

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 1889

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 16 October, 1889.

Supply—resumption of committee.—Messages from the Legislative Council—Crown Lands Acts, 1884 to 1886, Amendment Bill—Stafford Brothers Railway Bill.—Adjournment.

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

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Question.—That there be granted to Her Majesty the sum of £250,000 for immigration—put.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that seeing the Premier in his place, he wished to refer again to a matter to which he referred on the previous day, on the motion to go into Committee of Supply. He referred then to a statement that had been current in the Press for a considerable time, that changes in the Government were likely to happen immediately, or shortly, after the termination of the present session. It was currently reported, and he believed it was an open secret, that one member, the Colonial Treasurer, was likely to leave the Government. It was also said, he did not know with what authority, that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government contemplated visiting Europe, and was not likely to be in the colony next session. He thought when statements of that kind were made, and made when financial proposals of great importance were before the House, the House was entitled to ask to whose custody they were really being asked to give that money.

The PREMIER (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said that, in reply to the hon. gentleman, he might say that, as far as he could see, he had no intention of severing his connection with the Ministry. What contingencies might arise in the future he did not know, but he could only say that he had no intention at the present time, nor did he see any immediate prospect of severing his connection with the Ministry. That was all he could say, because it was all he knew himself.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The leader of the Opposition is going himself.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Where to?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: To the old country.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Oh, no!

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would like to say a word in reply to the leader of the Opposition. He was correct in saying that it was rumoured that he (the Colonial Treasurer) contemplated taking a trip

to England. Such was his intention. Under the circumstances that he accepted the office of Treasurer, it was not his intention to do more than he promised. He had no intention of doing anything that would embarrass his colleagues to the slightest extent, nor was it likely that he would resign his seat in the Assembly at present, whatever he might do at some future time. Certainly he did hope that he should not again have to face the Assembly with Loan Estimates, to be badgered in the same way as he had been with the General Estimates. It was not that which he feared, but he had so much of his own important business to do that he thought it was only fair that he should commit the Treasury to the care of some other person who had more time to devote to it than he possibly could give. It was only fair to say that he was not doing justice to his own business in giving so much of his time to public matters, as he had been giving during the session.

Mr. BARLOW said that on an occasion like the present it was necessary that some very plain things should be said, but it was not essentially necessary that they should be said either in an improper, rude, or offensive manner. The country called upon them to express an opinion upon the present position of financial affairs, especially in reference to the Loan Estimates submitted to the House by the Colonial Treasurer, and they would certainly be wanting in their duty if they did not express their opinions and make their voices heard. It did not follow that they expected to influence one single vote if they sat there until the beginning of next session, or cause one single change of opinion by what they might say. But there was a very much larger audience than met within the walls of that Chamber, and by that audience they were content, politically speaking, to stand or fall in the discharge of their duties as an Opposition. From some remarks made by the hon. member for Rockhampton, who perhaps was the most courteous as well as the most aged member of that Assembly, it would appear that that gentleman was of opinion that the constitutional functions of an Opposition in Queensland had somehow or other ceased. He (Mr. Barlow) thought it was a principle of constitutional law and practice of that great unwritten constitution which had grown up, and which, therefore, superseded and outlived every written constitution, that the functions of an Opposition were perhaps as high, and even higher, than the functions of the party intrusted with power; and therefore it was the duty not only of the great leaders of that Opposition, but also of the rank and file, to give a reason for the faith that was in them. He understood the hon. gentleman who represented Rockhampton to say, and he was so reported, that after the great lights and luminaries of the front Opposition bench had given their opinions, that the lesser lights should keep silence in order to carry out that design and object which appeared to be the ultimatum of the Government—to hurry over the session. That principle of hurrying over the session appeared to be the highest ideal of some hon. members of the duties of hon. members generally. It was no pleasure for him to speak in that House. Although he had done what he considered to be his duty in speaking a great deal, and he intended to do it so long as he was allowed to be there, it was no pleasure to him either to speak or to be reported. Those who had spoken at length had done so from a conviction of the necessity of the case, and the only way of silencing them was by the obvious way of defeating them at the polls, and then they would be heard no more in that House. Even then they would be heard to a greater extent, and probably with greater

power outside before that great constituency to which they all appealed, the great constituency of the public. The representatives of the people in that House had a very small audience to talk to, but outside the platform was open to them, and if by the machinations of their political opponents they no longer had an opportunity of speaking in the House, they would find an opportunity of speaking outside. He did not know what might be the conception of the duties of a representative of one of those districts where the population was sparse, and where the interests of property were rather regarded than the interests of human beings; where electoral matters were settled in a nice, quiet, and comfortable way, and members were returned without much trouble or fuss; but he did know that the large constituencies of the colony—and the larger constituencies were strongly represented by the Opposition side—intended and expected their members to give utterance to their feelings and opinions, because they had been placed in a position where they were bound to speak the truth, and that truth they would speak. He would never have consented to be a representative of the people if it was simply his duty to sit behind a leader and hold his tongue on any question upon which he was entitled to express himself. Nor did he consider it the only duty of any representative of the people, if he happened to be in Opposition, to go cap in hand and hang about the Government offices and ask for such bones, scraps, and rags, as might be left after other people had been satisfied; to sit up and beg for any little scraps that might be bestowed upon his district. If any district returning him to that House expected him to sit still and hold his tongue when any question of political importance was before the House, the expectation was a mistaken one. He knew they had the bulk of the people behind them, and that the people did not expect any such degrading duty from the representatives they returned to that House to do their duty without fear, favour, or affection. Those were the remarks he had to make as bearing upon the statements of the hon. and venerable gentleman who spoke so nicely to them last evening. The hon. gentleman had also spoken about the cohesion of the party, and told them not to suppose that there was any incipient decay or any rift in the lute that was going to break them up; that the party was stronger than ever, and while the hon. gentleman avowed his kind personal feelings towards the senior member for North Brisbane, he stated that no feelings of that kind would interfere with his undivided devotion to the interests of the gentlemen who now occupied the Treasury benches so long as they did their duty, and so long, he (Mr. Barlow) presumed, as they carried out the programme which that party had always been faithful to since he had any remembrance of political matters in the colony. He (Mr. Barlow) must say for himself that he had no hope that the party was going to break up at all, because he knew that the bonds of cohesion were too strong, and the principles of self-interest were too strong. Hon. members opposite had pronounced themselves independent of the newspapers, but he did not think any political party in the world was independent of the newspapers, or ever would be. Because the newspapers not only formed, but after they had formed it, they reflected public opinion. Therefore the hon. gentleman in saying they were independent of newspapers, and did not care for the opinions expressed in them, simply showed that the whips and scourges of that estate—which was higher than any estate of the realm, and which though called the fourth estate was in many respects the first—had sunk deep into their feelings. The hon. gentleman had told them not to suppose

there was going to be any break up in the great party returned to power in 1888. It had been pointed out very distinctly that the present party in power was not the party that came into power in 1888. The party that came into power in 1888 was formed—well he did not know whether the hon. gentleman formed the party, or the party formed him; but at any rate that party was headed, governed, and generalised by another gentleman altogether than the present head of the Government. It was headed by a gentleman who last night had distinguished himself by an attack upon his late colleagues, and by an almost personal attack upon the hon. gentleman in charge of the Treasury, who had never in that House shown anything but kindness and courtesy to everyone with whom he had come in contact. His (Mr. Barlow's) sympathy had been repudiated on many occasions, and therefore he would not tender it; but he said that the sympathy of the hon. gentleman's friends was certainly due to the Treasurer for the ungenerous and uncalled-for treatment he had received last night. He must say that he could have wished that the hon. gentleman had been—he did not like to say more able—but more willing to rise again and give back as good as he had got.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is here yet.

Mr. BARLOW said it was not his intention to make any attack upon the hon. gentleman, but he was saying that the hon. gentleman deserved the sympathy of his friends for the treatment he had received last night. Who was the divinity they were called upon to bow down to in matters of finance? That great financier who had burst upon the colony in 1888, and was looked upon as the saviour of the country? Who was that financier who had been expected to produce the policy of a Gladstone, and who had produced the policy of an apple-woman? There was scarcely an old lady keeping a store in the suburbs of Brisbane who could not, if the facts had been put into shape for her, propound a policy for the extraction of the colony from its difficulties equal to the policy propounded by that gentleman, who now turned round and reviled the hon. gentlemen who had stood by himself and fought with him shoulder to shoulder. He repeated, it was the policy of an apple-woman. It was impossible for any of those sitting on his side of the Committee to attain a reputation for finance, because they were overshadowed by the reputation, resting upon nothing, of the gentleman who made an attack upon the Treasurer last night. He had no hesitation in saying, though he claimed to be nothing more than an accountant and arranger of figures himself, that there was sitting on his side a gentleman as far in advance in mercantile knowledge—in a knowledge of the true principles of finance and the circumstances, wants, and needs of the colony—of that gentleman as he was doubly in advance of himself (Mr. Barlow). Those facts required to be put before the colony, and those great reputations they heard so much about required to be probed and proved. It was not enough for a gentleman to say, "I am a financier. I am the saviour of the country." It was necessary that people who took such high ground should justify it; and he had no hesitation in saying that the tariff propounded in 1888 was no justification for such a reputation, and if it had been propounded by anyone else it would have damaged and destroyed his reputation altogether. It was clear that that was the feeling of the colony, though there were some people who made a desperate attempt to contradict those things and say it was not. The hon. gentleman he was referring to reminded him to

some extent of Jonah. He believed Jonah was thrown overboard and did not jump overboard; but in the present case they had a Jonah who had jumped overboard of his own deliberate will, and he was hanging on to the ship he had lately commanded and doing his best to scuttle it. That appeared to be the position disclosed by the extraordinary scene of which he was a silent spectator last night. Of course the cohesion came into play, and a great many attacks could be made without any great harm being done, on account of the cohesion in the party. That was exactly the position in his eyes. Another hon. gentleman had said that the London money market did not care a farthing what railways were made, and that they did not know where the railways were going to, or where they were going to start from; in fact, that they did not know anything about them. It was quite true that the general bulk of the investors in foreign stocks and securities did not know. Very likely they thought Brisbane was the capital of Western Australia. But there was a class of men who made it their business to study the investments of the various colonies, and of the various states which were borrowers in the money market, and he believed that every banker in the city of Brisbane was an agent reporting upon the most minute transactions in colonial finance. He believed the condition of their finances were just as well known in London among investors as they were in Brisbane. All particulars were published in the investment guides and financial journals in London, and the people who really controlled the investment of the surplus capital of the United Kingdom knew as much about the circumstances of the colony as, and perhaps more than, some hon. members. It was a fallacy to imagine that the London financiers did not know what was being done. The colonies were judged by their works. A great question had been raised about that million proposed for unspecified railways. The scheme which the hon. member for North Brisbane, sitting on the other side of the Committee, had propounded on the memorable occasion of his first attack upon his colleagues, when they had learned that the rupture was not on account of the question whether £40,000 should be wasted on offices for the Railway Department at the Central railway station, was something like this: There were three processes in the course of railway construction. The first step was to bring in an Act authorising the construction of certain specified railways, the approximate costs of which were given, and which were divided into classes, such as suburban and country lines. The next process was the passing of a Loan Bill to authorise the borrowing of the money in one sum; and thereafter a yearly appropriation from the loan fund of a certain sum of money, to be divided amongst the different classes of lines, had to be passed. But they appeared to have diverged from that system altogether, and to have adopted one of an entirely different character. Perhaps the granting of a million of money to the Government for unspecified railways might not be a very serious matter in itself; but it covered a very important principle. Before the money was voted Parliament should know exactly what railways were going to be constructed. He did not believe that any civil engineer—whatever his reputation might be—had ever prepared a railway estimate which was anything like correct. They should not on that account be deterred from asking for an account of where those railways were to go. It would be expecting an impossibility to expect that an estimate could be correctly prepared, and therefore they should not be deterred by that from the principle of asking for infor-

mation on that subject before the control of the money was parted with. It had been stated that the proposed principle had been followed with regard to rolling-stock; but the evils were not the same. If the Ministry had the command of a million of money for unspecified railways, they could hold the whole of the constituencies of the colony in a state of expectancy, and they could carry on that principle until they had incurred a possible expenditure of, or exceeding that million of money. He recollected the time the O'Loughlin Ministry was kept in office in Victoria, by fishing for votes on both sides of the House. As the hon. Postmaster-General no doubt remembered, that Ministry could have been put out of power at any time, by a combination of parties; but they held office for some years—until the immoral coalition took place, and the coalition party was formed. In the *Melbourne Punch* a picture was published showing Sir Bryan O'Loughlin fishing with about sixty lines at the end of his rod, and at the end of each line was the bait of a railway engine. That would represent the position of the present Government. He did not believe in trusting any Government, whether from the Government or the Opposition side of the Committee, with the expenditure of money for unspecified works. He would not trust a Government which might be formed even in a new Assembly which did not contain one member at present sitting in the present one, with that expenditure. He hoped the good sense of the Government would come to their rescue in the matter, and that they would enlighten the Committee as to the lines upon which that money was to be spent. They would not lose anything in dignity by taking the Committee into their confidence. He thought that when he had last interviewed the Minister for Railways, as one of a deputation, the hon. gentleman had informed them that he had three pages and a-half of foolscap full of railways which had been talked of, or promised, or surveyed, or deputationised about; and that fact showed the enormous area which would be afforded for going up and down the list. It was only fair that the same course should be adopted as was adopted in the schedule attached to the £10,000,000 Loan Act. He did not deny that that schedule was inaccurate. Every such schedule must necessarily be inaccurate. If railway construction was not a matter of uncertainty, how could contractors make the huge profits they did? Therefore the Committee could not insist upon any explicit statement of the cost. All they asked was to be furnished with an approximate statement as to what the £1,000,000 was proposed to be expended upon, and they had reason to expect that the good sense of the Government would come to their rescue, and that they would give that information. It was true that the statement attached to the Loan Estimates stated that the £1,000,000 was "for the construction of such railways and works connected therewith (including resumptions, rolling-stock, and material for permanent way) as Parliament may approve," but that expression contained the whole gist of their contention. Parliament approved by a majority, and that majority was moved by the Ministry of the day. Therefore they might say "such lines as the Ministry of the day may approve of," or "such lines as the majority at the back of the Ministry may decide among themselves and direct the Ministry to approve and submit to Parliament." That was about the analysis of the expression in that paper "of such lines as Parliament may approve." Unfortunately in all legislatures in the world, party considerations did and must prevail, and the last resort in all cases was to the party vote. He should object just as strongly if he were sitting behind the Treasury

bench to that million of money being thrown on the floor to be scrambled for, and the Government supporters ought to see the matter in the same light as he did, and insist on knowing what lines of railway were to be constructed with the money. The Government must take the Committee into its confidence and put those lines into a schedule; and if that were done things would no doubt end very pleasantly. The Colonial Treasurer was threatened last night that he was to be displaced. The hon. member for North Brisbane stated that probably he would be the Treasurer himself. Whether that accession to office was to be a forcible one, or a matter of arrangement, it was not for him (Mr. Barlow) to say. The colony, and every colony, was tired of the system of Government by shuffle; they were tired of the perpetual shuffling of the political cards. No Government could stand well with the people that was not the direct choice of the people. When a Government was chosen under one leader, and the leadership was handed over from that one to another, there was always more or less a tendency towards disintegration and feebleness. People felt that the control of affairs was not in the hands of the gentleman who made a direct appeal to the country, not in the hands to which that trust was committed by the people. The hon. member for North Brisbane had done his best to seriously damage the Government; he had tried to swallow their reputation and their unity, and had made attacks upon them in one way or another which they did not seem to care to resent. Had such attacks been made upon him, no matter what promises of independent support might have been given, his self-respect would have demanded that he should assail any hon. member who conducted himself in the manner in which the hon. member for North Brisbane had conducted himself towards the Government. The tenderness of the Government towards that hon. member reminded him of the anecdote of a man who got a young alligator into his family. The alligator, as it grew to majority, increased in strength, and swallowed the man's children one after the other, and then it swallowed the wife. A friend who went to condole with the man on his loss asked him why he did not kill the wretched thing. "Kill it!" answered the man. "It is the most sacred object on earth to me; it is my family burying ground; it contains everything that is near and dear to me, and hereafter I also hope to find a refuge and a rest there." That appeared to be very much the position of the Government towards the hon. member for North Brisbane. They had received nothing but rebuffs and injuries from him, and he sincerely trusted they would pluck up spirit enough to resent them, as he would, if they had been directed against himself. The question was raised last night about meeting the interest on the loan. There was no doubt the affairs of the country were in a serious condition. He was not saying that was the fault of the Government. It was quite true that the revenue was not justifying the expectations that were formed of it. It was equally true that public works could not be stopped when so many people were dependent upon them for their daily bread. Those public works must be gone on with, and the interest must be provided. There was no doubt that their railways did not pay; whether the new management introduced into that department would make them pay remained to be seen. At any rate, it must take a large number of months, if not years, before they could expect their railways to pay when they were now running to the bad to the extent of £400,000 a year, while the capital account was being added to continually by the construction of lines which were not certain to be reproductive at present. They must there-

fore look forward rather to an increase in the deficit than a reduction of it. Parliament had set its face against extravagant sales of land, by passing a Bill imposing limitations on such sales. Whether the Government would be able to dispose of land by selling river frontages, thereby allowing the back blocks to lapse into a sort of free addendum to the frontages, he could not say, but the limitations introduced into the Land Act, would clearly put astop to the alienation of land in large areas. Still public works had to be carried on, and as the deficit could not be expected to decrease something must be done. When the hon. member for Toowong, Mr. Unmack, asked on the previous night how the interest on the proposed loan was to be met, the hon. the Colonial Treasurer informed him that if he only had patience to wait until the next Financial Statement was made, a surprise was in store for him.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Quote me correctly, please.

