. The land claimed by the Ann street Presbyterian Church was really as a matter of fact purchased by them, as they were required by the Government to pay £45 for the removal of the old pound, which was about as much as the land

was worth at that time, although its value has since increased very considerably. The property was leased from them by the Government for school purposes for several years until a National school was built, and all the facts point to the conclusion that the land is the property of the Ann street congregation. It is proposed that they should utilise the proceeds derived from the sale of the land for Church purposes, and the select committee have inserted a clause requiring the land to be put up for sale by auction, and prohibiting its sale at a price less than the upset price fixed at auction. I have not seen the lease under which the land is held by the present occupiers, but the hon. member for Wide Bay has seen it, and he informs me that there is no purchase clause in it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It would not matter if there was; it would be illegal.

Mr. McMASTER: I certainly think the Ann street congregation is entitled to the land, and the amendment which the hon. member for Wide Bay is prepared to move in committee will remove the objections raised by the Minister for Railways. It is proposed to give the congregation power to rectify the deed, and if the new clause is inserted the property will immediately pass out of the control of the congregation and become vested in the General Assembly, and be dealt with as the General Assembly directs. That is exactly how we dealt with a similar matter in the Church of England Bill, in which it is provided that certain property may be sold, and the proceeds applied to the erection of a parsonage and school room, any surplus to go to the Synod and be dealt with under the direction of the Synod and Bishop. The Ann street congregation have, in my opinion, a right to the property in question, and to utilise the proceeds of the sale of it for the erection of a church, manse, and school, in the district of Brisbane. I do not think the land was granted for the purpose of enabling them to build churches in the far West and the North. I really do not know whether the House can grant the land to any other Church. Parliament has refused to give State aid to any Church now, and, therefore, I do not think we are in a position to hand the land over to the General Assembly, unless it goes through the Ann street congregation. On looking at the evidence of Mr. Ogg—the minister who has been in charge of the congregation ever since the grant was made—it will be found that the congregation have always kept themselves in communication with the Government so far as this property is concerned, and have complied with the law in reference to the appointment of trustees. Whenever a trustee has left, died, or resigned, a new trustee has been appointed by the congregation in accordance with Presbyterian usage; the name has been submitted to the Government for approval, and the Government has, in every case, approved of and gazetted the new trustee so appointed. All the circumstances, in fact, go to show that the Ann street congregation have a legal right to the property, and had they not been misled in the first instance by being told that they could not be disturbed, an Act of Parliament rectifying the error which was made would have been passed long ago. Many similar Bills have been passed by the Parliament of Queensland, and I really do not know why this congregation should be singled out, and told that they shall not be allowed to deal with their property as other congregations have done. Personally it matters nothing to me whether they get the power they seek or not, as I have not been connected with the Presbyterians for twenty-eight or twenty-nine years past. I used to worship with the Ann street congregation when I first came to the colony, and at the time the grant was made,

as it was the only Presbyterian Church in Brisbane, and the congregation was a mixed one; but for the last twenty-nine years I have been connected with the Wesleyans. I cannot understand what the opposition to the Bill is; but possibly we may hear what it is before the debate is closed.

Mr. CROMBIE said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears to me that the grant originally given to this Church was given to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This congregation was, I believe, a member of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, but the Government of the day did not recognise any Presbyterian Church except the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and therefore, they granted the land to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Brisbane. This Church afterwards became the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, and the land was transferred to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. It was not, in my opinion, granted to the Ann street congregation. The evidence given by the Rev. J. F. McSwaine, I think, proves that. At question 25 he was asked by the chairman—

"Would the rule, that the General Assembly can inquire into the appropriation of the funds of a Church arising out of its lands, apply to the Ann street Presbyterian Church?"

Mr. McSwaine replied—

"Well, you see, you have to settle, before that question is answered, whether that property belongs to this congregation *per se*, or whether it belongs to the congregation in connection with any particular denomination. If you say it belongs to the congregation *per se*, then we have no right to inquire. If it was a grant to any particular denomination, or, to a congregation in connection with any particular denomination, that afterwards came into the union in this colony, then it would in the long run belong to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland; and so, if you settle that to be the fact, I say we have the right to exercise the power to inquire into the appropriation of funds arising from that property. But, you see, we have never taken up that point. The Church, as such, has never examined that point at all. We have gone on the ground that was put before us; simply, that this property belonged to the Ann street congregation. We never asked whether it was in connection with any denomination or not."

I think this land does belong to the denomination, and not to the congregation, but with members of the congregation as trustees. I know that sometimes land is given to a congregation by will. That was done in the case of Mr. McSwaine's Church, so that in that instance the land belongs to the congregation, and not to the denomination. I think that this Church land should be handed over to the denomination of the General Assembly, and not to any particular congregation belonging to the Church. I therefore think that, until the Bill is altered, we had better vote against it, and it may then be brought in next session in an amended form.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not agree with the hon. member who has just sat down that this Church property belongs to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church as a whole. The Minister for Railways has asked, "What was the object of the Government in granting this land?" and I maintain that the object is clear, and that it was granted to the Ann street Church. That Church is still in existence, and still holds the same views as it did then. Although some error has taken place in reference to the deeds, yet I maintain that the original intention of the grantees should be carried out. In the evidence, at question 26, Mr. Murray asks—

"You simply took it for granted that it did belong to the Ann street Church? We were so much satisfied with it, that we proceeded no further; but said, 'Get your deeds righted; they are wrong.'"

I do not see at all why we should make any exception in reference to this particular Church, when so many other errors have been rectified by

Bills of a similar nature. The hon. member for Toowoomba has brought in no less than three different Bills during the last few years, for the purpose of rectifying errors of this kind, and I think it would not be acting justly towards the Presbyterian body, and this Church in particular, if we attempted to throw the Bill out. I have nothing to do with the Presbyterian Church. I am opposed altogether to all Church grants, but seeing that this grant was made for a particular purpose to a particular Church, the country ought to keep faith with that Church and bestow the deeds upon the Ann street Presbyterian congregation. I hope there will be no objection to the second reading of this Bill, as the hon. member for Wide Bay has promised to rectify any errors and meet the views of the Minister for Railways.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Speaker,—As a member of the select committee on this Bill, I wish to refer the House to part of the examination of the Rev. Mr. McSwaine. At question 15 he is asked—

"By the Chairman: Were you the clerk of the General Assembly at its first institution? Oh! no. I came here in 1876, and the Church, I fancy, had its beginning about 1863.

"By Mr. McMaster: That is the Assembly? That is the Assembly, the incorporated Church.

"You agreed to join—to shake hands? Yes—quite so."

Then, again, at question 20—

"You were not in the colony when that was done? I was not in the colony.

"Does the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, or the General Assembly of the Presbyterian body in this colony, interfere with the property belonging to the several Churches, or property vested in individual Churches or congregations? It does not. My own Church is an example of that—an illustration of that.

"By Mr. Murray: How is it 'General,' then, if you have no general supervision by the Assembly over all the bodies? It depends in this way, Mr. Murray, as far as I know. The property may have been willed by some individual to a particular congregation, and according to the terms of the will is the tenure."

Now, I contend that the Ann street Church purchased this land. It was not a Government grant, but was the property of the congregation. At question 26, Mr. Murray asks—

"You simply took it for granted that it did belong to the Ann street Church? We were so much satisfied with it that we proceeded no further; but said, 'Get your deeds righted; they are wrong.'"

I need not dwell at length, Mr. Speaker, on this subject, as other speakers have put it as clearly as it is possible to put it, but I may refer to page 14 of the evidence to the latter part of appendix, B. This is an extract from the minutes of proceedings of the General Assembly:—

"And further,—

"The Assembly resolves that the adoption of the above resolution shall not in any way affect the standing or rights of congregations, as constituent parts of the said Presbyterian Church of Queensland, who do not transfer property acquired by them before the incorporation of this Church to the said Church when incorporated."

Now that is confirmatory of what has been said by various speakers. I can see no evidence to disprove the fact that this property was purchased by the Ann street Presbyterian congregation and that it at present belongs to them.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 24.

Messrs. Groom, Isambert, Foxton, Barlow, Glassey, Sayers, Wimble, Buckland, Grimes, O'Connell, Mellor, W. Stephens, Hamilton, Tozer, Macfarlane, Gannon, Laya, Annear, Salkeld, Jordan, Drake, Hodgkinson, McMaster, and Hunter.

NOES, 21.

Messrs. Donaldson, Nelson, Pattison, Macrossan, Morehead, Perkins, Dunsmure, North, Black, Watson, Palmer, Jessop, Cowley, Dairymple, Callan, Plunkett, Campbell, Crombie, Stevenson, O'Sullivan and Murphy.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of Mr. TOZER the committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Cowley's motion—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, early next session, to adopt some means for encouraging the sugar industry;" upon which Sir Samuel Griffith had moved by way of amendment—"That the following words be inserted after the word 'means'—'not involving a re-opening of the coloured-labour question,'" upon which Mr. Paul had moved—"That the proposed amendment be amended by the addition thereto of the words—'otherwise than an extension of the Polynesian Labourers Act for five years.'"

Mr. COWLEY said: Mr. Speaker,—Before this question goes to a division I wish to say a few words in reply to the debate, and I shall endeavour if possible to say what I have to say within the time devoted to private business. I shall first reply to the arguments used by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom. That hon. member found considerable fault with the action I took in introducing this question as a member of the Royal Commission. There was no cause for that, and I consider the hon. member was a much greater transgressor than myself, because I carefully avoided touching upon the Sugar Commissioners' report, and only quoted evidence to substantiate my line of argument. I never even quoted or alluded to the minority report, or scarcely at all. On the other hand, the hon. gentleman's speech was simply a repetition of his own report almost from beginning to end. He said but little in his speech beyond what he had said in his report. Had I gone into a criticism of the hon. gentleman's report, I feel sure I could have demolished it in a very few words, because I maintain that his report does not deal fairly with the question at all. I do not wish even now to criticise his report, but I simply say I could demolish it in a very short speech. I can also find grievous fault with the hon. gentleman, inasmuch as whilst in his report he has ably recited the depression in the sugar industry, he has suggested no remedy whatever. One part of the duty of the commissioners was to suggest a remedy for the disease, and the hon. gentleman has suggested none, and from that point of view he has entirely failed to carry out the duty he had in hand. I know very well what his convictions were; but I know also that he simply stated certain facts, and gave us no remedy for the depression in the industry, and no hope of a remedy. He appeared very much grieved because I did not invite him to the conference I called of hon. members to discuss this question before I brought it before the House. I wish to draw his attention to the fact that I simply invited members who were representatives of agricultural districts in the North, or districts in which sugar was grown, because they had a greater interest in the matter than agriculturists outside the tropical region, or where sugar was not grown. I thought it better to ask those who were particularly interested in the case to meet me and go into the question.

Mr. GRIMES: You did not invite me, and I grow sugar.

Mr. COWLEY: Yes; but not in a tropical district. I knew it was no use inviting the hon. member for Oxley, because he has expressed his opinions so often, and he is one of those men who never change. The opinions he entertained in his childhood he entertains still, and is likely to do so to the end of his days. The gist of the speech of the hon. member for Toowoomba was that sugar-growing would not pay even with coloured labour, owing to the great competition. Now I must object to that statement. I contend that with fair play sugar-growing will pay in Queensland with the labour which we have now, even in spite of the competition of other parts of the world. Even supposing it will not pay, why not allow those individuals who think it will pay to try? If they do not make money themselves still they are producing wealth for the colony, and I maintain that on that ground they should be allowed a fair trial, unless it can be proved that they are interfering with the best interests of the colony. The hon. member for Toowoomba has not proved that that is so, nor did he attempt to prove it in the long and able speech he made. The hon. gentleman never touched upon this question, or tried to prove it from his experience of the North and other sugar-growing districts. He has not proved that the coloured labour at present employed in the colony is injurious to the best interests of the colony, or that it interferes in any way with the white population of the colony. He simply tried to prove that sugar-growing would not pay with coloured labour on account of competition, and certain other reasons. I say that so long as people are prepared to spend £700,000 per annum in developing the industry, and in carrying it on, it is fair to surmise that it will pay. Of course, when I say I believe it will pay, I do not mean to say that the sugar growers will be recouped for the losses and the expenditure they have incurred in previous years. I am thoroughly convinced that a portion of that expenditure will have to be wiped off; but the estates are now valued at very low prices, and are obtainable at low prices, and I am convinced, more especially owing to circumstances which have transpired during the last month, that if the labour is allowed which we have at present, capitalists will embark in the industry, owing to the prices at which they can now buy estates, and that they will make them pay handsomely. Not only will they pay the planters handsomely, but they will produce wealth to the colony as a whole, and others will follow their example. To prove that sugar-growing would not pay, the hon. member for Toowoomba quoted from a work which is known to most members of the House—the "Encyclopædia Britannica." I presume the hon. gentleman took that as a standard work on the question. I entirely differ with that opinion, and consider that it is not only not a standard work upon this subject, but upon many others as well. To prove my contention, I shall refer hon. members to vol. iv., page 265, of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," where they will find a very startling announcement. If hon. members listen to the paragraph I am about to read, they will learn a great deal. This very great authority upon economic questions says:—

"The best quality of beer is made in Tasmania, whence it is shipped in frozen blocks to Australia and India. In Calcutta, now, the inhabitants suck—not sip—their beer."

If the information of this work upon the sugar industry is equal to the information it gives upon the beer question, then it is utterly worthless. I maintain that there are far more reliable works in the library connected with this House which will give more and better information than the one quoted by the hon. member for Toowoomba.

I maintain that instead of the sugar produced from cane being a decreasing quantity, it is an increasing one. Prices were at their maximum in 1882 and 1883, and since then there has been a very serious decline in prices, owing to the competition of beet sugar. There is no denying that fact; but whilst I am on this subject I may say that prices are again going up, and this year they are better than they have been for some years past, and there is every reason for believing that they will continue to keep up. To prove that the production of cane sugar is not a decreasing quantity, I shall quote from a work called *The Sugar Cane*, which is entirely devoted to this subject, and which is admitted on all hands to be a very reliable authority upon the sugar industry. The returns I shall give are compiled at very great trouble and expense, and are absolutely reliable. In 1882 and 1883, when the prices were at their highest, the product of cane sugar of the whole world, with the exception of Australia, South Africa, and one or two other of the smaller places, was 2,107,000 tons. The product of beet sugar for the same time was 2,147,000 tons. In 1887 and 1888 the yield of cane sugar—not taking Australia, Natal, and one or two other places into account—was 2,540,000 tons, whilst the product of beet sugar was 2,451,000 tons. Thus we see that in 1882 and 1883 the yield of beet sugar was 40,000 tons in excess of the yield of cane sugar, while in 1887 and 1888—the season of the greatest depression in prices—there were 88,000 tons of cane sugar more than of beet sugar. Looking at those facts, I unhesitatingly affirm that cane sugar is not dead, and that, given a fair supply of suitable labour, it will ultimately kill beet sugar, because the people in the beet-growing countries of Europe are beginning to feel the burdens of the increased bounties to such an extent that they must rise and say, "We will have none of this. We insist upon the bounties being abolished." In Paris and in the German cities, which are in the centres of large beet-growing districts, they are actually paying double the price for sugar that is paid in Great Britain, and the working people are beginning to see they are losing enormously. They are not only paying very large prices for their sugar, but they are losing the manufactures connected with the sugar industry, as they are being transferred to Great Britain where the sugar is so much cheaper. The sugar growers have every prospect of good seasons before them, and with the prospect of the yield of beet sugar gradually decreasing, cane sugar must be triumphant. Taking into consideration that since 1882 the yield of beet sugar has not increased as much as that of cane sugar, I feel certain that the cane sugar must outrun the beet. Then we must consider that in the figures I gave the yield of beet is given for the whole world, whereas Australia and other sugar-growing countries are omitted in the returns of cane sugar. Another thing is that the cane sugar is outstripping its rival on its own merits, whilst the beet sugar has to be bolstered up by bounties. Then the prices are improving once more. I shall quote from *The Sugar Cane*, number 241, for the month of August last. At the half-yearly meeting of the Colonial Bank, held on the 4th July, 1889, the chairman stated that—

"Since the 31st of December, the date to which the accounts went, there had been a great rise in the price of sugar, which had placed in the pockets of the West India planters between £1,250,000 and £1,500,000. What they had most to congratulate all connected with the West Indies upon was, that the rise had been produced entirely by natural causes, the increase in consumption being in excess of that of production. There was every probability of remunerative prices ruling for some considerable time, and the only danger which suggested itself to them at present was, that the higher price might check consumption. There was no doubt that

the West Indies were able to produce sugar under more favourable circumstances, and more economically, than they could when the crisis set in about four years ago."

