Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 28 JUNE 1892

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 28 *June*, 1892.

Petition: Queensland Permanent Trustee, Executor, Finance and Agency Company, Limited. — Motion for Adjournment: The Chief Secretary's charges against Mr. Glassey.—Elections Bill: Resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

QUEENSLAND PERMANENT TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, FINANCE AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED.

Mr. POWERS presented a petition from the chairman of directors of the Queensland Permanent Trustee, Executor, Finance and Agency Company, Limited, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Act of 1888. The petition was respectfully worded, the usual notice had been given, and the necessary deposit had been made. He moved that the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S CHARGES AGAINST MR. GLASSEY.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—The preliminary business having been disposed of, I wish to refer to a matter, and to put myself in order I shall conclude with the usual motion for adjournment. During the discussion of the Elections Bill in committee on Thursday last the Chief Secretary, in replying to a speech made by me, made some very serious——

The SPEAKER said: The hon. member cannot discuss what has taken place in committee on a Bill which has been referred to the Committee. The matter is now before the Committee, and cannot be referred to in the House until it is reported.

Mr. GLASSEY: I only wish to rebut the very serious charges made by the Chief Secretary, which, I think, he was not warranted in making; and, of course, I avail myself——

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in referring in the House to what has taken place in committee. I do not know any circumstances under which it can be done—at least, any ordinary circumstances.

Mr. GLASSEY: Then, I presume, Sir, from your ruling, that I am debarred from bringing this matter up in the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has no right to refer in the House to what has taken place in committee in connection with a Bill which is now before the Committee. When a Bill has been referred by the House to the Committee, until a report is made by the Chairman no reference can be made in the House to proceedings in committee unless they have been specially referred to the Speaker by the Committee through the Chairman.

Mr. GLASSEY: Of course, Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to violate any rule or Standing Order of the House, and feeling sure that your ruling is correct, I shall defer my remarks until another occasion, when I shall be able to take up the matter to which I wish to refer.

ELECTIONS BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On this Order of the Day being read, the House went into committee to further consider the Bill in detail.

On clause 2, as follows:—

"The fourth and fifth sections of the Elections Act of 1885 Amendment Act of 1886 are hereby repealed, and the provisions of the four next following sections of this Act are substituted for them; but such repeal shall not affect the validity of any claim which has been heretofore delivered or sent to an electoral registrar by any person, if such claim shows that the claimant is entitled to be registered as an elector."

Mr. GLASSEY said he did not know exactly whether he was in order in now referring to the matter he had previously touched upon, but he thought the question was of such serious moment that it was desirable that something should be said. He was sure that some of the remarks made by the Chief Secretary, to which he would shortly refer, were at all events uncalled for, and in order to put the members of the Committee in possession of all that transpired, so far as he was concerned, and also of the remarks made by the Chief Secretary in reply to his speech, he would read the whole of what was said. In the first place the Chief Secretary charged him with threatening hon. members of that House, also with inciting to mob rule. The hon. gentleman also endorsed the remark made by the hon. member for Nundah, Mr. Agnew, that he (Mr. Glassey) was a trainer in a school of violence, and finally the hon. gentleman said that his (Mr. Glassey's) friends outside were discussing a new policy—a policy of murder.

Mr. NELSON said he rose to a point of order. He really could not see how this discussion was to be carried on. A certain Bill had been referred to that Committee by the House, and the Committee had no other business, except that Bill to deal with. They had no power to deal with anything else. As far as he could make out from what the hon. member had said up to the present, he was referring to a subject that had no connection whatever with the Bill—something in connection with a discussion that took place in committee, and was to a large extent of a personal nature, if not entirely so. But personal matters should be brought up in the House in the proper way, not before a Committee, to which a certain special thing had been referred for consideration. If that kind of thing was to be allowed, it appeared to him that the business of the country would never be got through. There was a proper way of doing it, if the hon. member would only take the proper way; but he was sure that the course now taken by the hon. member was not the proper one. He was not present on the occasion to which the hon. member was referring; but he thought the whole of that evening was wasted, as far as he could see from the report of what took place in committee on Thursday. He thought that if the discussion had been confined to the Bill which was referred to the Committee the whole of the other matter introduced might have been stopped at the start. He knew he could speak for one side of the Committee, and he thought he could speak for the whole Committee in saying that if the Chairman would exercise his authority and keep hon. members within the limits defined by parliamentary usage, he would receive the support of nearly the whole Committee. They all knew the Chairman's impartiality; they all had great confidence in his judgment; and he was sure that if the Chairman did as had been suggested, he would be backed up by a very large majority of the Committee. If they adhered to the rules of parliamentary practice, an enormous amount of time would be saved. With regard to the matter referred to by the hon. member for Bundanba, he might or might not have a very good case.

