

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 24 JUNE 1890**

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# QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

### THIRD SESSION OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT,

APPOINTED TO MEET

AT BRISBANE ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF JUNE, IN THE FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN  
OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1890.

#### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Tuesday, 24 June, 1890.*

Vacancy during the Recess.—Member Sworn.—Member Adjudged Insolvent.—Seat Declared Vacant.—Message from His Excellency the Governor—despatch with reference to the increased representation at the Federal Council.—Elections Judge for 1890.—Auditor-General's Report.—Adjournment of the House.—Bill *pro forma*.—Ministerial Statement.—The Opening Speech.—Address in Reply.—Adjournment.

THE House met at 12 o'clock, a few minutes after which hour a message was conveyed by the Usher of the Black Rod that His Excellency the Governor requested the attendance of Mr. Speaker and hon. members of the Legislative Assembly in the Council Chamber.

THE SPEAKER, accompanied by hon. members of the Assembly, accordingly proceeded to the Legislative Council, and, having heard the Address of His Excellency, returned to their own Chamber.

The House resumed at half-past 3 o'clock.

#### VACANCY DURING THE RECESS.

THE SPEAKER said: I have to report that since the termination of the last session the following vacancy occurred in the House—namely, by the resignation of the Hon. Charles Powers, Esq., member for the electoral district of Burrum; that upon the occurrence of the said vacancy I issued my writ for the election of a member to fill the same; and that such writ was duly returned with certificate endorsed thereon of the election of the Hon. Charles Powers, Esq., as member for the said electoral district.

#### MEMBER SWORN.

THE Hon. CHARLES POWERS was sworn in and took his seat as member for the electoral district of Burrum.

#### MEMBER ADJUDGED INSOLVENT.

THE SPEAKER said: I have to report that by notification dated the 31st day of March last, signed by Alfred Down, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, and published in the issue of the *Queensland Government Gazette* of 5th April, 1890, it was publicly intimated that Ernest Hunter was, on the said 31st day of March, adjudged insolvent.

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#### SEAT DECLARED VACANT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move—

That the seat of Ernest Hunter, Esq., hath become and is now vacant, by reason of the insolvency of the said Ernest Hunter since his election and return to serve in this House as member for the electoral district of Burke.

Question put and passed.

#### MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

DESPATCH WITH REFERENCE TO THE INCREASED REPRESENTATION AT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL.

THE SPEAKER said: I have to report that on the 31st of March last I received the following letter from His Excellency the Governor:—

“Government House, Southport,  
“27th March, 1890.

“SIR,

“I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of the hon. the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, copy of a despatch dated the 10th ultimo, from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in reply to my despatch of the 6th August last, in which I enclosed an Address from the Houses of Legislature in Queensland, praying that an Order in Council may be issued to increase the number of the representatives of each colony in the Federal Council.

“I have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your most obedient servant,

“H. W. NORMAN.

“The Hon. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.”

“Downing street,

“10th February, 1890.

“SIR,

“I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 1 (Federal Council) of the 6th of August, transmitting an Address from the Houses of Legislature of Queensland to the Queen, praying that an Order in Council may be issued to increase the number of the representatives of each colony in the Federal Council, in accordance with the recommendations made by the Federal Council in the session of 1889.

“I received, through the Governor of Tasmania, a memo. by the Attorney-General of that colony, expressing doubt whether an Order in Council of the nature desired could be legally issued.

“Upon this point I have consulted the law officers of the Crown, and I am advised that although it is extremely difficult to state with certainty the exact construction which would be given judicially to the 5th section of the Federal Council of Australasia Act

of 1885, Her Majesty would not be justified by its terms in making an Order in Council whereby the number of representatives for each of the several colonies should alter or vary in proportion to the population, and that any such Order in Council must prescribe a definite number for each colony. I am further advised that any Order made under the section must provide for an increase in the number for each of the several colonies, and it would probably be held that the increase for each of the colonies other than Crown colonies must be the same.

"I have laid the addresses received on the subject before the Queen, who was pleased to receive them very graciously; but in view of the reasons above stated I have been unable to advise Her Majesty to issue the Order in Council desired. I have to add that before any Order could be made for such an increase of representatives as could be legally granted the legislatures of all the colonies concerned should send a request to Her Majesty, and that in the case of South Australia the Address was only adopted by the House of Assembly.

"I have, etc.,

"KNUTSFORD.

"Governor Sir H. W. Norman, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.I.E."

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that His Excellency's letter with its enclosure be printed.

Question put and passed.

#### ELECTIONS JUDGE FOR 1890.

The SPEAKER said: I have further to report that I received in due course a notification from His Honour the Chief Justice of the name of the judge who will preside at sittings of the Elections Tribunal for the current year, but there being no record of its receipt I caused application to be made for a duplicate of the missing letter. The letter does not, however, appear to have been recorded in the office of the Chief Justice, and the following communication was addressed to the Clerk by His Honour's Associate:—

"The Chief Justice's Chambers,

"Supreme Court House,

"Brisbane, 21st June, 1890.

"SIR,

"Referring to previous correspondence respecting the missing letters from the Hon. the Chief Justice to the Hon. the Speaker, notifying the appointment of the Elections Judge for the current year, I have the honour by direction to state for the information of the Speaker, that the Hon. Mr. Justice Mein has been appointed Elections Judge for 1890.

"I have, etc.,

"J. HARRISON BYRNE,

"Associate.

"The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly,  
Parliament House."

#### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

The SPEAKER said: I have also to report that I have received from the Auditor-General a letter dated this day upon the subject of the investment of the funds and the condition of the securities of the Government Savings Bank; and I have also received a letter dated this day from the Auditor-General, transmitting for presentation to the House the Treasury statements of the receipts and expenditure of the Consolidated Revenue, the Loan, and the several Trust Funds for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1889, with his report thereon, together with statements showing the public debt of the colony and other information in connection with the public accounts to the 30th April, 1890.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that the papers be printed.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House I beg to move, without notice—That the House, at its rising, adjourn until to-morrow at 3 p.m.

Question put and passed.

#### BILL PRO FORMA.

The PREMIER presented a Bill to authorise the establishment of sites and apparatus for the purposes of cremation; and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to make a Ministerial Statement. Since the House last met, some changes have taken place in the *personnel* of the Ministry. The Hon. Mr. Powers has accepted the positions of Minister for Public Instruction and Postmaster-General, vacated by the Hon. Mr. Donaldson, who has taken the position of Colonial Treasurer, lately held by Mr. Pattison, who resigned the office. The office of Minister for Mines and Works has been changed. The Hon. Mr. Macrossan, late Minister for Mines and Works, retains the Mines Department, and the Minister for Railways has taken over the Works Department. The position of Colonial Secretary has been taken up by my hon. friend, Mr. Macrossan, in conjunction with the portion of the office he heretofore held.

#### THE OPENING SPEECH.

The SPEAKER said: I have to report that the House in the earlier part of the day, attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered an Opening Speech to both Houses of Parliament, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy, which I will now read to the House:—

"HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"It affords me much gratification to meet you again at the commencement of a new session of Parliament, and I desire, before touching upon the subjects which will engage your deliberations, to express the hope that the close of a recess which has been to you, as to the colony generally, a period of unusual trial and anxiety, finds you assembled for the discharge of your legislative duties with no diminution of that hopeful energy which is necessary to their effective performance.

"It is a matter of extreme regret that during the period of the recess the colony has been visited by a series of floods of unprecedented magnitude, causing great and wide-spread losses. These, following upon a prolonged season of drought, have severely affected the well-being of the colony. It is satisfactory to note, however, that these disasters brought again into prominence the generosity and liberality of our colonists towards those amongst us who had materially suffered. It is gratifying also to know that the season at present prevailing leaves little to be desired, and that although the first incidence of those floods has been seriously felt, the effects, as regards benefiting the soil and filling the watercourses, must be productive of much good.

"I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to give expression to the gratification I derived from my recent visit to the Central and Northern portions of the colony. Whatever previous impression had been made upon me as to the ample resources of the territory, and the energy

and enterprise of the inhabitants, was greatly strengthened and enlarged by what I saw on that journey, and I could not fail to be deeply touched by the cordial and generous reception which everywhere awaited me. I much regret that the shortness of the time at my disposal compelled me to forego the pleasure of visiting various districts of which I am desirous to have personal knowledge, but I trust to be in a position, before many months have passed, to gratify my desire in this respect.

"The subject which at present naturally takes precedence of all others in point of importance, in virtue of the fact that it concerns not only the future of this colony but the destinies of the whole group of Australian States, is the rapid extension of the movement in favour of Federation. After prolonged negotiation on the subject between the different Governments, a conference of representatives from all the Australasian colonies was held at Melbourne in February last, at which this colony was ably represented by the Hon. Sir Samuel W. Griffith and the Hon. John M. Macrossan. The unanimity displayed by the various delegates in favour of the object of the movement furnished convincing evidence that notwithstanding certain differences of opinion in regard to matters of detail, the realization of the federal idea was at length brought within practical range, while the universal interest in the proceedings of the conference exhibited throughout the colonies showed clearly that the efforts being made in the direction of federal union were in accord with popular aspirations. The papers in connection with the negotiations referred to, with the report of the proceedings of the conference, will be laid before you, and resolutions will be submitted to you asking your concurrence in the appointment of representatives from both branches of the legislature to the convention to be held early in the coming year, at which this great question is proposed to be dealt with. Similar action is being taken in the other Australian Parliaments.

"In consequence of the prevalent industrial and commercial depression, due not only to the domestic conditions already alluded to, but to causes of more world-wide application, the demand for labour in the colony has become considerably restricted, and the necessity has been forced upon the Government of imposing a corresponding restriction upon the introduction of fresh candidates for employment. Fully believing that at the present stage of the colony's history immigration is essential to its progress, and believing also that the exigencies of the time are not such, or of so lasting a character, as to demand any radical change in their immigration policy, my Ministers have decided that the present difficulty would be adequately met by reducing the number of shipments of immigrants from one per month to two in each period of three months, and by terminating the engagement of their lecturing agent in the United Kingdom; and directions to this effect were accordingly forwarded to the Agent-General in November last. It is gratifying,

at the same time, to be able to state that, notwithstanding the unfavourable condition of the labour market, all immigrants introduced have been absorbed into the working community.

"As a direct consequence of the adverse circumstances already referred to, during the continuance of which work of every kind was greatly retarded, and traffic on the main roads in some districts entirely suspended, the trade and commerce of the colony have been almost paralysed for months past, with the result to the State of a considerable falling off in the anticipated revenue for the year. The unfavourable conditions to which these effects are traceable have now, it is believed, passed away, and as the prospects of most of the great producing interests are of a very encouraging character, a change for the better in the finances of the colony may with confidence shortly be expected. The price, moreover, obtained for the 3½ per cent. stock of Queensland recently placed on the London money market affords satisfactory evidence of the unimpaired credit of the colony, and of the confidence entertained by investors and capitalists in its financial stability and abundant resources.

"Notwithstanding the abnormally wet seasons, railway construction has made fair progress during the last year, eighty miles having been opened up for public traffic, and contracts made at satisfactory prices for an additional 155 miles. Plans have been carefully prepared, and will be submitted for your approval, for proposed extensions (including the lines specified in the schedule laid upon the table of the Legislative Assembly last session), all of which are designed for the development of the agricultural, mineral, pastoral, and other resources of the colony; the extension of main lines being at the same time arranged with a view to the ultimate junction of our numerous railway systems into one.

"Although mining operations have also been greatly impeded on account of the character of the seasons, I am pleased to see that the yield from our various goldfields has placed Queensland in the first position among the gold-producing colonies of Australia, and that in other branches of mining the production continues to be fairly satisfactory.

"The efforts of the Government to improve the condition of our agriculturists, by providing for their instruction in the latest and most approved methods of utilising their products, have been attended by marked success; and as further efforts in this direction are being made, it is confidently anticipated that this large and important section of our colonists will be greatly benefited by the creation of more remunerative markets for the products of the farm. With a view also to the higher development of agricultural knowledge, you will be asked to give effect to a scheme for the establishment of agricultural colleges and experiment stations.

"Steps will be taken for the introduction of a system of forest conservancy, having for its object not only the preservation of existing forests, but also the re-forestation of the denuded portions of the colony.

"Valuable information has been collected on the subject of irrigation, which will be laid before you.

"While it is satisfactory to be able to report the continued success attending the work performed under our system of public instruction, my Ministers are giving earnest consideration to the necessity of supplementing the system by adding to the facilities now existing for obtaining technical instruction subsequent to the completion of the usual school course, and an opportunity will be given of discussing the desirability of granting more liberal assistance to the efforts which are already being made in this direction.

"The necessity of giving greater attention to the physical training of the children attending our State schools is being increasingly recognised, and a large number of the teachers have accordingly been afforded an opportunity of acquiring a new system of physical drill, with a view to its application in the schools under their charge. Excellent results are anticipated from the incorporation of the system with the regular course of school training.

"GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"The Estimates for the ensuing financial year have been carefully and economically prepared, and will be laid before you at an early date.

"HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"The negotiations which had for some time been carried on between the Imperial authorities and the Australian Governments with a view to the reduction of postal charges led to an inter-colonial postal conference being held at Adelaide during last month, at which this colony was represented by the Postmaster-General. Copies of the proceedings of the conference will shortly be laid before you.

"In connection with the new contract for the mail service from Brisbane to London *via* Torres Straits, which commenced in February last, it is intended to submit a resolution to authorise the Postmaster-General to give the contracting company notice to provide a fortnightly in place of a four-weekly service. It is further proposed to introduce a Bill to amend the postal laws and to establish a parcel post.

"The following, amongst other measures, will also be presented for your consideration :—

"A Bill to Reform the Constitution by providing for an Elective Legislative Council ;

"A Bill to make provision for Dividing the Colony into Districts for Financial purposes ;

"A Bill for the Supervision and Regulation of Factories and Workrooms and for the Limitation of the hours of working in Shops ;

"A Bill to amend the Law relating to the Endowment of Municipalities and Divisional Boards ;

"A Bill to consolidate and amend the District Courts Acts ;

"A Bill dealing with the Registration of Bills of Sale.

"These and all other matters submitted to you will I have no doubt receive your earnest attention, and I trust that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, your deliberations will issue in the advancement of the various interests and general well-being of the people for whom you are called upon to legislate."

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Mr. CALLAN moved—

1. That a select committee be appointed to consider and prepare an Address in Reply to the Speech delivered by his Excellency the Governor in opening this the third session of the tenth Parliament of Queensland.

2. That the said committee consist of Mr. R. G. Casey, Mr. E. Plunkett, Mr. I. Lissner, Mr. B. D. Morehead, and the mover.

Question put and passed.

The Committee thereupon retired, and having returned, brought up the following Address, which was read by the Clerk :—

"To His Excellency General Sir Henry Wylie Norman, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Queensland and its Dependencies.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

"We shall give our most careful attention and consideration to the several measures which may be brought before us, and we beg to assure Your Excellency that it will be our anxious endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may be conducive to the material and moral advancement and prosperity of this portion of the Empire."

Mr. CALLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—In rising to move the adoption of the Address in Reply, I regret extremely that I have not had an opportunity before this of speaking very much in public. But, Sir, I am quite certain that hon. members of this House, both on the opposite side and on this side, and you yourself, Sir, will give me every assistance possible. Not having spoken very much in public, I would much rather that someone else than myself had been entrusted with the duty of moving the adoption of this Address. At the same time, when that duty has devolved on me, as a new member of this House, I will try and do the little I can to make more plain, perhaps, the announcements contained in the Speech of the Governor. I do not intend to detain the House very long, and will just skim over the various matters which His Excellency has put before us. First, with reference to the result of the floods, we are told that—

"It is a matter of extreme regret that during the period of the recess the colony has been visited by a series of floods of unprecedented magnitude, causing great and wide-spread losses."