Mr. BARLOW said for the sake of accuracy he would read exactly what the hon. gentleman said, because nothing could give him greater pain than to misquote the hon. gentleman:—

"Mr. UNMACK said exactly; the Land Act was to provide the interest; and at that time that was an honest answer, and an honest conviction. If that conviction had turned out to be wrong it was unfortunate; but that was a better answer than they had received with reference to the loan now proposed. They had no information whatever as to the interest.

"The COLONIAL TREASURER: You do not give us a chance of making a reply.

"Mr. UNMACK said he would give the hon. gentleman a chance, although he had had two already.

"The COLONIAL TREASURER said if the hon. gentleman's intention was to force the hand of the Government and make them disclose their financial policy, he was making an effort in the wrong direction. Hon. gentlemen might do that as much as they liked, but the Loan Bill had to be passed first. It was time enough to discuss the question of interest when the next Financial Statement was considered. Hon. members might then have something to debate and discuss. He had no doubt the hon. member would put himself on the back if he could get the Government to disclose their future policy, and perhaps it would be a little bit of surprise to him if he could get some information on that question so far in advance of the time. The hon. gentleman would have to curb his spirit of inquiry until the proper time arrived, or until the next Financial Statement was delivered. No doubt there would be a revelation and possibly the Government would be accused of stealing more of the policy of the present Opposition."

Now, when he heard those remarks his mind naturally turned as to what further portion of the policy of the Opposition the Government could steal. He thought the whole of it had been stolen.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I said, "Be accused of stealing," not stolen. There is a wide difference.

Mr. BARLOW said when he heard that remark his mind immediately seized upon the word "revelation," and the statement that possibly the Government would be accused of stealing more of the policy of the present Opposition. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer conveyed the impression that something was going to be done which would lead to a charge being made against the Government of stealing more of the policy of the Opposition. There was to be a revelation, and that revelation was to take the form of an accusation of stealing the policy of the Opposition. But he did not know what portion of the policy of the Opposition remained to be stolen. The strong pledges made by the Government against black labour were portions of the policy of the Opposition; and there were other portions of their policy which had been adopted with the greatest alacrity at the time of the

contest of 1888. Therefore, when he came to consider what might be the remaining portion of the policy of the Opposition that could be stolen, the only thing he could fix his eyes upon was the taxation of property and land. It occurred to his mind that, after all, the Government might realise what the Opposition had endeavoured to impress upon the country—that without some radical alteration in the system of taxation carried out at present, the wants and exigencies of the Treasury could not by any possibility be met. Possibly that might be the revelation to be made in the next Financial Statement. Of course, in discussing a question of that kind, they were not bound to confine themselves entirely to dry figures and estimates; they could allow their fancy to roam at will; and it had occurred to him that possibly in the next Financial Statement they would learn that the Government were at last converted to the policy of a land tax, a tax on property and income, and that they had taken the last remnant of the policy of the present Opposition. He confessed it would be no surprise to him; he was not surprised at anything; but it would be a wonderful surprise to the country. What then would become of all the arguments to the effect that they must alienate more land before they taxed it? What would become of all the arguments that had been forced down their throats, if he might use the expression, and which they had been obliged to slay over and over again? They were as dead as the dragon killed by St. George, but had to be slain over and over again. They had been told that the taxation of land and property would depreciate its capital value; that until they had increased the number of freeholds and the number of people who were prepared to resist the imposition of such a tax, it was perfectly futile and unnecessary to attempt to impose it. He felt as convinced as he was standing there that some policy of that sort would be propounded, and it was just as well that everybody should be prepared for such an extraordinary surprise, although such a revelation would be a very small surprise to him, if any surprise at all. Thus the Government would array themselves in the last of the garments of the Liberal party. There had been a good deal said about the necessity of borrowing more money, and the one reason he had heard given for the immediate necessity for further borrowing was that the balances now in the banks—of which balances the Queensland National Bank had the lion's share—could not be reduced, as that would injure trade and commerce. On the 30th of September last the balances, if they were set out as a merchant would set out his balances—which the Government balances never were—would stand something in this way: obligations or permissions for the expenditure of money sanctioned by Parliament from Loan, £4,323,768; surplus revenue account, £6,291; trust account, £181,243; savings bank trust account, £616,867; which made a total on one side of the account of £5,128,169, less the debtor balance of the consolidated revenue fund, which most facetiously appeared in the monthly and quarterly statements as reduced to £41,942. He could quite understand any honest working man, not accustomed to accounts and finance, reading the Treasury statement published in the papers and saying, "Oh, this is all right, the deficit of £602,000 which existed on the 30th of June, 1888, has been reduced to £41,942." But that very flattering unctious was dispelled by the fact that the statement included the pastoral rents for twelve months, and did not include three months' interest on the public debt. Why those things could not be put to a suspense account, or why a foot-note could not be appended to the state-

ment to show what the real balance was, was beyond his comprehension. Well, deducting that sum of £41,942, the little attenuated balance of the deficit—which deficit would go on swelling until, with the debit of the half year's interest due on the 31st of December next, it assumed its recent, or probably larger, proportions—deducting that amount they would have a balance on one side of £5,086,227. On the other side, the assets of the Government consisted of cash in the Queensland National Bank, including, he presumed, the amount in the hands of the Agent-General, £1,838,550; cash in other banks, £900,000; total balances in banks, £2,738,550; unsold loan of 1884, £709,900; Treasury bills, £1,304,834; deficiency on previous loans, £333,248; total, £5,086,532. The Treasury bills were merely slips of paper to show that a certain amount had been taken out of the Treasury, just as when a man took 2s. 6d. out of his till, he put in a slip of paper with 2s. 6d. written on it to show the money he had taken out. From the amount of £5,086,532 they had to deduct £305, the amount received from the Brisbane corporation on account of Victoria Bridge debentures, which left £5,086,227, the balance on the other side of the account. The new loan proposals amounted to £3,431,966, in addition to £350,000 for estimated deficiency on loans, and £1,304,834 for the retirement of Treasury bills, making a total of £5,086,800. To that should be added the sum of £709,900, balance of the 1884 loan; so that the Government would then have a borrowing power of £5,796,700, and they had cash in hand amounting to £2,738,550. That was a very large sum to be raised—and raised, as the Colonial Treasurer had stated, for two years—and the justification for that was that they were not to reduce the balance in the banks—he might say in the bank—for fear of producing a disturbance in trade. Who started the system, which was found so injurious in New Zealand, of having one bank exclusively as the Government bank? He did not think it was the Liberal party who did it. He had a very vivid recollection of the Liberal party coming into power on one occasion and finding matters were in such a position that they were unable to alter them. They were much in the same position then as the Government were now. The pernicious practice of putting large sums of Government money into one bank certainly did not originate with the Liberal party, and they had now to borrow, according to financiers opposite, in order to keep up that state of things. Banks of large resources did not care for Government money, unless they got it at such a comparatively low rate of interest that it amounted to money at call. What they did care for was that they should have a share of the current account of the Government, and if they got that they were content to take money on deposit and pay a rate of interest for it which might otherwise be somewhat of a drag upon them. That was the principle carried out in Victoria, and he believed the same practice obtained in New South Wales, though he was not quite certain. In Victoria, in consideration of having a share of the current account of the Government, the banks were content to take Government deposits upon terms which might otherwise be somewhat unremunerative. But, as he had said, banks of large resources did not care for Government deposits, because they knew that by taking them and paying interest upon them they would produce a state of things in the country which was most undesirable. Bank shareholders were like everyone else. They wanted as large dividends as possible, and he might say they were not very particular how they got them. They must and would have

them, and hence some banks were led into the mistake of taking large sums of money which they had to let out. In many cases they found, when they had let it out, that it was not so easy were always the best advances. The system of banking in the colonies would make a to pull it in again, and the advances which a bank must pull in, in case of necessity, London banker's hair stand on end. If he was taken behind the scenes of a local bank, and shown the advances made on squatting properties with no tenure, if he was shown the advances upon all forms of fixed capital, upon saw-mills, sugar-mills, and mining machinery, and things which, if they fell into the hands of the bank, must be kept going, his hair would stand on end. The idea of a London banker was short bills and short loans. He was not prepared to say that advances of the sort he mentioned were not safe in the colonies, but when a bank was called upon to draw in its advances, it must draw in those which were the most convertible, and which were the best part of a bank's business. Now, he should like to know, without passing any stricture on anyone in particular, whether it was desirable that such a state of affairs should be carried on in this colony? Whether some effort should not be made—and no better opportunity than the present could be had, when the public attention had been called to the question, that they must take a certain course, because they could not withdraw their balances from the bank—to bring such a state of things more into accord with reason and prudence? He did not think those considerations should be allowed to prevail. If a bank could not refund its deposits it must do what other banks did. It must either raise its rate of interest, and thus get more money, or it must deal with some of its advances. The ordinary course was a transference of advances to some other bank. He was not prepared to say that what he advocated should be adopted now under the present circumstances, but he submitted that such a state of things was not prudent, and at an early date ought to be put a stop to. It was not wise that very large sums of public money should be deposited in one bank, and that it should become a sort of tradition of the Government that those balances should be continually kept in their places. He did not think any merchant would like to have his business conducted on the principle that he must not draw from his current account to a greater extent than a certain limit. The great idea in banking accommodation was that people should not only have their own money but more than that if they required it, and in the present case that principle was not adhered to. Now with regard to the general question of those Estimates, they had in the first place, the immigration vote of £250,000, which was open to very serious consideration. He would not go so far as to say very serious challenge. There was no doubt that in the present state of affairs they were supplying a large part of the immigration which reached the other colonies. There was a very considerable leakage across the border, and they were told in that interminable debate to which he would not refer further that in all probability they would have to provide for people who would be thrown out of work in the North, and, therefore, that immigration vote deserved most careful consideration. He was not prepared to say that it should be pruned down to zero. He thought the immigration they might safely provide for was of people who came to settle on the land, and did settle upon it, and brought with them some capital. He was vastly pleased with the remarks of the hon. member for Maryborough, when he spoke about young men coming here and bringing with them £300 each

of actual capital. That was the way in which the best immigration had been conducted in New South Wales. They heard occasionally that certain immigrants had been "absorbed," but they did not know exactly where they were going, and he was sorry to say many did not care, but the immigration of those young men who had been referred to was fraught with the best advantages to the interests of the colony. Those were the sort of people they wanted to attract to the colony; people who would be able to keep themselves for a time, until they became accustomed to colonial ways and usages. There was a doctrine once, by which it was considered that every person coming to a colony should undergo a certain period of servitude, and the land laws were so framed in some of the colonies at one time that those people could not acquire land unless they had passed through such a period of service as to enable them to buy land at a high price out of their savings. Those theories had been blown away years ago, and the only immigration they now desired and wanted was the immigration of people with some capital of their own, who were prepared to take a direct and real share in the interests of the country and its development. He never looked at the children he saw playing in front of the public schools, but he thought they were the people who would follow trades and other occupations, and that it was a wrong to them to go too far in the direction of importing at the expense of their parents competitors in their labour. Those principles were neither extreme nor socialistic, nor were they even ultra-democratic. Let them import the producer and the agriculturist as much as they liked, and if they had a little capital so much the better, but the trades and handicrafts of the colony, he contended, should be filled up by the Australian natives. Those were principles which he held before he came to that House, and they were the principles upon which he hoped that the immigration vote would be framed and administered. The next item was the unappropriated million of money for railways, and he trusted the Government would listen to the arguments of the Committee on that subject. He did not suppose they would listen to the bullyings of the senior member for North Brisbane, and if he were in their place he would resign office rather than submit to anything of that sort; but he did hope they would listen to the sound constitutional arguments of the leader of the Opposition. The matter had been made very clear by that hon. gentleman, and by some other members who had followed the very able remarks that gentleman had made upon the subject. They had shown to the House and the country the unconstitutional character of that proposal. If the Government looked up and thoroughly appreciated the unconstitutional character of the proposal they had made he believed they would yield, and at an early date, to the entreaties made to them to produce the policy of railway construction which he had no doubt they had in their possession. It was utterly impossible that a Government consisting of able gentlemen like those opposite should come down to that House with a proposal of that kind and not be in a position to furnish details. He felt sure that in the list of the Minister for Railways, of three pages and a-half, there must be marks and crosses indicating a preference for some railways over others. There must be some in that list that were reasonable and proper, and that would commend themselves to both sides of the House, and he said, in the name of all that was reasonable and moderate, let those railways be scheduled, and put down in connection with that million of money. They did not ask the Government to give way to the bullying attacks made upon them on

the previous day, and they would think very little of them if they did; but the Opposition had endeavoured to show upon reasonable grounds that before that vote passed the railways to which it was intended to be applied should be scheduled. In that connection he might say there was a large tract of country reaching from the outskirts of Brisbane to Warwick, *via* Toowoomba, that was entirely destitute of any provision in those Estimates for any money to be spent in its development. He would urge that if any fresh loan was to be hypothecated, some provision should be made for that part of the country which, in the Estimates before them, was left entirely out in the cold. They found the Fortitude Valley Railway, the South Coast Railway, the North Coast Railway, the railway from Dalby to the Bunya Mountains, the Woongarra Branch Railway, and the Bundaberg to Gladstone Railway provided for in the Southern district, and there was nothing whatever in those Estimates provided for the enormous tract of country to which he had referred.

Mr. PHILP: They have got a railway there already.

Mr. BARLOW said that was very true, but there were other openings for expenditure. He noticed in the loan balances a sum of £492,595 for a railway from Ipswich to Warwick, known as the *via recta*. Of course, it would not be reasonable to expect that the Government should expend the whole of that sum at once, but some portion of that line could be commenced. It must be made some day or other. He knew that the *via recta* was in that Committee as a tale that had been told, but the House might be differently constituted some day, and at present they could do no more than appeal to the sense of justice of hon. members to commence the work.

Mr. PHILP: All the money is spent on other works.

Mr. BARLOW said that was so, but it could be recouped by the borrowing operations to take place. That £492,595, in the same way as the £160,000 in the electorate of the hon. member for Stanley had, no doubt, been annexed.

Mr. PHILP: By Brisbane.

Mr. BARLOW said very possibly by Brisbane. He was no more fond of Brisbane than the hon. member, and wherever he looked in those estimates he saw something for Brisbane. He was not going into Northern grievances now, as the question was too large, but there they had a railway for which nearly half a million of money had been voted in the Loan Act of 1884, and it had never been touched, and he said some beginning should be made with it. It had often been said in that Committee that they had a large population living on the "Loan Industry," and there was no getting away from the fact that they had large numbers of working men in the colony dependent upon nothing else but loan expenditure, and if they could not go on with loan expenditure those men must go. Therefore he contended that the large tract of country reaching from the outskirts of Brisbane to Wallangarra, *via* Toowoomba, should have something done for it, as it had been entirely neglected. They had some small amounts set down in the Central division, and for the Northern and Carpentaria division there was £375,000 proposed to be appropriated. Those estimates really had an uncomfortable and ugly look. It looked as if the constituencies represented by the Opposition side of the House were to be left out in the cold, with the exception of the enormous appropriations for Brisbane. There was a vote for working expenses and maintenance of bridges, and that was Brisbane to a certain extent. There

was a vote for the improvement of the Brisbane River; there was a new dredge for the Brisbane River, and so on; and £27,000 more for the Parliamentary Buildings. Then came an amount of £500,000 for loans to local bodies, including the Brisbane water supply. There was food for reflection in that. Surely if money was to be borrowed it was not unfair to ask that some consideration should be given to that large part of the country which at present had no share of the loan expenditure to support it. They looked for those things, and considered they were reasonably entitled to them. That large sum of money still stood to the credit of the *via recta*, although it had been absorbed in other accounts. It was still a loan balance, and until it had been legally written off they had a claim to it. He had endeavoured to express his opinions temperately, and he hoped the Government would listen to reason, and that they would schedule the lines they proposed to expend that million upon.