Mr. GLASSEY: You are very anxious that I shall not have an opportunity of stating it.

Mr. NELSON said he distinctly contradicted that statement. He was not at all anxious that the hon. member should not have an opportunity of stating his case, whatever his case might be. He thought every hon. member had a right to bring forward any case he chose, but he must do it in the proper way. That was all he contended for, and he did not think the time of the Committee ought to be occupied by the discussion of matters with which that Committee could not deal. He was surprised that the Chief Secretary had allowed it to proceed without rising to a point of order. If the hon. member were to adopt a proper method of bringing the matter forward, it was possible that he might be able to support the hon. member. He did not say he could; he did not say he would. His point of order was simply this: Was it competent for a member of the Committee to bring up for discussion some personal matter which had transpired on a previous occasion, not connected, as far as he could see, with the essentials of the Bill which had been referred to that Committee?

The CHAIRMAN said: The remarks of the hon. member for Bundanba, so far as he has proceeded since the Committee resumed, do not appear to me to be relevant to the matter immediately before the Committee; but I understood the hon. member to say that he rose with the intention of replying to a charge made against him at the previous sitting, and I do not think I should be justified in ruling him out of order in replying to charges made against him.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said that at the last sitting the hon. member occupied a long time in answering what he (the Chief Secretary) had said; and surely he could not resume the debate on a subsequent occasion? He did not rise before, because he thought it possible that the hon. gentleman desired to make amends for what he had said on that occasion.

Mr. POWERS said he was very glad the Chairman had ruled as he had done. It would be a great pity if members of the Queensland Parliament were not allowed to answer any charges made against them. When the hon. member for Bundanba was speaking on the last occasion there was such a howl that he (Mr. Powers) did not know until he saw *Hansard* what the hon. gentleman's answer was. Parnell, when charged with crime in the House of Commons, was allowed to answer the charge; and he hoped the time would never come in the history of Queensland when the present Chairman or any other chairman would refuse to allow an hon. member to answer any charge made against him.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. W. O. Hodgkinson) said there was no desire to prevent any hon. member from replying to any charge made against him; but it was necessary that the business of the Committee should be conducted in a proper form. No member of that Committee desired in any way to curb the expression of any sentiments the hon. member for Bundanba might wish to utter; but let him not assume to dictate to hon. members in violation of the forms consecrated by centuries of practice. He was certain that there was a mode in which the hon. member could do what he desired, and there was no hon. member who had great experience in parliamentary practice but would point out a channel in which he could bring forward his ideas in proper form.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Morgan,——

Mr. NELSON said he was really very sorry that he could not agree with the ruling of the Chairman. It was so contrary to all principles of justice and the good conduct of the business of the Committee that he must

on that occasion exercise his rights. He was perfectly certain that the course taken by the hon. member for Bundanba was not the right one. If an hon. member had a grievance there was a proper way to bring it forward; his liberties were not curtailed in any possible way; but he must exercise his rights in accordance with parliamentary practice. That the action of the hon. member for Bundanba was not in accordance with that practice, any number of precedents could be adduced to show. Of course there was always the right of appeal from any decision by the Chair, whether it was by the Chairman of Committees or by the Speaker. There was no appeal from the Chairman of Committees to the Speaker; the Chairman thus occupied the same position in Committee, as far as dignity and responsibility were concerned, as the Speaker did in the House. But hon. members could appeal from the Speaker's decision to the House, and they could appeal from the Chairman's decision to the Committee. That was the rule so far as he was acquainted with parliamentary practice, and he thought that by accepting the ruling which had been given on that occasion they would be establishing a very dangerous precedent which they might have hereafter to repent of. The question was one of relevancy—whether the discussion which the hon. member for Bundanba was attempting to initiate was strictly related to the question before the Committee. He really could not see how it was so related. The question as put by the Chairman did not, so far as he could see, embrace or cover any such discussion; he did not see how it could be twisted into giving any such latitude. Therefore, with great reluctance, he would ask the Chairman to put the matter to the Committee, and let hon. members decide it once for all. If they were going to adopt the practice which was proposed to be introduced, let them adopt it fairly and fully and know what they were doing. Every hon. member of course had his rights; but there was a proper time and place for referring to such matters as were proposed to be introduced, and that in his opinion was both the wrong time and wrong place. He hoped that hon. members would say whether it was conducive to the dignity and good conduct of the Committee to establish any such precedent as they were liable to establish on that occasion, by allowing that discussion to proceed.

Mr. GLASSEY said seeing that the Chairman's ruling still held good——

Mr. NELSON said if the Chairman wished him to propose a motion, he would do so. He moved that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed with.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he understood that the hon. member for Bundanba proposed to refer to a debate which took place when the House was last in committee on that Bill, upon an amendment proposed by the hon. member on the 1st clause of the Bill, and that the hon. member in referring to that debate wished to say something in explanation of or further answer to what he considered the charges made against himself.