We are just in that position. We are more able to produce sugar economically than we were previously. We have better machinery. Our land is getting freer from stumps, thereby enabling us to use machinery, and dispense with a considerable amount of hand labour. We have better means of communication, and better facilities for getting our sugar to market. Taking all these things into consideration, I maintain that we are now in a far better position to produce sugar economically than ever we were. And, besides, we are making a much better article. It is well known that the sugar produced some years ago was hardly fit to put on the table. Now we are sending it out from the mills equal to the best refined in the world. Anyone looking at the sugar used in Brisbane at the present day must admit that it is equal to the best Mauritius, or the best refined in Great Britain. I will also show that profit is made in another country besides the West Indies. I refer to Mauritius. It has been stated over and over again that cane sugar must die—that its competitor, beet sugar, is destroying it. Here are facts contained in this volume which must show every thinking man that cane sugar is not yet dead—that it is increasing in production, and that it is actually paying the producer. I am quoting from the report of the Agricultural Company of Mauritius, Limited, and it must be remembered that the only agriculture there is cane-growing; every other kind of agricultural produce they consume is imported. The report says:—

"The Agricultural Company of Mauritius, Limited, have declared a dividend of 10 per cent. for the past year. The net year's profits amount to £14,488, which, added to the balance brought forward from the previous year, makes £15,793. Of this sum £14,025 is absorbed by the dividend at 10 per cent., leaving £1,768 to be carried forward to next year."

What has been done in Mauritius and the West Indies can be done here, if the planters are only allowed fair play, and are encouraged in a legitimate way, without the aid of bonuses even. There is no better machinery in the world—and I am speaking on a subject with which I am thoroughly conversant—than there is in Queensland at the present time. And there is another great factor which many people know nothing of, and that is that our country is admirably adapted for horses and stock. In Natal, no horses can be kept on the plantations, on account of a sickness which sweeps them away every year; and it is the same with the bullocks. The consequence is, that the planters have to rely more upon hand labour than upon machinery, and that constitutes a very heavy extra item of expenditure. There is not a single steam plough in the country; everything is done by hand labour, while here we have the best of machinery, and skilled men to use them. In Mauritius there is not a plough in the island. It is one of the largest sugar-producing countries in the world, and all the work is done by Indian coolies. All the manure used on the plantations is carried to them on their heads, and every cane is planted in a hole dug by hand. Here we have our horses thriving well; we can buy them at a fair price; feed is cheap; and they are able to do good work. We have the very best mechanical appliances, and we are continually looking out for better, and doing all we can to stimulate invention to come in and assist us. And I say that if you will only allow us to carry on a little longer, black labour will be swept out and die a natural death. We shall be able to compete with white labour entirely, aided by our rich land, our good means of transport, and the

facilities we possess in having large markets close to our doors. All these things are peculiar to Australia; no other sugar-producing country in the world has so many advantages. Therefore I say there is every hope that the sugar industry in Queensland, if only allowed to go on unchecked for a few more years, will not only survive, but will ultimately triumph, and be conducted with white labour only. There was another thing the hon. gentleman said which rather amused me, and he put it forward as an argument that could hardly be controverted; that was that cane sugar was not likely to flourish because, in addition to beet, there was a great deal of sugar made from maple and sorghum. Anyone who knows anything about maple sugar knows that it is simply a sweetmeat. They do not make crystallised sugar from the maple, and sell it over the counter; it is not a commodity of a marketable nature. I will give a few figures from *The Sugar Cane* which refer to the production of sugar in the United States from maple, beet, and sorghum. In 1880 the production of sugar from beet was 357 tons, and from sorghum and other things 1,943 tons. There is no maple sugar recorded for that year. In 1881 there were 9,000 tons of sugar made from maple, 629 tons from beet, while the quantity from sorghum is not given. The quantity made from maple fluctuates considerably, the largest quantity having been in 1888, when 20,000 tons were produced. In the same year there was produced from beet 1,640 tons, and from sorghum 360 tons. That is the whole product of sugar made otherwise than from sugar cane in the United States. I will now give you the quantity made from sugar cane in the United States, so that you may contrast it and see what the industry is there. But before doing that I should like to read the remarks made on this point. It says:—

"Maple sugar is sold in the candy form, and its production, it is stated, is not likely to increase. The beet industry has not yet passed the trial stage—if the present import duties are continued it *may* pay. Respecting sugar from sorghum, we are not amongst those who believe that it will become a permanent industry. Kansas State gives a bounty of *is. 8d.* per cwt. upon sugar so produced, which, in addition to the *10s.* per cwt. protective duty, will stimulate enterprise. An industry, however, which is dependent upon such aids, is at best a very precarious one."

The whole quantity of cane sugar made in the United States is 140,000 tons, and that is the only country, so far as I know, where they are getting sugar from maple or sorghum. I know it has been tried to be made elsewhere. It was tried by the Rev. Mr. Holland, in New South Wales, some years ago. I tried it myself in that colony, but failed to make anything like a useful or paying article. But in America they give every attention to it, because in many of the States the cost of transport is very considerable, and they try to grow their sugar on the spot. It was tried in New South Wales and other places for the same reason; but I am convinced of this, and it is the general opinion of those most competent to judge on the subject, that we have nothing to fear from maple or sorghum sugar made either in America or in any other part of the world. Let us look at the consumption of sugar in the United States. In 1888, it was 1,470,000 tons, and, as I have shown, the production was about 140,000 tons from cane, and about 22,000 tons from all other sources. Therefore, I say, we have nothing to fear from the competition of the United States with the sugar industry in this colony. There is one other grievance I have against the hon. member. As I said before, I do not like theoretical statements; I like simple matters of fact which can

stand the test of inquiry, and I strongly object to any man giving only a one-sided view of a case, either by misquoting evidence or by giving only those portions which suit himself. The hon. member for Toowoomba said he would not take up time by reading many quotations, but this is one of the statements he made:—

"Let me read another case. It will be found on page 297, in the evidence of Mr. Johnson, of Mackay. Here we have a man sitting down in his own quiet chamber, and without any doubt giving honestly what he considers the causes of the depression, and suggesting remedies for its relief."

After giving the remedies, he wound up by saying:—

"There we have a sensible suggestion. The man honestly gives what he considers to be the causes of the depression, and in a very common-sense manner suggests what he considers should be done to relieve that depression; but he does not advocate coloured labour."

But, Sir, I will prove from the man's own statement that if he does not advocate coloured labour, he actually employs it. What is the use of saying that a man does not advocate coloured labour, when he practically advocates it by actually employing it? I will now give a short quotation to show that the two extracts which the hon. member gave from the evidence, are utterly unreliable. In order to substantiate his case he quoted from the evidence given before the Royal Commission, but I say that in doing so he either misquoted the witnesses or failed to give the whole of their statements. This witness, Johnson, after stating a number of facts as to capital invested, and so on, says:—

"Employed four kanakas and two Europeans, besides self and partner; average rate of wages paid to coloured labour, £15 per annum; total wages paid to kanakas in 1888, £69; to the two partners, *nil*. Considers (reliable) white or kanaka labour the most suitable for field work; reliability is the great desideratum."

That is the actual statement of the hon. member's own witness. He comes into court with a witness to prove his case, and he utterly and entirely fails, because the witness proved exactly the opposite. After enumerating a number of articles that might be grown in the district, the witness said—

"The labour required to render their growth profitable would be reliable Europeans or kanakas."

The hon. member then went on to quote from the evidence of Michael Flood, of Mackay, and we will see what that witness says. He is very emphatic; he is a magnificent witness for me; if I had brought him into court myself I could not have had a better one. He says—and this is said "in the secrecy of his own chamber, not when he has any commissioner to cross-examine him":—

"Considers Polynesians the most suitable for field work, but they are not necessary for carting or working with horses generally; for ten years has occasionally employed white men in field work; they are not willing, and would not earn more than their rations at it; would not undertake to grow cane with white labour even if the men worked for rations, but prefers whites for working with horses."

Further on he says he had men who refused to do field work at 30s. a week. This is the hon. member's own witness, and I maintain that when he attempts to bolster up his case by such witnesses as these, he utterly and entirely fails. I shall not quote any more evidence, because I feel sure that that is sufficient. Then the hon. member objects to a reciprocal treaty. No matter what remedies were proposed he objects to them, and he does not suggest a single remedy, although he says we have his entire sympathy, and that the industry is well worth preserving. One of his great objections to coloured labour is that it will prevent federation; that there are others besides ourselves to be considered, and we

have to look forward to the glorious time when we shall have a federated Australia—when all the colonies will be banded together with free-trade in Australia and protection against the rest of the world. And yet directly the question of a reciprocal treaty comes on he says, "Oh, no; that will interfere with certain industries which are now in existence; we cannot afford to lose those." What does the hon. member mean? If he is so anxious for federation, is not this a splendid way of bringing it about? If you start a reciprocal treaty with the other colonies, I say that is the very thing to lead up to that very desirable and laudable object, federation. It will hasten it on, and soon bring it about, because if it is started with one or two colonies, the others will immediately want to participate in the benefits to be derived from it. It would be a splendid stepping-stone to federation, and bring it about sooner than anything else I know of at the present time. The hon. member said black labour is dead, and that it cannot be revived. Why? Because the question was legislated on some five years ago? Yet what do we find the hon. member doing? Actually within the last month he was chairman of a conference which met and tried to do their very best to do away with past legislation with regard to the divisional boards of the colony. An Act was passed some time ago limiting the time within which divisional boards should receive certain endowment, and the hon. member was chairman of the conference that met to try and get that altered. Petitions have also been presented to the House on the subject by several hon. members, and I believe that when the time comes, the House will very speedily undo previous legislation, and that the £2 for £1 endowment will be carried. There is no finality to legislation. We should deal with things on their merits, consider the changes that occur as time goes on, and legislate accordingly. I say the question of finality in this or any other matter cannot be entertained. The hon. member was chairman of a conference whose object was to get an alteration in past legislation, by which divisional boards will obtain increased endowment, and yet he says this matter must not be revived because we legislated upon it five years ago.

Mr. BARLOW: Because it is a vital question and not a money question.

Mr. COWLEY: Which is the vital question?

Mr. BARLOW: The black labour question.

Mr. COWLEY: Yes, and it is a money question, too. It is a money question to thousands who have now to gain a livelihood in connection with the sugar industry. Surely the hon. member has a soul above party considerations on this question! Surely he can feel for the white men in the Northern part of the colony who will be thrown out of employment if anything is done to cause the sugar industry to collapse. If any legislation were to take place which would close the Ipswich coal mines, the hon. member would stand up here day after day, and week after week, protesting against it, and I contend that the closing of the Ipswich coal mines, or even the closing of Ipswich itself, is nothing to be compared with the closing of the sugar industry. The two things cannot be mentioned in the same breath. What do we get from the hon. member for Toowoomba, who travelled over large areas of country in the North, at very great inconvenience to himself I admit, and thoroughly inquired into the question? What recommendation does he give for remedying the present condition of affairs as regards the sugar industry? He makes no recommendation whatever. He simply states the case most pitifully, and all the planters get

from him, all the country gets from him, is his sympathy. The planters must be a very ungrateful lot not to be satisfied with the sympathy of the hon. member for Toowoomba, who went out at great inconvenience to himself and travelled over a large extent of country to see if he could find a remedy for the depression in the sugar industry. The hon. member appears to me to be like a doctor who is called in to see a patient. After feeling the pulse of the patient, and diagnosing his case, the doctor looks very grave and solemn, and says, "Oh, yes; I understand the nature of your disease thoroughly, and would very much like to prescribe for you, but some years ago a resolution was come to that we were not to prescribe for any outside our own circle; therefore, all I can give you is my sympathy." It has been said in the course of the discussion that we are making this a party question. I deny that it has been made a party question. The Government have opposed the resolution. Where, then, is the party question? The only party in favour of the motion on this side of the House are the representatives of the unfortunate districts suffering from the depression in the sugar industry, and as far as the Government are concerned it is no party question. If it is a party question, it has been made so on the other side of the House. An hon. member stated that it was a party question because of certain action by some members on this side when the hon. member for Oxley, Mr. Grimes, was addressing the House. The interruptions that occurred on that occasion arose out of no party feeling, but simply from a feeling of detestation and abhorrence of want of fair play in quoting evidence. The interruptions occurred because the hon. member misquoted and suppressed evidence; it was no party spirit, but simply a love of fair play which induced those interruptions. I say again, without fear of contradiction that this matter has not been made a party question. The Government have opposed the motion and do not intend to give us any support, so far as I can gather from the remarks made by the head of the Government. I wish now to say a few words with regard to what fell from the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan. The hon. member took exception to the employment of coloured labour, because he said the labourers were obtained by fraud and violence, using many more such epithets which I will not read, although I have them here in *Hansard*. He based his assertions and arguments on the statements made by a missionary. I have had a great deal of experience of missionaries in other countries beside this, and I am pretty competent I think, to judge of their character. I know many men among missionaries—noble, long-suffering men, who go out into the wilds of the country at great inconvenience to themselves, and do what they consider their duty, who are actuated by the same spirit as actuated Livingstone and Moffat, and who do noble work. But I know other missionaries, who, I am sorry to say, go into the work from a mere love of trade and gain—for what they can get out of it. I know many of this class, and I say the statements of such men ought not to be relied upon any more than the statements of ordinary men. I do not wish to say anything about the missionaries in the South Seas. But as the hon. member has brought before the House the conduct of a certain individual, the Rev. Mr. Paton, and read a letter which was written by that gentleman to the leader of the Opposition, I want to enlighten the House and the country as to who this gentleman is, and to show what other people think about him. For that purpose, I cannot do better than quote an article which the *Brisbane Courier* quoted from one of the Melbourne papers. I trust the House

will bear with me while I read the article, as it will give some idea as to the credibility of this man's evidence. The article says :—

"The Rev. Mr. Paton is a gentleman whose name is well known in this colony as one of the chief accusers of those engaged in the Polynesian trade. His connection with the South Sea missions has given weight to his false and reckless assertions, and there are many who have been led by him to believe that open and violent man-stealing is still practised by labour vessels, sailing from Queensland and elsewhere. Fortunately, Mr. Paton has been thoroughly exposed in the course of a controversy, in which he was foolish enough to engage in the columns of the Melbourne *Argus*, a journal which for many years has printed his statements, and relied on their accuracy. That journal, having found their reverend misleader out, has recently called attention to the proof that exists of his want of veracity. In December, 1881, Mr. Paton published a long letter in the *Argus*, which contained charges so grave, that Captain Bridge, of H.M.S. 'Espiegle,' was instructed by Sir Arthur Gordon to investigate them. Three of the principal charges, together with the official report on them, are printed in the *Argus*, and we reproduce them here.

"The first refers to the island of Erromanga :—

"MR. PATON'S CHARGE.

"That a Queensland vessel, with a Government agent on board, sent two boats on shore, that the men called out to a little boy to come to them; that the boy's father held the lad's arm and prevented him, and that the crews then opened fire and killed the natives."

That is the first charge made by Mr. Paton. Before reading the official report thereon, I would ask hon. members to consider these facts: first, that the commission appointed to inquire into these charges was appointed by Sir Arthur Gordon, who is a well-known Exeter Hall man, and would take very good care that he appointed either an impartial man, or else a man who was biased in his own favour; and, secondly, that the man who was intrusted with the duty of investigating the charges was a captain of one of Her Majesty's ships, and that it would be to his interest to do justice to all parties. This is the official report :—

"That these men wished to join a labour vessel but were prevented by the other natives; that on one of them attempting to reach a boat the natives opened fire, and struck the inner boat, whereupon the covering boat fired on the natives."

Then this is another case. Mr. Paton charged that—

"A labour vessel decoyed a Christian native teacher on board. Word was then sent to the young men and boys of the school that their teacher wanted to see them. So soon as 100 were collected the vessel sailed away."