Mr. GLASSEY said he had hoped that some hon. member on the other side would have had something to say upon the question of immigration.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: They have received instructions to be quiet.

Mr. GLASSEY said that he approached the question with a great amount of diffidence, as he had not been a resident in the colony for very many years. He had come to the colony with his wife and family as an assisted immigrant.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson): You are none the worse for that.

Mr. GLASSEY said that in consequence of the action he had deemed it necessary to take in the discharge of his political duties, he had been reproached by a very eminent member of that Committee with the fact that it was not very long since he had come to the colony as an assisted immigrant. He had arrived in the colony as an immigrant about five years ago with his wife and eight children, and with £20 in his pocket. That was his position five years ago. Since he had been in the colony, and since he had been a member of that House, so far as his conduct was concerned, he had done nothing that he should be the least ashamed of; and he trusted that so long as he remained a citizen of Queensland, and so long as he had the honour of enjoying the confidence of his constituency, his conduct would be such as would never cause a blush to either himself or those whom he was connected with, whether by family ties or otherwise. From the appearance of the Committee that afternoon, it appeared as if a mourning pall had been thrown over the Chamber, in consequence of the tremendous political slaughter which had taken place on the previous evening. The whole proceeding seemed to be lifeless. He trusted that in discussing that very important question, they would endeavour to refrain from personalities. He disliked personalities, and he avoided them, and he must be very strongly tempted when he indulged in any. He trusted the debate might be conducted with good temper, and with all the ability they could command, and without anything being said to wound the susceptibilities of other hon. members. Such had always been his course ever since he had taken any part in public business of any kind. Before proceeding to discuss the question of immigration, and the slackening off of immigration, which he considered advisable, he wished to correct a statement made by the Colonial Treasurer. He was quite sure the hon. gentleman had made the statement unwittingly. The statement referred to some remarks of his own as to the amount of wages paid to working men engaged in the sugar and

other industries of the colony. Like the hon. member for Ipswich, he wished to express his sympathy with the Colonial Treasurer for the unmanly attack which had been made upon him by his late colleague. He would just quote the words he referred to in the speech of the Colonial Treasurer:—

"Some people appear to think there has been an outcry in some parts of the colony against the Government importing immigrants at the rate they are doing, and of course we know that they come into competition with the labour of the colony when they arrive. In the time of the drought and depression we have had in the colony, there has in some districts been a surplus of labour, and the people of those districts may in some instances have lifted their voices loudly against the continuance of immigration that would compete with them in the fields of labour. But we must look at it from a broader point of view. The drought and depression affect all classes; not only the digger, the farmer, and the agricultural labourer, but the business men of the colony generally feel the effects of the depression, and I do not think it would be right to unnecessarily stop the flow of immigration which is so necessary to our national life. We have had long debates upon that for-ever-settled question of the sugar industry, and we have proclaimed to the world that we will have no more kanakas or servile labour, and surely it is only fair that we should introduce some sort of labour that will get a chance to find employment on the sugar plantations or on their own little plots. Whatever becomes of the sugar industry, we may take that liberal view of the question, and help those engaged in the industry by the immigrants we may import. There is, of course, no question of importing them at a rate that would tend to drop wages to the state referred to by the hon. member for Bundamba the other evening, when he told us men were employed for 12s. 6d. a week, including rations. Such a state of things I never heard of until the hon. member spoke of it, and if it exists at all it must be in isolated cases, but I have grave doubts that such a state of affairs exists at all. The Government have no intention of importing unnecessary labour."

He would say at once that he was pleased to hear that the Government did not intend to import unnecessary labour, and he trusted to be able to show, if that statement was correct, that no labourers should be imported for a considerable length of time. Before referring to the question of wages, he must say that if it were possible to import large numbers of workers of the industrial classes from the old country, without injuring those who were already engaged in the various industries of the colony, with a certainty of their being employed on their arrival at a fair and reasonable rate of wages, and for a reasonable number of hours a day, with decent homes to be provided for themselves and their families, no one would be more willing than himself to give any aid and assistance that could be rendered in that direction. His recent departure from the old country gave him greater opportunities of knowing the present condition of the working people in England than those who left perhaps twenty years ago and had not revisited it within recent times. In consequence of the humble position he occupied in that country, he had been enabled to obtain more accurate information concerning the industrial classes in England than most gentlemen whose position in the social scale was higher than his own, and who had not mixed with them so intimately as he had done prior to his departure from the old country. Therefore he said that if it were possible to bring out people from Great Britain with the certainty that work would be found for them on their arrival, without their coming into direct conflict and keen competition with the workers already settled in the colony, he should be only too glad to render every assistance in his power to encourage a constant stream of immigrants to settle upon their lands, to become a part of themselves, and to assist in the development of the resources of that great colony. But

such could not be done under the proposal made by the Government. He could not help thinking that there was a want of determination and courage on the part of the Government to take a direct step in advance, which would be an aid and an encouragement to persons to leave the old land without injuring the prospects of those already settled in the colony, and which would develop to a greater degree and at a greater rate of speed, the resources of the colony. A suggestion which would have that effect he made on a previous occasion—namely, that when immigrants arrived in the colony the Government should take a portion of the money from that Loan Estimate, and give them monetary assistance to enable them to settle on the land. Any loss incurred by the adoption of such a scheme would be infinitesimal compared with the great good it would do to the country, to the immigrants themselves, and to the great bulk of the people of the colony. They were asked to pass a vote of £250,000 for immigration, in addition to the £92,943 over- standing from the last loan. That amount would serve for about three years, bringing out a moderate number of immigrants. If £50,000 a year was given in the shape of monetary assistance to enable immigrants to go on the land and settle, and if £50,000 were spent in bringing them out to the colony, he ventured to say that it would be in the end far more beneficial to the colony than if spent in the way the Government intended to spend it. With regard to what he had said, and to which the Colonial Treasurer had referred, as to the low rate of wages—12s. 6d. a week—paid in some parts of Queensland—what he did say was that he was not surprised that the planters of Mackay had not been successful in obtaining white labour for their plantations in consequence of the very low wages which they offered to Germans to come out some years ago. The facts he then stated were fully borne out by the pamphlet published in 1884, which was to be found in one of the volumes of *Hansard* for that year. The wages offered were £20 a year in cash, and half the first year's wages were to be kept back until the expiration of the agreement. Without taking into account the money kept back, that meant 7s. 6d. a week; the value of the full rations came to 4s. 2d. a week, and the accommodation, which he might call rent, to 6d. per week. For sixteen full grown men the accommodation provided was a house or humpy 16 feet by 16, with iron roof. He reckoned the house at 8s. a week, or 6d. a week for each man; that with the rations made 4s. 8d.; so that, including the 7s. 6d. given in cash, the total sum came to 12s. 2d. per week. That was the pay offered to German emigrants to come to the colony, and work on the sugar plantations at Mackay. He did not say that that was the wages which prevailed generally in connection with agricultural pursuits in the colony. But he would go a little further than that, and state in connection with that question that he had received a letter from a working man at Mackay, who stated that the Mackay planters that year were only offering wite men, with engagements, if possible, for three years, 7s. 6d. a week and rations.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Name!

Mr. GLASSEY said, unfortunately he had not permission to give the name of the writer.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Then it's not worth much.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. H. Black): It is incorrect. I doubt it very much.

Mr. GLASSEY said the statement might be incorrect. He was not prepared to vouch for the accuracy of the letter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If it was true the writer would not object to give his name.

Mr. GLASSEY said he had no authority to give the name, and he did not care to take upon himself to do so. He gave the statement for what it was worth. The writer went on to say further:—

"I thought Sir Samuel Griffith passed a Bill prohibiting kanakas from being employed in anything but field work, but I say without fear of contradiction, and they are not overtime boys either, that they are employed ploughing, harrowing, working in the mill, on cattle stations, engine-driving, and even quarrying stone for Government works."

He had no objection to hand the letter over to the Minister for Lands privately, to show that, so far as he was concerned, everything was perfectly fair and above-board. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, when referring to the amount of money given to the various districts of the colony, said the Central district had not received what it was entitled to, and he also said, truly, that it was quite prepared to take care of itself. He wished every district in the colony could say that, but unfortunately there was not a Mount Morgan in every district. He would go further: he was sorry to see that the wisdom of the legislature in the past had not taken care that such places as Mount Morgan had not been devoted to more general purposes—that the enormous value of such mountains was not spent in the general interests of the people, instead of going into the pockets of a few private individuals.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Confiscate all the mines.

Mr. GLASSEY said he could tell the Minister for Lands, without any anger or feeling, that if the people of the colony were of the same way of thinking as he was on those matters, if confiscation did not take place, at all events laws would be passed that such enormous wealth should never go into the hands of private persons, but that a large portion of it should be devoted to the general good of the country. He trusted that day was not far distant, and he misjudged public opinion considerably if the feeling of the country was not running very much in that direction, and that ultimately new fields like Mount Morgan would not be held entirely by a few individuals, simply because of the existence of an extremely foolish law, passed by persons who were deeply interested in such concerns. He was quite certain that when the great bulk of the people came to think more carefully upon those economic questions which very materially affected the well-being of the country, the unbounded wealth which existed in such places as Mount Morgan would be spent not in the interests of private individuals, but in the interests of the whole community. He was only sorry that the Minister for Railways, a gentleman of undoubted ability, for whom he had a strong personal regard—perhaps his regard was not worth much, but still he had a strong personal regard for the geniality, good nature, and ability of that gentleman—he was only sorry that he and the Government had not seen their way to submit to the Committee a schedule showing the whole of the railways proposed to be constructed out of that £1,000,000. He was bound to say that he shared the opinion expressed by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, that it was the true basis of all proper and just government that they should know exactly what they were voting money for. There were some works in which he himself was interested in the district he represented. Notwithstanding that that district might be represented by a very unimportant and humble individual, still, as

long as he was intrusted with the confidence of a constituency, wherever it might be, he should demand for that district, so far as it required public works, a full share of the money that was paid by the taxpayers of the colony for the carrying out of works of a beneficial character in the different parts of the colony. There were two or three works in which he was specially interested, and he should be extremely glad to see the schedule embodying the whole of the works for which that money was proposed to be borrowed. He thought the hon. the leader of the Opposition was not asking too much when he demanded that that schedule should be laid before hon. members. He supported the hon. gentleman in that request, and he did not do so from any slavish point of view. He thought his conduct since he had been a member of that House would prove that he was not the slavish follower of any individual, but on all occasions when reasonable and just demands were made by the hon. gentleman who led the Opposition party, he should support him heartily. The request the hon. gentleman made to the Government, to withdraw that item of £1,000,000 until they had a schedule of the railways proposed to be constructed, was a reasonable one. If that was done they would know what they were doing in voting the amount, and would do it with their eyes open. But at the present time they did not know what they were doing, or whether the works to be undertaken would be beneficial to the country generally, or whether in deciding upon them partiality would be shown to those persons who consistently supported the Ministry. It had been stated, and reiterated times without number, that the Government were obliged to take a certain course, particularly in financial matters, in consequence of the condition in which the Treasury was left by the late Government, with a large deficit amounting in the aggregate to £602,000. He had not referred to that matter before, because it had been discussed by other members, but he felt it his duty to refer to it on the present occasion, inasmuch as it had been mentioned by the Minister for Mines and Works in the very able speech he delivered on the previous evening, a speech which would do infinite credit to any man occupying a public position in this colony. He often admired the speeches of the hon. gentleman, but had never heard him to better advantage than on the previous evening in the excellent speech he delivered in reply to his late chief. The hon. gentleman then stated that several things had to be done by the Government in consequence of the deplorable condition in which they found the finances when they took office. He (Mr. Glassey) contended that the deficit which existed then might not have appeared if the late Government had pursued the same policy as had been followed by the present Administration. There was no great amount of credit due to the Government now in power for their financial achievements. Nothing was easier than to raise money through the Customs as they had been doing by increasing the duties from 7½ to 15 per cent.; provided the Government were prepared to dip their hands deeply into the people's pockets, they could always have an overflowing treasury. That was one way by which revenue had been raised, and another was by the wholesale alienation of the public lands. So long as they had Crown lands, and there were persons who were willing to buy—and there always would be such whilst they had large syndicates backed by financial institutions—they could always sell land, and those persons could afford to buy and wait for the unearned increment. He had heard it stated that the late Government sold all the land they could. He did not know whether that

was true, but if it was there was something wrong; possibly people could not get the land on such favourable terms as they could from the present Government. At all events, the late Administration did not sell nearly the quantity of land that was sold by the present Government. He found, on referring to the tables circulated in connection with the Financial Statement, that the value of land sold during the term of office of the previous McIlwraith Administration was as follows:—In 1879-80, £77,898; in 1880-81, £195,859; in 1881-2, £113,905; in 1882-3, £114,226; total for the four years, £501,888. During the Griffith Administration, the value of the land sold was as follows:—In 1883-4, £75,260; in 1884-5, £43,139; in 1885-6, £91,758; in 1886-7, £48,649; total for the four years, £258,086. In four years the McIlwraith Administration sold £501,888 worth of land, while in a similar period the Griffith Government only sold £258,086 worth, or £243,082 less than was sold by the party now in power. He thought it would not be disputed by any hon. member that land was always as valuable as money. If the estate was not sold it was there, and when the late Government left office they left £243,082 worth of land, some of which had since been sold by the present Ministry, and which the late Government might have sold, and so have reduced the deficit by that amount. But besides that the new tariff had yielded up to the close of the last financial year an additional revenue of £256,558, which the late Government might have raised if they had been disposed to pursue the same policy as had been adopted by the present Government, and that amount added to £243,082, the difference in the value of land sold by the two parties, made a grand total of £499,640, which might have been raised by the Griffith Government. That would have reduced the large deficit of £602,000 to a little more than £100,000, which would have put a very different face on the financial condition of the Treasury from what appeared when the present Ministry took office. He would deal now briefly with the condition of the labour market. The Treasurer had considered that immigration should be continued on the present lines, to aid and assist, as far as possible, the sugar industry, in consequence of the House agreeing not to continue the immigration of kanakas at the end of next year. If that statement had been made three years hence there would be more logic in it, because there was not likely to be any want of black labour for at least four years more. It must be known to hon. members that the kanaka trade continued up to the end of next year, and those engaged would be available for three years from that time, but yet the Treasurer stated that they ought to continue immigration in consequence of the planters being deprived of black labour. If the hon. gentleman had urged that argument three years from now it might be urged with some show of reason, and it might influence hon. members to a greater degree than it is likely to do now. What branch of business in the country did require labour? He asked where was there a single branch of industry in Queensland for which labour was required at the present time? He was not aware of any, and he had communication with all parts of Queensland. He was not aware of a single instance in which there was a dearth of labour. He was not only borne out by communications he had had from private individuals, but his statement was strongly supported by the report from the Immigration Office. Let any hon. member take up that report and read it, and ask himself where there was a district that was languishing for the want of labour. He was quite sure that the continuation of immigration