Mr. GLASSEY: Hear, hear!

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he understood that the Chairman had ruled that that was in order. For his own part he (the Chief Secretary) thought that, strictly speaking, that ruling was not correct. At the same time he thought it would be unfortunate if the Committee were to disagree with the Chairman's ruling on that occasion, because when an hon. member had had a charge made against him—or even conceived that he had had a charge made against him, which was not a charge—which he might answer, it was desirable that he should have an opportunity of replying to the charge. So that although the strict rules of debate might be transgressed, yet, on the higher grounds of allowing a member to defend himself, he thought the rules of debate should not be strictly insisted upon. The hon. member might be considered to be speaking with the indulgence of the Committee, if his speech was to be what he said it would be. He (the Chief Secretary) hoped, therefore, that the leader of the Opposition would withdraw his motion.

Mr. NELSON said on those grounds he had no objection whatever to withdraw the motion. He would not for a moment curtail the liberty of any hon. member, but he desired that all things should be done properly and in order. If it was considered right that the first opportunity that occurred should be given to the hon. member to reply to something that had been said with respect to him, he would not object; but he wished it to be distinctly understood that that was an exceptional case, and should not form a precedent for future practice.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. NELSON said that being understood he would, with the consent of the Committee, withdraw the motion.

The CHAIRMAN said: If the Committee will permit me to make a few further remarks, I desire to say that the ruling I gave was based, in my mind, on those higher grounds to which the Chief Secretary alluded. I distinctly stated that in my opinion the remarks of the hon. member for Bundanba were not relevant to the question before the Committee. I understood the hon. member to rise for the purpose of replying to, and with the object, I presume, of clearing himself in respect of, some charges made against him when the Committee sat on a previous occasion. If an hon. member conceives himself to be the subject of a charge which in his mind is not justified, he ought, I think, to have the right of replying to that charge, even if in doing so he exceeds the strict limits of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

Mr. GLASSEY said he was exceedingly obliged to the Chairman and other hon. members for acceding to his request for permission to refer to some matters which took place in committee on the previous Thursday, and to reply to some charges which, in his judgment, were unfairly made by the Chief Secretary. During his (Mr. Glassey's) experience in Parliament he always found that indulgence was given to hon. members who felt aggrieved at anything which was said with respect to them; and although a matter might hinge upon political and social questions, he saw no reason why that indulgence should not be extended to any hon. member who might claim it, with a view of endeavouring to vindicate himself from the charges which he considered had been unfairly made against him. As he said just now, the Chief Secretary was in his judgment unwarranted in making the charges he had made. The hon. gentlemen said that he (Mr. Glassey) had threatened members of the Committee; that he wished to set up mob rule; that he had his audience listening to him outside. The hon. gentleman further endorsed the remark made by the hon. member for Nundah, Mr. Agnew, that he (Mr. Glassey) was a trainer in a training school of violence. The hon. gentleman further made the charge that his friends outside were discussing a new policy—a policy of murder.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: "Some amongst the hon. members friends" I said.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would give the words used. Everything which he had said which appeared in the slightest degree to be referred to in the Chief Secretary's speech he would repeat, and he would then put alongside that the remarks made by the Chief Secretary in answer to his speech, and would then leave the Committee and the country to judge whether the remarks made on that occasion by the Chief Secretary were warranted or not. Further, he and his friends, in consequence of the attitude they assumed, were threatened with expulsion from the House. Those were the matters to which he intended to refer as briefly as he could; not, however, with a view of making amends for what he said the other night, as the Chief Secretary had just now suggested, but rather in the hope that the Chief Secretary would make some amends for some of the very uncalled-for remarks he made upon the occasion in question. To come to the question of threatening hon. members, what he had said was that if the Bill passed in its present form it would have the effect of disfranchising a considerable number of working people in the colony, and would court a conflict with the people. What he said would be found in *Hansard*, as follows:—

"Mr. GLASSEY said he would ask if it was desirable to court a conflict with the people, because, as surely as that Bill passed, they would have a conflict with the people."

Further on he said—

"Let them trust the people, and he had no fear but that the people would trust the Parliament. He would warn the Government, and he would warn their supporters, that if the Bill was passed——

"The CHIEF SECRETARY: You warn the Government?"

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Somebody else said that.

Mr. GLASSEY said he continued—

"He warned them that if that measure passed it would raise a hostile feeling in this country such as they had never seen before."