With that I quite agree; at the same time, from my experience in the colony I am satisfied that, although the floods have caused great and wide-spread losses, the ultimate results will be beneficial to the colony generally. In looking

over the speeches delivered at the opening of last session, I observe it was a time of drought, and the hon. member who then stood in the position I stand in now, spoke of the drought as devastating the colony. We are now in a very much better position than we were then. At that time we could not foretell the result of the drought then prevailing. Since then we have had very large floods—the largest in my experience of over thirty years in the colony—and I am perfectly certain the results of the floods will be beneficial, because, although we may have dry seasons for the next year or two, still the country will have been so saturated that there will be plenty of feed for stock. I may say at once that at present I labour under a disability. I want to speak to the House, and I feel I cannot do so. It is just as well to be straight to you. Although there are many things I should like to say, that I find myself at present quite unable to say, although if the House supports me a little, I may be able to say some of them. I quite believe I shall receive the support of hon. members on both sides of the House, especially as I daresay many other hon. members have been in a similar position. The next matter is that of federation. On that question I have thought a good deal, not that I have ever taken very much interest in politics, but because the question of the future of Australia is one which I have never neglected, and have constantly thought about, during the whole of my residence in these colonies. Queensland up to the present has been particularly fortunate in the men it has sent, whether to Federal Councils or to conventions on the matter of federation—men like the Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith and the Hon. J. M. Macrossan—who have devoted their time and their great abilities to the furtherance of the question, which is worthy the efforts of the greatest statesmen in this or any other Parliament. Those two hon. gentlemen have done their very utmost, and I can only say that if in the future we get anything like the same quality of men to look after our interests at these conventions or conferences or Federal Councils, Queensland need not be a bit afraid. It is possible there may be differences of opinion on the question of federation. Some may think that possibly federation is not such a very good thing. But if one thinks what a country this is—what its magnitude is—it will be seen that although we have many things to be thankful for, there is one thing we want, and that one thing is water. When we know that water can be obtained by human hands, then I say that the federation and consolidation of the various colonies into one empire is a great thing and one to be adopted. At present Australia is something like the bundle of sticks in the old fable. We have one colony pulling one way and another colony pulling another way. Federation will bind the bundle of sticks together, and I cannot think that any better men can look after it on our behalf than those who have looked after it up to the present time. If we can only get others nearly as good as they are, I think we need have no fear for the future with regard to federation. The next paragraph of the Speech states that the Government, in view of the general depression existing, have thought fit to limit the number of immigrants coming to the colony. That, I think, was very wise on the part of the Government under the circumstances, but I am glad to see that they still believe in immigration; that they still retain to themselves the power of bringing out a certain number of people, according to the vote that may be passed for that purpose. At present I think that vote is a very small one. Looking at the vast area of Queensland, and its immense resources, I think we should have the power to bring a large number of people to this

colony when required. A large number of those very persons who are now adverse to immigration would not have been here had it not been for this very vote, because I believe that at least two-thirds, possibly three-fourths, of the inhabitants of the colony have been brought here by assisted immigration; and some of those very people now say, "No more immigrants; we will build a wall all round the place and have no more people brought here." I think the course taken by the present Ministry is a very manly and straightforward one. It is one that, mind you, is in opposition to the great bulk of the population; but they say, "We believe in immigration, and while we do not want to bring too many people here in these times of depression, we hold the right to bring more here when we want them" and any Government, whether on this side or the other, which threw that right away would make a very great mistake. The next paragraph refers to the bad state of trade throughout the colony, but it must be remembered that owing to the heavy floods all traffic was suspended for a time, the result being that stations and townships in the interior wanting goods could not get them, and of course that tells upon the state of trade generally, and upon the revenue. But, Sir, the result of my experience, which has been very considerable, has been that whenever you have big floods by which the country is thoroughly saturated, although there may be an intermission of traffic and a period when the colony suffers, yet the ultimate result is generally beneficial; and I have not the slightest doubt it will be the case in this instance also. One thing I may point out is, that our wool industry, which is one of the principal industries of the colony, is now in a very flourishing condition. And not alone that, but the frozen meat industry—that is the sending to the old country our beef and mutton in a condition fit for sale in the English markets—was never before in so good a condition as it is now. As you are aware, Sir, in New Zealand this industry has reached large dimensions, and no doubt it will do so here also. At present there is only one large establishment carrying on the business in Queensland, that at Lake's Creek, but I trust that before another twelve months are over there will be half-a-dozen Lake's Creek establishments in different portions of the colony. I refer to this because the Speech alludes to the present depression, and because I am of opinion, not as a member of this House, but as a business man, that the colony has not been for years in a better position than it is at the present moment. We have now what we never had before. Our wool is now not only required in the old markets, but I have seen, and others have seen, woollen garments worn in countries where wool was never known until within the last two or three years. We have seen that in Japan, and it is a matter of great importance to Australia, because it will provide a market for one of our largest and most important industries. Railway construction has been going on, notwithstanding the very big floods we have experienced and the difficulties attending them. With regard to agriculture, I think a great deal might be done. I am sure that a great deal has been done, and is being done, for that industry by the present Ministry. They have sent round the travelling dairy with lecturers to impart information on the subject to the people, and the result has been most beneficial. A curious thing happened not long ago. When I was coming across from San Francisco a person on board the steamer told me that he had 1,800 bags of maize on board for Sydney, and, further, that by far the greater part of it went to Queensland. Now, if America

can send maize to Australia and make it pay there must be something wrong in the state of our agricultural industry, and I certainly think the best course to pursue is that adopted by the present Ministry—that is, to educate our agriculturists as to the best methods to follow in carrying out their work. Another matter in connection with this subject which has been brought under notice is, that within the last twelve months there has been paid for bacon, hams, butter, and cheese imported into the colony no less than £160,853. That has been paid by the people of Queensland for these articles imported from the other colonies, and I think those who have farms ought to be able to produce things within the colony, and thus save that £160,000. When we consider the duty on those articles, they ought certainly to be able to make them at a profit. A Bill is promised to amend the Constitution by providing for an elective Legislative Council. I think that is a matter that will commend itself to hon. members on both sides of the House. I think any measure that takes power away from this House and from the Ministry of the day is always objectionable, and therefore it is better to have an elective Upper House constituted by a vote of this House. I do not think any better scheme could be proposed. The next is a Bill to make provision for dividing the colony into districts for financial purposes. That is a measure which I believe in, though it may not commend itself to the support of some hon. members, particularly the Northern members. The Bill dealing with the regulation of bills of sale and the other measures mentioned are, I think, worthy of the careful consideration and support of hon. members on both sides. They are all good, progressive measures, and I think should command the support of all hon. members who have the welfare of the colony at heart. I shall not detain the House longer, but will conclude by moving the motion.

Mr. LISSNER said: Mr. Speaker,—In rising to second the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, introduced by my hon. friend the member for Fitzroy, I may be permitted to say the same as His Excellency did in his Speech—that I feel highly gratified that all the hon. members on both sides of the House, as well as yourself, Sir, and the officers of Parliament, and the staff in general, are looking in good form, and ready to tackle another session, which I trust in the long run will be for the benefit of the country. I am very glad also to see that, although *la grippe* has come especially to members of Parliament and to members of the Civil Service, that it has not lessened the population to any great extent. I wish the seconding of this motion had fallen into the hands of some other hon. member, as I am still suffering from the balance of *la grippe*. I shall make my speech as short as possible, considering the importance of the occasion. My hon. friend, the hon. member for Fitzroy, has dwelt upon all the principal matters referred to in the Speech, and from my experience in Parliament I find that our happiness, so far as the country around us is concerned, is never quite complete when we meet again. The consolation is that there are always some good reasons to be given or some good excuses to be made, and the Speech in that particular respect is not different from any other. We always hope to bring things to a better issue, and although we have not done so yet, I hope we shall succeed this time. There is not the slightest doubt that the Government has worked under great disadvantages on account of the disasters that have befallen this colony. During the last Parliament the Speech referred to the extraordinary droughts that the colony suffered from.

Since then we have got relief from those droughts after a good deal of praying. Our prayers were fulfilled, and I am sorry to say that I think we prayed for too much rain. Wet seasons mean prosperity to the miners, the agriculturists, and the squatters, and to everyone else, but they came a little too thick, and something in the style of the days of poor old Noah resulted. He got out by having an ark, but we were not prepared for it. I happened to be in the North at the time of the extraordinarily severe floods, and on the Northern line of railway there was sixty or seventy feet of Burdekin water. That was enough to knock all the traffic off, and consequently that line has not paid as much as it would have done at any other time. The disastrous seasons have told on everything. I believe even a civilised place like the metropolis of a very large country like Queensland—which wants dividing into three different colonies—was submerged. Some portions of South Brisbane were submerged so that it was safer to go round in boats than by trams or railways or busses. Since I have been in the colony I have never experienced such heavy floods, and their results will be felt for a considerable time, no matter what Government may be in power. Bridges and railway lines have been carried away, and the receipts have got smaller. However, our Treasurer will, when he brings in his Budget, show how he is going to rectify that. I hope he will succeed, although I do not know how he is going to do it. His Excellency mentions his trip to the North. I had the pleasure of accompanying His Excellency, and I must say that he is the only Governor who has in one year travelled as far as he did, and made himself acquainted with the different portions of the colony. I know he obtained the goodwill and sympathy of all the people of the places he visited. He is the only white Governor who has seen some parts of the colony, and he has not seen one-fourth of the colony yet. Wherever His Excellency went, there was any amount of loyalty and goodwill shown to him, and I am certain that the Northern people, as well as those in the Central district, have satisfied His Excellency as to their loyalty to the Crown of England, whatever their opinions may be about the division of the colony. As far as the leading topic of politicians is concerned with regard to the federation of the colonies, I do not wish to speak. The leader of the Opposition and the Colonial Secretary represented this colony honourably and with credit to the colony, and we had better leave the subject in their hands. For myself, I am in favour of federation, because I believe it is time that the Australian colonies should form an independent nation of some consequence, and the only way to do it is by federation for defence purposes. I trust the colonies will unite, even though it might not suit some portions at present; but such things always come right in the long run. I believe the independence of the colonies depends entirely upon a proper scheme of federation. Look at Germany. What was it when it was composed of thirty-six kingdoms and dukedoms? The people might have come out and worked as cheap labourers; but look at United Germany now. The English gave them Heligoland, and consoled themselves by saying it was no good to them. I believe it is of great importance to the Germans, and if they had not been such an important nation I do not think they would ever have got Heligoland. In the same way, if Australia is not united we do not know but that at some future time the old country may be unable to defend us, and it may be found necessary to allow Queensland to go to some other country. I do not intend to go through the whole history of federation, but for my own part I hope

that a general federation will soon take place. So far as the alteration made in immigration is concerned, I believe it would be unwise to stop immigration all at once, because we have had times at present, and there are some places in the colony where we cannot employ the incoming immigrants. There is no doubt that we are not now in the position we were in when we sanctioned the present immigration law, but I believe that nearly half of the inhabitants of Queensland have been brought here under that system, and what would Queensland be without them? Something like Western Australia—begging and praying for constitutional government. Here we are a colony of over 400,000 people; we can depend to some extent on our regular increase, but our native increase is born very young, and I think it is a wise and good thing to mix with this increase a lot of other people from the old country. By reducing immigration to the extent stated by the Government, all classes will be suited, and it will not be detrimental to the progress of the colony. I do not believe in the argument that we do not want anybody else to come here any more. We might just as well live like Robinson Crusoe, and wait for some stray ship to take us away. I believe that immigration is the life of a colony, and that Queensland will never be the colony she ought to be until she has five times her present population. We have everything here to supply not only 500,000 or 600,000 people, but 2,000,000. It would, therefore, be unwise to stop immigration altogether, as is proposed by some extreme people. I am glad to see that mining has gone on successfully; that in spite of drought and floods the yield from our goldfields has been in the aggregate a very satisfactory one. The value of the output for last year was £2,750,000, which is the highest yield of any industry in the colony. Therefore, it is fair to say that it is one of the most important industries we have to look to at the present time, and we ought not to allow it to dwindle to insignificance through want of care and good legislation. I notice that in the Opening Speech of the Governor we are promised that provision is to be made for technical education. I think that some further technical education is still required for miners. We have certainly an odd lecturer here and there—one at Gympie and one at Charters Towers—but that is not sufficient. We want lecturers to go to all the important goldfields in the colony and keep up a course of instruction for miners. We also want a school of mines, and a very good one, in some portion of the colony. The Government have provided diamond drills in a small way, it is true, and I believe these drills will be found very useful in some parts of the colony in testing the ground. But diamond drills and one or two lecturers do not fully meet the requirements of the miners. The Government, and in fact any Government, can go much further in supporting the mining industry—which has been proved to be the leading industry of the colony—than any Government has gone hitherto. The agriculturists, I am pleased to observe, have not been neglected. Agriculture will exist when mines are done, and I am glad to see that people in every part of the colony visited by the travelling dairy speak well of that arrangement of the Minister for Lands as a means for assisting them to improve the manufacture of butter and cheese. The gentleman who has been appointed to instruct farmers in the curing of hams and bacon will also do good service. Then we have another able gentleman who is going round lecturing and showing how they do things in America. Whether we can imitate the Americans in agriculture I do not know. However, the agriculturists have not been neglected, and now they are promised an agricul-

tural college. I am glad that the Government propose to submit to the House a scheme for a fortnightly mail service with England *via* Torres Straits, and I hope that hon. members will see their way clear to support and pass that proposal. Such a service will benefit not only the Northern parts of the colony, but also Brisbane and other places in the South. A mail service *via* Torres Straits may not suit the majority of people for speedy correspondence with the old country, but there is not the slightest doubt that anybody who has had anything to do with commerce in the colony will admit that this mail service has brought the colony more prominently before commercial men in England and on the continent of Europe than any other service ever subsidised by Queensland. It is a national service, and I hope hon. members will sanction it, especially as it will only involve the small outlay of £13,000. It is all very well for Southern members to say that this service will only benefit the North. But as I have already said, such is not the case. Every steamer engaged in that service comes up the Brisbane River and makes this port its terminus, and the more steamers there are, the better will it be for Brisbane and the colony generally. The service does not seem to attract the larger shipping firms at home. When the Government called for tenders, there was no tender received from any company except the British-India Company. The Orient and P. and O. Companies have large ships going across the ocean to other countries, but they evidently did not think it good enough to tender for the Queensland service. We have a good service as far as it goes, but it ought to be made a fortnightly service. Passing on to another topic in the Speech, I will refer now to the promise that a Bill will be brought forward to alter the constitution of the Upper Chamber, and make it an elective chamber. I do not think we should adhere to the old system and keep up the present Chamber as a reflex of the House of Peers in old England. It is not good enough. With our democratic ideas, and our progress as a people, we ought to have an Upper House in which the people have the choice of the members. Hon. gentlemen who belong to that Chamber tell the people that they are a patent safeguard—a sort of patent brake—against rash legislation. I say, let that brake be chosen by the people, and they will have more confidence in it. I hope the Government will introduce this measure early enough in the session to allow it to be thoroughly discussed and passed. I believe the majority of members are in favour of such a change as is suggested; it might not suit everybody, but it will suit the majority of the people of Queensland. There is nothing like members feeling a certain amount of responsibility, and nothing like going before your constituents—if you have any—and telling them what you have done, or what you have not done, and getting into touch with them in order to make that responsibility felt; and to let the electors themselves feel that you are their representative, and not simply sent into the House by this or that Government. The hon. member who has moved the adoption of the Address in Reply has gone carefully over the whole Speech, except one or two portions which he did not touch upon, and which it is unnecessary for me to discuss. Members on both sides of the House will no doubt find many things in it to talk about, and I suppose some things that ought to be in it, but are not mentioned. I think it is a very fair compilation to start talking upon, and there is no doubt that we shall have plenty of that yet. When I sit down, probably the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition will get up and talk very seriously about the approaching end of