This is the official report :—

"A native teacher left by a labour vessel, but he went voluntarily. He was not decoyed. Word was not sent to collect the scholars. None were entrapped. There was no such kidnapping incident."

The third incident is alleged to have occurred at Tanna. Mr. Paton said :—

"That two tribes that were fighting placed their women and children on a reef. That a labour vessel stole in, got the women and children into the boats and sailed away, despite the firing of the men and the pleading of the women."

Now the official report :—

"The Revs. Messrs. Watt and Neilson have been long on Tanna, and both say that they never heard of any such thing occurring on that island."

The extract goes on to say :—

"These charges and their refutation are published in the *Argus* now, because the reverend gentleman is again on the warpath, and claiming, by virtue of his sacred office, belief in his statements. One Melbourne contemporary says of him that he 'appears to combine enthusiasm in a good cause with a perfect genius for scandal-mongering, and the imputation of bad motives.'

"To most of our readers this will appear rather mild censure on an individual who, though a minister of the gospel, persists in spreading calumnies of which the falsehood has been demonstrated."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that will show that no reliance whatever is to be placed on the missionary, Mr. Paton, and that any statement which he has made, or hereafter may make, should be fully considered before it is believed.

Mr. JORDAN: How about Bishop Patteson and Commodore Wilson's evidence?

Mr. COWLEY: I will say something about that, but I hold now in my hand the report of the Hon. John Douglas, at British New Guinea, made in the year 1888. I will not go fully into it, because I believe hon. members have the report, and I should like them to read it for themselves. Certain charges have been made against the planters that when they get these men they ill-use them, and consequently there is great mortality among them. Now I have always said that, whatever has happened in years past, no such thing exists at this time, and that the Polynesians are well looked after, treated with every kindness, and have ample means of appealing against unjust treatment. I will not read Mr. Musgrave's report to the High Commissioner, because every hon. member can study it for himself, but will read one extract :—

"From the amended returns it would appear that out of a total number of 187 Polynesians of both sexes introduced from the Savage Islands, Loyalty Islands, etc., ninety succumbed to disease or the hostility of the natives. Of the latter twelve are stated to have been so massacred."

That is in New Guinea. He then goes on to say that the island of New Guinea is not at all unhealthy for whites, and he says further :—

"In contemplation of the preceding facts, the conclusion is irresistible that there must be some special features in the lives of the teachers, or defects in the system for their care and control, which have operated prejudicially."

And he gives a list occupying more than a column of those who died. Then there is an extract from the Rev. S. Macfarlane's letter :—

"Although our mission is still young, we have lost no less than twenty-one of our number—seventeen by the diseases of the climate, and four by the clubs of the savages."

Then we go on still further and find a letter from Mr. Henry M. Chester. In a report to the Hon. John Douglas he says :—

"It is melancholy to think of the number of good men who have been sacrificed since the commencement of the New Guinea mission. These poor fellows were brought from their pleasant island homes in a delightful climate, dropped here and there along an unhealthy coast, and left to their fate until it was convenient for the 'Ellengowan' to visit them."

I could give other quotations to show that there is great mortality amongst the South Sea Islanders even when they are in the hands of missionaries, and that the missionaries themselves are open to the charge, according to the evidence of unprejudiced officers, of neglecting the men. So that we must be very careful in what we accept from the missionaries on this point. Everyone who knows anything about the Polynesians knows that they have not the same constitutions as English people have. If we know anything about them at all it is that they die just as fast in the Islands as they do in Queensland, and that they even come to Queensland for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment. I know from my own knowledge, extending over a series of years, that many men come from the South Sea Islands to be treated by our white doctors, and we know this much, that we are doing a great act of charity and kindness in bringing them here and away from the islands, where they are subject to be killed at any time. By bringing them on to the plantations, the men from the various islands live in peace and harmony, and when they go back to their islands the spirit which is engendered in them on the plantations is carried with them there. The

spirit does not die, and I have been told by those who know that there is less enmity amongst the islanders who have been on the plantations than there is amongst those who have not been here. They grow to know each other; their tribal differences disappear, and they live in security and peace with each other. I would call attention to another matter. What do the people in our own country say—the ministers of all denominations in our midst? I would refer to one man who has lived amongst the people of North Queensland—the Bishop of North Queensland. He has travelled through the whole North, not excepting the plantations. He has been among the islanders for days at a time, inspected their houses and food, and seen how they were treated. I know that his opinion is that those people are well looked after, and are benefited by being brought to this country. There is no doubt that there has not been any complaint from any minister of the gospel of any denomination whatever, who has made it his duty to go among the islanders and see the way in which they are treated. There is also one other question which I would refer to briefly. That is the remarks of the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow. He seems to be actuated by the most intense hatred towards any man with a black skin.

Mr. BARLOW: No.

Mr. COWLEY: I would ask whether this Parliament of Queensland should allow itself to be actuated by any feeling of that description? The hon. member seems to have an intense hatred of any man with a black skin, but I know of men with black skins who have as white hearts as any man in this country.

Mr. BARLOW: Very likely; in their own country.

Mr. COWLEY: I say not only in their own country, but in this country too. I know of a case that occurred on one of the Northern rivers where a Polynesian who had been in the country for many years was engaged with some timber-getters. There were four timber-getters in the camp, at sunset they went to bathe in the river, the master, three others, and the kanaka. The master was seized by an alligator, and the three white men ran as hard as they could out of the water and left him to his fate. What did the kanaka do? He went into the river with an axe and fought the alligator and rescued his master. In doing so his shoulder was lacerated to a terrible extent, and for months he lay helpless in the hospital, and the white man whose life he had saved at the risk of his own, never went near him. Why should we have an abhorrence of men of this description? That is a well authenticated instance. The white men ran and left their master to his fate, whilst the despised "nigger," as he is called, went to the rescue and saved him, and all the reward he got was that he was left in the hospital and the master whose life he saved never went near him, and when he came out of the hospital his white master refused to employ him because he could not do a day's work.

Mr. BARLOW: What a master!

Mr. COWLEY: I can give the hon. member another instance that occurred near where I live. A boat in which there were two white men and a kanaka was upset, and the kanaka at the risk of his own life supported one of the white men during three long hours of a tempestuous night, and ultimately saved him, though the other white man was drowned. Because the white men could not swim and the kanaka could, he supported him for three hours in torrents of rain and with a heavy wind, and saved his life; and these men are to be despised because they

are black! I say that any man who despises them is more worthy of our detestation and abhorrence than the foulest creature that ever stepped. I would also draw the attention of the House to an act that has gone forth, to the credit of those who did it, through the length and breadth of the land, and that is the action of the Samoans the other day. They were South Sea Islanders who did this noble action towards their enemies. Everyone knows of it, and I need not repeat it. It is well known to members of this House, and to the world at large, and I say that the action of those people is worthy of our admiration and emulation, and instead of despising such people we should do what we can to aid them. I say we shall not suffer by contact or assimilating with men like these. The only excuse the hon. member for Ipswich gave for his arguments was that they are not fit to marry our daughters. Here we have a new qualification for the electors of this colony. How many of the electors of this colony are fit to marry our daughters? That is not an argument at all. Would the hon. gentleman give his daughter's hand in marriage to thousands of the electors of the city of Brisbane? I know he would not.

Mr. BARLOW: He has not got a daughter to give.

Mr. COWLEY: I only wish to add a few words on another feature of the debate. I must express my very great disappointment at the action of the Government in this matter. Only three members of the Government have spoken on this very important question. One of them, the Minister for Lands has, as he always has done, advocated an extension of the Polynesian Labourers Act. The Hon. Premier says he will have none of it, and he will have none of cheap European labour, and he has not said what he will do for us. I say we have not been fairly treated in this matter, and the country has not been fairly treated in this matter. I say that the country expects that the Premier and his colleagues will take a statesmanlike view of this question and try during the recess to formulate some scheme to save this industry to the country, and to afford the thousands now employed in it a means of earning their livelihood. We have one member of the Government saying, "We won't allow you to bring in cheap white labour," and another advising us to do so. What are we to do under the circumstances? It is all very well to say that we have not done our best to get white labour from Europe, but I say we have.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. COWLEY: I say we have, and we are willing to do it now. We are willing to accept that labour if we can get it; but I say that so surely as white labourers do come here, so surely will there be a cry raised against them.

Mr. BARLOW: The Government have taken a black labour man on board the Ministerial ship.

Mr. COWLEY: I should like to speak at much greater length upon this subject, as it is of immense importance to the country, and of the greatest importance to the Northern portion of the country. I say that the Northern people who are interested should be allowed a voice in the settlement of this question; and if you cannot give us black labour give us local option, by which the districts most concerned may be able to say whether they will have it or not. We will accept that; but there are other things we will accept besides black labour. We will accept a reciprocal treaty with a federated Australia. There are several ways in which to assist us, and this House in dealing with the subject should not be actuated by any paltry spirit,

or by the consideration that these men's skins are black and not white like ours. I ask hon. members rather to take into consideration the thousands of men employed in and dependent upon this industry, and to do their very best to support us.

The HON. C. POWERS said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the question is put I would like to call attention to the fact that twice the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, has thrown out insinuations with respect to my having joined the Ministry though I advocated the continuation of Polynesian labour. In order to meet those insinuations, I will quote from the speech to which the hon. member refers. I considered that the continuance of this labour was necessary; but this is what I said:—

"The Ministry did quite right. I do not blame them. If I had been in the Ministry, even holding the views I now hold, I believe I should have done the same thing. I say the country must declare to this Ministry, or to any party in power, that it wants a change of policy on the coloured labour question before the Ministry can take any other action than they have done."

I repeat that now.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: A man who holds those views should not be in Parliament at all, much less a member of the Government.

The HON. C. POWERS: It is for my constituents to say whether I should be in Parliament or not. I say that until the country declares a wish for a change of policy on this question, the Ministry are not justified in changing it. I said that when I sat on the Government cross-benches, and I say it now, and so long as there is no declaration by this country for such a change of policy, I still hold that the Ministry are right in their action, and, as one of the Ministry, I shall support this opposition to coloured labour until the country declares for a change of policy upon it.

Mr. BARLOW: You will support what you do not believe in.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition benches: Divide, divide!

Question—That the words "otherwise than by an extension of the Polynesian Labourers Act for five years," be added to the amendment—put and negatived.

Question—That the words "not involving a re-opening of the coloured labour question" be inserted after the word "means" in the original motion—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 25.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Rutledge, Drake, Hodgkinson, Jordan, McMaster, Barlow, Salkeld, Wimble, Morgan, Annear, Grimes, Stephens, Groom, Macfarlane, Smyth, Buckland, Mellor, Sayers, Glassey, Isambert, Unmack, Tozer, Hunter, and Foxton.

NOES, 31.

Messrs. Nelson, Powers, Donaldson, Morehead, Black, Pattison, Watson, Paul, Macrossan, Plunkett, North, Gannon, Hamilton, O'Connell, Adams, Smith, Cowley, Palmer, G. H. Jones, Dalrymple, Jessop, Luya, Agnew, Dunsmure, Lissner, Callan, Crombie, Campbell, Perkins, O'Sullivan, and Stevenson.

Question resolved in the negative.

Original question put.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it must be rather astonishing—

The SPEAKER: I shall resume the chair—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government benches: No, no! Divide! Government business comes on after tea.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has a right to speak.

Mr. GLASSEY: I was remarking, Mr. Speaker,—

The SPEAKER: I shall resume the chair at 7 o'clock.

At 7 o'clock.

The SPEAKER said: In compliance with the Sessional Order, the House will now proceed with Government business.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. W. Pattison), the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee of the Whole to further consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

HARBOURS, LIGHTHOUSES, AND PILOTS.

The COLONIAL TREASURER in moving that £35,103 be granted for 1889-90 for harbours, lighthouses, and pilots, said the vote was exactly £2,000 in excess of the vote for last year and the preceding year. There were a few small increases in salary, but the increase was mainly brought about by the amount of £1,000 being set down for snagging Northern rivers, £500 for repairs to the steamer "Vigilant," at Normanton, and £500 for repairs to the schooner "Enid," at Gladstone. The latter was in a very unsound state—in fact, she was unseaworthy. It was absolutely necessary that both those vessels should be repaired.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he understood there were some new lighthouses being started. Would the hon. gentleman inform the Committee what had been done, or what was proposed to be done in that respect? He had seen something about a new lighthouse in the Straits.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said several ships had been wrecked in the Straits, and it was proposed to erect a lighthouse there. The Booby Island lighthouse was already in operation. Lighthouses properly came on in the next vote, the one under discussion being for harbours, pilots, and boatmen.

Mr. UNMACK said he wished to know if it was intended to make any alterations with reference to the system of having double boats' crews at several ports, where the Customs Department and the Harbours Department had a boat's crew each? That seemed to him to be quite unnecessary. Was it the intention of the Colonial Treasurer to economise in that direction?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was his intention to economise as far as he could. There were not many ports at which there was a double boat service; but if the Portmaster showed him that it could be done without at any place, he would dispense with one of them. Otherwise, he would not do anything to disarrange a well-conducted service. It had already been represented to him by a Northern member that a double service at one of the ports was unnecessary. He was now inquiring into the matter, and if it could be done without hampering the efficiency of the service, it would be done, and at other ports as well.

Mr. UNMACK asked if it was correct that there was about to be a vacancy in the office of harbour master by the retirement of Captain Wyborn?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that Captain Wyborn had not yet sent in his resignation; but as Captain Wyborn was a gentleman well up in years—in his 74th year—it was deemed advisable that he should make way for a younger man. Captain Wyborn was a valuable officer, and was carrying out his duties fairly well. At the same time he had arrived at such an age that it would be as well for him to retire,

Mr. GLASSEY said he noticed that three boatmen at Thursday Island were receiving £120 a year each, while the same number at Normanston were receiving only £108 each. It must be apparent that the cost of living at Normanston was at least as great as at Thursday Island, but perhaps the men at Normanston were receiving sustenance allowance in addition to their salaries.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was informed that the men at Normanston received 2s. a day sustenance allowance. That accounted for the difference. He believed the Works Department allowed 2s. 3d. a day.

Mr. GLASSEY said that would not account for the difference, because it was £12. It seemed to him that the men at Normanston should be as well, if not better, paid than those at Thursday Island.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said sustenance was allowed in one case and not in the other. That was how the difference arose.

Mr. SMYTH said if Captain Wyborn resigned he hoped the position would be given to one of the coastal captains who were in the habit of navigating our rivers, and who would be much preferable to a deep-sea captain. There were many of them who were deserving of the post.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he stated very clearly the other day that the claims of the coastal captains would be considered as well as the claims of those officers who were already in the service. It was only fair to state that the selection would be made from them, and possibly preference would be given to those who were already in the service, who had fair claims to promotion.

Mr. TOZER said he would like to know on what rivers it was proposed to expend the £1,000 put down for "Snagging Northern rivers"?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it would be expended wherever it might be found necessary. The rivers he could mention at present were the Russell, the Mulgrave, the Johnstone, and the Murray. A party was now working in the Murray.

Mr. GRIMES said, in the event of Captain Wyborn retiring, would he get a pension under the Civil Service Act, or from any other source?

The PREMIER said he would get a pension under the Act of 1863, after thirty years' service.

Mr. COWLEY said he was glad to hear that some money was to be expended in snagging Northern rivers, and he trusted the Herbert would not be overlooked.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That is one.

Mr. COWLEY said there was a large amount of traffic on that river, and punts were often injured by the snags coming down. He wished also to draw attention to the fact that there was a pilot, a coxswain, and boatman at Cardwell. Those men were really not wanted there, they had really no work to do, and he would suggest that they should be removed. He did not see why they should be kept there simply because they had been there for years, when they had nothing to do. At Dungeness there was plenty of work; the men there were well occupied, but he considered keeping those men at Cardwell an unnecessary expense that the country should not be put to.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had already stated that the hon. member had mentioned that matter to him a few days ago; and he was rather surprised to hear there was no work for those men. The matter would be inquired into, and if they were not necessary, they would not be retained there.