Further on he said—

"He believed the Government did not represent the people on that question. He believed the people were decidedly against the measure just as they had been against various other measures which he was not going to refer to at that time. So long as he was able he should oppose the Bill, believing, as he did, that the feeling and wish of the people was for a larger measure of reform, which would offer the utmost facilities for getting on the rolls. There were 108,000 people in the colony entitled to vote. The man who, in November next, if the Bill became law, robbed him of his vote, or attempted it, had better keep out of his way. The man who robbed him of his vote, robbed him of all that which was nearest and dearest to him; and the men who attempted to deprive the people of their political rights, were only provoking and arousing a hostile feeling and courting a conflict with the people.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY: You have been stirring up sedition for over a year."

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith): Hear, hear!

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: There are more of the same opinion.

Mr. GLASSEY said he called for proof of that statement; and in order to have on record a correct definition of what "sedition" was, he took the trouble to look up "Walker" and "Webster" that day to find the meaning they put upon the word—

"A factious rising of men in opposition to law and disturbance of the peace——"

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSEY—

"Tumult and insurrection."

That was the definition given by those learned gentlemen. He wanted the Chief Secretary to give the Committee and the country some proof of the statement: Where he (Mr. Glassey) had preached sedition? The date on which the preaching took place, and the circumstances in which it occurred?

Mr. PATTISON: You could get that from "Dear George," I think.

Mr. GLASSEY said that the Secretary for Railways interjected, "Let bygones be bygones;" and he (Mr. Glassey) went on to say—

"The Bill did not let bygones be bygones. If the Government extended the franchise they would be letting bygones be bygones by trusting the people. But to attempt to deprive them of their political rights would have the opposite effect. At least one thing he would promise, and that was that the Bill would only go through when he had no further strength and energy to oppose it. The Government might be sufficiently strong to pass it in the Committee; but his side was stronger outside."

Meaning that the bulk of the electors were not with the Government, but with himself in opposition to the Bill. That was the meaning intended to be conveyed, and which was conveyed in those words. Again he said—

"The Government might be sufficiently strong to carry the Bill. They had seen their strength manifested on several occasions, and no doubt they would see it again; but it would not last. He would seriously advise the Chief Secretary to take into his consideration the effect the passing of the measure was likely to have upon the minds of the people.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY: I believe it will have a very beneficial effect.

"Mr. GLASSEY said he thought it would have the very opposite effect. Any measure that did not give greater facilities to persons wishing to have their names on the rolls would not have a beneficial effect upon the country."

Those were the whole of the remarks of his which he thought were in the slightest way referred to in what he considered the angry speech of the Chief Secretary. He would next read the Chief Secretary's remarks in answer to those statements. The Chief Secretary said—

"He did not want to use unparliamentary language, but he must say he did not think he had heard a speech since he had been a member of Parliament so discreditable to every member of it as that of the hon. gentleman, as he supposed he must call him. The hon. gentleman in effect had threatened the Government and the Committee if they did not accede to his views.

"Mr. GLASSEY: Not my views—the views of the people of the colony.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY: His views of the best way of securing a *bonâ fide* representation of the people in Parliament—that they should be met with sedition and violence outside. The hon. member had in effect threatened the Committee with mob rule outside if they did not accede to his views to-night.

"Mr. LISSNER: That is exactly what he said.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is exactly what the hon. member for Bundanba said.

"Mr. GLASSEY: No.

"Honourable Members: Yes.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY said he did not think that threats of that kind would deter one single member of that Committee from doing his duty.

"Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

"The CHIEF SECRETARY said they were not going to be coerced by the language which the hon. gentleman and his associates had been indulging in for the last few weeks.

"Mr. AGNEW: Which he has trained them in.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY said the hon. member who interrupted him was right. There was apparently a school of violence."

He hoped that the Chief Secretary when he rose to reply would tell the Committee where that school of violence was, and who the members and pupils of it were, and would mention one single occasion where he had acted as a trainer of those people in matters of violence.

"Mr. GLASSEY: Give some proof.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY said that he had received some resolutions that day—he had not read them before. They had been sent to him from a meeting which had been held in the Centennial Hall—he had heard something about a speech which had been delivered there. He did not know who the compiler of those resolutions was, but he seemed to be a person of very poor ability judging from the composition of the resolutions. He seemed to have endeavoured to get together as many insulting epithets and expressions as he could. The hon. gentleman was apparently the mentor of those people; and now, to cap all, he had distinctly threatened the Committee and hon. members of it with violence—actual physical violence—if they did not accede to his views. The hon. member had posed as the mentor of those people inside and outside Parliament. Now, he asked the hon. member did he know what his friends were doing? Did he know that amongst the men of whom he posed as the leader at the present time there was a new policy being discussed, and that was the policy of murder? Did the hon. member know that?

"Mr. GLASSEY: No, and neither do you.