the Government, and tell them that the ship is sinking fast and all hands are lost. I have no doubt of that. I am prepared to hear it, and I trust the hon. gentleman will always say so until he becomes Premier again. When that time comes I, for one, will survive it and meet him on the other side with a smile. I trust my hon. friends will do the same. I have full confidence in his ability and his well-wishes towards Queensland. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing more to say, and I therefore second the motion.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the hon. mover and seconder of the Address in Reply may be congratulated upon having made the best of a very difficult task. I do not remember any instance where gentlemen in proposing an Address in Reply to a Governor's Speech have had a more difficult task than the one performed by those two hon. members to-day. The hon. member for Fitzroy, although he said he was rather nervous, did very well notwithstanding, and with a little more practice will become a very useful member of the House. He is not a new member, and it is indeed singular that neither last year nor this year were there any new members to move the Address in Reply. That is a circumstance which I think is unparalleled in the history of the colony. I am not able to take the same favourable view, Mr. Speaker, of the proposals of the Government that the hon. gentlemen who have spoken seem to take, although they have not committed themselves very plainly. There are some portions of the Speech with which, of course, we can all agree; but it occurs to me that the Government in preparing this Speech felt themselves in the position of people who were making a speech because they had to say something, and not because they had something to say. The Government at the commencement of the session, seeing the position in which the colony stands at the present time, ought to have something to say, and should not merely put forward a speech because they have to say something. In referring to this Speech in detail, I intend to refer, as the practice is, to the conduct of the Government during the recess. I think it is proper and usual to comment upon the conduct of the Government in the management of the colony since we last met, and then to deal with their proposals for the future. Now, the first thing that occurs to me is to wonder why we are so late in meeting. No explanation of that has been given, and none is visible to the ordinary observer. When the House adjourned, the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, in answer to a question from me, said—he did not give a definite promise, because no man could do that—but he gave us to understand that the House would meet not later than very early in June, and possibly in May. I do not know what explanation can be given; nothing suggests itself as a justification for not calling the House together before the end of June. Now, during the recess the Government have done some things to which public attention has been very much attracted. The first important function they had to perform was the appointment of the Civil Service Commissioners. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government solemnly assured the House that in the selection of those Commissioners no regard whatever would be paid to anything but fitness for the office. I do not intend to comment upon the officers who have been appointed, because it is never advisable that officers, when they have been appointed, should be discredited in the eyes of the public, but I do assert that the Government in the selection of these officers did not keep the promise that they gave to this House. Now, one of the things which during the recess attracted more atten-

tion throughout the colony than anything else, was the dealing by the Government with the "Hopeful" prisoners. That is a painful subject and a disagreeable subject, and I do not propose to refer to it in any spirit of vindictiveness or harshness, but the matter must be referred to, and I can only refer to the action of the Government as showing that there is a party in this colony which sympathises with such crimes as those committed by the "Hopeful" prisoners.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: No, no!

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I maintain that that is the position in which the matter stands. Or else the Government must take up the position that they do not believe the evidence on which the men were convicted; that they discredit the finding of the successive juries, and the opinions of the judge expressed at the time, and afterwards in an official communication. I know nothing of reports sent in to the present Government, but refer to that which was sent in when I was in office. They must either have discredited all that when they said, "We will set the men at liberty," or else the conduct of the Government in dealing with the matter shows that they regarded the case from this point of view: that these men did not deserve any punishment for their crimes. That must be their view, otherwise they could not have acted on the basis that the men who were convicted were all guilty in the same degree, while the real facts of the case were that some were guilty of murder of the most atrocious character, whilst others were more or less unwilling participators in it. They were sentenced according to the different crimes of which they were found guilty. The Government, therefore, if they wished to exercise mercy, should, at all events, have exercised it with some discrimination, and on some sound basis. The men who were guilty of the most atrocious, awful crimes were all put on the same basis as the men who were punished more lightly, and they were all let free. I say that the credit of the colony has been injured, and the reputation of the colony has been injured. The comments in the Press of the other colonies have shown it. The action of the Government has shown, indeed, that there is in this colony a party which is sometimes strong enough to maintain a Government in office that really sympathises with the crimes which have been committed in the South Sea Island labour trade. That is the opinion which has been formed, not only in the colony, but beyond it. I say that it is very unfortunate, but, after all, it is only of a piece with the general course of action pursued by the present Government to which I will refer. The Government profess to be opposed to the introduction of servile labour. It is part of their programme. They are officially opposed to it, but on the other hand they are pressed by supporters who are strong advocates of that labour, and who think they have been hardly dealt with by being deprived of it. The Government have felt themselves in a difficult position, and they have had to do something to please those supporters, while at the same time endeavouring to keep their promises to the colony. And how have they done it? For one thing, they have released these men, and brought disgrace on the colony. I may say, in passing, that I did not notice among the list of papers laid on the table any connected with this matter. I hope we shall have the papers, or such of them as may be properly laid on the table.

THE PREMIER: The papers relating to the case?

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Of course we know there may be some papers that cannot properly be laid on the table. What has been the conduct of the Government during the recess with respect to this black labour business? I did sincerely hope two years ago that that question was settled; but it is not settled yet. The Government have deliberately and systematically endeavoured to revive that question throughout the colony.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I say that during the recess the Government have deliberately and systematically endeavoured to revive that question throughout the colony. They have encouraged people to believe that although here in this House they are pledged to oppose the system of servile labour, nevertheless in their inmost hearts it is their desire to see its continuance, and that those who are animated by a similar desire must support them. That is what the Government have been doing systematically during the recess.

The PREMIER: No!

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government does not know anything about what has been done by his colleagues, but I will tell the hon. gentleman what has been done. We had, first of all, a deputation that waited upon the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, who was accompanied in receiving them by the Minister for Lands. That was a very large deputation, representing the sugar industry, and they asked for some relief. Some reference was made to black labour, and the hon. gentleman then told them what was ostensibly the policy of the Government, and that the deputation could expect no relief from the Government in that direction. But what did the Minister for Lands say? "The Southern members are too many for us," meaning, "You will never get black labour until you get separation!"

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Macrossan): And not then.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is what the Minister for Lands said in effect:—"The reason why we cannot give you black labour is because the Southern members are too many for you. We in the North want black labour; but the Southern members outweigh us, and so we can do nothing." That is the statement made by the Minister for Lands in the presence of his chief, and not contradicted. What did we see during the Governor's tour in the North? Then it was put plainly enough, "There is no hope of getting black labour until you get separation."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. H. Black): No.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Yes; it was put plainly enough. Then the Minister for Railways and Works said a great deal too much was made of this black labour question for political purposes.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: You are doing it now.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: We know the views of the Postmaster-General on the subject expressed in this House last session. He strenuously supports it. I said just now I had hoped this question was settled. But during the recess we have seen the Government deliberately keeping the question alive, and encouraging the people in the North of the colony to hope that by separation they will get a continuance of the system of servile labour. In connection with this subject, I must refer to the extraordinary

conduct of Ministers on that tour made by the Governor. It has always been understood that when the sovereign, or the representative of the sovereign, is present no reference is made to party politics. No person who knows how to behave himself ever takes advantage of speaking on such an occasion to advocate party politics. But what do we find was done in the North? We find the tour of His Excellency the Governor converted by the Minister for Lands into a separation campaign—a separation and black labour campaign. That was deliberately done by the Minister for Lands. I said just now that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government did not know what was done, and I am telling him now.

The PREMIER: You are painting it in your colours.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I was not there, and I take it as reported in the papers, and as it has gone throughout the length and breadth of this colony and the other colonies. I say that the tour of the Governor was converted by the members of the Government who were present—not by the Colonial Treasurer, but by the Minister for Lands—into a separation and black labour campaign. I say that is a most lamentable thing to have done. What does it mean? Does the hon. gentleman, who has separation at heart, think the movement will be forwarded by that means? On the contrary. He has made it plainer than ever, that so far as he and his principal allies are concerned, the foundation of the movement is servile labour. But the keeping up of servile labour is a matter that does not concern the Northern planters alone. The whole of Southern Queensland and the white population of the whole of Australia are concerned in the question, and they are beginning to take a very warm interest in the matter. They do not intend that Australia shall ever be given over to any but white men. So that the hon. gentleman, in the course he pursued, very seriously prejudiced the chances of his separation movement. The hon. gentleman smiles because he does not think so, and thinks that in spite of all he is going to get separation, and with it black labour.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No!

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is what the hon. gentleman thinks, and that is what he expressed as plainly as possible. In the meantime, I venture to say he has retarded the cause of separation by the course he pursued. For my own part, I venture to express the opinion that one of the strongest objections to separation is the danger of servile labour; and I will go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, that if sufficient guarantees were given that servile labour would not be introduced in that portion of Australia, my opposition to separation would be very much relaxed. There are many other objections and difficulties in the way; but if the separation advocates would give substantial guarantees that this system would not be introduced in the North, I would consider the matter from a very different point of view, and would endeavour to see whether the other difficulties could be met or not. They may or may not be met, but that difficulty is insurmountable.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No guarantee could be given to bind a colony like that.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The hon. gentleman says that no guarantee could be given. I think it could, but it is plain that no guarantee would be given. They are determined to have their hands free, and think they may hoodwink the people now into thinking it will be all right.

When we look round and see the Northern members of the House, I say put them into a Parliament by themselves and ask them to vote on the black labour question. We know perfectly well how the votes would go. Yet they ask us to give them separation, and say they will then hold different views. I do not see any sufficient reason to think so, or that the powerful influence prevailing in that part of the colony will not secure the return of members of the same opinion as now. Take another instance showing the real temper of the Government on this point: A little matter cropped up in England lately. Their Agent-General informed the Colonisation Committee of the House of Commons that the Northern part of Queensland was not fit for white labour. It is understood that the Government asked him for an explanation of that statement, and we have seen since in the Press what purports to be an explanation, but it is in effect a corroboration of the statement. No doubt those are the sentiments of the gentleman. But that gentleman is there as the official mouthpiece of the colony in England, and he represents to the House of Commons Committee, and to the British public, that the greater part of Queensland still unsettled is unfit for white settlement. These are not the views of the people of the colony, but the Government are responsible for representing those views as the views of the people of the colony. I maintain that they do not represent them in that as they do not represent them in almost any other particular. What else have the Government done during the recess? One thing has started into life during their *regime*, and I do not understand it, that is the desire for separation in the Central district as well as in the North. I confess I do not know why that desire has arisen. It did not appear to exist there a year or two ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You started it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No!

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It existed years and years ago.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I am not speaking of ancient history. I know there was a ridiculous movement there for separation in 1866. I have had the petition sent to me, and it is certainly one of the most remarkable documents I ever saw. If it contains the reasons on which they base a claim for separation, I think they have little chance of getting it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Had his Excellency's trip North anything to do with that?

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I do not know. This I do know, that the great complaints of the Northern people are two—one, that the Southern members would not give them the particular labour they want; the other, that owing to their distance from the metropolis, the centre of government, the administration of their affairs was neglected. The second of the two charges has now been made for several years. When I was concerned with the Government the most strenuous efforts were made to destroy the foundation of that charge. I am afraid, Sir, the present Government are not so eager in that direction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, they are.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I am afraid they are not. We have two members of the Government who maintain that separation is absolutely necessary. They have it in their power, in the administration of their departments, to manifest the impossibility, or the difficulty, of managing the Government from Brisbane. I hope they do not do that consciously.

If they do, they are very great traitors to the colony generally, whose servants they are. But they are placed in a very difficult position. They are in a position in which it is their duty to serve the whole colony. At the same time, they are the mouthpieces of a party which says it is impossible to govern the North from Brisbane. They are persons asserting the impossibility of doing a thing to do which is a duty with which they are charged. It is an unfortunate position to be in. I remember that last year a very serious complaint was made about the quantities of land that had been sold in the Northern part of the colony, and from which a large revenue had been derived. It is one of the great complaints made by the North against the Southern Government, that they are selling their lands and appropriating their money to expenditure in the Southern part of the colony. Yet the Minister for Lands has been doing the very thing which his own supporters in the North complain of as being a gross injustice. I see that a large sale of land is now advertised at Townsville. When we see these things one can only come to the conclusion that the Government collectively are working for separation. That seems to be the effect of the collective policy of the Government, while the Government collectively are pledged to the contrary course. They say one thing and they do the other. I believe the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government did not know what his colleagues have been doing, or the tendency of their conduct, or the opinion that is now formed of them throughout the colony. That is what they have been doing, and what they profess to be their policy. Then, also, during the recess we have seen another member of the Government—the Minister for Railways—going about all over the colony, and whenever any deputation has asked him for a railway it is well known he has given them an implied promise that they should get it. He sent none of them away sad; he sent the whole of them away hopeful. But I wonder what deputations can think is the value of those promises after what he is reported to have said at Toowoomba about the value of political promises of railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. M. Nelson): Promises for political railways.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No; the value of promises. That they were of no consequence; they counted for nothing. That I call at any rate a demoralising—to use a very mild expression—sort of conduct. I have now referred to the principal matters relating to the conduct of public business during the recess. I do not attack the Government individually, for individually I have a very high respect for them. They administer their offices very fairly according to their ability, and that ability is considerable. But I believe that with the exception of the matters to which I have called attention—matters reaching much beyond those relating to any individual department—the work could have been done just as well by half-a-dozen under secretaries.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Donaldson): That would apply to the late Government just as well.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: For what has been done well, but which might have been done better, the Government deserve a negative kind of credit. What they have done positively is the conduct to which I have called particular attention. The Government may think the colony approves of such conduct. I can assure them it does not. A minority of the House can not, of course, effectively express the opinion of the country, but it may express it very well all the

same, and effect is given to the true opinion in the long run. The Government are in the position that any Government must be in which has no policy of its own. They have no object in view. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government is like the captain of a ship who has lost his compass or does not know the port he wants to go to. I read a story not very long ago by Jules Verne called "A Captain of Fifteen." The story is that a ship had started from Auckland to go across to the American continent. The captain was unfortunately lost overboard, and charge had to be taken by an apprentice, who was only fifteen years of age. He knew nothing about navigation. He had an idea that America was to the east, and he thought that if he got a westerly wind, and kept pretty well to the eastward he would come out at South America. There was another person on board who, for some inscrutable reason, did not want to go to America; and he destroyed one of the two compasses and laid a piece of iron near the magnet of the other, and by these means he succeeded in diverting the ship, and instead of sailing, as they supposed, to the east, the ship got round Cape Horn and was wrecked on the coast of Africa, which seems rather improbable. When I read that story I could not help comparing it to our present ship of State. Certainly in our ship of State the captain does not know the port he is steering for, and his officers have different opinions as to what is the proper port to steer for, and the direction appears to be left to the choice of the gentleman who happens to be at the helm for the time being. That is really about the position of the ship of State in this colony. Can we expect a colony to prosper under these circumstances? Is this colony at the present time in a position to be managed in that way? What have the Government done that shows any grasp whatever of the real perilous position of the colony? Nothing. What do they propose to do? Do not we all know that the colony is in a very serious state? Do not we all know that our finances want most serious attention? We have not forgotten that last session the Government had no control over the finances, and very little idea of them; and it was admitted that one of the most important works of this session would be to put the finances on a sound basis. But there is not a word in the Speech to show that they have even considered the subject during the interval. Are we to drift on as before? It is quite manifest that we cannot go on making lavish promises of railways to everybody, and double endowments to every local authority, unless we have the money to spend. At the present time we are to the bad nearly £1,000,000 on our current expenditure. That is a very serious matter. The first duty of this or any Government is to make both ends meet. I have maintained that a great many times on both sides of this House and outside it, and I believe the reason I am now standing on this side of the House, instead of on that, is that I told the public that it was necessary above all things to make both ends meet, and that at that time we were living beyond our means. They did not believe me when I told them so, therefore I am here and I am rather glad of it. When I told them that, they put me out and said that they would spend money without further taxation. Now, Mr. Speaker, the finances of the colony demand most serious attention, and what are we to expect? What have we here in this Speech? What is the programme we have put before us? Nothing. Another matter to which some reference ought to have been made in the Speech is the question of the sugar industry. It is a matter that occupied a great deal of time last session.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Too much time.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: A great deal too much time. If the Government had directed their attention to that subject as they ought to have done, as a Government, and endeavoured to do something to meet the case, we might have had some practical result. But they have done nothing; they propose to do nothing. What is to happen? Drift! drift! In fact the Government do not know what they want. One of the essential conditions of success in a man is that he should first know what he wants, and it is the same with a Government. But the Government do not know what they want, and they will never succeed in doing anything except drift about. They may sometimes get on a rock; sometimes they may get a fair wind and drift along a little bit in front of it; but a policy of drifting will never do any good to a colony or to a man. I shall now say a few words on the matters contained in the Speech. Such as they are, there are a few matters I do not like to pass over altogether. I am glad to find the Government hope that we are inspired with "hopeful energy" for the effective performance of our duties. That is an excellent sentiment, Mr. Speaker, but a hopeful energy without any idea of where you are going is likely to lead people into trouble. The Government have hopeful energy, but if they do not know in what direction they want to go I do not think that energy will be of much use to them. Then there is a reference to the unfortunate drought and floods; I need not say anything about them. I do not charge the Government with being responsible for them, although I might fairly do so after the charges that were brought against me when in office. With regard to the important question of federation, the Government will no doubt submit resolutions at an early date dealing with the subject.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The Speech then refers to the important matter of immigration. I admit at once that there is no more difficult subject for a Government to deal with than that. The frequent fluctuations in the circumstances of the colony, affecting as they do the state of the labour market, it becomes a subject of continual anxiety, as I found it for many years. I do not blame the Government for what they have done in the way of restricting immigration to two ships in three months, instead of one per month. Very likely that was the wisest course to pursue under the circumstances, but I do say that they made a great mistake in recalling Mr. Randall, and I do so for this reason: That the kind of labour Mr. Randall was instrumental in bringing here cannot be got by any other means. They are a class of labourers who do not enter into competition with any other labour already here. That has been our experience with the men brought here. They have been absorbed in the country, and not in the towns, and do work that no other men in the colony do. Mr. Randall told me a singular fact the other day—that among the thousands of people he had selected and sent out to the colony only two persons had recognised him in the street; those were the only ones he had ever heard of in Brisbane, and no complaints had ever been received from them.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Gone south.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No; I believe there is no reason to doubt that they have all been absorbed in the interior. They are a class of immigrants who cannot be got except by personal supervision. There are many agents