could only have one effect. It could only tend to swell the ranks of the unemployed, or to elbow out the labourers already here in consequence of those who might be employed by being recent arrivals, and not knowing the wages that generally prevailed, being inclined to take lower wages in order to obtain employment. He had no hesitation in saying that a continuance of immigration would do infinite injury to the labourers and workers who were engaged in the various parts of Queensland. Take, for instance, the iron trade. A short time ago he was one of a deputation which waited on the Premier, who was attended by the Minister for Railways, and what were the statements made by the ironworkers? Their statements had been borne out again and again, that out of 200 men at one time employed at Mr. Sutton's foundry, only forty were now employed. The same thing applied to almost every foundry in Queensland. So far as the ironworkers were concerned, there was certainly no employment for extra hands. The Colonial Treasurer had very wisely remarked that no mechanics were encouraged to come to the colony; but he found that notwithstanding the depressed condition of the mining fields, and the statement was borne out by both the senior and junior members for Burke, there still continued to be importations of miners. Those hon. members had said that twelve months ago there were nearly 7,000 men employed at Croydon, and in consequence of the want of water those 7,000 had been reduced to 800. That was an alarming reduction. The large number of men who found employment on that field must go somewhere to obtain work, and that ought to have been a sufficient intimation to the Government that no more immigrants were required for a time at least. That ought to have been a sufficient warning, and they should have either eased off immigration or suspended it for twelve months, in order that those men might be absorbed by other industries in the various parts of the colony. Notwithstanding that a large number of men who were thrown out of employment in consequence of the circumstance he had mentioned, in the year 1888 there were between 100 and 200 miners brought to Queensland. They did not require them, and he thought the representatives of the different mining fields would bear him out when he said there was no room in any part of the colony for more hands, but that hundreds and hundreds of miners were to be found on the different fields of Queensland seeking employment and not being able to obtain it. In his own district, and the same thing obtained on the Burrum, if there was a single place in a coal mine vacant there were three or four hands seeking that place, and the most serious cases of privation had occurred in his district during the present year. For three or four months in one portion of his electorate—he referred to Dinmore, where a considerable number of hands had been engaged in the New Chum Mine—a large number of men could only find spasmodic employment. It was only within the last few weeks, when the proprietors of that mine had taken Government contracts at an exceedingly low rate, that the hands formerly employed in that mine were beginning to find their way back again. The district of Dinmore would have reminded anyone who visited it a few months ago of the description given of "The Deserted Village" in Goldsmith's magnificent poem. That was what it really was, as the houses were empty, humpies were standing without tenants, the tents—of which at one time there had been a considerable number—had disappeared, and desolation and evident signs of a decaying district might be observed on all hands. That was the present condition, to a large extent, of the mining field he represented, and it was

the condition generally of the mining fields of the colony. In the face of that he asked whether it was wise, prudent, or just, to bring 134 miners to Queensland last year, at a considerable expense to the colony, when those who had been here for some time were obliged to walk about with their hands in their pockets? Those who had families were obliged to go into debt with the storekeepers, and when they did find employment it would take them a long time to recover themselves and redeem the losses they had suffered as a consequence of enforced idleness. He found that there were no less than 488 general labourers brought out last year, and they were just as plentiful in the colony as the miners. Taking the building trade, so far as Brisbane was concerned, the brick building trade had been and was now fairly brisk, but in spite of that there was a considerable surplus of labour even in that branch of the trade. With respect to the masonry branch of the trade, a deputation that had recently waited on the Minister for Mines and Works had pointed out that that branch of the trade had not been in such a depressed condition for some years past as it was at present. That deputation had informed the Minister that they did not wait upon him to ask for charity, or to ask that relief works should be started, but that if works of a beneficial character could be undertaken and gone on with, the men they represented would be prepared to work on them, and earn the wages generally paid in that branch of trade. At the present time the masonry trade was in a very depressed condition in Brisbane, and that also applied to the colony generally, and as in the case of the miners, there was no room for others to be brought out to compete with those following those trades here. The same thing applied to other branches of business. If they came in contact with any draymen in the town, they would hear the same story. There was no money and no employment, nothing for them but to go into debt to maintain themselves and their families, hoping against hope, and asking anyone whom they thought might be able to give them a little information, when that state of affairs would cease, and when the prosperity they had so long looked for would overtake them. That prosperity was vigorously promised them at the last election by the gentlemen who were then returned to power. Those who thought deeply upon public questions did not expect it, and the people who did expect it were now asking when that boom of prosperity was to come, as they felt deeply the position in which they were placed. It had not come yet. There was another branch of labour that employed a large number of men, and that was the wharf labour in connection with the various ports of the colony. That branch gave a reasonable indication of the state of the general labour market, and when he mentioned that the wharf labourers, most of whom were strong, healthy, able-bodied men, averaged only about 28s. a week—as they were paid by the piece, and were not, as a rule, continuously employed—in Brisbane, and less in other parts of the colony, it was clear that there was no room for other labourers in their midst; but, on the contrary, there was room for the extension of other branches of business to give employment to some of the hands engaged as wharf labourers. Taking the number of men employed as wharf labourers, and the amount they drew as wages, he found they only averaged 28s. a week for the year round. He was sure no member of the Committee would consider that an exorbitant figure for labouring men, most of whom were married and had families to provide for. If they brought other labourers into their midst, many of them, in the absence of employ-

ment in other branches of business, would go to the wharves and would compete with those at present employed there, and still further reduce the meagre wages they were receiving. He trusted the Government would see their way to withdraw the amount of £250,000 for immigration, or to so reduce it as to provide for the introduction only of female domestic servants, who were in demand. He wished to disabuse the minds of hon. members of the idea that he was by any means talking for the purpose of killing time, and delaying the business of the Committee. He was simply attempting to show the condition of the labour market, and the undesirableness of bringing more immigrants into the colony at the present time, and that, so far as immigration was concerned, that loan was unnecessary. He wished to make himself clear upon one point. He was not opposed to immigration if immigrants could be brought here with advantage to the colony—that was to say, if employment were available under fair conditions, with reasonable hours and fair pay. He wished to make himself clear upon that point, because he had seen it stated in the Press that those who were new arrivals in the colony were generally the first to oppose immigration. If the Minister for Lands would, in his wisdom, adopt some system of settling people on the land upon their arrival in the colony, by giving monetary assistance to them, he would render all the aid he possibly could, both inside and outside Parliament, to make the scheme a success. Their industries were depressed east, west, north, and south—both along the coast and inland. He would shortly read some correspondence from some inland places, to show there was no room for labourers in the country, and to show that poverty and misery existed, and that it was not desirable to perpetuate and intensify that evil. It was their business to do all they could to discourage and prevent that continuing. A short time previously, when they had been discussing the Drayton deviation, the hon. member for Toowoomba had referred to the condition of the farmers in his part of the country, and to the absolute necessity of commencing that work which had been projected some years ago. The hon. gentleman showed that it was necessary in order to develop the resources of that district, and he showed that the people had been watching and waiting for a long time for that work to be begun. Persons engaged in farming operations in that part of the country were desirous if possible to get work of that kind near their doors, to assist them in the difficult position in which they were placed owing to the drought and the general stagnation which prevailed. He dared say hon. members on both sides would bear him out when he stated that neither in the capital, nor on the coast, nor in the inland towns, was work generally to be found. Nor, indeed, would the large number of persons out of employment at present be absorbed for some time to come. If the Government could not see their way to stop immigration altogether, they ought to ease it off to a considerable extent, and bring no class of labour to the colony except female domestic servants, who seemed to be in considerable demand. If they could not see their way to withdraw the whole, or a considerable portion of the vote, let them borrow only so much as was required with the balance outstanding from the late loan as would suffice, and spend the money in the settlement of people on the land in the way he had described. He had referred to the condition of several trades in Brisbane, and the same thing obtained so far as wooden buildings were concerned. In all trades in which the artisan classes were employed men were more numerous than were

actually needed. What he had said about the condition of the trades in Brisbane was applicable generally throughout the colony. The one question above all others that was engaging the attention of the working people most was the question of the restriction or stoppage of State-aided immigration for a time at least, and that was the only reason why he was contending that at the present time it was not desirable to vote so large a loan for immigration. If there was room for the persons to be employed when they were brought out, no one would be more desirous than himself to see a large number of his fellow-countrymen and countrywomen brought from the miserable condition they were in in the old country—a wretched and painful condition, without any prospect of amendment in the future, so far as he could see. It had been asked, if money was granted to settle the people on the land, where would be the security for its repayment? As he had said before, there would be some risk in the granting of the first instalment. The money should not be given to every person who said he was going to settle on the land. Some discretionary power should be exercised whereby only those who engaged to settle on the land, and did so, should receive the money. It was impossible for persons to settle on the soil if they had no money in their pockets. In Canada and other countries where the system had been tried, it had been found to be a thorough success. If good, suitable land was available, with a reasonable supply of water, and was made accessible to market by facilities being provided for carrying the produce to the different centres of population where required, he was persuaded that such a scheme would ultimately be attended with a large amount of success, although there might be some slight losses in a few isolated cases. According to the scheme proposed by the Brisbane Trades and Labour Council, each settler was to get a loan of £100, one-fourth of which was to be advanced as soon as he went on the land in the first instance; then as soon as it was proved that he had made improvements to the full value of the first instalment, he should be given a little more. As soon as he had carried out improvements to the value of the second instalment, he might with safety be given a little more to enable him to buy seeds and implements to enable him to carry out his operations. Of course that was only theory, but he was satisfied that if some scheme of that kind was put into operation it would result in considerable advantage, not only to the settler, but to the country as well. With regard to the question of security, he would point out that railways and other public works had been carried out in places where they were of considerable advantage to certain landed proprietors, but he did not know that the Government had ever asked them to give distinct security that the money expended on those works would be repaid within a given period. It had been proved over and over again that railways made in different parts of the colony had enhanced the value of the properties of many persons to such an extent that they had become wealthy in consequence; but no security had been given in those cases, nor did the country obtain full value directly for the money expended. He was convinced that a scheme such as that he had mentioned, if put into operation, would not be so risky or entail such loss as the country had suffered by the construction of some lines of railway. At present their railways did not pay working expenses and provide sufficient return to meet the interest on the capital expended, and yet when it was proposed by the hon. the leader of the Opposition some time ago to impose a land tax upon those persons

who had benefited so largely by the construction of railways, what a howl was raised throughout the country. But he was perfectly sure that the time was not far distant when the country would demand that those persons should contribute to the State a reasonable amount of the profits they derived, and which they themselves had never made. He had endeavoured to show what was the condition of the labour market so far as Brisbane and some other coastal towns and places were concerned, and he would now read for the satisfaction of the Committee portions of a letter which had been written by a person in the interior of the country, in reply to a communication addressed to him by the secretary of the Brisbane Trades and Labour Council, asking what the condition of the labour market was in the inland towns of the colony. He had a number of letters on the subject, but he would not waste the time of the Committee by reading many of them. He would simply refer to one or two to show that the statements he was making were borne out by the information supplied by those correspondents. This letter was from H. C. Smithbarry, Correena Station, Aramac, 24th May, 1889, and he should read only those portions which bore upon the question of immigration:—

"Re State-aid immigration was fully discussed, and your views and method to check the influx approved of. Any further State aid condemned and protested against. This road has been too long and silently endured without a determined stand being made against it by the masses of all Australia. As to information on the subject, as to the state and condition of the unemployed in the Central portion of Queensland, caused by the so long and patiently suffered system of injustice to the workers of the colony, it would be futile on my part attempting to depict cases of suffering which are numberless.

"It is the imperative duty of every working man to take immediate steps to stop at once and for ever so direct an injustice that causes so much misery in our ranks. We are now in the middle of the busiest season, and I can truthfully state that men in large numbers, both shearers and knockabout hands, are daily travelling about seeking employment anxiously, men that I know, who want work if offered. Many have been doing so for months, and are likely to do so for some time to come from the general appearance of the country out here. In the *Capricornian's* issue of the 18th inst. you will find that the police magistrate at Muttaborra has cautioned men from seeking employment out West, and the same caution is given, through the distressed state of the labour market, about Rockhampton, that they must not go East. Now, North and South is omitted, but I am confident the same state exists everywhere, and there is no work in whatever direction men move. Wherever work is obtained, the majority of working men out here consider they belong to the fortunate party, if they are in employment for six months out of the year."

Six months out of the year was surely not too much for men to be able to get employment.

"I will now give you a case, and they are numerous, of a man employed on this station, fit and willing to do any work, be it dam work or other laborious work, who travelled for eleven months—in this time travelling over 2,000 miles—north, east, west, and south—without obtaining employment. He is now anchored here, boundary riding fences, and assures me he intends remaining as long as possible, rather than face the same misery over again, though his present job is not congenial to his taste. As to privation and suffering, I can candidly inform you that many amongst us are frequently well contented with but half feeding, and are solely dependent on the squatter, or their fellow workmen who are so fortunate as to possess money to lend, so that they can buy rations to support a life that is unbearable under existing conditions, and not worth continuing."

That was the condition of the labour market in that portion of the colony, and he might inform the Committee that a petition was going round to the different stations and other places in the country. That petition was being largely signed, and would probably be presented to the House before the close of the session by the hon. member for Barcoo. It

would be found to bear out the statements he (Mr. Glassey) had just made concerning the state of the labour market, and a strong protest would be entered against the continuance of immigration under present circumstances. The paragraph in the *Capricornian* of May 18, which was referred to in the letter he had just read, was as follows:—

"The police magistrate of Muttaborra found it necessary, a few weeks ago, to warn unemployed against going West. We have now to warn them against coming East. The Rockhampton labour market is in a more depressed condition than it has been in for some years. In addition to the ordinary street walkers—the men who only get work when there is a demand for every man in the place—there are many respectable men idle. The recent crisis in commercial circles—though it has not caused that utter ruin that was predicted in some quarters—has had a sufficiently depressing effect, and one immediate result has been the discharge of a good many men. Some houses have had to reduce their staff by fully one-half, discharging employes who had been in their service for several years. Others, again, have had to curtail expenses, by replacing hands who were receiving high salaries with boys and girls willing to work for a few shillings a week. What with these additions to the ranks of the unemployed, and the immigrants who are arriving by almost every mail steamer—ninety are due by the 'Taroba' R.M.S. on Wednesday—there must be fully 200 or 300 out of employment. The police magistrate has been issuing passes for some weeks to those who wished to try their fortunes in the interior, but he has received a reminder from the railway authorities that too many have gone out. This—with the gloomy report made by the Muttaborra police magistrate—has caused him to refuse tickets. While on this topic, we may mention that the station owners in the West are beginning to understand the objects of the Government Labour Bureau, and are sending down to the Assistant Immigration Agent (Dr. Voss) for the labour they require. Then Dr. Voss and the police magistrate are registering the names of the various applicants for situations in the books at the depot, where masters who may be in need of an extra hand can at once ascertain if the man they require is procurable."

That was a description of the present state of the labour market in the district of Rockhampton, and it disclosed a state of affairs such as they had not seen before in the colony of Queensland, at least not since he had been in the colony. The hon. member for Charters Towers could give the state of the labour market in his district, and the hon. member for Gympie could tell them what was the condition of affairs at Gympie. Go where they would—east, west, north, or south, and into any business whatever, whether agricultural or manufacturing—they would find that there was no employment, no trade, no business, no money. He was not an avowed opponent of immigration, because the introduction of immigrants was not a loss to the colony, provided they could be employed when they arrived; but in view of the present condition of the labour market, he asked seriously and honestly whether it was wise or prudent or just on the part of the Government to ask the Committee to grant £250,000 from loan to bring persons here who were not needed, who would find no employment when they arrived, and who would not be inclined to use very fine words with regard to those who induced them to come to the colony? They would do a great deal of harm if they introduced a large number of immigrants into the colony at the present time. He wished now to say a word or two in reference to Mr. Randall, who was acting on behalf of the Government in the old country. From his knowledge of that gentleman, he did not believe he would wilfully misrepresent the colony. Mr. Randall was an earnest, zealous, honest, and enthusiastic worker; but however honest his intentions might be, it was impossible, after being away from the colony for at least five years, that he could be in touch with the people, and know what was the present condition of things. A mar-

vellous change had taken place in the colony during the last five years, and Mr. Randall might unconsciously and unwittingly do an injustice to himself and to persons living in the colony by the way in which he represented the colony to people in the old country. He (Mr. Glassey) had heard very strong expressions used towards Mr. Randall in Brisbane and in different parts of the country, but in justice to that gentleman whom he (Mr. Glassey) had met many times before coming to the colony, he must say that he did not believe Mr. Randall would wilfully misrepresent the colony under any circumstances. He had referred to a petition which was now going round the country for signature, and he had before him a letter on the subject from Mr. Smithbarry, dated Isisford, October 3. It was addressed to Mr. Hinchcliffe, and stated:—

"In reply to yours of the 26th ultimo, I am pleased to inform you that the anti-State aid immigration petition is assuming a great success and ought to be largely signed. I have placed the matter in the hands of Mr. A. Parnell, Secretary, Central Queensland Labourers' Union, who informs me that he will then forward the petition to the Barcoo representative, Mr. F. B. Murphy, to bring it before the House."

Then came a paragraph which it was not necessary to read to the Committee. The writer went on to say:—

"We can expect no reform until we are represented by our own men. I herewith enclose to you a notice from the Employers' Association, which is proof positive what we are to prepare for in 1890. Combined capital is now showing its hand and intends striking us our death blow. We must at once meet them by combined labour; in it is our only strength, but I am at a loss to know how to brace up our members to at once realise our position. We will be helpless unless federation at once takes place."

The notice referred to in the letter was no doubt due to the fact that there were a large number of people seeking employment and competing against each other. Employers naturally took advantage of the overcrowding of the labour market, and reduced the rate of wages. The notice of the Employers' Association mentioned by Mr. Smithbarry was as follows:—

"COLONIAL EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION.