"The CHIEF SECRETARY said that he did know it. He knew that amongst many of the hon. member's friends outside they had for some time past been discussing—deliberately discussing the question of murder—the murder of some prominent members of that Committee. That was a fact."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said he rose to a point of order. If the hon. member for Bundanba had a right to give a rehash of a previous debate, each other of the seventy-two members of the House could claim the same right, and business would come to a standstill. The hon. member had been allowed, by the indulgence of the Committee, to refer to certain charges which he alleged were made against him. Although the Committee were desirous to hear what the hon. member had to say on that subject, they did not want to be wearied with a repetition of the tiresome speeches of the hon. member. Let him concentrate his charges, and let the Chief Secretary reply to him if he could, and as he (the Secretary for Mines) did not doubt he could. They did not want a rehash of *Hansard*, and the time of the Committee occupied by the self-laudation of one of its members.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Bundanba appears to me to be taking a rather unfair advantage of the privilege extended to him by the Committee. I understood him to rise for the purpose of replying to certain charges that had been made against him. That could have certainly been done in less time than the hon. member has already occupied. I will ask him, therefore, to summarise what he has to say, to answer the charges he objects to, and then to conclude his remarks.

Mr. GLASSEY: Then I am not permitted to read what the Chief Secretary said in answer to myself.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We know it already.

Mr. GLASSEY: But I want the country to know it as well. I want to have my remarks and those of the Chief Secretary placed side by side.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is quite in order in refuting the charge, if any charge was made against him, but I think he should confine himself strictly to that, and not introduce matters that cannot be considered to contain any charges made against him individually or as a member of the House. He should summarise his remarks, as I said, and confine himself strictly to the language he objects to; and, having done that, make his rejoinder.

Mr. GLASSEY said it was the first time since he had been in the colony that any objection had been made to an hon. member occupying a few minutes on a matter of that kind. However, he wanted briefly to say that he denied *in toto* that any friends of his were engaged in any such work. If any persons were engaged in any such work, they were no friends of his. He repudiated entirely the charge—and he hurled it back to the quarter whence it emanated—that any friends of his were guilty of any such conduct. He wanted the Chief Secretary to give the Committee some information as to where that so-called school of murder was.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. T. O. Unmack): That would never do.

Mr. GLASSEY said it was quite competent for hon. members, or for the Chief Secretary, to make any charge they or he liked, but when the Chief Secretary was called upon to give the Committee and the country some information concerning his charge, they were told by another Minister of the Crown that it would never do. He repeated that, under no circumstances that he was aware of, had any friend of his been guilty of anything approaching what had been said by the Chief Secretary.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: Are you in the confidence of your friends?

Mr. GLASSEY said he had enough confidence in them to know that they would not be guilty of anything of that kind. He wondered whether there had been any inciting to murder on the other side! He wondered whether there was a meeting held recently in the Centennial Hall by the patriotic league, when the chairman recommended that he (Mr. Glassey) and other persons should be murdered? He did not pay the slightest attention to that, nor did he attach the slightest meaning to it, because he was perfectly aware that, although the language used was strong, the person using it had no such intention.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What meeting was that?

Mr. GLASSEY: It was a meeting of the patriotic league. A gentleman of Brisbane named Mr. Porter was in the chair. You had better ask him.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I never heard of it before, and I do not believe it ever happened.

Mr. GLASSEY said he attached no importance to reckless statements made by persons on either side. But when it had gone forth to the country, and was sent across the wires over every part of Australia, that the Chief Secretary had asked him if he was not aware that his friends were preaching a new policy of murder, it became a very serious charge. Could it be considered for a single moment that any men in their senses would be guilty of anything of the kind?

Mr. DALRYMPLE: They cut Abor Creek bridge down.

Mr. GLASSEY said could it be considered that a single person in that community would attempt either the life of the Chief Secretary or any other member of the House?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Did not they try to wreck trains?

Mr. GLASSEY said he wondered how such information reached the Government. Was there any secret service money voted?

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: There soon will have to be.

Mr. GLASSEY said who were the persons who were engaged in that secret and nefarious work, carrying such cock-and-bull stories to the Chief Secretary that he came forward and charged a man equally as honourable as himself and his friends with preaching a policy of murder. Although he was a very humble individual, he could place his character alongside that of the hon. gentleman, and court the fullest inquiry regarding it; and for the hon. gentleman to say

that he (Mr. Glassey) was mixed up with persons guilty of such crimes was monstrous. He had no desire to take up the time of the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. GLASSEY said hon. members might laugh to their hearts' content. It would not jar him in the slightest degree, neither would it cause him to sit down one moment before he intended. He said that every single statement made by the Chief Secretary in reference to his conduct was false and entirely untrue, and that if any of his friends were guilty of any such crimes as charged against them he entirely repudiated them. And now he wanted the Chief Secretary to tell them where the school of murder existed and who were the pupils; when and where he preached those doctrines; and who furnished the Government with information which would lead the hon. gentleman to utter such reckless, wild, and untruthful statements as he had referred to.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought they had gone far enough in extending the indulgence of the House to the hon. member. That hon. member was wild with the Chief Secretary for accusing him of having friends who advocated a policy of murder, and he made at the same time a direct charge against a very honourable gentleman in this town, Mr. Porter, of having presided over a meeting of the patriotic league the object of which was to arrange for the murder of the hon. member himself.