connected with the Agent-General's office in London who know nothing about Australia, or about Queensland; their only object is to get the small commission allowed; but these people have to be sought out and taught what sort of a place Queensland is, why to go there, and how they are to get here. That class of immigrants has been entirely closed by the action of the Government in recalling Mr. Randall. It was the only free immigration of males that was allowed, and it certainly was most desirable and beneficial, unless indeed we are to believe what some of us have heard stated by gentlemen, some of whom are still alive—that Queensland is not an agricultural country. I myself have heard it stated in this House that Queensland is not an agricultural country, and it was only wasting time to make believe that it was. These are a most desirable class of people, who do not interfere with the labour market, and who do work that you cannot get done otherwise, because it is a notorious fact that people born in the colony, as a rule, do not do the work on farms which must be done if it is to become a prosperous agricultural country. That, I maintain, is a very serious mistake. The only reference made to the finances is that "a change for the better may with confidence shortly be expected." I am sure we all hope so. If they do not get better I do not know what will happen. Hon. gentlemen opposite have hopeful energy in one part of the Speech and confident expectation in another—that something will turn up.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Like Micawber.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I know the hon. gentleman is confident that something will turn up, and wishes that it would turn up soon. Reference is made to the administration of the Agricultural Department, and no doubt the Minister for Lands has done a good many things for the agriculturists. He has sent about the travelling dairy, which has done a great deal of good; he is also sending an expert around the country to teach bacon curing, and the appointment of Mr. Shelton is a very good introduction, although I do not think the present Minister for Lands can take credit for that. My hon. friend, Mr. Jordan, deserves credit for that appointment. Then there is forest conservancy, a thing we have often heard about. Ten or twelve years ago it was brought forward; but nothing was done. I hope it will be seriously dealt with. It is an important subject, and must be dealt with, and there is much more information respecting it available now than there was in those days. I am glad to see attention specially directed to technical education, which really is intimately connected with a university. I shall take an early opportunity of taking the opinion of the House on that subject. The fortnightly mail service is a matter which received the support of this side of the House last session, and we are not likely to oppose it this. Now I come to the Bills to be introduced. Some of them are old friends. First is the Bill to reform the Constitution by providing for an elective Legislative Council. Whether that is a good Bill or not depends entirely on what is in it. If the proposal is to establish an elective Legislative Council with a property franchise or qualification, it shall receive my hearty opposition at any rate. It is better to

"—bear those ills we have,

Than fly to others that we know not of."

And a fixed tenure with a property qualification would be a great deal worse than any ills we suffer now from the Legislative Council. I can assure the Government that they are not likely to carry a reform of the Constitution in that way.

Next, there is "A Bill to make provision for dividing the colony into districts for financial purposes." I hope the Government will do more with that than merely present it for consideration. I hope they will really try to pass it; if they do, I believe they will succeed. As to the Bill for the regulation of factories and work rooms, it is a very necessary measure, but its goodness depends very much on the provisions it contains.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It's the same with all Bills.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I mean it may be a very good or a very bad Bill according to its details. The "Bill to amend the law relating to the endowment of municipalities and divisional boards"—I suppose that is to provide for the payment of large sums out of the Treasury. Any proposal of that kind must first be accompanied by one providing how the money is to be got into the Treasury. The other matters are of little consequence. What is there in it all? It is, I think, what one member of the Government not long since described as "domestic legislation." Here is a colony in an extremely perilous condition—it is really in a most perilous condition; its finances want most serious consideration; we have been living for several years beyond our means—and all that we are told is that the Government are going in for lavish expenditure with a hopeful expectancy that something will turn up.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Of course I did not expect anything but criticism from the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, but I expected sterner criticism than he has given us. The hon. gentleman started his speech by asking why the House had not met earlier, and said that there was a tacit understanding, if not an absolute promise, that the House should meet at the latest early in June. Well, there were many reasons why it could not meet earlier than it has now done. In fact, some of the reasons are now patent. Owing to the exigencies of the seasons several members on this side of the House are not able to be present now. The continuous floods almost from the commencement of this year, as the hon. gentleman knows, have so cut up the roads, and have made traffic so uncertain, that I thought it safer in order to get a full House to put off meeting until the last week in June, instead of earlier. But I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the House met to-day quite as early as that hon. gentleman, as a rule, met Parliament. I think I am perfectly right in saying it is earlier than he met Parliament in many instances. The hon. gentleman in proceeding to discuss the Speech stated that he would point out to the House the sins that had been committed by the Government during the recess. Well, I fully expected that he would have evolved from his inner consciousness, or from the inner consciousness of some of his friends, a much blacker and longer list of our sins of omission and commission than he has brought forward. He first took exception to the appointment of the Civil Service Board. Now the Government are perfectly prepared to justify those appointments. They were made after very great care, and quite in accord with the promise made to this House that the Government would endeavour to select the best possible men for the position, and the Government believe they have done so, and are prepared to challenge any debate upon the subject. Then the hon. gentleman went on to deal with the "Hopeful" question. One would have thought from the way the hon. gentleman spoke that this Government were actuated by an unreasonable desire to turn loose upon the colony a lot of terrible

criminals, some of whom, as the hon. gentleman said, had forfeited their lives. The hon. member must know that is hardly in accordance with the facts. He must be aware there was no precipitate action taken by the Government with regard to the case. He knows as well as I do that for months and months the Government inquired into the case, and it was only after the most mature deliberation that the Executive decided—not in any panic or in any hurry, and not in consequence of outside pressure, but calmly and deliberately decided upon the evidence brought before them that it was a fit and proper thing that those men should be released. The whole of the papers dealing with the matter will be laid before the House in a few days, and the Government challenge a debate upon the subject. I hope it will be fully discussed, but it can be better discussed after the papers have been laid on the table of the House than it can be now. The hon. gentleman went a little too far when he stated that the “Hopeful” prisoners were let out of gaol as a sop to the sugar planters. Surely the hon. gentleman cannot have been in earnest when he made that statement, because I think no men could possibly damage the sugar industry more than the “Hopeful” prisoners. Nothing could possibly have done more harm to that industry than the outrages those men committed, or were supposed to have committed, and to say that their release was a sop to the sugar industry is a statement hardly in accordance with the reality. It would have been better for the industry had those men been hanged, rightly or wrongly; but to say that their liberation is a sop to the industry is a strange perversion of facts. Then the hon. gentleman went on to say that the Government, or certain members of the Government, in a tour up North, wherein they accompanied the Governor, took advantage of the Governor's visit to turn the tour into an electioneering campaign on the basis of separation and black labour. Now, the hon. gentleman knows as well as I do that the Government have no sympathy with black labour. Whatever sympathies the Minister for Lands may have had with black labour he has disclaimed them. At any rate, so long as he is a member of this Government he must be opposed to black labour. I believe that he is opposed to black labour. Now, with regard to what that hon. member said about separation up North, I have read all he said just as carefully probably as the leader of the Opposition, and what has he said? He has given expression to opinions that every member of this House knew he held when he joined the Ministry. There was no secret about it. It was perfectly well known that the hon. members for Mackay and Townsville were in favour of separation. They have been separationists, they are now separationists, but they are not separationists so long as they are members of the present Government. This is no more accentuated now than when the Government was formed, and the remarks the hon. gentleman has made might just as well have been made two years and more ago as to-day. I deny that the Minister for Lands in his trip up North in any way made use of his position as a Minister accompanying the Governor to preach the doctrines of separation and black labour. I deny that he ever did so, and he will justify himself. I am perfectly satisfied from what I have read, and from what I know of the Minister for Lands, that he never conducted himself in the way the leader of the Opposition desires it to be believed he did. I also totally disagree with the hon. member as to the probability of black labour being accepted in the Northern portion of the colony should it be separated. I

quite agree with him that if it were to be so it would be intolerable, and that it would not be tolerated by any other colony in the union. But I do not believe for one moment that the majority of the people of the North would return members in favour of black labour if they had separation. In fact, we have only to look round the House to see that this would be the case. The miners, and also the people of the towns must necessarily be opposed to black labour. The hon. gentleman—I think unfortunately—made an allusion to the Agent-General, when he said that the action of that gentleman was of a piece with the action taken by the Ministry—that is to say, as I understood the hon. gentleman, that he was averse, and showed his aversion, to the introduction of white labour into Northern Queensland, or certain portions of the colony. He based that assertion, I understood, upon certain evidence purporting to be correct which was published in the *Courier*. I think the hon. gentleman might have waited, as the Government waited, until we get the evidence as it was actually given before the committee of the House of Commons. I do not consider it fair to judge a gentleman of the well-known capacity and undoubted ability of Mr. Archer as the leader of the Opposition has done, and to condemn him without having heard the case. The explanation I have from Mr. Archer is to this effect: He does not, of course, give his evidence in detail, but states that his evidence was in connection with the question of relieving the large towns of England, where there was a congested population, and he states that he threw cold water on a proposition to send out the surplus population from those congested districts to this colony, and in so doing I think he was perfectly right, and he has the fullest approval of the Government.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Nobody objects to that.

THE PREMIER: That is the information I have from Mr. Archer.

MR. GROOM: He went further than that, according to the evidence I read.

THE PREMIER: I have not the evidence as Mr. Archer gave it before the committee.

MR. GROOM: I read it in the *Times*, and his explanation.

THE PREMIER: I also only read it in the *Times*. Mr. Archer points out in his letter to me that his communication was not inserted *in extenso* by the editor of the *Times*, and the Government have full confidence in Mr. Archer, and are not going to allow him to be charged with failing in his duty, in the way he has been by the leader of the Opposition in this House, and also by the Press. I believe that Mr. Archer would be one of the last men in the world to do that. The hon. gentleman then mentioned the jesting promises about the separation of the Central districts, and said that the cry for separation did not exist when he was Premier. I suppose the people of those districts had so many grievances to attend to at that time that they had no leisure for such a small thing as separation, but now they are so well off that they are looking about for something to grumble at, and raise this cry for separation. I may say at once that this Administration has not the slightest sympathy with that cry, and I believe myself in the arguments brought forward by the leader of the Opposition with regard to this question. The hon. gentleman further went on to say that it was impossible, though he admitted the honesty of purpose of the two Ministers to whom he alluded, for the Minister for Lands and the Colonial Secretary to do their

duty honestly and fairly in this Cabinet, because their sympathies and aspirations are in favour of separation. He also indicated that those hon. gentlemen, either unknowingly or unwittingly, were led to do things, in some cases to favour and in others to injure the North, in order to intensify the feeling in favour of separation, and he stated that one of those Ministers had been selling large quantities of land in the North in order to exasperate the Townsville people still further. I do not think that any hon. member who knows either the Minister for Lands or the Colonial Secretary would believe for a moment that either of them would be guilty of such treachery; at any rate, I do not believe so. Well, the hon. gentleman, dealing with the Speech, went on to say that it was a matter for regret that we had not said more in the Speech with regard to the finances of the colony. The hon. gentleman would not himself—and I am sure he could not expect this Government to do so—disclose his financial policy through the Governor's Speech, delivered from the Throne. The hon. gentleman surely did not suppose that the Government would exhibit to the House any scheme of taxation in the Opening Speech of His Excellency the Governor—certainly not. They are just as firmly seized as to the state of the finances of the colony as any hon. gentleman opposite. They are perfectly well aware of the gravity of the situation; they are perfectly well aware that the deficit will be a very large one, probably larger than it was when the hon. gentleman left office; but, even although that is so, the Government certainly do not admit that the colony is in a perilous condition. Those are the words used by the leader of the Opposition. I emphatically deny that the colony is in a perilous position. The colony has gone through some very bad times—exceptionally bad times—but there is no reason to suppose that we shall not in the very early future be in a very good financial position. I do not say without extra taxation. Extra taxation will happen, and that extra taxation will, I hope, be brought before the House within a month from now. I hope that the Colonial Treasurer will be in a position before the end of July to make his Financial Statement, and let the House know what his scheme of taxation is. The hon. gentleman spoke of what, I think, he called the promising Minister, the Minister for Railways, and said that the Government, through that Minister, were making lavish promises of railways in all directions. He warned the House that we were travelling very fast and getting heavily into debt, and that the financial position of the colony is one which must be seriously considered. I admit that the hon. gentleman is right to a certain extent. I admit that for reasons which are patent to all hon. members. Enormous sums of money have been wasted in this colony in railway expenditure. I believe that it can be clearly shown that not only the late Government, but almost all previous Governments are greatly to blame for the heavy expenditure on railways, even in the North. In order to equalise the expenditure there with that in the Southern portion of the colony money has been spent in constructing railways which will not pay till the crack of doom. Instead of placing the money in the books to the credit of those districts, it has been expended on railways, many of which will cost a large sum to complete. But where did this lavish expenditure start? Is not the leader of the Opposition himself to blame for this? It is like a wild beast tasting blood, for money to be given in the lavish way it was given by the leader of the Opposition. The commencement of this great and terrible and growing evil lies with the leader of the Opposition and his

£10,000,000 loan. If the £10,000,000 loan had been all, that would be bad enough, but that is not as bad as the expenditure which has been entailed by railways only half made, and which it will cost an enormous amount of money to complete, so that the blame for the commencement of this prodigal expenditure lies with the late Administration, and the hon. gentleman is the chief culprit. I sincerely hope that this side of the House, and members on the other side also, will sit down, and sit fast, on this system of expenditure, and see that railway expenditure does not proceed in the way it has done for the last few years. We are borrowing too much money; we are getting overweighted with interest. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact, and there are men in this Ministry who do not shut their eyes to it any more than members sitting opposite, and who are not afraid to grapple with it, as will be shown by the statement of the Treasurer when he brings it down to the House. I have now dealt with every objection raised by the leader of the Opposition, except that to the construction of the Speech. With regard to that objection I may mention that during the preparation of the Speech, it never entered into my mind for a moment whether it would be pleasing or not. If we revised some of the Speeches constructed by the hon. gentleman, and they have been revised, it would be found that this Speech compares very favourably with many of them. The hon. gentleman, I think, hardly did credit to the Government in some respects. I think we are entitled to some little commendation for the action we took with regard to federation. The action of this Government had a great deal to do with the meeting of the Federation Conference. If it had not been for the position taken up by the Queensland Government then, quite likely the whole thing might have tumbled over, and the meeting might not have taken place. I take this opportunity of saying that the colony owes a debt of gratitude to the two gentlemen who represented Queensland at the conference. Anyone who has read the debates that took place will see that we certainly had two of the very worthiest representatives in Melbourne on that occasion. I think further, that some little commendation might have been given to the Postmaster-General for what he has done at the Postal Conference, which I hope he will explain fully later on, and also for his efforts in regard to technical education in our schools, for which he deserves the highest praise from every member of this House. The Minister for Lands we know has done admirable work in his department, and deserves credit for it. With regard to the proposal to create an elective Upper House, I am very glad to hear that the leader of the Opposition is, at any rate, prepared under certain conditions to support the measure. Of course it has got to go through another ordeal than this Chamber, but at the same time I think it is a step in the right direction. I think we should show to the people that the anachronism of a nominee Upper House should cease to exist, and that we should have the people represented in both branches of the legislature, which they are not at the present time. There is one other matter which I wish to refer to, and that is the question of immigration. I do not dispute for one moment that Mr. Randall was an admirable officer, and I hope the day is not far distant when his services can be availed of, and I may say they will be willingly availed of when the time arrives to send him home. He is well aware that the Government have a very high appreciation of his services, but at the present time it is not necessary that he should continue lecturing. We are now getting immigrants of a very good class.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: How do you get them now?