Mr. UNMACK said he wished to direct attention to an inequality connected with the officers of the "Pippo," which he thought was unique in the history of shipping; that was, that the master was paid a smaller salary than the engineer. The same thing occurred in the loan vote for the officers of the barges. He would like to know the reason for that. A captain had always to have a master's certificate, and, so far as his knowledge went, always received more pay than an engineer. He knew the same thing had been going on for some time; perhaps attention had not been called to it, but it should be done away with, because it was likely to lead to a great deal of insubordination, inasmuch as the engineer considered himself a better man than the master.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said in the navigation of the vessel the master was supreme, but it was possible in some cases that the engineer might be a very much superior man to the captain. He had submitted the estimate in the same form in which it had been submitted during the last two years. No alteration had been suggested.

Mr. UNMACK said he could not possibly admit that the engineer of a vessel was a superior man to the captain. The captain was responsible for the safety of the ship, and if any accident happened, his certificate would be withdrawn and not the engineer's. He contended that the man who navigated the vessel and was responsible for her safety, was the one who should be best paid; and he trusted that that inequality would be remedied in the future.

The PREMIER said he would like to know who it was that saved H.M.S. "Calliope" in the celebrated gale that took place not long since in the South Seas. It was the engineer—that was proved by the fact that the engineer was the only man who had been promoted—made engineer of the fleet. It was admitted by the captain that the safety of the ship was due, under Providence, to the admirable way in which the engineer did his duty. That was a case in point.

Mr. UNMACK said it was not a case in point. The captain of the "Calliope" also received the commendation of the Admiralty for his conduct on that occasion, and it was universally admitted that had it not been for the captain's presence of mind, the ship would not have been saved. The engineer simply did his duty, the same as he hoped every British seaman would under similar circumstances. He believed the same thing would happen in the "Pippo" if anything went wrong. The engineer of the "Calliope" could do nothing without the captain's orders, any more than the engineer of the "Pippo" could act without orders. If the captain ordered the engineer to go half speed, or slow, or full speed, and the ship ran ashore, who was held responsible? Why, the captain, not the engineer.

Mr. MURPHY said the master of the "Pippo" did not hold a sea-going certificate; he had only got a license to navigate up and down the river, and that made all the difference. No doubt it would be an anomalous thing if the master held a certificate, and the engineer received higher pay than he did.

Mr. UNMACK said he was afraid the hon. member for Barcoo was not speaking from a correct knowledge of the case. He (Mr. Unmack) did not know who the master of the "Pippo" was, but he was informed on the very best authority that that officer and the masters of the barges had to produce captains' certificates before they were engaged by the Government. If the hon. member for Barcoo had a personal

knowledge of the master of the "Pippo," he would give the hon. member best as far as that particular matter was concerned.

Mr. MURPHY said the master of the "Pippo" did not hold a captain's certificate. He had that from a very much better authority than the idle rumour mentioned by the hon. member for Toowong.

Mr. LUYA said he could say from experience that on small coasting steamers where captains held masters' certificates the engineer received the higher pay. The engineer held a very different certificate from that of the masters, and had to pass a very different examination. As far as the safety of the vessel was concerned, if anything went wrong in the engineer's department the captain was perfectly helpless.

Mr. McMASTER said the engineer no doubt passed a very different examination from that which the captain was required to undergo, but if the captain was not a skilful man, how was he to navigate the vessel? When the ship was in danger the engineer was at his post down below, and it was the captain who had to navigate the vessel; if he could not do so, the engineer would be perfectly helpless. A captain must pass a certain examination before the Government would give him charge of a vessel, and if the captain of the "Pippo"—he (Mr. McMaster) did not know that officer—held a sea-going certificate and chose to take an inferior situation and work a vessel running up and down the river, and about Moreton Bay, that was his loss; but being responsible for the safety of the vessel, he certainly ought to receive higher pay than the engineer.

Mr. GANNON said he certainly thought that the man who was in charge of a vessel, and responsible for her safety, ought to receive more than the engineer who had to obey his commands. He thought that the pay, both of the captains and engineers, was very small.

Mr. WATSON said both captains and engineers had to serve apprenticeships, and the engineers were no doubt well qualified to take a steamer along so long as the captain piloted her clear of the rocks. He had travelled in many parts of the world, but had never before heard of a captain, even on a small coasting steamer, receiving lower pay than the engineer. If the engine broke down, or anything went wrong with the machinery, the captain had to clap on sail and still navigate the vessel. He observed that the masters of the "Advance" and the "Laura" also received £150 each, while the engineers on those vessels received £240 each. The disparity there was certainly too great, and he hoped it would be remedied.

Mr. AGNEW said he was glad that matter had been brought forward, as he had intended referring to it himself, having some months ago received a long complaint about it, and he had mentioned the subject to the Minister for Mines and Works, under the impression that it belonged to his department. It seemed to him to be putting things upside down to give a man in charge of a ship less pay than another man who had to obey his instructions. The officer in command ought certainly to receive the higher wages.

Mr. GRIMES said he noticed that the captain of the "Pippo" received only £30 more than the fireman, who was not supposed to be a skilful man, and who had to pass no examination.

Mr. LUYA said if the hon. member for Oxley knew what a fireman had to do, he would know that the fireman earned his money. A great deal of the success of all steamers depended upon the skill of the fireman, and although it seemed a very simple matter, it was not every-

body who could go on board a steamer and fire up properly. It required very great art to do it well, and some firemen were more skilful than others.

Mr. GRIMES said he was quite well aware of the duties of firemen, but he maintained that they had to pass no examination, whilst the captains had to pass examinations.

Mr. McMASTER said he did not contend that the engineer's pay was too great, but that the captain was paid too little. The captain ought to have equally as much as the engineer.

Mr. GLASSEY said hon. members did not wish to reflect upon the Colonial Treasurer's action, but pointed the matter out in order that it might receive attention, and the apparent anomaly be rectified. On looking over the Estimates last year, he thought there must be something wrong, and that there must be a reason for the disparity. He quite agreed that the man who had the safety of the ship and the lives of those on board to look after should receive a salary equal to that paid to the engineer. Only the other evening they discovered that a messenger in one of the Government departments received a salary of £200 a year, whilst here they found a skilled man, the captain of a vessel, receiving only £150 a year. He hoped that the anomaly would be rectified, and that those men would be placed in their proper position.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it could not be contended that the engineers were overpaid, and he could only be guided by the pay given to other captains on the coast. He believed many of the captains on the boats travelling to the North were in receipt of salaries very little in excess of the sum put down. He believed that £15 a month was the usual pay for a number of the captains on the coasting steamers, and although they did not remain at that, yet £25 a month was about the highest salary paid. The Government could therefore not be blamed for paying what other people paid. If they put down increases he could understand the Committee finding fault, but he had followed the custom of the past, and had seen no reason to depart from it. The working head of the department was the Portmaster, and he was not a gentleman who would willingly do an injustice. He had got a really first-class staff around him—the state of the coast, which was about the best lighted of any Australian coast, showed that. Captain Heath had fixed such salaries as the men were satisfied with.

Mr. UNMACK: No; they are not.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said no remonstrance had been made to him, and the estimate having been framed on that of the last two years, he assumed that no remonstrance had been made. If it could be shown that those men were underpaid, then he supposed the matter would have to be remedied. He would promise to inquire into the subject, and consult Captain Heath.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said he did not know anything about the merits of the case, but on the face of it, it seemed a strange transaction. The captain had control of the ship, and the engineer was his servant. It was somewhat strange, therefore, that the engineer should receive the higher pay. There must be some reason for it which the Colonial Treasurer could give the Committee. He thought the captain's pay should be increased or the engineer's reduced.

Mr. WATSON said if they wished those steamers to be efficiently worked they must put the captain at the head, otherwise the engineer could defy the captain, and do as he pleased.

As to the efficiency of the Port and Harbour Department, to which the Colonial Treasurer had referred, he could say something. He knew of a man who had been twenty-eight years in the service, whose wages were stopped as soon as he fell sick. On hearing of that he (Mr. Watson) immediately went to the Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith, and mentioned the matter to him. The hon. gentleman wrote to the department, and asked if there was anything against the man, who had been an honest and faithful servant for so long, and he then ordered the wages to be paid until the man died. The high officers of the department looked after their own salaries, but they were not so careful of the interests of the working men.

Mr. LUYA said the engineers must have passed examinations and received certificates which would enable them to take charge of the machinery of large sea-going steamers, and that was why they got higher pay than the captains, who were not able to take charge of vessels of the same class.

Mr. UNMACK said the master of the pilot vessel "Advance" had to take that vessel out to sea, yet he only received £150 a year, whereas the engineer received £240 a year. How could the hon. member for South Brisbane justify that? The hon. member for Cambooya ought to be able to inform the Committee as to who was considered to be in charge of a vessel. That hon. member had been wrecked once or twice, and he ought to know whether the blame was put on the engineers or on the captain when anything went wrong.

The PREMIER said there were individuals who thought they had a perfect knowledge of everything under the sun. He (the Premier) preferred to trust to the opinion of Captain Heath, but the hon. member for Toowong seemed to think he knew more than that officer.

Mr. UNMACK: Nothing of the sort.

The PREMIER said that otherwise the hon. gentleman's remarks tended to nothing.

Mr. UNMACK: I know what is the practice in shipping.

The PREMIER said that in that respect he thought he knew as much as the hon. member, yet he preferred to take the opinion of Captain Heath, who was generally looked upon as one of the most efficient portmasters in Australia.

Mr. McMASTER said that on the vessel in which he came to Australia there was a captain serving before the mast. He was capable of navigating a ship anywhere—he lost a vessel on one occasion, he believed—yet he received no more when serving before the mast than any other able seaman. Therefore, it was no argument to say that because an engineer had passed an examination he should get more pay than the captain. He did not contend that the engineer received too much, but he thought the captain should, at least, be placed on an equal footing with the engineer, as far as wages were concerned.

Mr. STEPHENS said he noticed by the schedule that there was no captain for the "Pippo." There was a coxswain who got the same wages as the fireman, but less than the engineer. Would the Colonial Treasurer inform the Committee whether the coxswain was in charge of the boat, and which was correct, the schedule or the Estimate?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the schedule only dealt with people who held more than one office.

Mr. STEPHENS said that in the schedule there were five officers of the "Pippo," and in the Estimates there were five also. According to the schedule Mr. Luxton was the coxswain. Who was the captain?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the coxswain acted as captain. He was licensed to act as captain, though he had no certificate; and therefore he appeared in the schedule as a coxswain. Perhaps that would explain the difference in salary between him and the engineer.

Mr. UNMACK said that was no explanation. The estimate said the master received £150 a year, but the schedule said that the coxswain, who acted as master, received £120 a year. One must be wrong.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought the estimate was right. He could not account for the difference, and he thought there must be a misprint. The estimate corresponded with the estimate of last year, and he thought it must be right.

Mr. FOXTON said it seemed to him that the estimate was wrong, and that the Committee were asked to vote £150 for a man who only got £120.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he might explain that the port officer stated that the entry in the schedule was a misprint, and that might be seen from the fact that in last year's Estimates the amount was exactly the same as in the Estimates for the present year.

Mr. STEPHENS said that was all he wanted to know. The schedule would not compare with the Estimates, and he wished to know which was right. At the same time he thought the officer in charge of the vessel should, at least, get as much salary as another officer on board, and who must be under him.

Mr. WATSON said he would ask the Colonial Treasurer if the Committee were to understand that those men would be taken into favourable consideration next year.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had said nothing about next year. The harbour-master, he had said, would see if any amendments were required.

Mr. FOXTON said he did not catch all the Colonial Treasurer had said in moving the vote. There were three clerks set down, one at £175, one at £150, and one at £100, and there was an increase in the total vote for them of £40. He would like to know which of the three clerks had had his salary increased, or whether all three participated in the increase on the total vote. Then there was an increase of £20 for the coxswain and storekeeper, and he would like that explained also.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there was an increase of £15 to Mr. Pethebridge, the clerk in the Brisbane office, who also acted as secretary to the Marine Board. There was an increase to Creighton, another clerk, of £25, and an increase to Wade, the coxswain and storekeeper, of £20. There was an increase on the vote of £60. In Moreton Bay there was an increase from £230 to £240 for a pilot to bring up the salary to the regular pilot's salary. That was promised last year, and by an accident it did not appear on the Estimates. There was an increase to a clerk in Maryborough, from £100 to £120; in Rockhampton there was an increase of £20 to a clerk, and an increase from £230 to £240 for a pilot to equalise the salary with that paid to other pilots. That was an explanation of the increases, and he had explained some little reductions that had been made.

Mr. GRIMES said he would ask the hon. gentleman whether there was any sum at the disposal of the department for snagging the Southern rivers? He saw there was a vote for Northern rivers, and he would be glad to learn that something was provided for snagging the Southern rivers also.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman was aware that there had been a dredge at work in the Southern rivers, and if any of them required snagging they would be attended to. The vote of £1,000, he thought, would be sufficient to spare a moderate sum if it was required. The rivers of the North had not, so far, been attended to, and it was absolutely necessary that something should be done to them. Any obstruction in the Southern rivers brought under his notice would receive attention.

Mr. GRIMES said he would call the hon. gentleman's attention to the state of the Coomera River, which was at present in a shocking state with snags.

Mr. PLUNKETT: The Colonial Treasurer's attention has already been called to that.

Mr. GRIMES said that he wished to impress the matter upon the attention of the Colonial Treasurer. Not long ago a cutter got across a log in that river; she was balanced on the log, and the whole of the cargo had to be shifted, lest she should break her back. It was certainly not a proper thing to leave a river, on which there was a fair amount of traffic, in such a state as that.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if the hon. member called the attention of the department to a matter of that kind, it would be attended to. It was not possible for the department to know that such obstructions existed until they were brought under their notice. The matter referred to by the hon. member would receive attention at an early date.

Mr. UNMACK said he wished again to refer to the boatmen at Bowen. He would like to know what there was for a boat's crew to do at Bowen. The boat's crew there consisted of three men and a coxswain, and he believed that the number of vessels that had to be attended to at Bowen was something like thirteen. Those men lived in a cottage alongside the jetty, and about all they had to do was to keep their boat clean, and go fishing to pass the time as they best could. At the same time he was correct, he believed, in saying that the Customs authorities had frequently to pay wages to persons outside the department to attend to necessary duties on the jetty. He was quite sure that the time of the boat's crew might be turned to better advantage, so far as the revenue was concerned, if they were made to do other work than painting and looking after their boat. He might appear persistent in speaking again upon the point, but possibly the Colonial Treasurer had not an intimate knowledge of all those details. He did not think he was called upon to apologise for mentioning the matter, as he felt it might do good, and the department might save money if the boat's crew at Bowen were found something to do.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he scarcely thought it was necessary for the hon. member, or any other hon. member, to apologise. It was the privilege and the duty, he took it, of members of the Committee to inquire closely into all the questions submitted to them, and he felt obliged to hon. members for bringing such information under his notice. As the hon. member had fairly and properly said, it was not possible for any Colonial Treasurer to know the details connected with the whole of the ports of the colony, and whether the boatmen stationed at them were fully occupied or not. He

should imagine that the boatmen at Bowen must have a good deal to do occasionally, though at a slow place like Bowen their time might not be fully occupied. They might not be fully occupied more than one day in the week, but it was necessary to have a sufficient crew to man the boat. There were three boatmen, a coxswain, and a pilot, and that was certainly not a great number of men to have stationed there. A reduction had been made at Cardwell. Last year there had been a coxswain and two boatmen, and one boatman's services had been dispensed with, reducing the vote by £108.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he might inform the hon. member for Toowoong that the boatmen at Bowen had to visit the Dent Island lighthouse, and latterly they had had additional work put upon them. They had to attend to the buoys and beacons, and had to attend upon all the mail steamers, so that they had quite enough to do.

Mr. BUCKLAND said there was a sum of £1,000 put down for snagging the Northern rivers. He wished to call the attention of the Colonial Treasurer to what was going on in Bulimba Creek. The temporary structure across the creek in connection with the construction of the railway bridge was now being removed, and the piles were being cut off at low-water mark. The consequence was that the piles were left in such a condition that they were a source of great danger to the punts which were continually passing up and down the creek. Only a few days previously a punt containing 30,000 bricks had been sunk by striking against one of those piles, and he hoped the hon. gentleman would give instructions to the contractor to have the piles removed altogether.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was a difficult matter to deal with. Captain Heath had brought under his notice a short time previously the fact that a vessel was lying stranded in the Brisbane River, but he very much doubted whether the Government had the power to order the supposed owners to remove that vessel. He had referred the question to the Minister of Justice, but he had not received the opinion of that hon. gentleman. He would certainly not permit the contractor to block up the creek if the Government had the power to prevent it.