"Notice to Labourers.

"After the 1st day of January, 1890, the wages payable by members of the Colonial Employers' Association to general station hands, whether employed inside or outside sheds, will be not more than 25s. per week.

"By order of the committee,

"SYDNEY SHARWOOD,

"Secretary.

"Colonial Employers' Association,

"Beech street, Barcaldine,"

"14th September, 1889."

That, he thought, showed that it was not desirable that that state of affairs should be perpetuated, because if immigrants took advantage of an overcrowded labour market they would reduce wages. Throughout the whole of Australia, the labour markets were depressed. In Victoria New South Wales, and South Australia there were numbers of unemployed. If Queensland ceased to bring immigrants to Australia, an inducement would be held out to labourers to come here from the South and fill vacancies as they arose, although he was sorry to say there were none at present. He had referred casually to the condition of the labour market generally, as disclosed in the returns from the immigration office here. They doubtless contained somewhat meagre information, in consequence of the agents having to collect the information over vast areas of country. But they could take Maryborough, which was to some extent a manufacturing town; Toowoomba, which was a purely agricultural district; Ipswich, the centre of a large agricultural district, and where there was not much manufacturing going on;

Bundaberg, a most thriving place, which, although there were now black men employed in it, he was satisfied would flourish and develop with white labour. Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and Bowen, and in all those places alike the labour market was in an extremely depressed condition. There were a large number of unemployed who required to be absorbed, and who were waiting anxiously, and were willing to work. In many cases there was extreme destitution, and considerable suffering and privation, and he asked, under those circumstances, was it wise or prudent that the present system should continue, and was it just or reasonable that the Government should ask the House to intensify the evil by voting £250,000 in addition to the money unexpended, in order to bring people to the colony who were not required, who would feel greatly disappointed when they came to it, and who would do infinite harm and damage to those who were already settled in it? He trusted the Government would not press the vote. He perhaps should have something further to say later on, but he sincerely trusted the Government would not insist upon the Committee adopting the motion. If they did, then all he could say was that they were taking a wrong course, one which would not redound to their credit, and one which would not raise the colony in the estimation and respect of the world generally.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he did not know whether the general debate on the question of the loan estimates was over. Hon. members on the other side seemed indisposed to say anything, probably because they had nothing to say, but if they were going to discuss at length the question immediately before the Committee—the question of immigration—he thought the Government ought to pay serious attention to what had fallen from the hon. member for Bundanba, who had given very serious and weighty arguments. He had given him (Sir S. W. Griffith) a lot of information that he did not possess before. He thought the hon. gentleman in charge of the estimate ought to tell the Committee what were the proposals of the Government with respect to immigration. What did they propose to do, and what information was in possession of the Government with respect to the labour market of the colony? There was a Government labour bureau in the colony which received weekly returns, and it ought to be in a position to say exactly at any moment what was the condition of the labour market throughout the colony. If things were in so lamentable a condition as the hon. member for Bundanba had been informed they were, he thought the matter was one for serious consideration. The question of the continuance of immigration was a matter that had been forcing itself upon their attention for several years past. He had never been able to see his way to agree to stopping it, but at the same time the matter deserved serious consideration. He thought, before they proceeded further, they ought to have from the Government what information was in their possession. Of course they were in possession of some information, or they would not have come down with a definite proposal to the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) said the information which the Government were in possession of regarding the state of the labour market, was somewhat different to the information given by the hon. member for Bundanba; and further than that, they had telegraphed to all the labour agents in the colony to get the information up to date, and he thought they would very likely have that to-morrow. The intentions of the Government regarding immigration were very well known, and had been

stated already. They did not intend to continue immigration on the same lines as it had been continued hitherto. If hon. gentlemen would look at the Agent-General's and Immigration Agent's reports, they would see that there had been a gradual decrease in the number of immigrants for the last two years, and they still intended to continue that decrease and introduce only agricultural labourers and domestic servants. They must, of course, bring out assisted immigrants, and by that means some artisans might be brought out, but the Agent-General had been told to carry out his instructions to the letter. He did not know that he need enter into the general question of immigration. He quite agreed with what the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition had said. He was not an ardent advocate for immigration, but he could not see his way to stop it at present. He quite agreed with the hon. gentleman in that respect. The Committee might reply upon the Government taking such steps as not to increase the number of immigrants unduly while the depression in trade existed; but they must have at hand a certain amount of money, so as to be able to use it judiciously when the proper time came for it, and that was why that vote was asked.

Mr. LITTLE said he had listened attentively to the hon. member for Bundanba, and he thought it was extremely selfish of that hon. member to try to prevent his own countrymen coming out here and doing as well as he had done himself. The hon. member had told the Committee that he had come out to the colony only a few years ago, with a family of eight children, and £20 in his pocket, and yet they found the hon. member that day in one of the highest and most distinguished positions in the colony—a member of the Legislative Assembly; and it was unjust for the hon. member to try and prohibit his countrymen from following his own example and coming out to the colony, because they would compete with him.

Mr. GLASSEY: I explained that I did not wish to prohibit them.

Mr. LITTLE said the hon. member had spoken against the vote, and that was the same thing. The hon. member had come out only a few years ago, when the people of the colony had created industries and cut roads, and to tell them now that no more should come to enjoy the same advantages was monopoly. The hon. member's speech had lasted for about two hours, and that was what he had been driving at all the time. It was rather a strange thing that the Australian-born men were the best men in Australia to take immigrants from the old country in hand when they arrived here, and almost to give them the preference when there was any opportunity to assist them. In Australia they claimed to be of the same race as the people of the old country, and they allowed them the same privileges as others. He was not sure that it would not be wise to go as far as they went in America, and provide that no man who had not resided for ten years in Queensland, or in Australia, should have the right to sit in the Legislative Assembly, because it was impossible for such men to understand the wants of the country. He was surprised to hear the hon. member for Bundanba speak in the way he did, as that hon. member, if he had remained in England, would probably to-day be chucking coal at three "bob" a day, or at four "bob" a day if he was a very good man. Reliable men had told him what wages they got in the old country, and the hon. member was only advocating a monopoly when he tried to prevent his fellow-countrymen coming to the colony.

to better themselves as the hon. member himself had done. That was all he had to say upon immigration, and he would support the vote.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he understood the hon. member for Bundanba, in the able speech he had made that evening on that subject, to state that he was not opposed to immigration if it could be introduced to the advantage of the colony.

Mr. GLASSEY: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that exactly embraced the position the Government took up in the matter. The Government would not introduce any immigrants into the colony unless they could be introduced to the advantage of the colony. Hon. members had already seen how immigration had been slackened off owing to the depression existing in the colony during the last few years. They would keep that fact steadily in mind in the future, but it would be extremely injudicious for the Committee to negative such a vote as that before them. They depended very largely for the success of the colony upon the position they held in the financial market at home. They were quite willing to take their money, which had been advanced to them on the most liberal scale up to the present time, and it would be very damaging if it was to go forth to the old country that they in Queensland were willing to take their money, but were not willing to take their people.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is another thing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that was not another thing. They would be justified in letting the people at home know that so long as depression existed in the colony it was not the intention of the Queensland Government to bring out immigrants; but in order to foster the producing industries of the country they must have a judicious system of immigration, and the present Government did not intend to attempt anything else but that at the present time. As hon. members knew, none but agricultural labourers and domestic servants were being introduced.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Miners.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said that miners were not being introduced as such by the Government. Assisted immigrants of that class were undoubtedly being introduced; but he would ask who introduced the assisted immigrants, the tradesmen who came to compete with those already in the colony. It was not the Government, but the tradesmen themselves who introduced them. If the tradesmen, artisans, and miners already in the colony were so satisfied with the success they had themselves achieved that they desired to induce their relations to come out—if they chose to nominate their friends and relations, and were not frightened of the glut in the labour market referred to by the hon. member for Bundanba; if they were so satisfied that the colony was progressive and its industries so vast that they were not afraid of introducing their friends, and the moment they landed were prepared to take them by the hand and find homes for them; the Government would not act judiciously if they interfered in cases of that sort. They might consider it necessary, if nominated immigrants were arriving in too large numbers, to suspend temporarily the nominating clauses of the Act.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That would be a mistake.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he thought it would be a mistake. He had carefully looked through the Immigration Agent's report, and he was satisfied it had been prepared with a considerable amount of care; and the statements given from the various districts of

the colony led him to suppose that there was not a large number of unemployed throughout the colony. He quite admitted that in a capital like Brisbane, and in centres of population like Rockhampton and Townsville, to which the unemployed naturally flocked, and from which it was always most difficult afterwards to dislodge them, there might be temporary depression, and he regretted to see it; but on that account alone he did not think the Government would be justified in entirely suspending the immigration vote. Since the year 1860 they had expended out of a total of loans of £27,000,000 no less than £3,250,000 on immigration, or about one-eighth of the whole of their loan indebtedness had been incurred for immigration.

Mr. SMYTH: It has been money well spent too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he quite agreed with the hon. member that it had been money well spent, and it was to the judicious fostering of immigration during the last few years that much of the success of the colony was attributable. They were increasing their population very rapidly, and although those whose avocations compelled them always to remain in the towns, and who were thus brought face to face with the unemployed, and naturally sympathised with them, might think that there was a dearth of employment in the country, he contended that in a colony like Queensland, whose vast resources were awaiting development, it would be most injudicious to stop immigration at the present time. The hon. member for Bundanba referred, and referred fairly enough, to a certain number of miners who were unemployed; but it was well known that on the Northern goldfields there was plenty of work. Possibly the hon. member for Burke knew for how many, better than he did; but he should say that employment could be got for at least 1,000 men, if they were willing to accept from £3 to £3 10s. per week. There were many mines which were hung up in the North, owing to the inability of the owners of the mines to pay the high rate of wages demanded by the miners. The rate of wages which was demanded by the miners in the North would be considered phenomenal by the miners in older countries, and the progress of the colony was retarded by the demands of the men being so exorbitant that many mines were hung up for want of labour.

Mr. HODGKINSON: Do you know that £9 a week was paid to men for sluicing on the Ovens Gold Field, in Victoria, in 1852?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he did not see what that had to do with the question.

Mr. HODGKINSON: You are talking about high wages in the North.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said there was a matter referred to by the hon. member for Bundanba, to which he had also referred on a previous occasion. He understood the hon. gentleman to say that he would be quite prepared to see the Government spend £50,000 in introducing immigrants if they would also spend £50,000 in settling them on the land, or something to that effect. There might be something in that proposal; but they were already paying a very large premium—not actually in money, but in land—to those who were willing to settle upon the land. It would be very difficult to say how far the State would be justified in making advances to selectors—for that was really what the whole thing amounted to; but they said to the selectors who would go on to the land, "You shall have for 2s. 6d. an acre what everyone else will pay £1 for." Although they did not actually pay £50,000 a year in cash, they gave cheap land to the men who would

bona fide settle upon the lands of the colony. He did not know how such a scheme as that suggested by the hon. member for Bundamba would work. In America it was done to a certain extent, but there it was done by large railway syndicates, who had acquired land on the land-grant railway system, and it was to their advantage to settle people upon their land. He did not know whether they made monetary advances but they made advances of rations, seed, and tools, which amounted to the same thing. Although they had not that system in Queensland, they gave the land at low rates. Considering the readiness with which land was selected whenever good land was thrown open for selection, the Government would not be justified in giving a money bonus to people, in addition to giving them extremely cheap land. There was another matter in connection with immigration. Parliament had affirmed that coloured labour was to cease in the colony. It had been stated repeatedly that the tropical agriculturists must in future depend upon European labour for carrying on their industry. That was the opinion not only of Parliament, but of a great majority of the electors of the colony, he believed. Having affirmed that white labour was to be the labour by which the sugar plantations were to be carried on in the future, they could not now prevent the planters getting the class of labour which they had been told they must use. It would be a most insane thing for the Government to propose to stop the only source of labour for that great industry, which every hon. member knew it was to the advantage of the colony to continue. The Government had fairly stated their intentions in connection with immigration. They believed that it would be inexpedient and injudicious to completely stop immigration, though he believed the time would come when they would have no free immigration; but that time had not yet arrived. The Government would continue the policy which they had carried on last year, by which the minimum number of immigrant ships had been brought out. They had had only one ship per month bringing immigrants, whereas twelve months previous to that, they had had two vessels per month.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Very seldom.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the Government were not going to bring out any other classes of labourers but domestic servants and agricultural labourers.

Mr. AGNEW: A class of mechanics is more required.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said on behalf of the Government he could say that should it be found that the nomination system was being availed of too largely for bringing out mechanics, measures would be taken to check the introduction of a class of labour which might come into competition with the mechanics already in the colony.

Mr. SAYERS said he was opposed to immigration. It was not to the advantage of the great majority of the people in the colony that free immigrants should be brought here at the expense of the taxpayers of the colony merely to benefit a few people. He was not so much opposed to the system of assisted immigration, or nominated immigrants, because by that means they would get a better class of immigrants than by any other means. He was quite prepared to go this far: that they should put Queensland, by a system of assisted immigration, in the same position as America and other countries, where there was no free immigration. He did not think there was any self-governing country, peopled by British speaking

racers, except Queensland, that had a system of free immigration. However they looked at the question it must be seen that at the present time the labour market of the colony was flooded in all directions. It had been said that the population of the colony was increasing rapidly. The population of Charters Towers was increasing rapidly, but the greater number of the additions to the population came from the southern colonies; they were not free immigrants from the old country. In his opinion the money spent by Queensland in bringing out free immigrants was mainly spent in increasing the population of the southern colonies. When he was in Victoria and New South Wales last year it was quite a common thing to hear it said that Queensland was bringing out, at its expense, people to settle in those colonies. He would read on that subject a paragraph from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of September 27, headed, "The influx from Queensland":—

"We published a few weeks back some figures obtained from official sources showing that during the three months ending in August last the arrivals from New Zealand very greatly exceeded the departures to that colony. We are now enabled to present the figures for Queensland, so far as the passage by sea is concerned. While these figures are not so startling as those for New Zealand, they are sufficiently pronounced as to afford food for reflection. During the month of June there arrived from the northern colony by steamer 919 persons, and there left for the northern ports 655 persons, a difference in favour of New South Wales of 264 persons. In July the numbers were: From Queensland, 743 passengers; to Queensland 629, an advantage to New South Wales of 114. In August the figures came to 913 from Queensland, and 685 to that colony, or 228 persons to our good. Up to the 19th of this month 707 persons had come by steamer from Brisbane and northern ports, but the numbers that left this colony for the sister one are not yet available. The excess of arrivals over departures in the three months thus amounts to the respectable total of 606, a sufficient number to indicate that the mother colony is not yet on its last legs. Probably some of the persons included under arrivals passed out of the colony to other places, but the same may be said of those among the departures. In any case there is a sufficient surplus to allow of the southern colonies taking a fair number of them and then leaving a large margin in favour of New South Wales."