Mr. GLASSEY: I attach no importance to it. It was a wild statement.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the thing was extremely ridiculous; to talk of murdering the hon. member was too absurd. Nobody wanted to get rid of the man himself, but they wanted to get rid of his eternal jaw. Now, he rose as Treasurer of the colony. If there was an expensive institution in the colony which was abused it was *Hansard*. It had been the constant practice of the labour party to abuse *Hansard* in order to meet their own ends. The most precious time of the House was always taken up by those members insisting, in season and out of season, in making themselves prominent in *Hansard*. Anyone looking at *Hansard* casually would think that "Mr. Glassey" was the House. The Chief Secretary might have a say occasionally, but, casually looking at *Hansard*, people saw the same "Mr. Glassey," or "Mr. Ryan," or "Mr. Hoolan," and it might be supposed that those members had charge of the House, simply because they commanded the first columns of *Hansard*. Now, that was an abuse that ought to be put down; and he hoped the Standing Orders that were being prepared would provide thoroughly that the Government should command the business of the House and *Hansard*, and he hoped hon. members would back him up in curbing *Hansard* so that it should not be abused in the way it had been. It was an institution put to no use at the present time, except to encourage the angry passions of men in this colony at the present time. In these times of depression, when there were so many unemployed, many people were doing their best to pull the colony through, but there were others who were doing what they could to thwart every effort that was made in that direction. He believed himself that in spite of the machinations of those people the others would succeed; but he did not think they should be stopped by the parliamentary dodges which had been so completely mastered by the hon. member for Bundanba. That hon. member thought he understood political economy and other things, but what he really did understand was getting a good mob speech into the first page of *Hansard*, and letting it be distributed throughout the colony. That was a thing he (the Colonial Treasurer) objected to entirely. The House had indulged the hon. member for Bundanba for a long time, and he hoped that some good would come out of it, not in the way the hon. member expected, but in a different way altogether. When the hon. member challenged the Government to come forward and give details of certain things he would not succeed. There was a lot of information which the hon. member would like to burrow out, but he was quite disappointed if he thought he would get it. The Chief Secretary had nothing to reply to; and the only way to treat the hon. member was with the contempt which his conduct deserved.

Mr. NELSON said he rose to agree with the remarks of the Colonial Treasurer. He thought the House and country were tired of the abuse which was being made of the privileges of the House by the representatives of the labour party, and he thought the electors of the country must see by this time that although they could elect members of Parliament, they could not make them anything more.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They could not make them sensible men.

Mr. NELSON said they could only elect members of Parliament. When they saw men coming into that House who were prepared to assert what they called their "rights" against all the courtesies and traditions that were established by Parliament; when they saw that although those men got as broad a hint as possible that sitting so close as they did to the Ministry was objectionable, he thought perhaps it was time that some further steps should be taken. Certain hon. members showed their determination—for what reason he could not say, unless it was to show that they had a certain amount of power—to sit as close to the Ministry as possible.

Mr. GLASSEY: As a matter of convenience.

Mr. NELSON said they seemed as if they were going to assert their power to the utmost. They were determined to show people what use they would make of their power when once they got it. They showed that if once they got hold of power they would be perfect tyrants. But the very fact of their conducting themselves in the House as they had done was a sufficient warning to the whole colony, and he was quite sure the position of affairs was becoming recognised. All the working men that he knew, and with whom he conversed—and there were hundreds of them that he was intimate with—told him the very same thing. They said that they believed in unions, as he (Mr. Nelson) also did, and as he believed everyone did, but they said that the way their members were conducting themselves had quite disgusted them with parliamentary work. That was beginning to be the feeling of the country. There were, as hon. members knew, certain unwritten laws by which their proceedings were governed; but the hon. members to whom he referred appeared to have no regard whatever for anything unless it was strictly defined in a legal statute. There was, for instance, no law with regard to the seats of hon. members in that House. There never was any such law. They had certain traditions of the House of Commons to guide them, but they did not apply here, and it had always been the practice and custom of this Parliament to leave it to the courtesy of hon. members to conduct themselves in accordance with the established practice of Parliament. The hon. member and his followers, however, although they had been distinctly told by the Government that they were a nuisance in sitting so close to the Government benches, took no notice whatever of the hint.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. Tozer): They do not go where they pledged themselves to go when elected.