Mr. BUCKLAND said that in the case he had referred to the cargo had been removed and the punt raised, so that the punt was not an obstruction in the creek. The punt had sunk through striking against one of the piles which had been cut off just above the low-water mark. The danger still existed.

Question put and passed.

LIGHTHOUSES.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £24,960 be granted for lighthouses and general lighthouse contingencies. There was one new lighthouse in the vote, that in Great Sandy Island Strait, making an increase of £198. In the vote for general lighthouse contingencies there were considerable alterations. Last year the sum of £3,500 appeared on the Estimates for the Booby Island lighthouse, but considerable delay in the erection of that lighthouse had arisen in consequence of three contractors failing to carry out their contracts. The work was now let to Messrs Rooney Brothers, of Townsville, and they were executing the work in a satisfactory manner. Last year the sum set down for oil, stores, and incidentals was £6,000, whilst for the present year he was asking for an increase in that amount of £550. Then there was the sum of £1,200 for a lightship at the Upper Flats in the Fitzroy River. The vessel

at present there was very old, and it was a question whether she would not sink. She was old when first placed there, and, like everything else, she had not improved with age. The sum of £3,500 was put down also for a relieving lightship to relieve the various lightships in the Straits; and there was also a very necessary vote of £200 for repairs to cottages. Those items accounted for the increase in the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

POWDER MAGAZINES.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £996 be granted for powder magazines. The vote was exactly the same as last year.

Mr. ANNEAR said he wished to bring under the notice of the Colonial Treasurer a new regulation with regard to the removal of explosives from magazines. Seven or eight months ago anyone could remove a ton or 30 cwt. at one time, but lately he had been very much surprised to find that not more than 8 cwt. could be removed at one time. Hon. members would see that that would add largely to the cost. The Railway Department gave notice every time an explosive train was going to leave, and in order to obtain one ton of explosives three drays had to be sent to the magazine to bring that ton of powder or other explosive to town. To cart 8 cwt. cost 12s., and to cart 24 cwt., which was considered a fair load, cost 12s. He did not see any sense in that. He was told it was done under the Navigation Act, although he failed to see what the Navigation Act had to do with the roads outside of Brisbane. Explosives could only be removed from the powder magazine at 6 in the morning, and must be discharged out of the dray before 8 o'clock. There was no greater danger in bringing a ton into the town than in bringing 8 cwt. No accident had ever occurred, nor had any explosion taken place. It was a vexatious condition, and at the same time a costly one. It put an additional cost of 24s. a ton on explosives. No doubt the officers of the department were only carrying out their duty, but it was very harassing all the same. If a man wanted to send away a ton of explosives and only sent one cart for it, it was impossible to send for the second instalment before the explosives train had gone, and it often happened that four weeks elapsed before another explosives train was despatched from Brisbane.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that according to the law no vehicle could come into a town carrying a larger quantity of explosives than 8 cwt. That appeared rather strange, for in his opinion there was no more danger in carrying a ton of explosives than in carrying 8 cwt. Still, such was the law, and they had to administer the law as it stood. Even 8 cwt. of explosives was a large quantity to remove at one time. In the large mine he was connected with it was not considered a small quantity. No alteration in the amount to be carried could be made without there being first an alteration in the law.

Mr. SMYTH said he noticed that the salaries of the powder magazine keepers ranged from £200 to £110. The keepers of the magazines at Gympie and Charters Towers only got £100 each, and he trusted that when the Mines Estimates came on, the Minister in charge of that department would favourably consider the claims of those two officers to an increase.

Mr. SAYERS asked what law it was that provided that only 8 cwt. of explosives should be carried by a dray?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The Navigation Act.

Mr. SAYERS said it was an absurd law, which created a certain amount of hardship and expense, and one which ought to be altered. If an explosion took place, the result would be exactly the same if 500 tons or only 8 cwt. exploded.

Mr. GANNON said he trusted the law would not be altered. He represented a constituency in which the principal powder magazine in the colony was situated, and he did not want to see his constituency wiped out of existence. He hoped the quantity to be removed by drays would be kept as small as possible. He would rather see it 5 cwt. than 8 cwt.

Mr. ANNEAR said there was as much danger in carrying explosives by train as by road in a dray, and yet if a man took twenty dray loads to the train it would carry them all. Last session while passing the new tariff it was decided, in order to encourage the mining industry, that there should be no duty on explosives. By that absurd regulation it was being taxed at the rate of 24s. a ton.

Mr. McMASTER said he understood it was the intention of the Government to remove the powder magazine from Eagle Farm. He supposed it would be taken further afield, and that would still further increase the expense of cartage unless drays were allowed to carry more than 8 cwt.

Mr. WATSON said the hon. member for Toombul need not be frightened about his constituency; it stood on a very firm foundation. Only eighteen months ago a large quantity of dynamite exploded there, and Toombul still stood where it did.

Mr. STEPHENS said it seemed strange that only 8 cwt. of explosives could be sent from Eagle Farm to Brisbane by dray, while 10 tons could be sent by train through Toowoong and other populous places. He did not understand the Navigation Act applying to roads and not to railways. It seemed an absurdity. If the Navigation Act had force on the roads in the city, where only 8 cwt. of explosives could be carried, it should also have force on the railways on which 10 tons or more could be carried. If 24 cwt. were being sent to the station it would involve three journeys by dray, and therefore there would be three times during the same day a risk of being blown up; whereas if it could be all taken in one load there would only be one such risk incurred.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said hon. members should understand that the railways were not under the Treasurer's Department. He could not possibly account for what the Railway Department did. Hon. members would be able to extract any information they wanted on those matters from his hon. colleague, the Minister for Railways, when his Estimates came on. As long as the law stood as it did it must be administered.

Mr. STEPHENS said he would like to know if only 8 cwt. of dynamite could be taken in a dray, and 10 tons could be taken in a train? If a train could take 10 tons, surely a dray could take 1 ton?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not know what quantity trains took, but it seemed to him that there would be no more danger in a train taking 10 tons than in taking 8 cwt.

Mr. McMASTER said he would like an answer to his question as to whether it was intended to remove the powder magazine from Eagle Farm, and if so, where it was likely to be put? A permanent railway survey had been

made to that place; therefore it would be as well to know whether the magazine was to be removed or not.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was not aware whether the powder magazine would be removed at all. The matter would be considered, and when a conclusion had been arrived at the House would be informed of the exact locality where it would be placed if it was to be removed. Possibly the Government might have to buy a piece of land for it, therefore it would not be wise to disclose the locality, because it might result in increasing the value of the land. He could give no further information on the subject.

Mr. ANNEAR said he understood the Navigation Act had been in existence for the last ten years, but it had never been acted upon before. No harm had occurred in the past, before it was acted upon, and no complaints had been made.

Mr. SMYTH said the great danger of explosives, such as dynamite, was keeping them too long in the magazine. The department should see that no explosives were kept there beyond a certain time. The great danger of keeping dynamite too long was that it crystallised.

Question put and passed.

FISHERIES.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that £1,250 be granted for salaries and contingencies in connection with fisheries. There was a substantial increase on the vote passed last year, brought about by the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent as Commissioner of Fisheries. That accounted for £600, and there was a further increase of £200 in "contingencies," the greater part of which would be required by Mr. Saville-Kent in carrying out his duties. He had the pleasure the other day of laying before hon. members the second progress report received from that gentleman, showing the work he had done and was doing; and he was sure hon. members who had perused those reports would agree with him that they disclosed a very satisfactory state of affairs, and showed that the appointment was a very wise one to make. Mr. Saville-Kent showed by his reports that they would derive a very large revenue from their fisheries. Already their oyster fisheries were producing fairly good results, and he was satisfied that under the management of Mr. Saville-Kent those fisheries, as well as the pearl-shell fisheries, would produce a very considerable increase in the revenue.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: What are the terms of his engagement?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was engaged for three years. It was thought that that would be a sufficient time to fix as an experiment, and he was certain that the appointment was a prudent one—entirely for the benefit of the colony. If desirable the term could be extended at the expiration of the three years, but it would be time enough to do that next year or the year after, when hon. members would have more information before them. So far, the results had been most satisfactory. The report from Captain Boulton, at Maryborough, showed that the oyster fisheries there were yielding considerably increased revenue. In 1886 the returns amounted to only £398, while in 1889 they reached £923. That was a very satisfactory state of affairs; and he was certain that their pearl-shell fisheries would, under the efficient management of Mr. Saville-Kent, yield a handsome revenue to the colony.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he only rose to say that he considered the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent a most judicious one. Their fisheries had been neglected for a great

many years; they knew very little about them; and he believed that they would get as much information from Mr. Kent as it was possible to get. It was the most judicious appointment the Government had made during their term of office.

The PREMIER said Mr. Saville-Kent's engagement was for three years. If the hon. gentleman wished it he would lay the agreement on the table of the House.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No; I did not ask for that.

Mr. LUYA said, while he quite agreed with the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent, he thought it was no use getting information as to what fish were in their waters and teaching fishermen how to catch them, unless they had a market where the public could buy them; and he thought the Government would do wisely by establishing a fish market at the terminus of the South Brisbane railway. There was some suitable land there available; and a better site could not be selected for a fish market, because people could go there from all portions of Brisbane. He had spoken of that matter before, and wished to drive the nail home, if possible. The great want at present was a fish market, and by establishing one they would be able to derive some benefit from Mr. Saville-Kent's experience.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said if it was necessary to establish a fish market in all towns, that was a matter that should be dealt with by the municipal authorities. The hon. members for South Brisbane and Woolloongabba, Mr. Luya and Mr. Stephens, were very active aldermen, and should take the matter in hand. It was no part of the duty of the Government to erect fish markets or any other markets. It would be an interference with the municipal authorities.

Mr. WATSON said he wished the Government would send a boat to inspect the river at night to catch the Chinamen who destroyed the fish. About 5 o'clock every morning he saw Chinamen going about the river, and what were they doing but destroying the small fish and prawns, to pickle and send away to China. He thought that a couple of good men should perambulate the river in a boat during the night and prevent that sort of thing.

Mr. SAYERS said they had heard a great deal about the fish in the Brisbane River, and of the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent, to which he had no objection; but he would like to call their attention to the state of the inland rivers. He, and many other hon. members, knew that the fish were being destroyed in those rivers by dynamite. It was easy enough for people on the coast to obtain fish, but it was very difficult for those in the interior to do so. In a little while they would simply have the rivers without the fish. There was a law against the use of dynamite for that purpose, but it seemed to be inoperative, and no Government had taken steps to put it in force. They had only to look at the papers to see the extent to which the destruction of fish by dynamite had gone on. He had received innumerable letters upon the subject, and he promised that he would call the attention of the Government to it when the Estimates came on. The Government would only be doing their duty if they instructed the police authorities to take steps to prevent the destruction of fish in the manner he had referred to. And they could put the law in motion in that way with very little trouble.

Mr. STEVENSON said he was very glad that the hon. member for Charters Towers did not object to the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent.

Mr. SMYTH said he could corroborate all that had been said by the hon. member for Charters Towers. There were three persons on Gympie who had lost a hand each through the use of dynamite in fishing. There was a time when the people of Gympie could obtain very nice fish from the river; but the use of dynamite had so destroyed the fish that they could scarcely get any at all. He had seen boys coming home with bags full of fish no larger than sprats, but which would have been of great use had they been allowed to grow. And there were not only boys, but men who should have known better; in fact, they were men and not boys who had their hands blown off. They went down to the river with some dynamite and held it too long and away went their hands. It was not the number of fish that were caught, but the number that were destroyed and not brought ashore that did the damage. A charge of dynamite might destroy a couple of hundred small fish, and if the water were deep they could not be procured. He hoped the Government would adopt stringent measures to stop the use of dynamite for getting fish.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was scarcely possible that the police could undertake the duty of patrolling the rivers. He supposed the hon. member for Charters Towers was referring to the river Burdekin. The police could not prevent people from breaking the law in the manner pointed out by the hon. member. Already complaints had been made that there were not police enough to carry out what were really police duties, and the police could not neglect those duties. Some other method would have to be adopted to deal with the question. He knew people were ready to run the risk of punishment for catching fish with dynamite. He had seen it done, and he had known people who had been maimed for life in doing so. It was difficult to convict people of offences of that kind, and he did not see that the police could be told off for such a duty.

Mr. SAYERS said he ought to feel highly honoured by the way in which "The Laird," the hon. member for Clermont, had alluded to the fact that he (Mr. Sayers) was pleased to approve of the appointment of Mr. Saville-Kent. But he did not feel flattered by that compliment. The hon. member had been homelately and had picked up very good manners, and he was glad to see that he adopted them in that Committee. The hon. member had not always had the name of being well-mannered; but he hoped he would continue to improve as long as he remained there.

Mr. BARLOW said he had had some correspondence with the Colonial Treasurer in reference to the closing of the Upper Brisbane River for fishing. That was very hard. The people in Ipswich could not catch fish for themselves, and the train from Brisbane did not arrive in time in the mornings. Several of his constituents had mentioned the matter to him. The Colonial Treasurer, in reply to his letter, did not state any reason for the course that had been adopted, but simply stated that it appeared desirable; it really was a great hardship.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was very well understood that there was a prohibition against fishing in that part of the Brisbane River; but the hon. member for Ipswich had applied for that prohibition to be set aside in the vicinity of Ipswich. He had consulted the head of the department, and found that it was not desirable to set that prohibition aside; but a promise was given that the use of nets should be allowed in the Bremer River. If he granted permission to fish with nets in the Brisbane River as desired, he supposed he would have somebody else running to him asking for a similar concession lower down the river, and the

prohibition would be worthless. There was no doubt that the prohibition had been the means of preserving the fish in the river, and it was far better that a few hundred people should have the opportunity of fishing with rods and lines than that so many fish should be taken and destroyed by netting. Possibly at some future time, probably at an early date, it might be advisable to withdraw the prohibition during a certain season and allow net fishing in the Brisbane River.

Mr. BARLOW said he did not see why the river should be closed in that manner. He believed that the scientists who came out here knew nothing at all about their rivers; he had no faith in the science of England being applied to Australia.

Mr. STEVENSON said he would just say a word or two in reply to the hon. member for Charters Towers. It was no wonder that hon. members on his side of the Committee were tired of the hon. member's speeches. He (Mr. Stevenson) had been a member of the House for nearly fifteen years, and he certainly would not take upon himself the position assumed by the hon. member for Charters Towers. One would fancy from the way the hon. member spoke night after night that he was the leader of the Opposition instead of the hon. member for North Brisbane, Sir S. W. Griffith. It was about time the hon. member understood what was his position in the Committee. He (Mr. Stevenson) did not care by what names he was called, and was not ashamed of any name he might be called by, as was pretty well known to members of the Committee. He thought that the hon. member for Charters Towers should consider the short time he had been in the House, and take up his proper position, and after he had been there a little longer he would, no doubt, learn the lesson he ought to have learned before.

Mr. SAYERS said the hon. member wanted to read him a lecture, but he took very little notice of it. He did not want the hon. member to tell him what he should do, nor would he consult the hon. member or any other person as to what position he should take up in that Committee. He (Mr. Sayers) would speak when he liked and as often as he liked, and would not be lectured by the hon. member for Clermont, who represented a few people in the bush, or a few sheep. A few years ago the place which the hon. member represented was something of a place, but that was before the hon. member was the representative of the district. If it was the same place now the hon. member would not be its representative. As regarded the position he (Mr. Sayers) took up in the Committee, whether he took up the position of leader of the Opposition or any other position, that was a matter for his own side of the Committee to consider, and he thought they were perfectly satisfied with his action. The hon. member could lecture him as often as he thought fit, but he (Mr. Sayers) thought he could give him an answer.

Mr. STEVENSON: You have cheek enough.

Mr. SAYERS said he had not more cheek than the hon. member for Clermont. He had read the speeches made by the hon. member when he used to sit on the Opposition side of the Committee. The hon. member spoke pretty often then, but did not do so now because he was gagged, and was very obedient. No doubt when he got out of his tutelage, and sat once more on the Opposition side of the Committee, he would be a different man, and they would hear more of his blow. He (Mr. Sayers) might yet, before the end of the session, read for the edification of the hon. member, not for that of the Committee, a few of his entertaining speeches from *Hansard*.