That conclusively proved, to his mind, that there was a certain drain from Queensland, and that drain could only arise from people who were dissatisfied with the colony, or from people who had been forced out of the labour market by new arrivals. Only the other day he saw in Brisbane, a whole family leaving for Victoria. They had only been in the colony three months, and the father had preceded them to Victoria, where he thought it would be better to settle. There was a loss in money to the colony of over £100 for fetching out those people as free immigrants, and there must be hundreds of similar cases which never came under the notice of hon. members or even of the authorities. In fact, Queensland was paying a large sum annually to recruit the population of the southern colonies. Those colonies at one time had a similar system of free immigration, but public opinion compelled them to do away with it. At the next general election the question of free immigration would be made a test question in some of the constituencies, and he believed a large number of members would be returned pledged against it. Not long ago the authorities at Hughenden wired down to the central authorities in Brisbane to prevent the police magistrate at Charters Towers from giving free passes on the railway to Hughenden to the unemployed. In Brisbane, he himself had been applied to time after time to get people passes to go North. They had failed to find work in the country, and had drifted back to the metropolis. Every month a large number of people landed in the colony. The only possible way they could get work was

by cutting under those who had already got work. For whose benefit was the system of free immigration kept up? Not the great mass of the people who had to work for their living, but for the benefit of capital, by enabling them to introduce free labour into the colony. The more free labour came into the colony the larger were the profits of the capitalists. The vote asked for was stated to cover two years' immigration. That meant that it was to be spent at the rate of £125,000 a year. In the present state of the finances of the colony the best thing the Government could do would be to reduce the vote considerably. It had been said that the Government were bound to continue the system for some time longer, that it would not do to knock off free immigration altogether, but let them only apply the system of nominated immigration. Not long ago, when the black labour question was under discussion, it was said by the hon. members for Herbert and for Mackay, who were supposed to speak with authority on that question, that if the House refused to continue the Polynesian Act for another five years, all the labour markets of Queensland would be flooded by the unemployed from the sugar districts. Whether that statement—which was thrown out as a kind of threat to prevent hon. members from voting against the extension of the Polynesian Act—was true or not, he could not say, but the Government ought to be in a position to know whether it was correct or not; and yet, in the face of that assertion, they were going to continue to bring in immigrants at the cost of the State. They were going to bring out more people to compete with those already in the labour market, and also those who would be thrown on the labour market, according to the statement of those two hon. members. He was perfectly satisfied that if work was to be done, they would get any number of men from the southern colonies to do that work. There was no lack of labour in the district he came from, which was one where more was spent in wages than in any other district in Queensland. There, at the present time, if anyone wanted one man, he was bound to have twenty applicants to do the work. If a mine wanted a couple of men on a Monday morning there would be fifty trying to get the employment. Those men had come to Queensland, and settled at Charters Towers with their wives and families, because the rate of wages was higher than down south; and wherever there was work there plenty of labour would find its way from the southern colonies. There was not the same slackness of labour now that there was twenty-five or thirty years ago. Victoria and New South Wales were increasing their population very rapidly without free or assisted immigration, and the population of the colonies numbered about 4,000,000 people. Why then should Queensland require free immigration? It ought to be in as good a position to hold out inducements for population to come to it as the other colonies. No doubt it did hold out good inducements; but it was younger than the other colonies, and people who came to it went to those colonies because they had friends there; and they would continue to do so, whether they were brought out at the Government expense or not. He hoped that the Government would see their way to reduce the vote. He had received a communication from his district asking him to oppose the immigration vote, and he should do all he possibly could to prevent £250,000 being voted for that purpose. He knew it was a subject upon which hon. members on both sides held different opinions, but he hoped that a sufficient number would be found to at least insist on a considerable reduction in the proposed vote of £250,000.

Mr. CROMBIE said he was glad to see that the debate had centred at last on the question of immigration, instead of going over all the items on the Loan Estimates. He was very much pleased to hear on the previous night from the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer that the amount spent on immigration last year was £50,000 less than during the year before, but he thought the amount would have to be reduced still lower than that. The hon. member for Bundamba, who was no doubt in a better position than he was to know what destitution existed among the labouring classes, had stated that there was a great deal of destitution. He (Mr. Crombie) had not heard of it; but he did not doubt the hon. member's word for one moment. He knew that in the district he represented there was a certain amount of destitution amongst old men. There was a certain fixed rate of wages in that district—25s. a week and rations—but those old men were not able to earn the wages, and the consequence was that they were entirely dependent on the stations for rations to keep them alive. He did not think that was a proper state of things. According to the Union rules, employers were not allowed to employ men at less than 25s. a week and rations, and those old men, who were not able to earn 10s. a week, were out of employment from one year's end to the other, and were actually living on the charity of the people of the district. There was destitution in that respect, but it was limited, and he was sorry to hear from the hon. member for Bundamba that there was so much destitution among the labouring classes. With regard to the introduction of agricultural labourers to the colony, he thought that also should be stopped for a time. They all knew that the legislation of the colony was against the introduction of coloured labour for the sugar industry, and it was therefore probable that that industry would collapse.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: No, no!

Mr. CROMBIE said at any rate it was the opinion of a great many hon. members, and it was his, that that industry would to a great extent collapse. The consequence would be that thousands of white agricultural labourers would be thrown out of employment. He believed that two-thirds of the white men employed on the plantations would be thrown out of employment within the next twelve months, and he contended that before they introduced any more agricultural labourers they should see what was going to be done with those men—how they were going to get employment. With regard to the sugar plantations, he did not see that it was the business of the country to supply that industry with labourers. The planters should supply themselves with labour; it should not be done at the expense of the colony. With respect to mechanics, he believed the supply was quite sufficient for the present, and that the introduction of that class of labour should also be stopped for a time. In fact, he thought the Government should hold their hand very much more than they had done with regard to immigration; and unless they were prepared to accept a very much lower sum than £250,000 he should vote against the whole amount.

Mr. ANNENAR said he did not suppose any question of greater importance than the Loan Estimates under discussion had ever come before Parliament since Queensland had been a separate colony. The Hon. the Minister for Lands was mistaken when he stated that miners were not assisted as immigrants to the colony. Only a few weeks ago he (Mr. Annear) was in the Agent-General's office in London, and Mr. Archer then told him that the only two classes—

that was of males—assisted to emigrate to the colony were agricultural labourers and miners. If hon. members would look at the list of immigrants by the "Taroba," they would see that there was a great number of agricultural labourers and miners in the free and assisted list.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Coal miners.

Mr. ANNEAR said coal miners very soon became gold miners, and gold miners could very soon become coal miners. He very much regretted that the hon. member for Barcoo was not in his place that evening, and he would take the first opportunity when the hon. member was present to give him his idea on a few matters on which they disagreed. But he (Mr. Annear) would refer on the present occasion to a little matter which, in justice to his constituents, he could not allow to pass. He wanted it to be clearly understood that he did not come into the House by the window, but by the door, and that he was returned by as intellectual and independent a constituency as there was in Queensland. He would retain that position as long as he was a free man and represented, as he then did, the views of his constituents, and he would not allow the hon. member for Barcoo, or any other hon. member, to cast slurs on the people who returned him to the House. While the hon. member was speaking the previous evening he (Mr. Annear) interjected, but not in an offensive way—

"You don't want a railway of your own?"

Mr. MURPHY said he did not want a railway made in his electorate.

"Mr. ANNEAR: There are no people there.

"Mr. MURPHY said the hon. member for Maryborough thought that all the people of the colony lived in Maryborough; but he could tell that hon. member that there were more male adults in his (Mr. Murphy's) constituency than there were in the town that hon. gentleman represented.

"An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Are they white or black?"

"Mr. MURPHY said they were white men. There were more black men in half a mile of one of the streets of Maryborough than in the whole of his constituency. Maryborough was a black man's constituency; his was a white man's."

The hon. member was not in a position to know much about his (Mr. Annear's) constituents, or anything appertaining to the general body of the electors. The hon. member had not to face a contested election; he had sufficient friends to square the bush publican who was to have opposed him. He (Mr. Annear) was assured that if they had both gone to the poll the publican would have been returned by a large majority. He had been looking at the electoral rolls on which the last general election was held, and he found that on the Barcoo roll there were 782 electors, while on Maryborough roll there were 2,104, or 1,322 more than in the electorate of Barcoo, and he believed he was correct in stating that 2,000 of the electors of Maryborough recorded their votes on the day of the poll. There was not an elector in the town of Maryborough who would submit, without resentment, to the same insult from the hands of a Chinaman, as the hon. member met with in his electorate, and, as he (Mr. Annear) was informed, did not resent. He would not say anything more about the hon. member, as he was not present, but he would refer to him again on some future occasion. He wished to discuss the Loan Estimates which were before the Committee. The first item on the Loan Estimates was £250,000 for immigration, the expenditure of which was to extend over a period of two years. He maintained that that was too large an amount to expend on immigration in the present state of affairs in the colony. He thought that if they spent £100,000 in two years, that was quite as much as the colony should be called upon to expend in that direc-

tion under present circumstances. They must have agricultural labourers in the colony, men who would become producers, and keep in the colony the large amount of money which was sent to the other colonies every week for produce. Another class of persons whom it was desirable to introduce were domestic servants. He quite agreed that both agricultural labourers and domestic servants should be assisted, but there were enough mechanics in the colony in every branch of industry without bringing out any more. Hundreds of mechanics and miners were out of employment at the present time; he knew there was a great number of mechanics out of employment in Brisbane.

Mr. AGNEW: They do not want to work.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Nundah said they did not want to work. Was the hon. member like some other hon. members who spoke on that side on the previous evening? Was he going to declare the new political faith he had adopted? They heard members on the Government side get up and declare that they were sent to the House to do a certain thing at one time, but now they had to do something new, and they had to make that declaration. On the previous evening the Press of the colony was referred to in terms of derision, by members sitting on the Government side of the Committee. But the Press, not only in Queensland but in every country, was a great power. It was a power that could not be despised, and outside the Press there were the people of the colony, who were their judges. Hon. members sitting on the Opposition side were identified with the people, and were not frightened of them. They had nothing to fear, and had no occasion to declare a new political faith, as they strictly adhered to that faith and those political principles which they adopted when they were returned as members to the House. The hon. member for Mitchell, Mr. Crombie, stated that agricultural labourers should not be brought to the colony, as the men already employed on the sugar plantations would have to find some new employment. What an absurdity that was! The introduction of Polynesians would not cease until 1890. The other day a ship called the "Roderick Dhu" arrived at Maryborough, having made a trip to the islands and back in about six weeks, and returned with a full complement of islanders. The trade had been regulated by those whom the planters had so much abused, and there were plenty of men for working the sugar plantations. The planters did not want more hands; they got all they required, and it was kicking up a great noise about nothing to say that the sugar industry was ruined by the cessation of black labour. There was nothing to show that the calamity which had befallen the sugar industry was due to anything but the low price of sugar and the drought. He trusted that some member would move that the vote for immigration be reduced by £150,000. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Bundamba that some assistance should be given to strangers coming to the colony to settle on the land. It was really surprising how the people did settle on the land in Queensland, with the little information available at the present time. The Government could not do better than spend a large portion of the amount proposed to be voted for immigration, say, £25,000 per annum, in assisting—

Mr. AGNEW: Manufacturing industries.

Mr. ANNEAR: To assist the people to settle on the lands of the colony. He would go with the hon. member for Nundah. He would assist the manufacturing industries by putting on such an import duty on foreign

manufactures that everything would be made here. That was the way to assist them. Members on the other side, when the Opposition party were in power and proposed a duty of 15 per cent. on machinery, raised a great cry. In the United States there was a duty of 70 per cent., and that was what made the people there so wealthy. There was no need for immigration to the United States. People could cross the Atlantic for £4, and he had no doubt the immigrants who came to this colony brought more than £4 with them. Now the next item was a sum of £1,000,000 for the construction of railways in no specified localities. The leader of the Opposition had so ably treated the question from a constitutional aspect that it would ill become him to refer to it, but he should oppose any vote for the construction of railways unless he knew where they were going to. He was aware that the district he had the honour to represent had been promised a railway to Pialba for many years, and that million was to be held out to them like a bunch of carrots to a donkey. He had been informed that certain persons had been told that the Pialba line would be made out of that million; but he believed there were so many promises made that it would take five millions to pay for all the lines promised. They were not going to take any promise of that kind. The Government had a majority at their back which would vote for them through thick and thin, and they knew what had been going on for the last few days. They had seen that a caucus ruled the Government. But the Government of Queensland could not be carried on very long by caucuses and they must have men behind them who did not require to be called together every day or so to declare what they were going to do. There was another fact he wished to refer to, and that was that the money in the Loan Estimates was to be spent in constituencies returning supporters of the Government. As far as he could see there was not one shilling to be expended in the district of Wide Bay and Maryborough. Hon. members would see that those districts were bunched with Burnett, but they did not want to be bunched with Burnett. Let each district stand on its own foundation. Let the expenditure and revenue go side by side, and see how his district compared with other districts of the colony. At the general election, every member on the other side was promised a railway, and was told that the Government were going to bring down such a railway policy as Queensland never heard of before. Now, where was that policy? Two small lines had been introduced—the railway from Bundaberg to Woongarra and the Dalby towards Bunya Mountain line. That was the policy of the great National party who were going to revolutionise the colony by their spirited policy of railway construction. There was going to be a great boom. Everything was to boom up, but he thought everything had begun to boom downwards. He did trust that the Government would take into consideration that vote of one million. Let them think for one moment of the country outside. They must know the feeling outside. The feeling of people outside was that the million was nothing more nor less than a corrupting vote.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: And what was the £10,000,000 loan?

MR. ANNEAR said every item of the £10,000,000 loan was spent on the works for which it was intended. He thought if the Government were wise they would withdraw that vote, proceed with business, and let the session come to a close. Now he would refer to the expenditure from the loan fund for 1889-90. He presumed that from now up to the end of the financial year was about nine

months. In the first vote there was provision made for immigration to the extent of £123,000 to be spent within that time. He was sure that in the present state of the labour market the people of the country would consider that that amount was far in excess of what should be expended. It would be seen that with the exception of Brisbane every constituency returning members sitting on the Opposition side of the House was altogether outside of the railway vote.

MR. PHILP: What about Maryborough?

MR. ANNEAR said he saw Wide Bay and Burnett down for *nil*. He saw amongst the Southern and Western railways—Beenleigh to Southport, extension to Cleveland, extension to Melbourne street, Dalby towards Bunya Mountains, Brisbane to Caboolture, Gympie to Brisbane, Sandgate buildings and sidings, and extension to city and Fortitude Valley—£395,638.

MR. PHILP: What about Maryborough?

MR. ANNEAR said that for the Maryborough to Gayndah Railway there was a sum of £37,777, but the actual sum was for the second section £23,750. That was put down on the Estimates, but tenders had not yet been called for it, and supposing they were called for by Christmas that would give them six months in which to expend £23,750, which would bring the time for the completion of that one section of railway up to four years. Surely the colony was not to go at that slow pace. That section could have been completed easily in eighteen months at the outside; and the result would be that the contractor who would take the contract for that section would have to be instructed that he must do so much work and no more. The Minister for Railways had led the Maryborough people to believe that they would have a new railway station there, but he saw no money down for that in those Estimates. He supposed it would come out of the unspecified million. The Government should instruct their officers to prepare a schedule of the railways on which that vote was to be expended, and then the Committee could express an opinion as to whether the vote was to be properly appropriated or not.

MR. PHILP: Look again for Maryborough. There is something more down.

MR. ANNEAR said there was a sum of £1,900 down for buildings and sidings, but he would undertake to say that that work had been done long ago, and paid for. He was going to look now at the large expenditure that was to take place at Townsville, and in the North generally; but before doing so he would like to know if it was the intention of the Government to stop dredging the Mary River? It seemed to be, because there was only a sum of £1,000 down for the improvement of the Mary River. He found that there was £15,000 down for Mackay.

MR. PHILP: That is a very important place.

MR. ANNEAR said he was obliged to the hon. member for the interruption, because only the other day they had been told that owing to the action of the Opposition side of the Committee the people had almost all left Mackay, and it was a deserted place. Then Townsville was down for £16,000, and it was interesting to watch the enormous sums of money that had been spent at Townsville during the last ten or fifteen years. If the hon. member for Townsville liked, he would call for a return of the money spent there for the last ten years, and he was sure it would astonish the hon. member when he saw it. At the time of the last census the returns showed that that portion of the North that claimed to be a separate colony had only about one-fourth of the population of Queensland. They had been told

by hon. members opposite that there had been a great exodus of population from the North lately, and he supposed the population now could not be more than about 60,000, and yet there was a proposal to construct a new gaol at Townsville to cost £28,000. He did not wish to say anything unkind about Townsville, as he knew a large number of people who had lately gone there, and expected that by the time the next general election took place, say, in about twelve months, they would be able to claim for Townsville that she would then be a portion of the white North.

Mr. PHILP : She is now.

Mr. ANNEAR said he expected she would be in about that time. That town was represented by one of the staunchest protectionists in the colony, and also by one of the greatest free-traders in the colony, and almost every bit of timber used in Townsville was brought from America.

Mr. PHILP : From Maryborough.

Mr. ANNEAR said it used to be at one time ; but it was now brought from America.

Mr. PHILP : You have put the price up.