The PREMIER: They come through the agents, and are passed in London. When a continuous stream of immigration is resumed, we will employ Mr. Randall again. I may say that the Government are not in the slightest degree in sympathy with those who say we should close our ports against immigrants, and so long as I have anything to do with it, I will bring in as many as the colony can absorb. I think there is an immense amount of ingratitude shown by those people described by the hon. member for Kennedy; people who, finding they are doing well themselves out here, say "we will have no more immigrants." It is very strange how extremes meet in that direction. I remember when Mr. Wienholt was member for Darling Downs. He was not what would be called an extreme radical, but it is strange that he held the same views as extreme radicals hold now, that we had enough people in the colony, and that we should divide it amongst ourselves. I hope during the next year or two we may have a large increase in the number of immigrants brought to this colony. I think I have now dealt with all the hon. gentleman spoke of, and I may say that I am glad to find that his attack was of such a very mild nature.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker,—The Premier in his reply to the speech of my hon. friend, the leader of the Opposition, expressed his disappointment at the comparative feebleness of that hon. gentleman's attack upon the policy of the Government; but I have noticed frequently that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, when he has occasion to reply to the speeches made by my hon. friend, resorts to those tactics. It is all very well for an hon. gentleman to get up and say, "I am surprised that an hon. gentleman at the head of a party such as that which sits on the Opposition benches has so little fault to find with the misdeeds of the Government, or the policy put forth in the programme submitted to the House in the shape of His Excellency's Speech," but that does not deceive anybody, and an argument of that kind is a very feeble one to use. It certainly does not in the estimation of impartial members of this House, and will not in the estimation of the readers of *Hansard* tomorrow morning, do anything towards covering with anything like honour the retreat the hon. gentleman seeks to effect from the scathing criticisms which my hon. friend put forward to-day. I think the hon. gentleman's criticisms were of a most effective character, and I did think the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, in attempting to reply to those criticisms, would have used something more powerful than a mere negation of the accusations of my hon. friend. What we want under the circumstances is that the statesmanlike criticisms which we heard this evening from the leader of the Opposition should be met by a statesmanlike reply, and I am very sorry indeed that the statesmanlike reply which might have been expected from the head of the Government and the leader of a powerful party has been wanting on the present occasion. The hon. gentleman said he did not expect anything like a friendly criticism of the policy of the Government as expounded in the Speech of His Excellency from the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition. While we may criticise a Speech like this perfectly free from everything like a feeling of animosity towards individual members of the Government, I should like to know how it is possible to criticise in any other than an unfriendly spirit a Speech such as that placed in our hands to-day. It is very patent to every person in this community that the state of affairs in this colony is a very

serious one indeed. One has only to travel about and hear what people of different ways of thinking in the community have to say with regard to the political situation in order to discover that in the estimation of every thinking resident of this colony, and every well-wisher of the colony, there is this preponderating sentiment, and it is freely and unmistakably expressed, that the condition of affairs we have drifted into under the guiding hand or hands of members of the present Government is a most deplorable one; and there is no getting over that fact. Hon. members may say, "You are painting a picture in colours of your own manufacture, and you are making them as vivid as possible so as to have a certain effect on the eyes of the people to whom you present it." But the work of making this picture have such an effect on the people of the colony is not to be attributed to the Opposition, but to the handiwork of the Government themselves. They have produced not only the picture, but also the reality.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: We inherited it from our predecessors.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: It must be admitted that the colony is suffering under the pressure of a very great financial gloom. But what do the Government treat us to when they bring us here at such a late period of the year to commence our legislative duties? Without attempting to shut their eyes to the financial gloom which is prevalent—of whose existence they make but a feeble admission—what do the Government do to dissipate this gloom? They simply invite this House and the colony to witness a display of literary fireworks. But we want something more substantial than literary fireworks. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government asked that credit should be given to him for the things the Government had done deserving of credit; and I give him credit for having put into the mouth of His Excellency the Governor a very pretty speech, which reads remarkably well. But after all, it is nothing but fireworks; and the effect, after the flash has disappeared, will be to leave the condition of things much more gloomy than before, unless the members of the Opposition contribute something towards shedding a little light on the darkness. I remember that when the party now in Opposition sat on the Government benches, a favourite accusation hurled at us, especially by the present Colonial Secretary, was that we were a one-man Government. I should be very sorry, as I observed before, to say anything disparaging of individual members of the present Government, and I desire that everything I say against the Ministry as a whole shall be utterly free from any feeling of hostility or bitterness against members of the Government individually. I have nothing but feelings of respect for them individually; but I am speaking of them as a Government, and I say that it would be very fortunate for them if, instead of being in their present position, they were in the position of the one-man Government, which they used to be some years ago, and still later less than two years ago. We have now a Government composed of a series of small independent Governments. Although we know that the Premier exercises a certain amount of control over the individual members of his Ministry, we know that the elements are too heterogeneous to exist in a state of cohesion. Every department is a government in itself, acting almost independently of every other department. If this is the kind of thing we are to have as an alternative of a one-man Government, I say, give us back a one-man Government again. It is all very well for the Premier to say that the members of the Government are a happy family, that they are agreed upon

questions of public policy, on questions of importance, such as the introduction of coloured labour into the colony. But what is the fact? If they are a happy family, it is in appearance only; it cannot be in reality; for the statement made by the Premier to-day is at variance with statements made by the Minister for Lands during the celebrated tour he made in company with His Excellency the Governor recently, unless he is misreported in the papers I read giving an account of the tour, or unless I have misread the published reports. That hon. gentleman said that when he connected himself with the Government he was left a free hand—those were his words—on the questions of separation and suitable labour for the sugar plantations. Now, I want to know how it comes about, if he thinks it necessary to tell the people of the North in the presence of the Governor that he has a free hand with regard to those matters, knowing that the Premier does not favour what he calls the most suitable kind of labour for the sugar plantations, and has no sympathy with separation—how comes it that the Government are a happy family, having only one idea with respect to these two most important questions? That tour, while it was a very happy conception on the part of the Government to give His Excellency an opportunity of visiting the various parts of the colony which he is called upon to govern, was not used for right purposes by some of those who had to do with the programme which His Excellency carried out up there. There can be no doubt that it was made use of for party political purposes. I do not say that was done only by the Minister for Lands. And I may here remark that the Colonial Treasurer did not, by any word or deed, commit anything that could be construed into an effort to serve party purposes. I freely concede that to the Colonial Treasurer; but I cannot say as much for the Minister for Lands, and I regret to say that I cannot say as much for some of those who were honoured with invitations to accompany His Excellency. Some of the supporters of the Government who accompanied His Excellency had the bad manners, at a banquet given by the mayor of Charters Towers in honour of the Governor, to inveigh against the choice made by the people of Charters Towers in selecting the men they considered fit to represent them in this chamber.

Mr. PAUL: I was there and I never heard them.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: They so far forgot themselves in the presence of their entertainers, and in the presence of His Excellency, as to grovel in the mire of party politics of the worst kind.

Mr. PAUL: No such feeling was ever shown.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: The hon. gentleman is putting the cap on with remarkable celerity. There was throughout an attempt made to impress upon His Excellency that the whole of the North was in favour of separation. I am happy to say that His Excellency recognised the manifestations of loyalty with which he was met during the course of his Northern tour. I am proud to say that the town which I have the honour to represent took a leading part in impressing His Excellency with the deep-seated loyalty which prevails among the people of the North towards the Constitution of this colony, and towards His Excellency as the chosen ruler of this colony. I am proud of the enthusiastic reception which was accorded to His Excellency by all classes in the town of Charters Towers, and I deeply regret that on the occasion that His Excellency was banquetted there, and on the occasions that he was banquetted elsewhere, those manifestations—of exuberant loyalty I

was going to say, but at all events those manifestations of respect for His Excellency's person and office, were twisted into an endeavour to promote the interests of separation. Now, His Excellency was made to believe that the enthusiasm shown upon the occasion of his visit to Charters Towers, together with the way certain sentiments were expressed at banquets, and the way in which certain expressions were cheered by persons who were present, that there was in the North an almost unanimous feeling in favour of separation. I deeply regret that those who had charge of those things should have permitted the thing to be so managed that such an impression should be made upon the mind of His Excellency. We know very well how these things are managed. We know very well that under the cover of His Excellency's presence at those banquets there was a great deal done towards producing an impression which I venture to assert, without any fear of contradiction, does not give a correct idea of the facts as regards the minds of the Northern people as a whole upon this vexed question of separation. I am not going to try to find out all the faults I can that have been committed by the Government during the recess. I am prepared to admit that the various members of the Government have applied themselves to their various duties, so far as I have been able to see, with a great deal of conscientious zeal. I am perfectly prepared to admit that they have tried to do their best, and in trying to do their best and accomplishing so little they have clearly demonstrated their incapacity. If, with all the energy they displayed, and with all the conscientious zeal which they have applied to the discharge of their duties, they succeeded in allowing this colony to drift on to the rocks of financial disaster, I say that they have only demonstrated their own incapacity, and the sooner that this colony is in charge of men who know how to steer the ship of State more safely than it has been steered lately, so much the better. Now, there are some things that I cannot help advertising to as a reason why fault should be found with the Government. I am not going into any of those matters touched upon by my hon. friend this evening. After he has dealt with a matter and applied the force of his argumentative ability to it, there is not much left for anybody else to say. But I say this: Do we want an illustration of how things are going? Take the case of the Minister for Railways: That the Minister for Railways is a conscientious, hard-working Minister, everybody will admit. But what do we find? Surely, now we have Commissioners, a great deal of labour that used to fall upon the shoulders of the Minister has been removed, and he might have had time to display a little originality and energy in the management of his department. Yet what do we find? That on the occasion of an attempt to organise a system of insurance for the railway servants of this colony, he has so mismanaged the office he represents that we find the railway service almost in a state of rebellion.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: What about the Commissioners?

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: Of course there are Commissioners, but I have no doubt they have been very much at the ear of the Minister, or he has been at their ear. They do not manage the affairs of the Railway Department at arm's length. If they do, they ought not to. The Minister has been applied to on this subject, and he has taken it upon himself to say, the Commissioners notwithstanding, that this matter is not to come into operation at once. Three months will be given, during which some other scheme will be devised, and a comparison

will be instituted between that other scheme and the scheme already proposed, in order to see which is the best. When I find a state of things like that, I say somebody is to blame. We cannot blame the Commissioners. They are not here to answer for their conduct. In a matter of this kind, a matter of State policy, to a great extent the Commissioners carry out the ideas of the Minister, and I think the Minister ought to exercise a little judgment in a matter such as that sought to be imposed upon the railway servants of this colony, which I am sure everybody who examines it will agree is a very unsatisfactory one indeed. Now, the Speech opens with the expression of a desire on the part of His Excellency that hon. members, after the troubles of the recess, will come to the discharge of their legislative duties with no diminution of that hopeful energy which is necessary to their effective performance. That is a very nicely rounded phrase—exceedingly nicely rounded; but in order that there should be an exhibition of hopeful energy, there ought to be something to stimulate it. Hopeful energy is not a thing which spontaneously exhibits itself in grappling with stern and severe and arduous duties like those which engage the attention of members of this Chamber. We should have something to stimulate our energies; but we have nothing to call forth those latent energies within us. There is everything to discourage us. It would be encouraging if we saw the Government, which must be fully aware of the most serious position in which the colony is in at the present time, rising to the occasion and doing something to grapple with the difficulties in which the State finds itself—trying to extricate the colony from the difficulties into which it has been plunged. But nothing of the kind. We are told that the seasons have been bad, but they are all right now; that there never was such a good season as the one now setting in, and depend upon it everything is going to go right. One feels inclined to be satirical after reading a paragraph like this in His Excellency's Speech, and remembering what used to be said by those same hon. gentlemen when they sat on this side, and when members of a former Government used to speak with regard to the effect upon the finances of the colony, and upon the industries of the colony, of the succession of disastrous droughts which prevailed a few years ago. Why, they laughed us to scorn, and said that those were only idle pretexts invented by incompetent men to cover their incapacity. That is what they said in effect, but as soon as they changed places and got over there, and found no earthly reason could be given beyond a partial drought last year and a flood this year, they say the droughts and floods have played the mischief with the finances of the colony. "You must be generous in your criticism of our administration, and not lay the blame upon our shoulders, but lay it upon the shoulders of those natural causes, and hope for the best in time to come." That may be a very comforting theory for Ministers to apply to themselves; but, certainly, it will not, I think, in the estimation of thoughtful persons in this colony, account for all the evils, all the financial troubles, which at the present time affect this colony. Now, the Premier has stated, with regard to the criticism addressed by my hon. friend to that part of the Speech, that hon. members ought to give the Government every credit for those things for which they claim credit; and among the things which the hon. gentleman says the Government deserve credit for, and which the hon. gentleman specifies as one of his grounds for claiming credit, is that which is touched upon in the paragraph