Mr. NELSON said they had a perfect right to come over to the Opposition side of the House. They had a right to make use of their privileges and sit on the Opposition side; but he did not invite them to do so; and if the unwritten laws to which he referred were abused in that way it would come to this: that they would have to make written laws.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. NELSON said our system of civilisation must deprive people of so much of their individual liberty for the good of the whole community; and if a few members of the Committee would not conform to the intelligent usages of the Committee, they would have to make laws upon the subject and restrict their liberty. By the action of a few individuals, the liberty of all the rest of the Committee would have to be curtailed. He quite agreed with the Colonial Treasurer. He was not present on Thursday night, and did not hear what took place; but, having heard it retailed by the hon. member for Bundanba, he thought the Chief Secretary would do well if he made no reply whatever.

Mr. RYAN said he had no wish to take up the time of the Committee, and could never be accused of having done so since he had been a member of it; but he had always endeavoured to oppose in what he considered a fair and honourable way any Bill brought forward with which he did not agree. He thought the charge which had been hurled——

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said he rose to a point of order. The Committee had permitted the hon. member for Bundanba to dilate upon the matter before them, but had not intended to extend the same indulgence to every hon. member to dilate in the same manner.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Bundanba has been permitted to make an explanation in reply to certain charges he considered had been brought against him; but I shall require hon. members who may follow to confine themselves to the question before the Committee.

Mr. GLASSEY said the clause before them was one of the leading clauses of the Bill; it proposed to repeal some section of another Act, with the view of substituting something else. He considered the provisions desired to be substituted were by no means an improvement, and unless there was to be an improvement he should oppose the repeal. He expected when they adjourned on Thursday that the Chief Secretary would have been ready to propose something that would be a decided improvement. The alteration he thought necessary and beneficial was one which would take that matter out of the hands of irresponsible persons, and put it into those of people who would be responsible. In making the alteration that had been proposed they would be making an elaborate scheme which, in his opinion, was far more complicated and difficult than the one at present in force. Therefore, he was not favourable to the repeal, and in order to put himself in order he would move that the word "not" be inserted after the word "are."

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. member that the object he desires to arrive at can be attained by negativing the clause itself.

Mr. GLASSEY said he was quite aware of that.

Mr. POWERS said he would ask the Chief Secretary if the clause ought not to state that if a man had put in a claim under the present Act it would be registered the same as if this clause had not passed. It seemed to him that a man would not be entitled to be registered because this clause imposed a lot of other conditions to be complied with.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the clause perfectly protected the rights of everybody. If a good claim had been sent in it would still be valid. But it could not be provided that they should be dealt with in all respects as if this Bill had not been passed, because the clause contained an express provision that the electoral registrar should make inquiries as to the *bona fides* of the claimant.

Mr. POWERS said even if a man had been entitled otherwise he would not be entitled after the clause passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that the clause proposed to be repealed provided a form of claim, and the Bill before them substituted another form. The clause before them said such repeal should not affect the validity of any claim heretofore delivered if the claim showed that the claimant was entitled to be registered. It could not be clearer.

Mr. DRAKE said he would like to ask the Chief Secretary if he would, not necessarily at present, but at some time in the early stages of the Bill, indicate the order in which it might be convenient for the Committee to take the various amendments of which notice had been given. They were very numerous, and in some cases were tumbling over one another. The Committee desired that they should be fully discussed, and those who had given notice of them wished to know how they would be taken. He noticed that there was one amendment in the name of the hon. member for Burrum upon clause 1. He presumed that hon. member had decided to move it in some other place. It would be desirable to have some understanding.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he would take the amendments in the order in which they were put in the copies before him. The amendments given notice of by the hon. member for Ipswich seemed to relate to a distinct subject, and should come in at the end. Then there were some to be proposed by the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, which would follow clause 8; and that to be moved by the hon. member for Normanby, if it came in at all, would also follow clause 8, because it dealt with a new subject. Then there were some of which notice had been given by the hon. member for Rosewood, which, if they came in anywhere, should come in at the end. There was one proposed by the hon. member for Enoggera which should come in after clause 15, or at the end. Then there were some of which notice had been given by the hon. member for Burrum. They should come in after clause 8.

Mr. POWERS: After clause 7.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One might come in after 7, and the other after 13. That was the best indication he could give at the moment.

Clause passed as printed.

On clause 3, as follows:—

"A person claiming to have his name inserted in any electoral roll may deliver his claim or send it by post to the proper electoral registrar for the district in the roll for which he claims to have his name inserted.

"The claim must be in the following form or to the like effect, and must set forth, in the form of answers to the questions contained in it, sufficient facts to show that the claimant is entitled to be registered:—

"THE ELECTIONS ACTS, 1885 TO 1892.

"*Claim.*

"To the electoral registrar of the [division in the] electoral district of .

"I hereby give you notice that I claim to have my name inserted in the electoral roll for the electoral district of , my name and qualification being as appears by the answers to the following questions:—

(1.) What is your Christian name and surname?