Mr. McMASTER said he would like to call attention to a matter which had been brought under his notice by a gentleman engaged in the pearl shell fishery, and that was the danger of the industry being greatly injured by the taking of small shells. He mentioned the matter once before, and he thought that some means should be adopted to prevent the destruction of small pearl shells. With reference to the establishment of a fish market in Brisbane, he thought the most suitable place for such a market was at Bulimba, or in some part of Fortitude Valley. If a fish market were established there, then when the railway was completed through Fortitude Valley, and the Government had fulfilled their promise to make a branch line to the river at Bulimba, the Ipswich people would be able to get a supply of fresh fish in time for breakfast. That was the natural and most suitable place for a fish market, but no doubt it would be convenient to have one also in South Brisbane. He hoped that the matter to which he had referred in connection with the pearl shell fishery would receive the attention of the Colonial Treasurer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said one very important portion of Mr. Saville-Kent's report was that which dealt with the question raised by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. Mr. Kent had proved that the young pearl shells could be shifted in the same way as oysters, and planted on other banks, where they would be more accessible, so that there was no reason why they should be destroyed.

Mr. FOXTON said he would like to know who was the person described in that vote as "Inspector, Brisbane, £100?"

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Captain Fison.

Mr. FOXTON: What is his total remuneration?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said Mr. Fison's total remuneration was £350. He occupied the positions of shipping inspector, shipwright surveyor, examiner in navigation, and inspector of fisheries. He received £250 as shipping inspector and £100 as inspector of fisheries.

Mr. FOXTON asked whether he drew anything as examiner in navigation?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No.

Question put and passed.

WATER SUPPLY.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that there be granted a sum not exceeding £1,575 for "water supply." Last year the salaries had been paid out of loan, but the Hon. Sir T. M'Ilwraith, who was then Treasurer, promised that the item should be transferred to revenue account. That was the system prevailing in the Harbours and Rivers Department, and he thought it a proper one. The amount was the same as last year, and the balance of the vote would be found in the Loan Estimates. He had already laid on the table the report of the Hydraulic Engineer, accompanied by plans showing the exact positions of all the bores that had been dealt with—those under way, and those proposed. Probably some hon. members would want information as to the reason for certain bores not being down in their districts, but he would be happy to give all the information in his possession.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he would like to ask the hon. gentleman whether the Saltern Creek bore was a public or private bore.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is a private bore.

Mr. HODGKINSON asked how it was that it appeared in the report as a Government artesian bore; was charged to Government account, and was referred to as not being complete.

Mr. MURPHY said the Saltern Creek bore was a public bore. It was in his district.

Mr. HODGKINSON: The Colonial Treasurer denies it.

Mr. MURPHY said he wished to correct the Colonial Treasurer. He knew the bore perfectly well. It was a public bore put down at the expense of the Government and abandoned.

The PREMIER said there were two bores at Saltern Creek. One was a public bore, and one, which was called the Great Saltern Creek bore, was put down on Messrs. Wienholt's station. The one that gave such a large supply of water was sunk by private enterprise.

Mr. HODGKINSON said the report of the Hydraulic Engineer entered into a good many particulars about every bore, except the Saltern Creek bore, which was referred to as a Government artesian bore. Could the Colonial Treasurer tell him whether any water had been struck in the Government Saltern Creek bore?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Saltern Creek bore gave about 17,000 gallons of water per day, and had been sunk to a depth of about 980 feet.

Mr. HODGKINSON said some time ago he brought under the notice of the Colonial Treasurer the fact that a bore was very much required at Croydon. Now, attached to the report of the Hydraulic Engineer was an excellent map showing the position of the various bores and the state they were in. In reply to his advocacy for a bore at Croydon, so long as it was confined to private appeals to the department, it was considered to be a mere question of geology, but when it was brought before the House in conjunction with another matter they were told that the Colonial Treasurer did not feel justified in committing the charge of such a work to the Divisional Board of Croydon, in consequence of some little difficulty in regard to their money matters. Now, the persons who were responsible for that state of financial affairs had not been members of the board for some time, with the exception of one; but independent of that, he should like to know upon what ground the district was to be subjected to that line of conduct, simply because a few men had been guilty of possible extravagance. He was not there either to defend or to attack that board, but to demand how it was that the bores were confined to a line extending from the North to Brisbane, and that not one was put down in the vicinity of a goldfield? They had been told that the Treasurer did not intend to grant any more applications for bores, unless the repayment of the expenditure was provided for by the local authorities concerned; but not a penny had yet been received by the Government on account of the bores already put down. What he wanted to know was whether the Government intended to give the residents of Croydon a bore or not. He did not want any allusion to past occurrences, because they did not affect the question at issue. The question at issue was the health of the people. In one portion of the report of the Hydraulic Engineer it was stated that no charge was made by the Government for the use of the artesian water during the drought, but directly there was no demand for the artesian water a charge was imposed. All the existing bores had been made in the interests of one section of the community, but he did not object to them having bores so long as the benefit was extended to other parts

of the colony where bores were equally necessary. A most futile attempt had been made to put down a bore at Croydon with imperfect machinery. The man in charge was known to be utterly incompetent to manage it at the time he was sent, and the expenditure was simply gross in comparison with the result achieved. At Brisbane, close to the Racecourse, a bore was put down in spite of the warning of the best geologists in the colony that the probability of getting a good supply of water there was very small. That bore was put down because pressure could be brought to bear on the Government, but no bore had been made on a goldfield that had been suffering from drought ever since it was opened. He could pledge himself that whatever might be the constitution of the divisional board at Croydon, if the people on that field received the advantage of a supply of water, they would be the first to repay the Government the money expended on the bore. In every instance goldfields had been to the front in meeting their obligations; and he would like to know on what principle Croydon had been refused the advantages which had been conferred on other parts of the colony where the same necessity did not exist.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought he was safe in saying that the hon. member knew very well that no bore had been refused in connection with Croydon; but for the information of the hon. member he would read a letter sent from the Treasury to the divisional board at Croydon, covering the report of the Hydraulic Engineer, which showed that it was not likely that water could be procured at Croydon by artesian boring, and that if it was obtained it would be at a very great cost. It was only fair that the divisional board should be made aware of that fact. He agreed to put the bore down for them on the same terms as for any other local authority. The Government had already expressed their willingness to put down a bore on the application of any local authority if the Government had reasonable evidence that water was likely to be procured. But there was the condition that if they succeeded in obtaining a supply of artesian water, the local authority should take the bore over at its cost to the Government, the amount to be treated as a loan repayable on the same terms as other loans to local bodies. The Government undertook a great risk, and they must be satisfied that there was a reasonable prospect of getting water before they put a bore down. Therefore when he received the report of the Hydraulic Engineer, he thought it only fair to send a copy to the Croydon Divisional Board. He accordingly sent that report with the following letter, dated the 4th June:—

"Referring to previous correspondence *re* artesian bore, I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the Hydraulic Engineer's report on the board's application, from which you will observe that the cost of the proposed work will be excessive, and the result of an uncertain nature."

From that time till now the application had never been repeated; but since then circumstances had come to his knowledge which caused him to state in that Assembly that, as the board was then constituted, he would not intrust them with any further loan money. He did not think that a large and populous district like Croydon should be deprived of the advantage of artesian water if there was a moderate certainty—he would not say an absolute certainty—of securing a supply. He thought that in such a case it was the bounden duty of the Government to put down a bore even at a risk; but in the face of the report of the Hydraulic Engineer, until he saw what approaches the board were prepared to make to the Treasury, he did not think

it would be right for him to force the matter on them. In connection with the return laid on the table a short time ago, he might state that he had already dealt with two applications from local authorities to be allowed to take over artesian bores—one at Blackall and one at Tambo; and that applications with respect to the Barcardine bore and other bores were under consideration. No money, however, had actually been received by the Government on account of any of them. The local authorities at North Rockhampton and Pinalba had sent in applications for bores, and they would be granted on the terms laid down by the Treasury. The work was growing so vast and costly that the Government thought it only right that some regulations should be made under which the Government would undertake to put down bores. He had been besieged with applications from all parts of the country, and he found many promises had been made. Those promises he had to keep, but at the same time he had endeavoured to let the local authorities understand that they must eventually take over the bores; and he had no doubt many of them would be willing to do that.

Mr. HODGKINSON said they had heard a very long explanation from the hon. gentleman, but he had not made the matter much clearer. The fact remained that all the bores had been put down in the pastoral districts, and Croydon had not received one. It was impossible for any man to say that water would not be found there. He claimed himself to know as much about the geological features of the colony as any man who stood in it, and he had had much longer experience of them than the gentleman at the head of the hydraulic department; and he distinctly asserted from his knowledge of the geological formation of the Croydon Gold Field, that there was a very strong probability, almost approaching a certainty, that an available supply of artesian water would be found there at a comparatively slight depth. Some of the bores sunk up to the present had not been successful in obtaining water. There had been, and there would be, failures, because the water strata was just as erratic as strata on the surface, and in those boring operations the Government must take the risk of failure; but he would like to know how it was that a bore was put down at Eagle Farm against the distinctly adverse opinion of Mr. Jack, who was the best geological authority they had? The Government had been told distinctly that there was little chance of getting water there. There, however, appeared to be a determination on the part of the Government not to put down a bore at Croydon, and that was equally clear after all that explanation. In the Central districts the department had called for tenders for boring a certain number of feet, and the return showed that the successful bores ranged from a minimum depth of 691 feet to 1,371 feet. Did they think that the Hydraulic Engineer called for a bore at Barcardine or Blackall, or any of those places? Certainly not, as he knew the cost in that way would be excessive, but the department called for tenders for boring so many thousand feet up to 16,000 feet, or whatever it might be, and divided it amongst a number of bores. In that way they might get them sunk as a fair price, as it might be worth the contractor's while to take a contract like that at a fair price. There were many places in the North that required bores more than those places which had been so greatly favoured. He appealed to the tone of the hon. gentleman's explanation given on a previous occasion to show the evident determination of the Government. The mistakes of the Croydon Board had been seized upon as an excuse for not doing that work at Croydon. The matter had now been in hand for fifteen

months, and had he been in office himself for a little longer they would have had a bore at Croydon, and he did not see why they should not have one now.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the hon. member must surely forget that it was not the present Government that started boring for artesian water. It was the previous Government that commenced that work, and it was a very commendable work for them to undertake. It was true that it was only in the pastoral districts that the bores were put down, but he did not very well see how the hon. member could complain of that, under the circumstances.

Mr. HODGKINSON: Why don't you do likewise with other districts?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the people in the colony who really understood boring operations were very few, and the boring plants were few. At one time it was thought that all the boring plant would have to be imported, but they now found that boring plant could be manufactured here, and that was being done.

Mr. HODGKINSON: They appear to be "ear-marked" at Croydon.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that, no doubt that was a sore subject with the hon. gentleman; but he had fairly explained the reasons why a bore had not been put down at Croydon up to the present time. The hon. gentleman was himself provided with the report of the Hydraulic Engineer, and surely that ought to satisfy him. It was a very risky work to undertake; but if the Croydon people would undertake their share of the risk, he was perfectly prepared to meet them half way and run the risk with them upon the terms upon which the Government had agreed to put down bores. They must first, of course, approve of the locality, and be advised that there was a reasonable chance of getting water if they bored for it. He had no doubt, from his knowledge of the Croydon people, that they could get a respectable board, with whom the Government could deal, and with whom they could arrange about further loans. The hon. gentleman had said that Mr. Jack had pointed out that it was almost certain they would get no water at Eagle Farm by boring, but Mr. Jack had said no such thing. He had Mr. Jack's report in his hand, and he found that that gentleman said "The North Coast Railway discloses several dips towards the South, so that it is at least probable that a supply of water will be obtained."

Mr. HODGKINSON: Read the first part of the report.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman had the report, and could read it for his own information. It was scarcely right of the hon. member to say that Mr. Jack had said it was not possible to find water at Eagle Farm, when that gentleman had said the very reverse.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he would like to ask the hon. gentleman one more question. Had the hon. gentleman any understanding with any of the boards, in whose divisions the bores had been put down prior to the last six months, as to the terms upon which they would be sunk. Was there any written understanding, or anything in the shape of an agreement expressed in writing on the subject?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the hon. gentleman must know that he had not been very much longer than six months in office, and the question of boring for artesian water was one of the first things which he had taken in hand, as he saw what a growing burden it was likely to be upon the colony. There was

nothing in writing now between the boards and the Government upon the subject. The local authorities at North Rockhampton and at Pialba had made applications, and he had agreed to put bores down for them on the terms he had stated, and, though one of those places was in his own district, he was sure the hon. member would acquit him of any intention to treat the local authorities there differently from those of any other district.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said he did not know what a boring machine was before, but he had been initiated into the mysteries of it that night. He understood now what a boring machine was. A friend of his was bringing in new patent boring machinery, and he would like to ask the Colonial Treasurer if it would be admitted duty free? He had expected the hon. gentleman would have gone into the question of hydraulics, and given them some information upon the bores that had been sunk; but he had got more information from the *Courier* than he had got from the Colonial Treasurer, and he had got more information that night from the hon. member for Burke than he got from either. He would like a boring machine sent up to his district, and the hon. member for Burke might be induced to go up and direct the operations. Would the Colonial Treasurer be willing to admit the patent boring machine he referred to duty free?

Mr. HUNTER said his hon. colleague had put the question very plainly, but the Colonial Treasurer had not answered that question very plainly. It was the same old story. They had asked the Government many times about putting down a bore at Croydon, but nothing had yet been done. The Croydon district was not favoured with the same weather as other districts which had obtained bores. At Croydon they did not get rain for several months, and he could assure hon. members that they had had only one decent rainfall there in two years. If ever a place required a supply of artesian water it was Croydon, and there were other places where the rain fell very seldom. Yet the Government went and put down bores in beautifully-watered pastoral country; and they had been making experiments. He could not see why Croydon should not have a bore. That district had been almost starved-out for want of water. The miners had had to stack the stone until they could stay there no longer. They had spent all their money; the storekeepers had given all the credit they could; and the place was almost dead for want of a plentiful supply of water. Machines were hung up, and the population was fast dwindling away; and the Colonial Treasurer told them that by the time all the people had gone the Government would think about putting down a bore. The hon. gentleman spoke about the people of Croydon putting down a bore for themselves, but they could not afford to do so. The whole of that district urgently demanded that bores should be sunk. The Hydraulic Engineer had inspected the district, and the Government must know that there was a chance of water being obtained. There were other places in the district requiring bores besides the town of Croydon. Several experimental bores should be put down, as had been pointed out by his hon. colleague. Water was very badly wanted at the Cumberland, and only the other day all the mines at the Durham, next to the Cumberland, had been hung up for want of water. The people at the Durham had been drinking the water from the company's dam for some time, and he could tell the Committee that that water was not fit for anyone to drink. There was not the slightest offer on the part of the Government to provide the district with water, but instead they put down bores in

districts where rain fell frequently. The Government had neglected the Croydon district, and appeared only too pleased to make the misconduct of the divisional board a pretext for doing nothing in the direction of providing them with a supply of artesian water. They had a fair claim to demand that the Government should make experimental bores there, as they had done in other parts of the country, and if they proved successful then the Government could treat them the same as they were now dealing with the local authorities in the South and West. The Colonial Treasurer had said that the system of boring was initiated by the late Government; but supposing that the late Government had done wrong in putting down all the bores in pastoral districts, that was no reason why the present Government should continue to make the same mistake. They were not likely to be satisfied with the treatment they were receiving at the hands of the Government. The Government could not blame him and his colleague if they kept on pestering them for a bore, as the people were leaving the district simply for the want of water. It was a disgrace to the colony that such a large goldfield as Croydon should have been allowed to fall into such a state. The Government should really not confine themselves to making one experimental bore in the district, but should put down half-a-dozen. If they proved unsuccessful, no one could blame them for having failed, as they would have tried to perform a very necessary work. Hon. members might say that that would be made another Northern grievance. Well, as long as he represented a Northern constituency he would always raise his voice until the matter was remedied, and under the circumstances he had every justification for complaining.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman seemed to think the Government had done nothing for Croydon, but the Government had expended £2,000 in sinking wells there. Surely that was something. Let the hon. gentleman state the case fairly. He had said the Government were only too anxious to seize upon the misbehaviour of the divisional board at Croydon as an excuse for not putting down a bore, but that was not correct. That had been almost the first instance of misconduct under the Divisional Boards Act, and it had pained the Government to find what had been done in that case. He (the Treasurer) had not refused even now to grant a bore to the people of Croydon. If they made an application, and met the Government half way, he would not say that they should even have the same terms as he had mentioned, but the Government would, at any rate, grant a reasonable amount of consideration. The hon. members for Burke were quite justified in bringing the wants of their electorate before the Committee in the most forcible manner they could, but they must be satisfied when fair reasons were given them for not sinking a bore. He was himself largely interested in the Croydon district, and according to the ordinary rules of life that would be an incentive to him to give every consideration and assistance that was possible to the district. He could say no more than he had already done. If they had now a properly-constituted divisional board, which would join the Treasury in sharing the risk, the Government would put down a bore.