Mr. ANNEAR said the price had been put up by putting on an extra duty, and he hoped the House would come to its proper senses in that respect, and, instead of having a duty of 3s. a hundred on dressed pine, they would have a duty of 6s. a hundred, and stop the importation of American timber. To show how the Americans protected their own people, he might say that if an artist of any other country painted a picture it had to pay a duty of 35 per cent. when brought into the United States ; but if an American artist left the place of his birth and painted 1,000 pictures in another country they would be allowed to go into the United States free because they were the work of an American citizen. He trusted the Government would inform the Committee as to their intentions regarding the long promised public works in the Wide Bay district, and particularly the Pialba railway. The Government had constructed a railway to Emu Park, they had now agreed to a line being constructed to the Burnett Heads, a line had been constructed to Sandgate, and lines had been taken to Cleveland and Southport. But in his district they were unable to get a line to Pialba, which one-eighth of the population of the colony frequented from time to time. That place was to be ignored. He was sure the hon. member for Burrum approved of that line, and he hoped the hon. gentleman had sufficient influence in the Cabinet to have a sum of money placed on the Estimates for the construction of that line. If that line were one of those proposed to be constructed out of that million vote, why not let them know at once ? He would be satisfied if all the works which were to be constructed out of that money were properly scheduled and placed before the Committee, when they could be either passed or rejected as the majority decided, and the minority would have to submit to that decision. He had no desire to waste the time of the Committee, and as he supposed every hon. member would have something to say, he would reserve what he had to say for another occasion. He trusted the Government would see their way to allow them to return to their various avocations, and not waste time, and time would be wasted if they were to discuss that vote, which was of a character such as had never been heard of in any Parliament in the Australian colonies. The Minister for Mines and Works had on the previous night made a very able speech, but he had laboured very much towards the close. He had had to go to Victoria, and from there to

New Zealand, and he had had to read a great deal from books to back up his arguments. The hon. gentleman had had to do what the hon. member for Rockhampton had charged the Opposition with when the gag had been referred to. From *Hansard* it would be seen that two of the greatest debates they had had during the session had led to no result—the debate on the sugar industry and the debate on legal reform. The hon. gentleman who introduced the subject of legal reform had quoted largely from books and had filled up the columns of *Hansard*, and had helped to make it the voluminous work it would be by the close of the session. The hon. members for Rockhampton and Barcoo, had on the previous night said that the Opposition were swayed by what they read in the newspapers. Since then he had gone to the library to look at the newspapers published in the colony. Hon. members must admit that the newspapers represented public opinion, with the exception of such papers as the *Darling Downs Gazette*—a paper which had never had any influence, and which belonged, he believed, chiefly to a member of the Government. It was only papers of that class which defended that amount of £1,000,000 ; but, excepting that class of paper, there were not half a dozen journals in the colony which said a word in advocacy of that money. He had every respect for the newspaper Press. They had criticised him very severely, but he had learned a great deal from them, and he thanked them for their criticism. They had every reason to be proud of the newspapers of the colony, and especially of the Brisbane papers. Then the *Wide Bay News* and the *Maryborough Chronicle*, which had fought so hard to return a member to the other side, were papers to be proud of ; but what did the *Maryborough Chronicle* say now ? Let hon. members look at the *Toowoomba Chronicle*—a paper which was bought largely because it contained good literature, and its leaders were worth reading. Those were the papers which represented the public opinion of Queensland. The leader of the Opposition had on the previous night indicated the true wish of members sitting on the Opposition side. They had no desire to sit on the Government benches. For his part he preferred sitting where he was. If they read the records of Parliament they would find that day after day it had been government by the Opposition, and not by the Government in power. Every suggestion made by the Opposition had been accepted by the Government, and they had done well in accepting those suggestions, because they emanated from men who knew the requirements of the colony much better than the Government, and who were better able to carry them out.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he would confine his remarks to the item of £250,000 proposed to be voted for immigration. As an Australian born, he was of opinion that Queensland could only grow to be a prosperous and powerful nation in proportion as the population was increased from all legitimate sources. A great factor in the prosperity of the Australian colonies had been the stream of people which had been flowing in from the United Kingdom and from the Continent of Europe for many years. But while he was of opinion that the colonies generally were indebted to that cause for their prosperity, and while he was of opinion that the colonies—and Queensland in particular—had derived very great benefits from the system of immigration which had been carried on ever since the colony had entered on its career as a colony, it was desirable that they should exercise a little discrimination. If they looked back to the time when the colony in its wisdom had despatched a gentleman, who was now a highly

respected member of that Committee—he referred to the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan—to induce people to come to Queensland and make it their abode, they would find that the foundation of a great deal of the good they were now enjoying was laid by the efforts of the hon. gentleman he had referred to. The results he achieved were very different from those of the two very able and intellectual men who had been despatched with a similar object by the Government of the mother colony of New South Wales. The efforts of Messrs Parkes and Dalley resulted in absolute failure. He believed only one man was induced to come to the colony of New South Wales, as the result of the united labours of those two talented gentlemen, and that man was hardly physically capable for very much hard work, as he was minus a leg. The achievement of those two gentlemen was hardly one that any man—let alone men of such calibre as those two gentlemen—would feel disposed to crow over, and congratulate himself upon. Contrasted with the efforts of those gentlemen, the success that attended the efforts of Mr. Jordan stood out with a conspicuousness that rendered that gentleman worthy of all honour and credit. The colony had never yet fully understood the full measure of the obligations under which it was laid to Mr. Jordan for the great efforts he put forth and the good he was instrumental in achieving. Since then the colony had been very well represented by gentlemen who had been despatched to the United Kingdom for the purpose of setting before the people there the claims of Queensland as a field for immigration, notably by Mr. Randall, the present immigration lecturer. He dared say many hon. members were personally acquainted with Mr. Randall, and personally knew the genuine enthusiasm with which he prosecuted his duties as immigration lecturer in the old country, and even those who had not any acquaintance with that gentleman personally must be acquainted with the character of the work he was doing, from the accounts that appeared in the newspapers from time to time indicating the success that was attending his efforts to induce suitable persons to make a new home on this side of the globe. Mr. Randall, while picturing fully the advantages accruing to persons coming to the colony, did not, he thought, overcolour his pictures. He made them sufficiently attractive without being deceptive, and the colony had a great deal to congratulate itself upon in the class of people that Mr. Randall had been successful in sending out. But in spite of all Mr. Randall's vigilance, it must be admitted that a few undesirable persons came out, who were not long in the colony before they found their way either into the lock-up or into the asylum for the insane at Woogaroo. That, however, was not Mr. Randall's fault. He (Mr. Rutledge) was aware that the Government had promulgated instructions by which immigration at the present time was to be restricted to farm labourers and domestic servants, though the credit was not due to the present Government solely. The Government that preceded the present Government became fully alive, some time before they ceased to exist, to the necessity of putting some kind of limitation upon the introduction of mechanics and other persons of that class from the old country, and did limit the immigrants to be introduced at the cost of the colony to the classes of persons he had named. But in spite of all that it was found that there was a plethora—a perfect glut—of labour in some parts of the colony, especially in the more populous parts, with, as its concomitant, a very great deal of real distress. It had caused him considerable pain to become aware, as he had become during the last six or twelve months, of many instances of excellent

men, who were not only agricultural labourers but capable of doing almost any kind of labour, and who were unable by any efforts they could put forth to find anything more than intermittent employment, or were not able to find employment at all. While it might be perfectly true that some of those persons who had been agitating at Townsville, demanding employment from the Government, were what were designated as “loafers,” who, while clamouring for work, hoped they would get no work to do, he was sure that many of those persons were deserving persons anxious to find employment. It had come to his knowledge that in Brisbane there were many persons—sober, intelligent, and careful men—eager to work with pick and shovel or at any other outdoor employment of that kind, who were unable to earn even the paltry few shillings a day which were the wages of the labourer. In view of those circumstances the Government would do wisely to take into their serious consideration the necessity of doing something to still further restrict immigration. He had recently had a communication from his constituents at Charters Towers on that particular subject. They intimated to him that in their belief it was very desirable that something should be done to limit the wholesale introduction of immigrants into the colony at the present time. When persons up there felt the necessity of making a representation of that kind, he was bound, as their representative, to give effect to their views in that Committee as far as he possibly could. It was not a very pleasant thing to find that after the calamitous seasons of the last few years a large number of honest, hard-working men were out of employment, and it did not seem to him a good policy for the Government, aware as they must be of that fact, to pour into the colony a constant stream of immigrants, at the rate of a shipload a month, as if there was a scarcity of labour in the colony. He was very sorry to hear from the hon. member for Mitchell, that out on the stations in the far West the squatters were obliged to exercise charity to the extent they did—that there were men walking about there who actually got their livelihood from the kind-heartedness of the station-owners, who either gave them bread to satisfy their necessities, or gave them employment for which there was no necessity, in order to find them in something to eat. That was a very undesirable state of things indeed. It was hoped that with the inauguration of the new régime, with the advent of the present Government, after all the promises they heard on the subject, the state of things that existed previously would have been done away with. It was said, and believed by many people—especially in the outside squatting districts—that with the downfall of the Griffith Government there would come in plenty of employment for all classes of labour on the stations in the interior, and, acting on that belief, members representing Western constituencies were returned unopposed as supporters of the party now in power. That fact spoke for itself as to the feeling in the minds of the people in the Western districts, that there would be ample employment for labour of all kinds when the new Government came into power. Now they heard an avowed supporter of the present Government say that there was too much labour for the squatters to absorb in the Western districts of the colony, and he counselled the Government to do something towards limiting the number of persons who were coming into the colony at the present time. It was not a party matter at all. Surely a man might have his opinion upon the subject of immigration without being obliged to look to the leader of either side of the House for guidance as to how

to vote. He could assure the hon. member for Mitchell that if he would move an amendment in the direction of reducing the item for immigration, he would have his hearty support. He was not opposed to immigration as immigration, as he believed the colony was capable of absorbing a certain amount of labour from year to year; but they should look at the state of the labour market at the present time and exercise a little discretion. He should be very sorry to see immigration absolutely put a stop to, and while he believed protection was the right thing for the colony, and while he believed that if they had a proper system of protection in existence there would be such an ever-increasing demand for all classes of labour that two ship-loads per month of immigrants would not satisfy that demand, they had not yet arrived at that point. They had not yet made protection pure and simple part of the public policy of the colony, but he hoped they were tending in that direction in their legislation by degrees, and until that time arrived, the Government were those to whom the people looked to take special steps to prevent the existence of anything like distress arising from the dearth of employment. He should be very sorry if the picture drawn by the hon. member for Mitchell was likely to be realised—that in consequence of the stoppage of the introduction of coloured labour, the result would be that the sugar planters would find themselves obliged to suspend operations, and drive the white men now in their employment to look for work elsewhere; and not only those who were engaged in the manufacture of sugar, but those who were engaged in its cultivation. He hoped there was more inherent vitality in the sugar industry than the hon. member's speech seemed to indicate; and if such were not the case, it would be a very calamitous thing for the colony, especially as those men would have first claims for employment, by reason of their having been a long time in the colony, when there were numbers of others being brought free into the colony, in excess of requirements. The Government should consider that matter, and also the present over-gorged state of the labour market, and the unfavourable seasons there had been, and place some limit upon the introduction of immigrants. The hon. gentleman, speaking in the name of the Government, had spoken about the impropriety of interfering with their system of immigration, and he agreed that it would be a very unfortunate thing if they were to stop immigration altogether. But the hon. gentleman could be perfectly consistent with his own views and with that which was best for the interests of the colony, by preventing the immigration of a large number of those who were coming to the colony at the public expense, and were being driven in self-defence, as some of them were, to New South Wales and Victoria. He had been looking for a passage which he had come across in a book in the library a few nights ago, but he had not been able to discover it. That book had evidently been written by a person well acquainted with the internal affairs of Queensland, and he said that it was a notorious fact that large numbers of persons who were introduced into the colony of Queensland by the free immigration system immediately proceeded to New South Wales and Victoria; and the statistics quoted by his hon. colleague, from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, went to confirm that statement. Then they must remember that no register was kept of the number of persons who travelled south by land. There could be no doubt that in a large metropolis like Sydney, and with old established industries like those in New South Wales, and the larger area under cultivation, there were circumstances that tended to make that colony a very attractive picture to anyone who came to Queensland for

the first time. They must remember, also, that immigrants who landed in Queensland in summer time took a very unfortunate prejudice against the colony and against the climate, and jumped to the hasty conclusion that the climate would not suit them or their families, and they sought the more congenial condition of things, which they expected to find in the southern colonies. Many persons came out honestly intending to remain in the colony, but they thought the climate would not suit them, so they went down south, only, very often, to swell the number of the unemployed there. That was one of the sources of leakage, of the extent of which the Government must be fully aware, and in that way the benefit which was expected to accrue to the colony from that large expenditure of public money was absolutely lost. Simply because they were believers in immigration, why should they go on in the hope that fortune would in some way or other provide for the needs of those they were bringing out? Some hon. members contended that the farm labourers they were bringing out did not interfere with the condition of the labour market on the goldfields of the colony; but that was a mistaken contention altogether, because on the goldfields many persons who were not skilled miners were still able to use a pick and shovel as well as gold miners, and were able to do a great deal of work. He asserted as a fact that many of those men who were landed at Townsville as agricultural labourers, went on to the goldfields in the hope of finding employment there. The result was a congestion of the labour market at Charters Towers, which made the people there feel acutely on the subject. He did not want his constituents to fall out with the idea of immigration; he should be sorry if the continuation of the evil under which they were labouring caused a feeling of dissatisfaction with immigration, and induced them to raise protests against immigration as immigration; and he considered that it was the duty of the Government to find out the weakness of the system, and apply a prompt and effectual remedy. The prompt and effectual remedy would be for the Government to consent to the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Mitchell to reduce the vote. The amount proposed was intended to cover a period of two years, at the rate of £125,000 a year. Would the colony suffer if, instead of introducing immigrants at the rate of £125,000 a year, the Government were to introduce them at the rate of £75,000 a year for two years? That would not be discrediting or discouraging the system of immigration, but would be simply regulating the method of applying the principle, and doing away with the feeling of dissatisfaction that existed on the subject. He believed it was the duty of the Government to popularise to a greater extent than they had hitherto done the system of immigration in connection with land orders provided for by the Land Act of 1886. That was a system which the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, was never weary of asserting was the secret of his success as an immigration lecturer; and he was delighted the other day to make the discovery that no less than four members of that Assembly were among the fruit of that hon. gentleman's efforts on behalf of immigration. While there should be a limited amount of free immigration, the kind of immigration the Government should seek to foster was the immigration of persons paying their own passages under the inducement held out by the excellent system of land orders.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is a rotten system.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he knew the hon. member for Stanley held a strong opinion on the question; but he understood the hon.

member's objection to be not so much to the system as to the fact that the land orders were not transferable.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They are a fraud on that account.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said his opinion might not be worth much on the point, and he did not want to force it on other members; but he held to his opinion all the same. One result of that system of land orders was that thirteen ships came to the colony with persons who paid their own passage and brought over a million of money to the colony. Those persons stayed in the colony and themselves became employers of labour in time; and if the system of land orders were more strongly encouraged, there would be a repetition of the kind of thing that followed the appointment of Mr. Jordan as agent in the old country. If people would come to the colony paying their own passages, they would be welcome and would be under no obligation to the colony; but if the land order system was an inducement, and people were prepared to come under that system they ought to be encouraged to come, because an increase of that class of person would help to absorb the redundant population floating about unable to find employment. He hoped the Government would not misunderstand anything he had said on the matter. He repeated, that he was not an opponent of free immigration as such. Many of the men brought out at the expense of the colony had stayed in the colony, and had done well for themselves and their families; and he believed that more would do so in the future; but he contended that the Government must proceed cautiously. A healthy man could only absorb a certain amount of solid nutritious food, and if he gorged himself even with nutritious food when he was not feeling very well, the result was likely to be a condition of dyspepsia. And it was the same with the body politic. If the colony, when in a delicate condition of health financially, induced by the disastrous seasons, tried to absorb or take in immigration to excess, it would not be able to assimilate the excess taken in, and the result would be a condition of dyspepsia as regarded the body politic, which would not be good either for the State or for the immigrants themselves. He hoped the hon. member for Mitchell would move his amendment, and that the amendment would be carried.