in the Speech relating to federation. I am quite prepared to give the Government all the credit they can lay claim to on that account. I am quite prepared to give them credit for having seen exactly what public opinion really was and is on the subject of federation. But while I give them credit for having done their best towards bringing about the conference which was so successfully terminated at Melbourne a short time ago, it must be borne in mind that they were well aware that they had public opinion at their back. This idea of federation is not a new thing to be credited to the present Government. Both the hon. gentlemen who represent North Brisbane have for years been ardent advocates of federation. They have both spoken and acted with the view of bringing about the federation of the Australian colonies. They have done this for years, and I am very glad that the present Government have acted in accordance with the best opinions, as I understand them, upon this subject, and have contributed their quota towards bringing this question to a successful issue. The Speech goes on to refer to the matter of immigration—and here I cannot express so much approbation as the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government claims for the Government in respect of what they have done in that matter. I need not repeat what has already been said on this side on the subject of the kind of immigration that ought to be introduced here, and of the tremendous mistake made by the Government in recalling Mr. Randall, who really was one of the principal safeguards we had at home against introducing unsuitable persons into this colony. But I say the Government have not gone far enough in the way of restricting immigration. I believe that all that has been said by the Premier and by others on the subject of immigration is true, and that the encouragement of immigration is a right thing. But what may be a right thing to-day may not be a right thing for all days, and it is quite possible to overdo even a good thing. There ought to be some discrimination. Although the Speech tells us that the colony has been passing through a period of unexampled drought and floods, yet immigration has been allowed to go on until within the last few months, at the undiminished rate of one shipload every month; and now, when the labour market is congested, and hundreds of men are walking about unable to find employment, the Government have found no more stringent remedy than that instead of having one ship every month we are to have two ships every three months. At a time like this they ought to have recognised the fact that there are hundreds of honest working men looking for work and unable to find it, and have restricted immigration in a much greater degree than they have done or propose to do. It is all very well to make the Governor say that it is a matter of satisfaction, notwithstanding the unfavourable condition of the labour market, that all the immigrants introduced have been absorbed into the working community, but I feel justified in taking exception to that statement. It is perfectly lamentable at the present time to see the numbers of able-bodied men—men who are willing to work—who are spending all their days in the vain search for employment. And this is not only the case in Brisbane. I thought that in this Brisbane was singular, but that it is not so, hon. members on both sides will, I am sure, bear me out. It is a painful thing to be applied to, as one is constantly, for assistance towards getting men employment who are unable to obtain it, or to contribute to prevent them or their families from starving while they are seeking for employment. I thought this kind of thing was peculiar only to the metropolis, knowing the tendency there is on

the part of the unemployed, as a rule, to gravitate towards the metropolis, but I found on my recent travels that Brisbane is not singular in this respect. I found that there are hundreds of working men in the Northern parts of the colony who are going about seeking employment and cannot obtain it; and I say that at a time like this, when there is so much destitution, and such a difficulty to find even temporary employment by deserving men, the Government ought to have recognised the gravity of the situation, and ought to have reduced the rate at which immigrants are brought in to a much greater extent than the proportion to which they have seen fit to reduce it. I am sure that the kind of reduction which is to be effected will not give satisfaction in any part of the colony. When we had the immigration vote before the House last year, the hon. member for Mitchell moved a reduction on the amount set down in the Loan Estimates for the purpose by one-half, and I supported him in that. I would not vote for the omission of the item altogether, because I believe in immigration, but I believe it ought to be restricted in times of great commercial depression in the colony to a minimum. The hon. member went to a division and was defeated, I and many of my hon. friends voting with him; but he was defeated, because the Government gave a solemn promise that they would considerably restrict immigration, which I took to mean that in a time like the present they would restrict it by one-half. I am sorry to say that instead of one-half, the proportion is two-thirds of what it formerly was, and I can assure the Government that the labour that has been imported into the colony during the last twelve months has not been all absorbed. Then I join with my hon. friend, the member for Kennedy, in his excellent speech seconding the adoption of the Address in Reply, in expressing disappointment that so little is said in the Speech with regard to the mining industry. I do not grudge that the agricultural industry should have the facilities for developing its great resources that will be furnished by the existence of a college. I do not grudge that the pastoralists should have the expenditure—for it is virtually expenditure—provided by the use of the boring apparatus for testing the capacity of many parts of the country for yielding artesian water. I do not grudge the expenditure of large sums of money for the benefit of the sugar industry in any legitimate way that may be decided upon in the wisdom of the Government, although, by the way, there is nothing at all about it in this Speech—but I do say that while the House is prepared to deal generously in aiding all these industries to develop their vast resources as a matter of experiment, I observe with regret that there is absolutely nothing said here with a view of showing that the Government are alive to the necessity of developing the mining industry of the colony. The matter has been brought before the notice of the Government over and over again. The Government which preceded the present one took some steps, and inquiries were made by my hon. friend, the member for Burke, when Minister for Mines, and preliminary steps taken by him for the purpose of establishing a school of mines. The necessary sum for that purpose was placed on the Estimates, and it was intended to be submitted to the House. But when the present Government came into power we found that the mining industry was virtually brushed aside. As long as Mount Morgan is in the colony, what do we want with any mining industry? That seems to be the idea of the Government with regard to the mining industry, and they have no eyes for the development of mining in any other locality. To show

what is needed, I may point out that quite recently in the district I have the honour to represent, in places where it was supposed formerly that no auriferous riches remained in the ground, by well-directed and intelligent application, they have succeeded in striking very rich reefs. In many other parts of the colony the same thing exists. What is wanted is the application of trained intelligence to the efforts which are made by our hard-working mining population, in order to extract from the earth the riches that are deposited there. I say we ought to have had something more than a few words with regard to the mining industry, the effect of which amounts to this: "Oh, the mining industry is a very good industry; it is getting on remarkably well; there is a lot of gold coming out of the mines of Queensland." That is all they think about the mining industry—this industry, Sir, which has been the backbone of the country for some time past, which has done more to attract the attention of foreign capitalists to the great resources of Queensland than any other industry; this industry, Sir, which I say is the gem and pride of all the industries of the colony—this one industry comes in for this small amount of patting on the back, which amounts to this: "You are doing very well; go on and do better if you can." There is no promise whatever on the part of the Government to do anything towards the assistance of the mining industry. The miners of this colony are a very long-suffering people, and I must say that I hoped better things from the present Minister for Mines. I know that he has liberal ideas on the subject of the mining industry, and I thought that with that hon. gentleman as Minister for Mines, at all events, whoever went short, the miners would not go short; but, Sir, I think the miners are worse off now than ever they were with regard to the proposed expenditure of money or any actual solid encouragement to the industry to which they belong. We heard the other day the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer telling the people of Charters Towers that he was surprised they never asked for anything. No doubt that is their characteristic; they do not ask for anything. They are not one of those clamorous cormorant constituencies who are always asking the Government to keep the town going by means of Government expenditure. It rests on a solid basis, and I am happy to say it has gone along very well without very much Government aid. Yet what do we find? This is one of the things I have to allege as a shortcoming on the part of the Government. They were applied to to supply that place with a post and telegraph office suitable to the requirements of a town which is second to none in Queensland out of Brisbane, and we find the Government—the members of which actually go there and tell the people, "You never ask for anything; why don't you ask for something?"—say they will give the post and telegraph office if the municipal council will provide or present the Government with twenty-five feet frontage of land for the purpose of erecting the building. I say a haggling spirit like this in dealing with a great constituency of this sort, which has never been a mendicant at the door of the Government asking for relief—I say it reflects no very great credit on the administration of the Government. And while I give the Hon. the Treasurer credit for being sincere in his promise that a sum should be put on the Estimates for the erection of a post and telegraph office, and give the Postmaster-General credit for sincerity in his desire to supply that requirement, I can find no words but words of condemnation for the tardy, niggardly way in which they propose to set about that expenditure; and I may say that comments are made very freely and

very emphatically upon the policy of a Government who say to the people, "You never ask for anything," and when they do ask they are told, "We will give you the post and telegraph office if you get the municipal council to give us the land to build it on." I think a spirit of parsimony like this in dealing with a constituency of this sort is one that deserves censure. I am very glad, as a representative of a Northern constituency, to find that there is a determination arrived at by the Postmaster-General and the Government to give the company which now has the contract for carrying our mails notice to provide a fortnightly instead of a monthly service. It will be a very satisfactory announcement to the people of the North, and will not be without benefits to the South as well. I should like to be informed at the same time, if it is the intention on the part of the Government to require the contractors, in accordance with the proposal made by themselves when the matter was submitted last session, to provide boats of a greater rate of speed than those at present employed in the service? The only other subject to which I shall refer before sitting down is that with regard to an elective Upper House. When that measure is submitted it will be the proper time to discuss it in detail, but I may say at present that I am entirely opposed to the proposition to substitute an elective Upper House for the existing Upper House. The experience of Victoria and South Australia, where elective Upper Houses exist, I am sure does not tend to engender in the minds of thoughtful persons any feeling of confidence in the beneficial results that would accrue from bringing about so great a change in our existing Constitution. And while no doubt a nominated Upper House sometimes becomes obstreperous and acts in opposition to the wishes of the popular Chamber, yet we find in the experience of the past, that when the Upper House has been convinced that the lower Chamber has the opinion of the public at its back, it invariably gives way. I should lament most sincerely the supplanting of the present Upper Chamber by means of an elective chamber, which would be based, I suppose, on a property qualification. We should then have a conflict between the two Houses of a chronic character, and the result would be to impede useful legislation, and engender that class of animosities which it ought to be the aim of every thoughtful patriot and citizen not only to discourage but to suppress.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said: Mr. Speaker,—It seems customary, on the opening of Parliament, when the adoption of the reply to the Speech is moved, that an attack should proceed from the Opposition against the Government. That is the usual thing, and it is usually couched, I notice, in the same terms. I know that when I myself was in Opposition I endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to make out that the Government then in power were about the worst Government that had ever occupied that position. I do not know whether I succeeded any better than the hon. gentlemen who now occupy the Opposition benches have succeeded this evening, but I can only say that if I did not succeed better than they have done I did not succeed at all. They have endeavoured to make out, so far as I can understand, that individually the members of the Government have done their work very well. I think I do not exaggerate when I say that they give the members of the Government credit for having done their work in their administrative capacity fairly well; but taking them collectively, they say they are a very poor lot indeed. We on this side of the House are in that happy position to be able to smile at these attacks. The attacks that have been made this evening have

not been at all of an ill-natured character, and I hope that the debate will continue in the same spirit in which it has commenced. One thing, at all events, is quite certain, that although we may not have succeeded to as great an extent as we could desire for the welfare of the colony—which I think it will be taken for granted we have at heart—we have endeavoured to do our best. That best may not be as good as some hon. members opposite think it might have been, but we take credit to ourselves that it is quite as good as they were ever able to effect when they were in the position we now occupy. I do not regard the speech of the leader of the Opposition as a scathing speech, as the hon. member for Charters Towers described it. It was nothing of the sort. It was a moderate speech, and it was not half so scathing as the speech of the hon. member for Charters Towers; but it was a fair criticism of the action of the Government, and a criticism which I think is deserving of certainly a courteous and elaborate reply to set at rest, at all events, several matters especially affecting myself as a member of the Government during my recent Northern trip. One of the first objections the leader of the Opposition took to the action of the Government during the recess was the appointment of the Civil Service Board. Well, I do not know where that dissatisfaction comes in to which the hon. gentleman referred. I can only say that having mixed to a great extent with the people of the colony during the last few months, I have heard nothing but expressions of approval as regards those appointments, and I have no hesitation in saying that the Government were actuated by the best motives, and made the selection which they did entirely apart from all political or party considerations, and I believe that the gentlemen appointed to the Civil Service Board are as able and competent men as the colony is well able to furnish. Which of the three—or whether it is all three appointments that does not give satisfaction to the leader of the Opposition I cannot say; but as far as I have been able to ascertain up to the present time those gentlemen are imbued with a sense of the responsibility imposed upon them, and are doing their best to meet that responsibility. I have no doubt that when they have been sufficiently long in office to organise the Civil Service, the position of the service and of the country generally will be very much improved by the Civil Service Act passed last session. I may say that I was sorry to hear the strong way in which the leader of the Opposition referred to an act of mercy that this Government, I am pleased to say, were able to carry out in connection with the release of those unfortunate "Hopeful" prisoners.

Mr. SMYTH: Shame!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I regret that the hon. gentleman referred to this act as to some extent a concession to the sugar planters. Now, I was present at the trial of those unfortunate men. It is well known that my sympathies are and my interests were with the sugar planters, as they still are, and I say unhesitatingly that, having been present at that trial, I have not the least hesitation in saying that more cruel, bloodthirsty murders were never perpetrated by any men. I have never had the least sympathy with those men, and so far from their release being brought about by any request or agitation from the sugar planters, no greater injury was ever done to the planting industry of this colony than was perpetrated by those men connected with the "Hopeful" atrocities. Nothing did more to bring the labour system into disrepute than the acts of those men.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That and similar ones.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes; that and similar ones. I say that the planters as a class have always denounced in the most unmeasured terms such atrocities as those. But we must bear this in mind, that the time of their conviction was after a general election, when there was a great deal of political excitement.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It was twelve months after the general election.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At the general election there had been a great deal of political excitement in connection with the black labour traffic, and guilty as I believe those men to have been, I do not think they had extended to them that measure of justice at their trial which they would have obtained had there not been such political excitement at the time. But whether or not, I think that now that similar crimes to those for which those men have suffered have ceased to exist, and now that that labour is about to expire—and I have no hesitation in saying that it is properly going to expire, notwithstanding the remarks of the leader of the Opposition in connection with that industry and my connection with it—I say that, taking all these things into consideration, and the severe penance those unfortunate men had already undergone, the Government were quite justified in the action they took in recommending His Excellency to exercise mercy towards those men; and from the opinions I have been able to gather—and mind I have travelled a great deal during the recess through different parts of the colony—I have no hesitation in saying that the action of the Government is supported by the majority of the well-thinking people of this colony, of men who certainly have no sympathy with crime any more than the Government have. However, the papers in connection with this matter will be duly laid upon the table of the House without any unnecessary delay; and no doubt in the debate which will probably ensue the Government will be able to justify the action they have taken in recommending His Excellency to act as he did. The leader of the Opposition referred to the recent tour that His Excellency made to the Northern and Central portions of the colony, and he insinuated that the tour of the Governor was converted by me as Minister for Lands into a separation and black labour campaign. Those were the words the hon. gentleman used. I utterly deny that I entered upon that tour with any such intention, or that I did anything approaching what the hon. gentleman has alleged. Travelling with His Excellency, as in honour bound, I considered it my duty, and a duty that I faithfully carried out, never to say one single word to His Excellency upon the subject of separation. It is also quite certain that I took no steps towards converting it into a black labour campaign. The North is opposed to black labour. Hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House who have had an opportunity of travelling through the North may have seen that.

Mr. DRAKE: No!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The North as a whole is opposed to black labour, and whatever may be the result of the separation movement, hon. gentlemen on this side of the House and the people of the North can clearly understand that a more preponderating vote against coloured labour would exist under a separate colony than there is at present under the colony as a whole.

Mr. HYNE: You are speaking on behalf of separation.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I noticed that when we arrived at Townsville, which was the first port of call, that every address, or almost every address, presented to His Excellency contained references to the question of separation. Most certainly neither I nor any member of our party ever referred to the subject in talking to His Excellency on board the steamer going up. It was most marked in Townsville, and no one was more astonished than myself when we arrived at Charters Towers to find that the feeling of the people of Charters Towers was quite as pronounced in favour of separation as it was at Townsville.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: No!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I assure you, Mr. Speaker, it was quite as pronounced, and there was no effort made by me, nor, as far as I know, by any of our party, to bring about what was to me such an unexpected state of affairs.