Mr. GANNON said he would ask the Colonial Treasurer as to the reason why the Eagle Farm bore had been abandoned?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it had been abandoned because the Hydraulic Engineer thought the bore had gone down sufficiently far to convince him that it had got into strata

which were not water-bearing. Certainly the water flowed to the surface at the rate of about 10,000 gallons a day, but as the Government had submitted a large water scheme for the supplying of Brisbane and all its suburbs with a plentiful supply of water, and that scheme had been approved of by Parliament, the Racecourse bore was not necessary. The Hydraulic Engineer was satisfied that the flow from the bore in question would not be increased. The hon. member for Toombul had already interviewed him in reference to that bore, and he had told the hon. gentleman that if the divisional board would pay for the piping—the Government losing all the money spent in the boring—the pipes would be left down. The bore at the Logan road, which had been decided upon at the same time as the Eagle Farm bore, had also been abandoned. He considered that a well would answer all the purposes of the Toombul people quite as well as a bore.

Mr. PAUL said he wished to bring under the notice of the Colonial Treasurer the fact that Sir Thomas McIlwraith promised to put down a bore at Emerald. Subsequently it was decided that any bores put down should be put down on the terms stated by the Colonial Treasurer. There was only one permanent waterhole at Emerald, and it supplied not only the township, but also the engines on the Clermont line, the Springsure line, and those running east and west on the Central line of railway. There was thus a very great drain on the water, and during a time of drought the supply ran very short. There was a very great necessity for the bore being put down. Was it the intention of the hon. gentleman to carry out the promise made by Sir Thomas McIlwraith?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the matter would receive consideration. So many hon. members had appealed to him with promises said to have been made by Sir Thomas McIlwraith in reference to the bores, that he was in doubt about many of the promises alleged to have been made. They were apparently mostly made during the general election, and he had no doubt that people believed a bore had been promised, when what was actually promised was that the question of the bore would be considered. Emerald would receive all the consideration it deserved, and he had no doubt a bore would be put down, but it would be on exactly the same terms as the others.

Mr. GANNON asked whether the water at the Eagle Farm bore was of good quality or not?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would furnish the hon. member with the analysis as soon as he received it. He believed the water was very good.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he noticed from the report that at Winton a traction engine was set apart for hauling water from a waterhole distant about three miles from the town. Croydon had been suffering from want of water quite as much as Winton ever did. One bore yielding the amount of water derived from any of the bores on the list would keep all the machines at Croydon in constant work. It would multiply the yield of gold by thousands of ounces, and it would at once settle the state of friction existing between employer and employé. Croydon was unusually cursed with want of water, even as compared with the most arid regions in the colony; but whenever that difficulty occurred in a small squatting hamlet that did not hold as many men as were employed on a single claim at Croydon, every effort was made to relieve them. The argument of his hon. colleague that the Northern district was entitled to experimental expenditure on the part of the Government quite as much as the Southern and

Central districts, was irrefutable. He would point out to the hon. gentleman, in spite of his official adviser, that the great source of water supply was the great divide between the south-eastern and north-western watersheds. That embraced what he might call the absorbent part of the colony—the cretaceous formation—and there was an enormous amount of pastoral, as well as mineral country there that was fairly entitled to experimental expenditure. There was that grand pastoral country on the Gilead and the Julia Creek, on the great divide in the neighbourhood of Cloncurry, and especially between Woolgar and Croydon, but not one sixpence had been spent there. Unless he received a promise that the same facilities should be extended to Croydon and other places in the North as had been extended to the Central and Southern districts, he should take rather stronger steps in the matter than he had hitherto done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member had made a complaint simply because in the time of the drought there was a traction engine in use at Winton. But the roads were closed at the time, and the engine could not possibly travel to where it was wanted. Application was made by the inhabitants of Winton to relieve them, and the Government did what they would have done to any other district if it was in their power to do it. Surely the hon. member did not blame the department for relieving the wants of Winton. If the plant had been at Croydon they would have done just the same, and if they had, he was sure the people of Winton would not have acted the dog-in-the-manger. He had already told the hon. member the terms on which Croydon could have a bore, and he could hardly be expected to go on repeating them over and over again.

Mr. HUNTER said they were not complaining about Winton. They were complaining of not having the same treatment as Toombul. It appeared that an offer had been made to the divisional board in which the Eagle Farm bore was put down, that if they would pay for the pipes they could have it. They were also told that the wants of Toombul could have been supplied by a well. If so, why did the Government put down a bore there, knowing well that other places were literally starving for the want of the money they were spending there. He supposed that if the Toombul Board offered half the cost of the pipes they would get them.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: You are not supposing facts.

Mr. HUNTER said that at all events the board were told they could have the bore on paying for the pipes. The hon. gentleman had referred to what the Government were prepared to do if the Croydon Board would make proper application and certain promises; but the hon. gentlemen knew very well that the rates collected that year at Croydon amounted to only £600; he also knew that people had had to leave the place, that business people there had to suspend business for want of water, and consequently the rates next year were likely to be a great deal less. Therefore it was not likely that the divisional board would make rash promises to the Government. They had no money to promise the Government, and the least the Government could do was to give them some experimental bore at the cost of the country, and not talk so much about divisional boards.

Mr. BARLOW said he wanted to bring a matter under the notice of the hon. the Treasurer, to give a little information, and to ask for some. He referred to the case of the Laidley bore. He had in his possession some

information which he would have handed over to the hon. member for Lockyer, but it was stated in the communication he had received that some time ago that hon. member had stated at a banquet at Laidley that he had placed his resignation in the hands of Sir Thomas McIlwraith, in order to further the construction of that artesian operation. Of course he (Mr. Barlow) did not blame the present Government for a matter which was initiated by the late Government, of which Sir Thomas McIlwraith was the head. The hon. member for Burke and others had been complaining of the want of artesian bores in their electorate, but there appeared to be one too many in this instance. He was very glad to see the hon. member for Lockyer in his place, because he did not desire to say anything unpleasant or to interfere with that hon. member's constituents. Yet there were facts, or supposed facts, which he wished the Hon. the Treasurer and the Committee to know. A very respectable person in the neighbourhood writing to him said:—

"The bore at Laidley is a huge swindle. I have never been able to meet anyone who knew a word about it, until the plant was landed at Laidley station. It was never asked for or heard of, and is of no use when done. Laidley, as you know, is well watered; and one of the leading residents told me the other day it would most likely not be used if water was struck immediately. The bore is situated in an allotment given by the wife of a publican and into which there is access from the back yard of the hotel."

That was very satisfactory. From a conversation he had had with another resident of that town—

Mr. NORTH: Why don't you give the names?

Mr. BARLOW said he did not intend to give the names. The hon. member for Lockyer must excuse him from giving the names; that would be a little too much joy. He had been informed by another resident that if water was struck at that bore it would disappear in some mysterious way into Laidley Creek. He knew nothing of the matter personally, and was only stating the information that had been given to him. His correspondent went on to say:—

"Now contrast this bore with the paltry sum which has been expended upon two useless wells sunk for the struggling settlers out at Plainland. The Government have put them down the depth agreed upon, and through getting no water the settlers are in no better position than before, and they are really and truly in need of assistance. Numbers of them had to come to Laidley during the dry weather to get water, having to pass through the township to get this water. The lagoon at Laidley is about three-quarters of a mile from the township and has a never failing supply, enough to serve all the people from Ipswich to Laidley."

Mr. NORTH: I defy the hon. member to give the names.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member would not get the names. He had not brought the matter forward out of any animosity to the hon. member for Lockyer, who had been so zealous in the interests of his constituents that he had placed his resignation in the hands of Sir T. McIlwraith, in order that that work might be executed. He (Mr. Barlow) did not ask for such communications as he had read, but he maintained that if people sent them to him he had a perfect right to lay them before the Committee, and he should do so no matter what electorate they came from. There was no ill-feeling towards the hon. member for Lockyer, who had done his best to get that artesian business carried out, which he (Mr. Barlow) believed to be a mistake.

Mr. NORTH: Give the names.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member for Lockyer might interrupt as much as he liked, but he would only convert persons who were kindly disposed towards him and his electorate into

something which would be very unpleasant for him. He had not attacked the hon. member. He had given him credit for doing his duty and placing his resignation in the hands of Sir Thomas McIlwraith in order to get a certain thing done.

Mr. NORTH : I never said such a thing.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member did, at a banquet at Laidley; he had read it in print, and, if necessary, he would turn the paper up and produce it. If that Laidley bore was what it was represented to be, "a huge swindle," it was time that the Hon. the Treasurer took some steps in the matter.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he scarcely thought the hon. gentleman was right in his facts. He had read from a letter which possibly he had received, but they knew that even if a bore proved a success, it was hard to please everybody. Everybody wanted it near his own property, and the writer of that letter was, perhaps, one of those dissatisfied men. At any rate he could not possibly know whether the bore would be a failure or not, and he (the Colonial Treasurer) was informed by the Hydraulic Engineer that it had reached such a stage that they expected to reach water any day. They had every indication of it.

Mr. BARLOW : What's the good of it when down?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said a bore put down in any district must be of some use; but if, as the hon. member stated, the lagoon was only three-quarters of a mile away, in that view of the case it might not be necessary. However, he could not be held responsible for that, nor for any promise made by Sir Thomas McIlwraith; and if the hon. member for Lockyer had put in his resignation as a lever to get that bore, he was sure there were other hon. members who would do the same if they could get a bore in their district.

Mr. NORTH said he could assure the Committee that what the hon. member for Ipswich had said about his placing his resignation in the hands of Sir Thomas McIlwraith was utterly false. There was not one single word of truth in it. The hon. member for Stanley, Mr. O'Sullivan, was present at the banquet that had been referred to, and could bear out what he said. As regarded the bore at Laidley, during the drought the water there was not fit to drink. The cattle got into the waterhole, and the people could not use the water, and the consequence was that the people presented a petition to the Minister for Railways, asking him to have some troughing put up at the railway station for the use of the people. That water was very salt; but they used it for some time. There was no place in the whole of the Lockyer electorate which was worse off for water than the township of Laidley. He asked Sir Thomas McIlwraith if he would put a bore there, and that hon. gentleman consented. As for his placing his resignation in the hands of Sir Thomas McIlwraith, that hon. gentleman could bear him out that such was not the case, and there was not a single word of truth in it. In regard to the position of the bore, he went with the Hydraulic Engineer to fix the site, and that gentleman asked the people in the township if they would give half-an-acre of land for the purpose. Everyone in the place refused, except a publican, who said he would give the land. That was how the bore came to be placed there, and the engineer would bear him out when he said that it was the best site in the whole of Laidley. He was quite sure that the town of Ipswich would never want a bore while they had the hon. member, who, he wished, would

attend to his own electorate and leave Lockyer alone. He did not want to be included in the Ipswich bunch.

Mr. BARLOW said they all ought to be exceedingly indebted to the hon. member for Lockyer for his witticisms. He was quite content that that hon. member should deny the statement he had made as to the placing of his resignation in the hands of Sir Thos. McIlwraith. He (Mr. Barlow) read that statement in the *Queensland Times*, and it was very much talked of at the time.

Mr. NORTH : It was a letter written by a private individual.

Mr. BARLOW said it was an official report, and people were highly amused at the idea that Sir Thomas McIlwraith, with a majority of eighteen at his back, should be coerced by the threatened resignation of the hon. member for Lockyer. His correspondent said :—

"If you could get the *Queensland Times* people to look up their files, and produce the paper containing the report at the opening of the bore, you would see that North distinctly stated he had pledged himself to get this bore, and had actually placed his resignation in the hands of Sir T. McIlwraith, when he at last consented to put it down."

He was not finding fault with the hon. member, who was at liberty to place his resignation where he pleased, even in the hands of the Speaker. He would find the copy of the *Queensland Times*, and bring the matter forward on a future occasion.

Mr. SMYTH said it would be a great mistake if everyone wanted a bore put down in his own electorate. They knew very well that there were places in the colony where it would be impossible to obtain water by boring. At Charters Towers and Gympie, to expect to obtain artesian water would be madness. He did not know what the formation was at Croydon; but there a bore might probably serve a double purpose. If no water were obtained they would receive some information as to the auriferous formation of the country. The nearest bore was some hundreds of miles from Croydon, and that country deserved some recognition. In putting down a bore the Hydraulic Engineer and the Government Geologist should always be consulted. They could not expect water at the Racecourse bore.

The PREMIER : As a matter of fact, they have obtained water to a limited extent.

Mr. SMYTH said that could not be called artesian water; there was no overflow at all. The bore was put down on a flat, almost level with the river, and the water that had been discovered might have filtered through. He did not think either Mr. Jack or Mr. Henderson approved of that bore, which was a sheer waste of money.

Mr. GRIMES said he regretted very much that the Government had abandoned the idea of putting down a bore at the junction of the Ipswich and Logan roads, as it was one of the places pointed out by Mr. Jack as being a likely place to find water. They could not find a place where a supply of water was more needed than that. He was surprised to hear that the idea had been given up because of a large scheme of water supply having been arranged for the city of Brisbane. He did not think that would supply the demands of the people in the locality which would have been supplied by that bore. The Meteorological Observer in Sydney had foretold a severe drought, and in the face of that, they ought not to limit their supply of water, as it was not likely that Gold Creek and Enoggera would hold out.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : The scheme is abandoned for the present only.

Mr. GRIMES said he hoped the Government would see the necessity of putting down that bore. The divisional board had discussed the matter, and they would like to know what would be the probable cost of the bore, with a view of making some arrangement.

Mr. MURPHY said he wished to ask the Treasurer what revenue, if any, had been derived from the sale of water from the Barcalaine, Blackall, and Tambo bores?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there had not been a great deal of revenue derived from them, a result which had mainly been brought about by the persistent action of the hon. member for Barcoo himself, who had impeded the arrangements that might have been made for the local authorities to take those bores over. He had relied to some extent upon the hon. member, as representing the locality, to bring about some arrangement between the Government and the local authorities, and the hon. member had certainly done his best to obtain the water at as low a rate as possible. The regulations under which water would be supplied had been published, and he would try and obtain a return showing exactly what had been received.

Mr. MURPHY asked if the hon. gentleman could inform the Committee what the bores were costing the country for caretaking?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the caretakers received £120 a year each.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he wished to know if the Treasurer could tell them what was the cost of putting down the bore at Eagle Farm?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: About £2,300, including piping.

Mr. BUCKLAND: Has any reply been received from the Toombul Board as to whether they are inclined to take over the bore from the Government?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there had been no communication with the Toombul Board. It was the hon. member for Toombul who mentioned the matter to him.

Mr. GANNON said he had been in communication with the Toombul Board and the Treasurer, but unfortunately nothing could be done in the matter until the board had held a meeting, which they could not do before Saturday, as a certain notice of the meeting was required by the Divisional Boards Act. He hoped the Treasurer would consent to allow the tubing to remain in the bore until the matter had been discussed by the board so that, should the water prove of good quality and fit for general use, some arrangement might be arrived at by which the board should take over the bore. Some of the tubing had been withdrawn; but he hoped the hon. gentleman would stop any more being withdrawn at present.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that was a matter attended with very considerable expense, as if he did what was suggested, the Treasurer would be liable for a large sum to the contractors. He could not make any such promise as was asked; but if it could be done without incurring too great expense it should be done. He thought the board might have called an emergency meeting to consider a matter of such importance.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he had seen it reported in the morning paper that, in compliance with a request made to the Treasurer, it was intended that the bore, which was to have been put down at the junction of the Logan and Ipswich roads, was to be put down at Rocklea. He hoped that was not the case, because the district where it was originally intended to put down the bore

suffered considerably during the late drought. He believed the Stephens Divisional Board would be willing to enter into an equitable arrangement by which they should bear a share of the expense of putting down a bore at the junction of the Logan and Ipswich roads.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said a deputation had waited on him, and asked him to shift the site of the bore to Rocklea, and he had declined to consider the proposal. The contractor for the bore had made application for an extension of time for six months for putting down that bore, owing to the difficulty in getting sufficient plant, and that application had been granted. The plant was, he understood, being made in the colony, and as long as it could be made here he would prefer having it made here to importing plant. But there was no truth in the rumour mentioned. How those rumours got afloat he did not know.