Mr. PALMER said that as a native of Australia, he felt ashamed of the manner in which the colony had been spoken of by men who had attained a position honourable to themselves and were a credit to the country which they pretended to despise. He considered that the good name of the colony had been trailed in the dirt, through the untruthful statements made with regard to the extreme destitution said to prevail. If such was the case, how was it that the Agent-General said in his report, on page 2:—"It is a pleasing fact that a large number of people who went to the colony were induced to do so by encouraging reports received from friends who are doing well there." They would not have brought their friends out to a land full of destitution, as described by the hon. member for Bundanba and other hon. members. He did not think it was fair for people who had been in this colony for a few years only—people who had seen hardly anything of the colony—to jump at the conclusions they had done with regard to the condition of the country. It only required immigration of the right sort to make the land full of employment. According to statistics, 215,000 immigrants had been introduced since separation, and he would like to ask what the colony would have been had

it not been for those immigrants, and the money they brought and helped to bring to it? The very thing that would cause employment, if there was a want of it, was to bring more people into the country. He did not care what source the fund came from, immigration must benefit the State. If it came from the Customs revenue, every immigrant who arrived in the colony paid over £10 a year Customs duties, so that in two years he had paid for his passage, and not only that, but he made employment for others. If the fund came from the lands, then the land revenue could hardly be put to a better use than bringing people here. They saw by the report of the Minister for Lands last year the great number of farms that had been surveyed, and were lying open for occupation, and every year those farms were being taken up by people who had been here for a few years; who, like the hon. member for Bundanba, had come out perhaps with very little experience and very little money, and who, after a few years colonizing, took up land, became employers, and made room for others. The workman of to-day was always the employer of to-morrow in these colonies, provided that he was a man who desired to work and make an independence for himself. If they looked at the savings bank figures and the deposits in the various land banks they would testify to the enormous latent wealth there was amongst the working people of the colony. The broad argument in favour of immigration was that it would assist to develop the enormous material wealth that was lying latent in all parts of the colony. He was not afraid of the dyspepsia the hon. member for Charters Towers talked about. There was not the slightest likelihood of that condition of dyspepsia arising so long as they had such unbounded resources lying dormant, waiting to be developed, for want of the very people who were starving in the old country, and whom they should be only too glad to bring here. With regard to the statement about the departures from the colony, and that their immigration system was simply one for feeding the other colonies, hon. members who made those statements must deny the position as disclosed by the figures, because the excess of arrivals over departures during 1888 was 11,805 coastwise, not including passengers by rail. Taking the matter in any shape, there could be no doubt that the colony was benefited by the inflow of immigrants. There was nothing so calculated to make wages high. He believed in high wages, because a country was prosperous in proportion to the number of people in it, and the rate of wages paid for labour. Nothing could tend so much to increase the prosperity of the country as the introduction of people. When he came to the colony before separation he remained for a time in the Wide Bay district, and the wages then paid to shepherds, really good willing men, who would do splitting, fencing, or any work they were asked, was £36 a year; but no one would now think of offering a new arrival, who knew nothing of the ways of the country, such wages as that. All the arguments they had heard that evening with regard to the unemployed, the want of employment, and the danger arising from having an over-peopled colony, could have been used with the same force and applicability when there were only 1,000 people in the colony. It might then have been said that there were people out of work, as no doubt there were, and according to the arguments of some hon. members they should drive out all the unemployed and then there would be employment for those who were left. But directly they did so there would be another lot of unemployed. He ventured to say that if there were a million people in the colony there would be more

employment and more sources of employment than there were now. He contended that the only way by which they could develop the resources of the colony and make it as prosperous as it was bound to be was by a judicious system of immigration. They talked about competitive labour, but nothing was said about competitive capital. The Government were introducing capital every year, private individuals were doing the same; there was competition in that, and he thought the Government would be very much to blame if they brought a proposal before Parliament to introduce a £5,000,000 loan if they did not also take some means to induce people to come here and spread all over the colony. The result of the expenditure of loan money had been to develop their lands, their mines, and all the various industries of the colony, which were all only in the nursery yet, only just commencing; and the only means of encouraging them was by bringing immigrants here, who, like the hon. member for Bundanba, were a credit to the colony and to the country they came from. He was surprised that the hon. member for Bundanba, a man of common sense and reason, should assume to himself the position he had that evening. Why should he deny to others that which he himself had benefited so much by. It was an assumption of arrogance, and he was surprised at the conduct of the hon. member, who would not, he hoped, take offence at his remarks, because they were not intended to be at all offensive. But he deprecated a new hand coming in and laying down laws for the guidance of the colony, which, if carried out a few years ago, neither he nor a good many others would be in it now. He believed all the past experience of the colony had proved that immigration was not the cause of the want of employment, or of low wages, but that it had arisen from various other causes. If the crowd that assembled at the head of Queen street every evening was to be taken as a sample of the unemployed, he was certain that no contractor for railways or other works would be able to pick out half a dozen decent men from the lot. They were not the stuff that working men were made of. He believed that good reliable men could always get work, and he hoped that good wages would always be paid for a good day's work. He did not wish to depart from the question before the Committee, except in one matter, and that was the complaint made by the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, that that district had not been supplied with a railway to Pialba. He was so surprised at that remark that he turned to table Q, in the Treasurer's Statement, and there found that the railways in the Wide Bay and Burnett district returned during the year 1888-9, a percentage of 5s. 5d. That was the class of railways the hon. member wanted increased by a line to Pialba.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That was what the hon. member complained of; he said the Burnett Railway brought down the percentage of the others.

MR. PALMER said they were all under the one head, the same as the Northern railways were under one head; and the Southern railways were under one head. That was the only matter he wished to refer to besides the question before the Committee. He hoped that the immigration vote would be discussed and settled, so that they could get on with the next item—the vote of £1,000,000 for railways.

MR. MURRAY said he had long held the opinion that they had arrived at that stage in the history of the colony when they should

abolish free immigration altogether, and devote the money they were spending on free immigration to the encouragement of voluntary immigration. The system of free immigration had a tendency to attract the worthless and idle classes from the old country, and it was their duty to avoid that, and offer inducements to men who had shown in their native country sufficient industry, perseverance, and energy, to accumulate a little money, and who had sufficient enterprise to leave their native land and go to other countries for employment. It was a great mistake to import people into the colony, and the moment they arrived here to clamour for protection in order to find them employment. It was a contradiction of the order of things to do that. In this colony, with its large extent of territory and enormous resources, there was sufficient employment without protection, and it ought to be the duty of the Government to do all they possibly could to encourage a voluntary system of immigration. He thought it would be admitted that there was no country in the world where the people as a class enjoyed more prosperity and comfort than the people of Queensland did at the present time. Why then should they be so anxious to rush into the state of things that existed in countries in the old world where the population was dense? Another point was that there was at the present time an enterprising and industrious class of people who were not only willing to pay their passages to the colony, but were also willing to pay a premium of £30 in the shape of a poll tax to be admitted here. If it was worth the while of a Chinaman to pay his passage and a premium of £30 to share the good things of the colony, it was certainly more worth the while of an Englishman to do so. He was satisfied that if they were to abolish free immigration it would be a good thing for the colony. No one appreciated anything that was easy and cheap; it was those things which were difficult to get that people appreciated most, and if it were once known that no more free immigrants would be admitted into the colony he believed they would have a crowd of voluntary immigrants coming from all parts of the world. They had an enormous territory, which offered employment for all classes of people that could possibly come to the colony. Men in all parts of the world when they thought of improving their condition, looked around to find the country which was most sparsely populated, because they there found opportunities which could not be found in thickly populated countries. Queensland was, he believed, the only colony that was carrying on the system of free immigration at the present time, and he was confident that if that system were abolished the best men and women would be attracted to these shores. He would certainly support a reduction in the vote, and would even go further and support any motion that would have the effect of abolishing free immigration entirely. The people here were prosperous and comfortable, and they should not be anxious to rush into the state of things which prevailed in the old country. The more dense the population of a country was, the greater were the extremes of social conditions of wealth and poverty. They had better leave well alone; the colony would be populated soon enough without free immigration. At the present time it was about the only outlet for the surplus population of the old world, and if instead of spending, as was proposed, large sums of money on free immigration they devoted the money to the encouragement of voluntary immigration in the form of water conservation, well-boring and other things of that sort, it would be much better than introducing the idle and worthless population of the old world, as he believed they did now. Let them abolish free immigration once and for ever.

Mr. CROMBIE said he was not a believer in free immigration in any shape or form. He had often been asked why he was a protectionist. He now declared to the Committee that he was a protectionist, and he believed if they had protection pure and simple in the colony there would be no occasion for free immigration; they would have people coming to it of their own accord, and paying their own passages. He did not, however, think it would be a good thing at the present time to do away with immigration altogether, because they proposed to go to the old country and ask for a loan, and unless they could show to the old country that they intended to increase the population by immigration, they would not be likely to get the loan on such favourable terms as they otherwise would. He was, therefore, of opinion that they should retain a portion of the amount in that estimate. Under other circumstances he would vote against the immigration vote entirely. If they had protection pure and simple he would be against one shilling being spent for bringing any man to the colony who could not pay his own passage or get somebody to pay it for him. There was a great requirement at the present time for domestic servants, and he believed that if double the number now introduced were brought out they would find ready employment in all the towns along the coast. The Government should devote their attention particularly to bringing out domestic servants. He saw a certain member opposite laugh, but it was a very serious matter. If they brought the women to the country they would settle the men, and they would then have an immigration of another sort altogether that would not cost the country anything; they would have a native born population. He was happy to see the leader of the Opposition laughing, and thought the hon. gentleman approved of what he was saying. He (Mr. Crombie) objected to free immigration altogether. He did not think that any man should be prohibited from coming to the country if he paid for himself, and under the present system it would be well to continue assisted immigration, because people who sent home for their friends, and paid a portion of their passage money, probably found employment for them when they came here. With regard to domestic servants, he thought great care should be exercised in securing a desirable class of women—strong and able women, who would be able to work for themselves, and who would be likely to find good husbands in this country. There were plenty of men ready to marry them if they were in the colony, but the large majority of the population were males, and he thought that more women should be brought to the country. He had spoken on that question before, and he felt every word he said. He wished to propose an amendment to reduce the vote to £150,000. He therefore moved that the vote be reduced by £100,000.

Question—That the sum of £150,000 only be granted for immigration—put.

Mr. MACFARLANE said before making a few remarks on the amendment, he would call attention to the remarks of the hon. member for Carpentaria, who had criticised the speech of the hon. member for Bundamba. He thought hon. members would remember that that hon. member emphasised the fact that he was not opposed to immigration, so long as the colony was able to absorb the labour. In reference to the amendment proposed, it had his sympathy under the circumstances. If the colony was in a better position, he should vote for the motion as it stood, but under the circumstances he should vote for the amendment. A great deal had been said about increasing the immigration of domestic servants. He was not opposed to bringing out as many domestic

servants as the colony could absorb, but he would point out that a great many of those who were imported ultimately left for the Southern colonies. He would give the experience of his own household for the last twelve months. Good servants were very scarce in Ipswich, but he had had five within the past twelve months, and three out of that number had actually left for the southern colonies.

The POSTMASTER - GENERAL: They could not have been satisfied with their place.

Mr. MACFARLANE said one of the five came from the North of Ireland. She was employed for six months, and then left for the south, and had actually been trying to induce four others to follow her. He referred to that as an illustration of what took place, and it would be very well if the Government could get some statistics as to the class of people who were leaving Queensland for the Southern colonies. A great number of them were female domestic servants, and they simply got a passage to Queensland with a view of visiting their friends in the other colonies. He wanted also to give an illustration of how careful the Government were in selecting the class of people to be sent out here. A short time ago one of his constituents wanted to get a friend of his out to Queensland. He made application to get his friend and his wife and two children out. The man had been fifteen years employed in England as a ploughman, but at the time of the application he had left the country, and gone to London to take a position in a coffee palace. The Agent-General therefore refused to send him out, because he was not a farm labourer. He mentioned that to show how careful they were in the London office, that none but farm labourers and domestic servants were sent out here, and yet a great many mechanics came out as agricultural labourers. In reference to the proposed reduction of the vote, a great deal might be said in favour of it. But at that time of night it was no use repeating the arguments made use of by other hon. members. He was quite in favour of the reduction in consequence of the labour market being overstocked. When it had been eased a little in a year or two, when everyone was satisfied with his position, and the people were enabled to employ labour more freely, then immigration might very well be increased again. He believed that immigration had to a large extent been the salvation of the colony. Under the circumstances, he thought it would be wise on the part of the Committee to reduce the vote from £250,000 to £150,000. He had intended to make some remarks in reference to the speeches made by two hon. members on the previous night, but neither of them being present, he should take some other opportunity of doing so. If the amendment was pressed to a division he should vote for it.

Mr. McMASTER said that hon. members who had spoken on the question all seemed to agree with immigration in a certain form. The hon. member for Bundamba did not say that he was opposed entirely to immigration, but that he believed there should be a certain class of people brought to the colony, and that they should be given some assistance in settling upon the land. He (Mr. McMaster) believed it would be a very bad stroke of policy for the Government to stop immigration altogether. But they should be very careful what class they brought to the colony. When the question was before the House on previous occasions he had raised his voice against a certain class of men being brought to the colony at the expense of the taxpayers. He objected to their introducing those who were loafing about the streets at home, who were good for nothing at home and who

would be good for nothing here. They would be only a burden upon the State, and would be filling the gaols and lunatic asylums. The cry against immigration was nothing then; it was not a cry of the present year, or last year, or ten years ago. He had heard it thirty-four years ago. It would be thirty-five years next January since he landed in what was called Moreton Bay, and he remembered that only a short time after that the cry was raised that there were too many immigrants coming into the place. He was not in the fortunate position of the hon. member for Bundanba when he arrived. He considered that hon. member a small capitalist with his family of eight children, and £20 in his pocket. He had not as many shillings himself. He said that any man who turned his hand to anything in an honest way would get on in this colony. When he came out wages were much lower than they were now. He had received £37 a year when he was first engaged in the colony, and they could not get a farm labourer now, a man who could hold a plough—and he could have undertaken to do that—for less than £1 a week. Another advantage the hon. member for Bundanba had over him was that the colony paid to bring out that hon. member, and he had had to pay for himself. However, he had never regretted coming to Moreton Bay, nor did he think the hon. member for Bundanba had much to regret in coming to the colony. While he agreed that it might be desirable to restrict immigration, while there was depression in the labour market, he would not for one moment support an attempt to stop immigration altogether to such a large colony as Queensland was. He agreed with the hon. member for Charters Towers that the men induced to come out by the hon. member for South Brisbane were a credit to the colony, and they had greatly benefited by the residence of those men amongst them. If they brought out men acquainted with farming, and induced them to settle on the land, they would employ two or three others in a very short time, and the men they employed would also soon become employers. If the Government were careful to get a proper class of immigrants, he would have no fear of free immigration. They had plenty of mechanics, and plenty of those who were good for nothing, and they did not want such immigrants as those. He believed that Mr. Randall was very careful in the selection of immigrants; but a large number of men came out here, having signed a declaration that they were farm labourers, who were not farm labourers at all. They got justices of the peace and parish ministers to witness their declarations, and send them on to the emigration agent, and on to the colony, with the good intention of getting rid of them. He spoke of that matter before when he had referred to a society at home for getting the poor and helpless to emigrate, in order to get rid of those who would become a burden upon them in the poorhouses. There were many ladies at home who sent out a large number of domestic servants, who when they came out did not know how to wash their own socks. What they wanted were good strong healthy girls from the country places, such as the hon. member for Mitchell had referred to. If they took his advice they would go to the North of Scotland and the North of Ireland, and they would get men and women who would be a blessing to the colony. It would be very unwise to stop such a class of people as those from coming here. He had something to say with respect to another class of emigrants that Mr. Fleming had been sent to report upon, and those were the crofters. Anyone who knew them would know they were a desirable class of immigrants, and there were some of the finest men amongst them that they

could possibly get to come here. He believed that if they could get the crofters to come out to the colony, they would become the bone and sinew of the colony.

Mr. GRIMES: They will shoot the deer.

Mr. McMASTER: Why should they not shoot the deer? When they found the farmers starving, and the men with long purses, the land-grabbers, driving them out as if they were cattle, he asked why should they not shoot the deer? So long as they did not shoot the landlords he was with them. He did not want them to do that—in fact they would not do it; but he could not blame them if they shot the deer when they and their families were starving. If the Government could induce that class of people to come here they would not regret it, even if they spent that £250,000. There was room in the colony, if thousands of such people were brought out. The Government had stated that they would ease off immigration whilst stagnation existed in every department of industry. Even tradesmen were reducing the number of their hands, on account of the stagnation. The National party had promised that a good time was coming; and he hoped the tide would soon turn. His colleague knew more about the Scotch crofters than he did, as he had been in the north of Scotland. He (Mr. McMaster) should like a trip there; but he believed his colleague could tell the Committee more about the crofters than he could.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that, as he understood many hon. members still wished to speak on that question, and as there was no chance of coming to a division that night, it would be better to adjourn the debate. He moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report no progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported no progress; and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

CROWN LANDS ACTS, 1884 TO 1886, AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that the Legislative Council had agreed to the Legislative Assembly's amendments in the new clause following clause 16, and did not insist upon the other amendments to which the Legislative Assembly disagreed.

STAFFORD BROTHERS RAILWAY BILL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that they had passed this Bill with the amendments indicated in the accompanying schedule, in which amendments the Legislative Council invited the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

On the motion of Mr. SMYTH, the consideration of the message from the Legislative Council was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—In moving that this House do now adjourn, I wish to inform hon. members that after the consideration of private business to-morrow, the Government intend to proceed with the Loan Estimates. I move that this House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past 10 o'clock.