Mr. HODGKINSON: What about your great supporter's threat at Cairns?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would like to ask hon. gentlemen opposite, What are you afraid of? Are you afraid of separation? I have been attacked on this question, else I should not refer to it now. It is my duty, as long as I occupy the position I do, to carry on the affairs of the colony without dismembering it; but what are hon. gentlemen afraid of? Are they afraid that there is no justice in their case, and that they cannot justify themselves? Are they afraid that His Excellency should see with his eyes and hear with his ears all the arguments for and against, and find out what the real state of affairs is? I am not afraid. I have never swerved from the opinion which I held when I joined the Ministry. I joined the Ministry retaining a free hand, should the matter ever come to a vote, to act according to my discretion on the subject, and I say it would be a good thing for both North and South if separation did take place. The South will get on just as well with the North sundered from it, and the North will get on a great deal better without the South. But because I hold this opinion it does not follow that I should act as a traitor to the colony, as the leader of the Opposition put it, and perform acts irritating to the North in order to compel the people there to be more ardent in the cause of separation. Why, Mr. Speaker, I would scorn such a thing as that. The hon. gentleman referred to the land sales at Townsville, and to pressure being brought to bear on the Government to stay off further sales. There is no doubt that the excess of Northern revenue last year was brought about to a very great extent by the land sold at Townsville and Cairns, but land is only sold in accordance with the demand for it. There is a requisition, I believe, on the way down from Townsville that until separation is granted no more land shall be sold in the North. Would the hon. gentleman have me agree to such a proposition as that? If there is a demand for land in the North, why should not land be sold? However, as a matter of fact, there has been very little land sold in the North or in the South this year—there has been far less land sold in either the North or the South than in previous years, in consequence of there being no demand for it. The sale of land has not been forced, but has been regulated according to the demand. That is my position as regards His Excellency's trip. I think I was perfectly justified in taking that trip as a member of the Ministry, and I may tell hon. members that I was very much pleased to find the feeling in the North as pronounced as it was in favour of separation. I do not disguise the fact; I do not dread separation, it will come sooner or later;

and so long as the North and South separate on amicable terms, it will be a good thing for both. But so long as they are one colony we will do our best as an Administration for the whole colony. It is, however, difficult to administer the affairs of such a vast territory from its extreme south-eastern corner. That has been said over and over again, and the sooner we recognise the fact, the better it will be for all concerned. Hon. members on the other side who have been in office themselves know the difficulty just as well as I do, and have admitted it over and over again. The leader of the Opposition has stated that if he could only get a pledge that black labour would be excluded from the Northern part of the colony, he might see reason to modify his views on the question of separation. It is impossible to give any such pledge; it is the people themselves who must decide as to what the policy of the colony shall be. I say that the people of the North by their votes have decided against coloured labour as an institution. When separation does come, as it will come, though it will probably not be hurried, I for my part, taking part as I probably shall in the politics of the Northern colony, unhesitatingly say that coloured labour as an institution will not be an institution of the Northern colony. The people certainly will not have it. Then the leader of the Opposition also referred to the perilous condition of the colony. Well, I remember when we on this side of the House were in opposition we made a similar remark. We referred, just before the leader of the Opposition went out of office, leaving a deficit of £600,000, after having inherited over £300,000 when he took office—that is, after having got rid of £900,000 in five years—I say we referred to the then perilous condition of the colony.

Mr. SMYTH: You promised to wipe out the deficit.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are going to wipe it out. We are not daunted at the financial condition of the colony; we have every confidence in the unbounded resources we are possessed of, and we are going to endeavour to develop them. Perhaps I myself was somewhat severe during the time I refer to, in blaming the late Government for disasters that were attributable to bad seasons. I do not think I was then a bit harder upon the present leader of the Opposition than he has been upon this Government and upon myself, but I do say that no Government can be fairly held responsible for disastrous seasons. However, we are evidently now in this position that we have good seasons coming; our revenue is increasing; I believe that our industries this year will surprise even the people of the colony; the pastoral industry is in a splendid condition, the stock are all fat, and means are being adopted by which I hope we shall profitably utilise the surplus stock of the colony; agriculturists are in good heart, and there will probably be one of the largest sugar crops the colony has ever turned out, and that, be it remembered, is a crop of export value. We not only produce sufficient sugar for our own requirements, but we export a considerable quantity, and I should not be at all surprised if the export value of that crop amounts very nearly to £1,000,000. That is a matter for congratulation to all those who have made their home in the colony, and who desire to see the resources of the colony developed. The mining industry again promises to be extremely successful, and, taking it altogether, I think there is no reason for anyone to be alarmed at what has been referred to as the perilous condition of our finances. We shall have a little trouble, no doubt. The Treasurer when he makes his Financial Statement will explain how

the difficulty is proposed to be met; but I do not, and I know the Government as a whole do not, take a disastrous view of the financial condition of the colony. It is not a bit worse than we inherited. I have referred to the enormous deficit left us by our predecessors; it is to wipe out that deficit that is part of the financial difficulty with which we are supposed to be surrounded. Our own deficit will no doubt be large.

Mr. SMYTH: What about the tariff?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not going to refer to the tariff now—that can be discussed at the proper time; but I think that the tariff has been blamed for more than it deserves. We have gone through a period of great depression, lasting nearly two years, and we are now, I hope, on the eve of better times. I hope to see all our industries progressing, and work available for the unemployed; and they will undoubtedly get work. The tariff was passed by the House in good faith. Parties on both sides of the House thought it was a very good tariff.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on Opposition benches: No, no!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I say, yes; they thought it was a good tariff. Protectionists thought it a very good thing to have a little taste of protection, and agriculturists thought it a very good thing to have a little import duty placed upon agricultural products. At all events, I know the tariff had the effect of establishing one industry which did not exist here before—that is, the milling industry. There is no doubt about that. I hope to see other manufacturing industries established, and I think that those hon. gentlemen who were in favour of the protective part of that tariff will not be so anxious to see the tariff cancelled when the time comes. But I do say this: one reason why the commercial prosperity of the colony has not recovered as rapidly as it would otherwise have done, is the extremely unsettled conditions existing between labour and capital. I would ask, what man of any intelligence, having at his command means to establish a new manufacturing industry, would consider himself justified in doing so in this colony under the present extremely unsettled conditions of the labour market? After the expenditure of several thousand pounds in putting up a new factory, the unions might come down on him and say, "You have got to raise the wages of your men," or conform to some conditions which he did not calculate upon. Otherwise his men would be called out on strike, and eventually disaster must result. I am not blaming one side or the other, but I do say that that has a great deal to do with the unsettled condition of commercial affairs in the colony at the present time. Those who are only too anxious to establish new industries are debarred, and will be debarred until some more satisfactory way of solving this labour difficulty is arrived at than exists at present. I am told that within the next month we are threatened with serious disaster here because there is going to be a wharf difficulty down in Sydney. I suppose that according to the rules of the unions that is all right, but I say it has a most paralysing effect upon those who are only too anxious to introduce new industries. This is a matter which I have no doubt will be amply discussed at another period of the session; very likely when the Factories Bill comes on there will be some reference to it. It is the intention of the Government to introduce that Bill, and that was well known long before the meeting which was held last night in support of such a measure. The Bill has been framed, and is all ready. Now, with regard to Mr. Randall's removal. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Randall, and I must say he struck

me as a remarkably intelligent man and a gentleman whom I am perfectly certain must have performed his duties well and given general satisfaction in doing so, and I know it is the intention of the Government, as soon as the requirements of the colony demand a greater stream of immigration than we have at present, to reinstate him. If we were to search throughout the whole colony I am sure a more efficient or intelligent gentleman than Mr. Randall could not be found. There is no political significance or importance connected with that matter. Economy is necessary. Hon. members on the other side have affirmed the necessity for reducing immigration. That has been done, but the hon. member for Charters Towers would have the Government stop immigration altogether. I would ask hon. gentlemen opposite, when they were in power what did they do? During the five years that they were in office did they stop immigration because the times were bad? Why, our expenditure during the last year is very little more than half of what they spent. I believe that without immigration this colony would never rank in the position in which I think it will rank. If we are to continue our railway system, if we are to go on borrowing money on which interest must be paid, we must have more people to help us to pay it. That is inevitable. To stop the influx of population would amount to stopping our borrowing powers, or imposing such taxation as the people would not submit to. I contend, therefore, that our Government in guardedly watching the requirements of the country, are doing the best they can in the interests of the country. As soon as they find that there is a demand for labour they will introduce additional labour to meet the demand, but as soon as they find unemployed men demanding work they will ease off immigration. They will only bring in labour as it is required, and they will be quite prepared to answer to this House in carrying out that policy. I believe that policy is the policy generally endorsed by members on both sides of the House, and that the House generally has no sympathy with those who demand the stoppage of immigration altogether. Now, with regard to the remarks made on the question of federation. There is no doubt when that matter comes before the House it will be entered into fully. I can only endorse the remarks made by the hon. the Premier in reference to the very able manner in which the two gentlemen—the leader of the Opposition and the Hon. J. M. Macrossan—performed their duties at the conference in Melbourne. It is no more than I anticipated. Two more able, better-informed men could not be found in the colony, and I do hope, and I have no doubt, that when other delegates are appointed by the House, some of our leading politicians will be invited to assist those two gentlemen, and that the result of their attending the conference in Melbourne will be to bring back such a scheme to this House as will meet its approval, and lead to the initiation of an Australian nation, which I believe is the aspiration of most of those who are here now. The reference made to the alteration in the constitution of the Upper House so as to make it elective does not appear to have met with much favour either from the leader of the Opposition or the hon. member for Charters Towers; but I am quite sure of this that it will meet with the favour of the people of the colony. It has been a matter which has been referred to frequently at elections. It is a matter which, whenever referred to at public meetings, has always been received with great favour. There is no doubt it will be the means of taking a considerable amount of political power out of the hands of the Govern-

ment; and let those who understand how these appointments are made say whether they can honestly believe that the welfare of the colony is studied by the present nominee system. It has been the practice that when vacancies have occurred in the Upper House, the Government have nominated their own supporters. We have not had many opportunities like that, but there is no doubt that if we had we should do the same. But is that the way for the country to get efficient legislation. You can swamp the Upper House if it is necessary to force a particular measure through. All you have to do is to appoint additional members who hold the views of the party in power. I maintain that the Upper House to be effective should be elective. It is a matter for consideration what the qualification should be. Probably the qualification of universal suffrage such as we have in this Chamber, with very much larger districts, and mixing the districts up so that no one interest would be represented in one constituency in particular, would be the best plan. That the reform is wanted I have very little doubt, and I am quite sure it is one of those measures which the country would hail with satisfaction as having been introduced in this House. I almost regret having had to address the House at this early stage, as I should have preferred to have waited until some other leading members or member on the other side of the House had referred to subjects which have not yet been touched upon, but which no doubt will be referred to; but I thought it was only courteous that an ex-Minister speaking from the other side should be replied to by a Minister on this. As I myself had been specially referred to in the remarks made by both the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Charters Towers, I have offered the few remarks I have made.

Mr. HYNÉ said: Mr. Speaker,—I was waiting until some leading member on this side of the House should get up, but I have no idea of allowing the motion to be put just yet, as I hope to hear a great deal more upon the subjects touched upon. I can make very little comment upon this Speech, but perhaps I can make a few remarks upon it after listening to what has been said by the Premier and Minister for Lands. In the first place, I agree with my leader that the Speech is very vague and shallow. There is nothing in it to give one a handle to work upon. The first paragraph has reference to the floods. Of course we all know we have had terrible floods, and though they have been made somewhat light of this evening, those who have experienced the losses due to them look upon them as a subject upon which they hardly feel inclined to joke. I have something to say on the subject with regard to the parsimony of the present and previous Governments, as serious losses might have been prevented by the expenditure of a few shillings. I can tell the Postmaster-General how to prevent the recurrence of such losses by floods in the Wide Bay district. The great losses in that district by the recent floods were caused by the fact that the people of the Wide Bay district and Maryborough were cut off from telegraphic communication with Kilkivan. The wires were interrupted somewhere between Kilkivan and Tiaro, I think, and the result was that the people of Maryborough had no intimation of the immense rainfall that occurred at Kilkivan. We at Maryborough knew nothing of what was taking place there. I have been in Maryborough, as the Postmaster-General knows, for twenty years, and I have seen four or five floods there, but I had no idea that anything of the kind was going to take place. The papers there had no telegraphic information of the rainfall taking place from the Friday night until the Monday night following. Had the telegraph master at Kilkivan been empowered

to do it, and had he not been so bound up in red tape, he would have ridden or sent a courier to the nearest telegraph station and wired to Maryborough information of the terrific rains falling at Kilkivan, and had that been done, immense damage and loss of life could have been avoided. I had to sit and see my property going away, not by hundreds of pounds worth, but by thousands of pounds worth. I speak feelingly upon this matter, as I feel confident that could I have been made aware of the terrific rains at Kilkivan I could have taken means to save the property I have now lost. I mention this without any blame, in the hope that instructions will be given in future, should communication be cut off, to send a messenger to the nearest station to acquaint Maryborough of the terrible injury they are likely to suffer from the effect of terrific rainfalls.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. C. Powers): They have that authority.

Mr. HYNÉ: The Chamber of Commerce at Maryborough took the matter up and decided to refer it to the Postmaster-General, and asked that, in the case of a flood at Gympie, the telegraph master there should be instructed to wire hourly bulletins to Maryborough of the state of the river and the rainfall.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That instruction was given long ago.

Mr. HYNÉ: I believe the information given to the Chamber of Commerce was that it was refused, and we were advised to wire to our nearest friend. I have to thank the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Mellor, for posting me up well on the last flood. But it was the terrific rainfall at Kilkivan that settled us, and we were not acquainted with it in time to make any preparations for it. The difficulty could be very easily got over if the telegraph master at Gympie were instructed to wire to Maryborough in times of flood hourly messages as to whether the river was rising or falling. That would prevent losses all along the river, and I throw it out now as a suggestion which should be received in a fair spirit. The next clause in this Speech refers to the pleasure derived by His Excellency the Governor during his Northern visit, and the loyal welcome extended to him. I had the pleasure of travelling with His Excellency when he landed in the colony, and I predicted that wherever he showed his face he would have a right hearty welcome. I congratulate the North upon the fact that he received a right good welcome at their hands this time. Nevertheless, I regret very much to see from the speeches at the different banquets given to His Excellency, that the question of separation was brought so prominently forward. At every banquet to which His Excellency was invited separation was brought before him as the most prominent dish, and I regret that it was so, as it turned the visit into a party business. The Minister for Lands has told us to-night that the North is not in favour of black labour, and that he pronounces himself emphatically against it. The hon. gentleman knows my feelings on the sugar question, and I know that the hon. gentleman is not game to make that statement at Mackay. I firmly believe that if the hon. member goes to Mackay, and distinctly states there that he is not an advocate of black labour, he will never be returned to this House to represent Mackay again, and that will be a circumstance which I should regret; I can give the hon. gentleman that much credit. The next subject treated of in the Speech is the question of federation. When that question was first brought up, I read with great admiration the reply made by the Premier to the application of Sir Henry Parkes for a conference. I believe in

the Premier's reply, as I think there was power to build up the Federal Council, instead of attempting to pull it down; and I did not see any necessity whatever for a conference. Why should Sir Henry Parkes come forward at the eleventh hour and ask for this conference? Why did he not join the Federal Council before, and if, as he says, the Federal Council did not possess certain powers which he thought it should have, why could those powers not have been asked for and granted? Whenever federation is alluded to, the first question I ask myself as a Queenslander is, "What are we to gain by federation?"

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Free-trade.