Mr. BUCKLAND: Then I suppose the bore at the junction of the Logan and Ipswich roads has not been entirely abandoned?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it had not been entirely abandoned, but it had been suspended for six months, and that for the most part on the application of residents in the district, who stated that there was really no necessity to put the bore down at present, and that no injury would be done by extending the time for six months.

Mr. STEPHENS said he hardly thought the statement of the hon. gentleman was correct. The site for the bore that was to be put down was in the Stephens Division, and the deputation which waited on the hon. gentleman was from another division. It really looked as if that deputation were trying to steal a march on the Stephens Divisional Board, and he was very pleased to hear that the Treasurer did not intend to remove the bore to Rocklea. He (Mr. Stephens) believed that his friend, the hon. member for Logan, would not have introduced the deputation had he been aware of the facts of the case. It would be very unfair to remove a bore from one division to another division without informing the board of the proposed change. Some of the members of the Stephens Divisional Board had spoken about the matter, and he had intended to mention it to the Treasurer, and would have done so before now, only the hon. gentleman had been so busy. The board would be willing, he believed, to contribute towards the cost of putting down the bore, though not the whole of the cost, seeing that one had been put down for nothing at Eagle Farm. With regard to what had been said by the hon. members for Burke, he must say that he endorsed their remarks, with respect to the absolute necessity of getting a supply of water for the Croydon Gold Field. Only a short time ago he visited that place, and was disappointed at seeing the machinery in nearly every case lying idle for want of water. Wherever there was machinery he could see a paddock full of stone, but absolutely no water. In one place, in which he believed the Treasurer was interested, there was machinery, a fine dam, and any amount of stone, but no water. The people said that the last wet season was no wet season at all, but a dry one. He only saw one crushing machine at work, and that was at a dam in the middle of the town. Water had been struck in one or two of the shafts there at no great depth, and the people regarded that as an indication that water could be obtained by boring. It was also argued that they might kill two birds with one stone, and in putting down a bore test the reefs, some of which did not run regular, and with regard to which there was some doubt as to whether they were continuous. He

understood, when in Normanton, that it was the intention of the municipal council of that town to apply to the Treasurer for a boring machine, which might also be used at Croydon. He believed the council were willing to pay for a bore, and he would like to know from the Treasurer whether anything had been done in that matter.

Mr. STEVENS said that with regard to what the hon. member who last spoke said respecting the deputation which he introduced to the Treasurer, he might state that he had no intention to assist any divisional board in attempting to steal a march upon another board. So far as he was concerned he did not know but that the two localities were in the one division. He should always consider it his duty, if any of his constituents wished to have any public matter carried out, to give them an opportunity of laying their views before the Minister. It could hardly be called stealing a march, because deputations were always reported, and if one district considered itself aggrieved it had an opportunity of having any matter put right.

Mr. BARLOW said as he had been flatly contradicted he wished to read an extract from the *Queensland Times* of 19th June, 1889. The report was a very short one, and spoke in the highest terms of the members for Lockyer and Stanley. This was what the member for Lockyer was reported to have said:—

"In the case of these boring operations, he had experienced great difficulty. He promised the electors at the time of his candidature that he would obtain a bore for Laidley, if possible, and he was glad he had been able to redeem his promise, but it was only after a very hard fight—in fact, he would tell them that it was not until he had told Sir Thomas McLlwraith that he would resign if the bore was not granted to Laidley. Indeed he had actually placed his resignation in the Premier's hands, when his request was at last granted. (Applause.) He was much pleased with what he had seen that day."

Mr. NORTH said all he could say was that he was not responsible for what the hon. member for Ipswich or any other blackguard wrote to the papers.

Mr. HODGKINSON asked the ruling of the Chairman as to whether such language was Parliamentary. If that language was going to be used, there were ways of dealing with the hon. member which he would not forget in a hurry. In the meantime he appealed for the Chairman's ruling.

The PREMIER said he would have felt it his duty to point out that the language used by the hon. member for Lockyer was not Parliamentary if the hon. member for Burke had not been so eager. He was sure it was used in exasperation, and would be withdrawn by the hon. member.

Mr. BARLOW said hon. members need not trouble themselves upon the matter at all, because he considered a very high honour had been conferred upon him. He pledged his word of honour that he never wrote or instigated that article. As to interfering with the hon. member, he had no desire to do so; but he had brought forward certain matters at the request of a man who was as respectable as the hon. member himself.

Mr. NORTH rose to a point of order.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Chair! chair!

Mr. NORTH said he would withdraw the words complained of.

Mr. UNMACK thought the hon. member should do more than withdraw the words. He should apologise to the Committee.

Mr. MURPHY said the hon. member—

Mr. UNMACK rose to a point of order. He maintained that the hon. member for Lockyer ought to apologise to the Committee.

Mr. MURPHY said the hon. member had withdrawn the statement, what more could he do?

Mr. BARLOW: I did not want him to do even that.

Mr. MURPHY said that the matter was in the hands of the Committee, and he thought sufficient apology had been made by the hon. member. He would like to get back again to the subject of artesian bores after that little storm. He quite agreed with the remarks of the members for Burke that the Government ought to assist them to get some trial bores put down in order to see if artesian water existed at Croydon. Most of the Government bores had been successful, whilst those put down by private persons had not been so successful. Still that did not show that water would not be found, if searched for, at Croydon. All boring operations were purely experimental, and it was well that the Government should prospect that part of the country where water was wanted. He was not a bit jealous of other districts. The Government had treated the pastoral districts very well, but he lived in as dry and arid a district as that represented by the members for Burke. At the time the bores were put down in the pastoral districts Croydon was not known as a great mining field, but no member of the Committee had the slightest objection to the Government searching for water in the mining districts. Certain supplies of water had been struck in the pastoral districts, but the Hydraulic Engineer had put a tap on the bores and prevented the water running until a drought occurred. He had to bring pressure to bear on the Treasurer to get him to have those taps taken off, so that the water might run and people get the benefit of it. Those bores were originally put down with money voted out of loan, and it was an injustice on the part of the Government to ask small divisional boards to take them over. The bulk of the water used was not used by the people in the districts where the bores were situated, but for travelling stock. They were practically bores for opening up the country, and for the purpose of keeping the stock routes open. As for the bores in his district, he wished the Government to hand them over to the local authorities. They were costing a large sum annually for maintenance and caretaking, and the Government put on a high charge for the water, which people were not able to pay. They must eventually let the water run, because they could not allow people to die of typhoid fever for want of pure water when there was a beautiful supply to be had by taking off a tap. The Colonial Treasurer had made a most liberal offer to a wealthy divisional board near Brisbane to let them have the bore for the value of the casing. Why would he not make the same liberal offer to his (Mr. Murphy's) constituents? The Blackall bore was a most expensive one, because it was started with the wrong class of machinery, and the Government had to import other apparatus before water was obtained. It was unfair to ask poor local authorities to pay for the cost of the bores that were put down practically for national purposes. They were willing to undertake the responsibility of looking after the bores, and to enter into a bond to keep them in good repair, and he appealed to the Government to let the local authorities have them at a low rate. The Treasurer wanted £2,000 for the Blackall bore, but that was more than the local authority could afford to pay. If they did not take the bore over, the Government must still let them have the use of

the water, because they could not shut the bore up and let the people die for want of water; so that it would be far better to hand over the bore to the local authority on such terms as they could afford.

Mr. UNMACK said that if the argument used by the hon. member for Barcoo held good, it would put a stop to all boring in future, unless the local authorities first pledged themselves to refund the whole of the expenditure to the Government. He considered it was sufficient for the country to bear the expense of those bores that did not prove to be successful, and that whenever a bore was successful, the local authority concerned should either refund to the Government the whole of the expenditure incurred up to the time the bore was taken over, or else pay the Government a good stiff rate for the water. The hon. member for Barcoo had stated that the Treasurer was willing to hand over the Barcoo bore for £2,000, but he understood that the cost of that bore was £5,400, and that no bore could be handed over at less than its cost. He should therefore like to hear an explanation from the Colonial Treasurer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was surprised at the action of the hon. member for Barcoo. He liked consistency in public men as well as in individuals; but the hon. member had not been at all consistent in his action. He had been pestering and badgering him (the Colonial Treasurer) as often as two or three times a day in connection with that matter.

Mr. MURPHY: I will pester you more yet.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman might pester as much as he liked, but he had no right to state half the truth. He had made no offer such as the hon. member stated. The bore was an experimental one; there were failures in connection with it; and the only thing the Government could do was to consider what would be the cost of putting down a bore there at the present moment. He did not know that it was necessary to repeat private conversations; but the hon. member for Barcoo had disclosed what took place during a private conversation, and it was necessary that he (the Colonial Treasurer) should do so to some extent to place matters right. The hon. member had had many interviews with him, and had done all he could for his constituents—as he had a perfect right to do—and he had yielded to the hon. gentleman's reasonable requests. He intimated to the hon. member that under the circumstances he did not think it would be fair to call upon Blackall to pay the full amount expended on the bore; and the hon. gentleman then made an offer, whereupon he said to the hon. gentleman, "If you make it £2,000, I will submit it to the Cabinet." He would not presume to make terms either with the hon. member or with the divisional board on a question of that sort without first submitting the matter to the Cabinet. If they agreed with his recommendation, well and good; but if they did not, he could not make terms on his own responsibility.

Mr. MURPHY said the Colonial Treasurer told him that he would submit the proposed terms to the Blackall Municipal Council. He had done so, and his communication appeared in the local papers, so that he did not think he was disclosing any private conversation. No matter what the hon. member thought, when his duty to his constituents forced him to pester the hon. gentleman he would do so inside that Chamber and out of it. He would pester any member of any Government in the interests of his constituents, and would not be put down by the Treasurer. He considered that he was simply doing his duty towards his constituents.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I admit that.

Mr. UNMACK said the explanation given by the Treasurer showed that the local authority at Blackall had been treated with extreme consideration and unexampled fairness; and under the circumstances he had no objection to offer. But he took exception to the remarks of the hon. member for Barcoo, when he asked what the Government would do if the local authorities did not pay for the bores. The hon. member said that the Government must give the water away in that case, because they could not let people die for want of water. If every hon. member advised his constituents to take up that position, there would be an end to all Government bores, unless the local authorities first pledged themselves to repay the expenditure. It was only another way of getting out of paying for the advantage derived from Government expenditure; and he thought that was a position which no hon. member ought to take up. If such advice as that was listened to in that Committee without remonstrance, the next step would be that every member representing a district in which a bore had been put down would inform his constituents that they need not pay for it because, if a drought occurred and they were in want of water, the Government could not let them starve for it and they would have to give it. If that was to be the case, he trusted that the Colonial Treasurer would see, before any more bores were put down, that the divisional boards interested passed a resolution and entered into an agreement in black and white to pay for it if it was successful.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he had listened with surprise to the remarks of the hon. member for Toowong. If that hon. member's argument was to be accepted, it should be carried out to its fullest extent and applied to all the votes affecting the city of Brisbane and the Southern portion of the colony, and the people deriving the benefit from them must pay for the luxuries provided them at the general expense of the country. In the North they had ceased almost to hope for justice, and they were now in that position that they craved a little indulgence. The argument of the hon. member for Barcoo was more reasonable, and was based upon sound premises. The development of their water resources added wealth to the colony and improved their real estate. The bores already put down would, no doubt, add to the carrying value of the country around them, and he looked upon the expenditure incurred under the Hydraulic Engineer's department as about the wisest to be found on the Estimates.

Mr. SAYERS said he would like to know whether the Colonial Treasurer had had any report from Mr. Jack, as to the likelihood of getting water by boring in the country round the Cape River and Charters Towers? They had frequently suffered from want of water there, and the discovery of artesian water there would advance the district greatly.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I have received no report from Mr. Jack upon that district.

Mr. SAYERS said he would be glad if the Government would, in expending money in the discovery of artesian water, take that district into consideration. When they considered the large amount of surplus revenue derived from the North last year, they might ask that some of that money should be spent in testing the capabilities of those districts for the supply of water. They did not object to what had been done in the South in that respect, but they asked for fair play, and that other portions of the colony should be treated in the same way.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that Mr. Jack was under the Department of Mines, and if he made any report it would go through the hands of the Minister for Mines and Works. He had no such report from Mr. Jack as had been mentioned by the hon. member. Mr. Jack could certainly make no report upon that district for three or four months to come, as he had gone away to report upon the electorate represented by the hon. member for Burke.

Mr. SAYERS said that perhaps when Mr. Jack returned the Minister would instruct him to report upon the district he mentioned?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Yes. If I am asked by the Colonial Treasurer to do so, I will.

Mr. MORGAN said he wanted a little information from the Treasurer, and he would put his question as briefly as he could. He understood that the firm that held the contract for the bore at Laidley had accepted a contract, including bores, in the Dalby and Warwick districts. He would like to know if that was so?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that for the information of the Committee, he might state that the firm referred to had accepted a contract for two other bores—one at Dalby and one in the neighbourhood of Warwick, at Swan Creek.

Mr. MORGAN said the hon. gentleman had told them that the contractors for the Laidley bore expected to strike water at any moment, and he wished to learn from the hon. gentleman if there was any truth in the rumour that those contractors had asked the Colonial Treasurer to consent to the cancellation of the remainder of their contract?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I understand from the Hydraulic Engineer that no such application has been received.

Mr. LITTLE said he hoped Croydon would procure a bore and he hoped also that a bore would be granted to Mountalbyn, which was the largest silver mine in the colony and supported 2,500 people. They had had great difficulty in procuring water there and had had to pay as much as 2s. 6d. a cask for it. He hoped the Treasurer would consider the claims of that district to a bore upon the same terms and conditions as such advantages would be given to other districts.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he sympathised with the Treasurer for the way in which he had been bored that evening. Hon. members representing mining districts especially, had asked for bores, and they ought to have known that mining was carried on where primary rock formation prevailed and that was not favourable for finding artesian water. The Colonial Treasurer had had some sad experiences in connection with the Croydon Divisional Board, who had applied for a bore. If they were going to govern all their affairs in the way the Croydon Divisional Board had done, separation was very far off. It would be a waste of money boring for water at Croydon or in its immediate neighbourhood. But it was well known that the Rosewood was a locality where water was very likely to be obtained by boring. Laidley was well supplied with water already, whilst Rosewood was very badly in want of water. If the Laidley bore proved a success he hoped the Colonial Treasurer would consider favourably the question of putting down a bore in the Rosewood district.

Mr. FOXTON said the salary of the Hydraulic Engineer was put down at £700. On referring to the schedule he found that there was no

travelling allowance set down, although he probably travelled more than any other officer in the Government service. The whole of his travelling allowances had apparently been squeezed into the small item of £60 for forage allowance, and he could scarcely believe that all his travelling expenses were paid out of the £760 in the schedule. If that was not so, he would like to know what fund the travelling expenses were paid from? They ought to appear along with his other allowances.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the travelling expenses of the Hydraulic Engineer amounted to a guinea a day. They were paid out of the Loan Fund. Formerly the whole of that vote had been paid out of loan, but the salaries had now been removed to the general Estimates, while the travelling allowance was paid out of loan as before. It was impossible to fix either in the case of the Hydraulic Engineer or the Chief Engineer for Railways the actual amount which would be charged for travelling allowances, because the Government did not know how many days those officers would be travelling, and for that reason the amount was not put in the schedule.

Question put and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn. If we get to the Government business to-morrow, we will first take the consideration of the Granville and Burnett Bridges Bill in committee.

Question put and passed.

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