Mr. HYNÉ: Just so; and that is just what I don't want to see. I look at it from a practical point of view. Federation to a certain extent, in the direction of federation for purposes of defence, is very desirable. It is impossible for the Government of any colony to commit that colony to expenditure in connection with federal defence, and I say, therefore, that for defence purposes it is necessary that we should have federation. I have heard only one argument in favour of federation, and that is an argument used by the Colonial Secretary. I do not look at federation from the sentimental point of view, that it is a grand thing to be called an "Australian." I would just as soon be called a "Queenslander" as an "Australian." I should be just as loyal to my Queen and country whilst a Queenslander, as I should be as an Australian. But the benefit of federation pointed out by the Colonial Secretary is, to my mind, a very good one. He suggests that it would bring about a unification of the public debt, and he also suggests the conversion of the debt, by which it might be considerably reduced, and money could be borrowed cheaper. I am not sure that money could be borrowed cheaper, and I think the indebtedness of the whole of the Australian colonies, including New Zealand, is about £168,000,000. How is that to be allotted by the Federal Government, and how is the Federal Government going to raise money? If they are going to levy taxes it will take from the powers which we now hold, and will make the Governments of the different colonies mere parochial Governments. I, for one, so long as I have a voice in this House, shall look with a jealous eye upon the proposal to give up any power which we now hold. It is against the whole spirit of our recent progressive legislation, which has been in the direction of self-government and local government. Federation, it seems to me, is the extreme of centralisation, and is likely to deprive us of powers which we have been battling and contending for for years. I shall look with a very jealous eye on the proposal, notwithstanding the declaration of many members of this House and the members of the conference that they look forward to it as a great consummation. No doubt it is from a sentimental point of view. Canada and the United States are held up as examples; but it was the terror of war that induced them to federate. What fear have we of an invasion? The suggestion is that we shall be able to dictate to the world. Let us federate for the purpose of defence; but when we do, let us mind our own business, and let other countries mind theirs. So long as we do not interfere with the outside world, the outside world will not interfere with us. The suggestion made by the Minister for Mines at the conference is that we should hand over our railways, our telegraphs, our coinage, and our commerce to the Federal Council. I want to know what will be left for us to legislate on then. As Mr. Playford said, we shall be simply turned into parochial boards; and when the proposal comes before the House I shall

watch it very keenly to see that we are not divested of any of the powers we now possess. At the same time I must compliment our representatives, Sir S. W. Griffith and the Hon. J. M. Macrossan, on their very able speeches at the conference, which I look upon as the two speeches made on the occasion. I hope they will be sent back as two of the delegates, and that the others who will be chosen will hold opinions on the fiscal requirements of the colony in accord with the general feeling of the community. I hope also that someone with a knowledge of commerce will be chosen, because it is not necessary that all the representatives at the conference to be held in 1891 should have had a legal training. I may say that I look upon the question of protection against the world and freetrade between the colonies as a parrot cry. I am not in favour of it at all at present, because, though Henry George did his best to convert me, I cannot see how we can compete with the southern factories if we have freetrade within the colonies and protection against the world. We shall become simply a market for the southern colonies, and we shall have no more wheat mills. I am pleased to say that wheat mills have been established, as I predicted they would be before three years were over when the tariff was under consideration. There are good points in the tariff; but there are others which have been deservedly denounced; and perhaps it will not be out of place for me to refer to one important point objected to by this side—namely, the remission of the excise duty on beer. I am pleased to know that it was referred to by the hon. member for Barcoo, who stated at a meeting of his electors that if no one in the House proposed to have the duty replaced, he would do so. That is certainly a feather in the cap of the Opposition, because they fought hard to have it retained, and I hope that the beer duty will again be imposed. I suggested at the time to the hon. gentleman in charge of the tariff that the excise duty on beer should be allowed to remain, and that the duty should be taken off tea. That would have been far more acceptable to the majority of the electors. The Premier, in referring to the present indebtedness of the colony, did not mention—in fact, no one on that side has thought fit to mention—the extra amount received under the increased tariff, and also on account of increased sales of land, when he stated the amount of the deficit left by the late Government and the amount of the deficit now existing. Will he state the amount received extra from the tariff and from sales of land over and above what the late Government realised?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: You will find that in the annual reports.

Mr. HYNE: Just so. But when statements of that kind are made, both sides of the picture should be given. In criticising a Government, any member has a right to condemn what he does not approve of; but if he is not game to commend actions of which he does approve, he has no right here. There have been several things of which I approve done by the Government, especially by the Minister for Lands, who deserves credit for many little acts performed in connection with his department. The travelling dairy, for instance, has done a great amount of good to the colony. Then there is the bacon curing, and in regard to that I look forward to a substantial benefit being derived from the knowledge of the expert now employed in the colony. Therefore, I am willing to give credit where credit is due. The hon. gentleman also made a concession which had been asked for by a number of my constituents; and that was in reference to timber licenses. Timber licenses, I may tell you, Mr.

Speaker, always terminate in June and December, half yearly, and I will point out a great hardship men are suffering from this year. It has been a terrible year, and during the past six months the timber-getters have only worked about six weeks. During the last fortnight it has cleared up, and the men are anxious to go to work. To do so they have had to take out licenses just for that fortnight, and is not that unjust? The hon. gentleman remedied that, and he deserves credit for it. It was an act of justice. The licenses should date from the time of issue; and I commend the hon. gentleman for his leniency in this matter. The Postmaster-General also deserves credit for the able manner in which he conducted the Postal Conference, and in that matter also I give credit where credit is due. I was very much impressed with what I saw in the *Telegraph* that the Colonial Treasurer had set apart a day for an arbor day; but the Minister for Lands should not let out of his hands what belongs to himself.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It was an arbor day for schools.

Mr. HYNE: I believe the Minister for Lands will have to be appealed to before it can be carried out. I join heart and soul in the movement. I am delighted to hear it, and I hope it will be carried to a successful issue. But it cannot be carried to a successful issue without the assistance of the Lands Department. The next paragraph says that valuable information has been collected on the subject of irrigation which will be laid before us. I am sorry that that information has not been laid before us already. I believe the only district in which inquiries have been made as to the suitability of the country for irrigation has been the Mackay district. That is the only district I have heard of where there is an engineer present, and I would like to know more about it. Then there is a clause dealing with public instruction and technical instruction. That meets with my hearty approbation. If it were possible I would like to see children learn trades at the schools, as we should then not see so many of them hanging around the doors of the Government offices for employment. I believe that might be carried out. The next question I will refer to is the fortnightly Torres Straits mail service. I know the Northern members are delighted with that. I believe that service has done a great deal for Queensland—for the North especially; but what I would point out to the Government, and I wish the Premier to listen to what I have to say in this connection, is that in the district I have the honour to represent with my colleague, Mr. Anneer, it contains about one-eighth of the whole population of the colony, and we derive very little benefit from the Torres Straits mail service. Is there no means to be devised by which these steamers can call into Wide Bay? If it be urged that they cannot cross the flats, by all means let the flats be dredged. I heard a late Colonial Treasurer say he would never rest until the British-India boats called at Wide Bay as well as at Keppel Bay. I hope the Government will take the matter into serious consideration. Maryborough is placed at a very great disadvantage at present. Goods have to be taken to Brisbane and brought back to Maryborough, and it is impossible for merchants there to compete with those at other ports where goods are landed at their door. Then there is to be a Bill to alter the constitution of the Legislative Council. When I came before my constituents I was pledged to support a Bill of that kind. I pledged my electors to support a Bill to make the Upper House elective; but of course it depends upon the details of the Bill—if it is what I call consistent,

and likely to do proper service to the country—whether I give it my undivided support or not. I may state that at present I am pledged to support a Bill making the Upper House elective. Next comes a Bill to make provision for dividing the colony into districts for financial purposes. Why is not the Decentralisation Bill that was before the House forced through? Because the Northern members do not want it. They know it would stop the cry for separation. That is the fact. The Northern members will not have it, and for that reason the Government are not game to go on with it. I hope the Government are in earnest now, and that this is not to be a sham Bill. If I may make a joke, I hope it will not be driven to the shambles to be slaughtered. Dividing the colony for financial purposes will take the sting out of the separation cry altogether. There is also to be a Bill introduced to supervise and regulate factories and workshops. I attended a public meeting the other night, and we were all told by one of the speakers that we came under pressure. I think the speaker showed very bad taste indeed in saying such a thing. When I see a movement of that kind going on which I think will be beneficial to my fellow men, I am always there to lend a hand; and I felt the remarks very annoying and insulting, and but for the fear of exciting the people in a strange place, I should have resented in another manner the way the speaker chose to refer to members of Parliament. I do not think the Government had been actuated by the motives suggested by him, and it was in exceedingly bad taste to refer to it in the manner he did, and also to the chairman who presided. The Minister for Lands spoke of the trade of the colony being in a state of "sixes and sevens," on account of the unsettled condition of labour and capital. Being an employer of labour to a large extent, I can speak somewhat feelingly on this subject. Up to the present time the working men have not made what I call any outrageous demands. What are they asking for now? They are asking for a day's labour to be limited to eight hours. To show the inconsistency of my position, my employes work nine hours a day. I cannot work eight hours a day when others work nine hours. Let pressure be brought to bear, and make the working day eight hours, and I shall hail it with joy. Looking at it from a serious point of view, I never pass a body of men working, labourers especially, without asking myself, "What prospect have these men got of rising from the position they now occupy?" They work from Monday morning till Saturday night, and what time have they for enjoyment or for instructing themselves and their families? Of course mechanics are better off than day labourers, and the condition of the labourers has a depressing effect. Would it not be better for an employer of labour to see his employes come in an intelligent mood, well clad and well fed, than to see them come to work in the morning more tired than when they left off at night? I, as an employer of labour, do not look at any demands of labour as yet as preposterous. I shall assist to my utmost in getting this Factories Bill made workable. From the knowledge I have of the working people of Queensland, and having gone through the mill myself, I think I ought to know a little about the subject, and I hope to be able to make some suggestions that will make the Bill really workable, and to introduce clauses into it of which no mention has yet been made. Another promised measure is a Bill to consolidate and amend the District Courts Act. Is this the only reformation we are to have of the great legal reformation of my hon. friend on the other side? I hope he has not abandoned his scheme of legal reform, and I look forward

with great pleasure to see this bantling come forward. One legal reform that I should like to see brought about would be a clause to prevent barristers and solicitors from badgering witnesses. I have seen ladies faint when they knew they had to go into the witness-box to be cross-examined by what I may almost call an ill-mannered barrister. It is shameful sometimes to see a poor witness badgered in court by a barrister or solicitor, and I hope some clause which will effectually stop it will be inserted in this Bill. Has it not often struck every hon. member who has had to appeal to a court of law for justice how a little turn or an intricate point will decide a most important case? A man is cross-questioned and badgered until he commits himself, and he loses a most valuable case on a trumpery technical turn made by these wily lawyers and barristers. I hope the hon. gentleman has not abandoned his Bill for legal reform.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Not at all.

Mr. HYNE: I think those are all the matters I need refer to. The most important point in this little programme here is the question of boring for water, and as another portion of it refers to milk, I think we can fairly designate the present Ministry as a milk and water Ministry.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to say a few words on the subject of the Governor's Speech before the evening gets later. The Speech commences with His Excellency's regret at the serious floods that have devastated the country. I have travelled over a good deal of the colony lately, and I may be pardoned for saying that the floods are not altogether an unmixed evil for the country generally. Though personally a sufferer from the floods, I think their effect on the pastoral industry, at all events, of which I know most, will certainly be not altogether a bad one. Their present effect on the business and the commerce of the country is no doubt a very depressing one, and to a considerable extent I have no doubt it is responsible for the condition of the Treasury for the last few months. All trade and the progress of the country have been brought very nearly to a standstill. There has not been a single flood, but a series of floods, such as I do not think any member of the House remembers before; at all events, during my experience of the country I have never seen any six months in which so many floods have covered so considerable a part of the colonies. The losses sustained by the pastoral industry have been, in many parts of Queensland, simply enormous and disastrous; but the effect of flooding the country and filling the watercourses and clearing out the channels of rivers which had been silted up will be very beneficial to the country generally, though it may have injured individuals for the time being. Therefore, I hope that the expectation to which the Government gives voice, that these floods may be the commencement of the return of prosperity to the country, may be realised. At all events, in that particular industry with which I am connected, and of which I know most, I feel certain that the floods will be followed by a period of prosperity, and that the output for the year and the year following will be very much greater than it has been in any past year in Queensland. The earnings of our railways, the earnings of our merchants, and the shipping from our ports, will in like degree be increased; therefore, Sir, the prosperity of the country will also increase. With regard to immigration, I have followed very carefully what has fallen from hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House, and I fully and earnestly hope that no Ministry will ever

come into power that will not be a Ministry who will encourage immigration—immigration of the proper sort—to this colony. By “the proper sort” I mean men who will come into the country, enter into agricultural and pastoral pursuits, and go on the mines of the country, and who will by their bone and sinew develop the resources of the colony to the largest extent to which they are capable of being developed. That is a very different thing from having men brought to our shores who have had no experience whatever of rural life—men who have been brought up in cities, and are thoroughly and absolutely unfit for life in the colony. Though I say this, Sir, it would be very far from my wish that the Government should in a time of depression flood the colony even with the best class of labour. So long as any considerable body of men, desirous of finding work, are so unfortunate as to be obliged to wander about this colony or find their way into towns because they cannot find work, I should be very sorry to see any large number of men brought into competition with them. It may be said that as an employer of labour these remarks are disingenuous on my part; still I think that no man with the feelings of a man would desire to see the country overrun by men who are desirous of finding work and not able to get it. Therefore, though I should very much deprecate any attempt to stop immigration altogether, I entirely concur in the views of the Ministry in the present juncture, that is, to stem to a certain extent the tide of immigration until the country recovers from the effects of the late disastrous floods and droughts. Another subject which fills my mind, and which occupies considerable interest throughout the whole of the colonies at the present time, and to which almost every hon. member who has spoken to-night has alluded, is the question of federation. In referring to that, I propose to do what every member who has mentioned it has done—compliment the hon. members who did us the honour to represent us at the conference held the other day. Those gentlemen are, as everyone who knows them at all must be aware, a credit to the colony, and they took no immaterial part in the transactions which transpired. I trust, Sir—and I hope the feeling of the House is the same as my own—that this federal idea may, in the not far distant future, develop itself so that we shall become, within measurable distance, citizens, not of individual colonies, but of a federated nation, and that the greatest nation beneath the line. The work done by the hon. the Postmaster-General at the conference, held the other day, is one with which the House is not very familiar yet, but the Press of the southern colonies in speaking of it say that we were well and ably represented by that hon. gentleman. The improvement which he has introduced into the State school system is one which is spoken of very highly, not only by the public, but by many of the teachers with whom I have come into contact, and who are able to judge of the effect it will have on the children under their charge. The fortnightly mail service is a matter that requires very little comment. I do not suppose there is any hon. gentleman in the House or anyone in the colony who does not regard it as an act of progress, as leading onward. It is making more easy our communication with the old world, and bringing the older civilization closer to us. The proposed reform in the Constitution to make the second Chamber elective, may or may not be a good thing. As the hon. the leader of the Opposition says, it depends on what is in the Bill. I have no doubt the Bill will be one which will meet the wishes of the House, and also of the country at large.

The Bill for the supervision and regulation of factories and workrooms, and for the limitation of the hours of working in shops, is one which has my hearty sympathy. I see no reason why, if the hours of labour are to be limited in trades, that they should not also be limited in the case of persons who have to work in the unhealthy atmosphere of factories and workrooms. The other Bills are ones which I know very little about, but no doubt the hon. gentlemen in charge of them will explain them for us, and we shall then be able to judge whether they will be beneficial to the country or otherwise. I hope, Sir, that the Government will have a fair opportunity of developing their ideas on the tariff question at an early date. The deficit, of which so much has been made, does not seem to me a very alarming matter, knowing, as I do, the enormous resources of this colony, and knowing that the past one or two years have been periods of great depression—of commercial depression which is the reflex of similar depression on the other side of the world—and of bad seasons which no power of man could control or change. Knowing these things, this deficit seems to me to be a mere fleabite, a mere nothing compared with the enormous resources which this country possesses, and which any member who has travelled over it can see for himself in every direction. The colony, Sir, in which we stand in one corner, as it were, is one teeming with wealth of all kinds. It has minerals in every direction and of every kind. Even one who knows only a little of mineralogy cannot go fifty miles from the coast, in any direction, without stumbling upon some new deposit of mineral. To a colony with such untold material wealth only waiting to be developed, a deficit of £1,000,000 seems to be a mere nothing, a thing, Sir, that may be wiped out in one or two years of prosperity in the natural course of events. I think it can be wiped out without any additional taxation at all. I see no reason why any large taxation should be placed on the colony in order to wipe out at one blow this very small deficit, as I call it. I see no reason why it should not be allowed to remain in abeyance until one or two years of prosperity have brought the revenue round to the position in which we all know it will arrive at sooner or later. It is not as if the country were going backward. The country will go steadily and honestly forward. It must go forward in the natural course of events. Therefore, I hope that the Government, in bringing forward any proposals which they may have for the wiping out of this deficit, will not trouble themselves to wipe it out in one or two years, but that they will allow time for the country to recover from the stagnation it at present suffers from, and allow the deficit to wipe itself out by the natural course of events. As it is getting late, I shall not trouble the House with any more remarks.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this debate be now adjourned.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twelve minutes past 9 o'clock.