(2.) What is your age?

(3.) What is your occupation?

(4.) What is your place of abode?

(5.) What are the particulars of your qualification?

(6.) Are you a natural-born British subject?

(7.) If you are not a natural-born British subject, have you been naturalised for six months?

(8.) Are you registered in respect of the qualification of residence as an elector for any other electoral district?

(9.) If so, for what district or districts?

"And I hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that the foregoing answers to the above questions are true.

"I elect to vote in the polling district which includes the post office [*or* court-house] at .

"And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act of 1867.

"Declared before me this day of , 18 .

J.P.

(Signed) A.B.

"The claimant must, in answer to the question 'What is your place of abode?' give such a description of the locality of his place of abode as will enable it to be easily and clearly identified.

"The claimant must, in answer to the question 'What are the particulars of your qualification?' give a description of the particulars of his qualification in such one of the following forms as is applicable, or to the like effect:—

(*a*) Residence for the last preceding six months at [*giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment (if any), or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it*];

(*b*) Possession for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate at [*describing situation as above directed*], of the clear value of not less than one hundred pounds above all encumbrances;

(*c*) Householder at [*describing situation as above directed*] for the last preceding six months, the house being of the clear annual value of ten pounds;

(*d*) Holder of a leasehold at [*describing situation as above directed*] of the annual value of ten pounds, the lease of which has eighteen months to run;

(*e*) Holder for the last preceding eighteen months of a leasehold at [*describing situation as above directed*], of the annual value of ten pounds;

(*f*) Holder for the last preceding six months of a license from the Government to depasture land at [*describing situation as above directed*].

"The situation of the property, if any, in respect of which registration is claimed, must be specified in such a manner as to enable it to be easily and clearly identified.

"The claimant may, at his option, fill up or not fill up the blank in the line relating to a polling district."

Mr. POWERS said he would ask whether the person sending in a claim would have to deliver it in person or send it by post? In the outside districts it would be difficult to deliver it in person in all cases. He would ask if it might not be delivered personally or by agent?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that those were the words of the old Act. He thought it would be better if they were delivered personally. He had heard of many cases where great numbers of claims had been collected by one man, and very often they were all in the same handwriting, including the signatures. Of course there was no objection to the body of the claims being filled in in the same handwriting. If any alteration was to be made in the clause he would propose to say "delivered personally.

Mr. PALMER said that in the directions for filling in the form of claim the claimant had to state "Residence for the last preceding six months at [giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment, if any, or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it]." In his district he would like to know how a man working on a station, where he had neither number of portion nor allotment, could fill in that form? He might be working on a station for a few months, then shifting to a neighbouring station. He was asking that without any view of embarrassing the Government; but in the pastoral districts how could such men possibly fill in that form?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that if a man was working at the hon. member's head station he would say: "Residence for the last preceding six months at the head station of Canobie;" or if he was not at the head station he might say at an out station. That would be sufficient to enable him to be identified; and if he changed to another station during the year he could send a notice stating the alteration in his residence qualification

Mr. HAMILTON said that in his district there were a number of pearl-shellers, who, though living within Queensland waters and paying heavy taxes, had no place of abode except their vessels. He would like to know if those men would be entitled to have their names enrolled? They were of benefit to the State, as they paid heavy taxes, and their places of abode could be easily identified—they were always residing in a portion of the electoral district of Cook.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is all right. I believe they are all householders on land.

Mr. HAMILTON: Some of them are hardly ever on land.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Have not they got leaseholds?

Mr. HAMILTON said that although some of them had, a great many had not leaseholds. They had only their ships.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the definition of the household qualification was, "Is a householder within the district occupying any house, warehouse, counting-house, office, shop, or other building."

Mr. HAMILTON: The only house they have got is a boat.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that was their residence clearly enough. They could clearly specify the place. They might say "Residence on such a vessel, stationed at such a station."

Mr. DRAKE asked the Chief Secretary whether the words "[— division in. the]" were necessary in the clause?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that they were necessary, because there might be more than one division. In the electoral district of Carpentaria there were three divisions—Burketown, Camooweal, and Normanton; and it was necessary that the claim should state which division the claim was made for.

Mr. DRAKE said he did not see why it should be necessary for an elector to send his claim to the registrar of a particular division seeing that there was only one roll.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that each court had jurisdiction only within its own division. If the qualification was in the Camooweal division the Normanton court would not deal with the claim. That was all provided for by the principal Act.

Mr. BARLOW said he would suggest that the first part of the form of claim should be amended so that it might be made to read thus—

"To the electoral registrar of the electoral district of Carpentaria.

"Electoral division of Camooweal."

He knew that there had been a great deal of confusion in connection with the present form.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the object of the Government was to make the form so simple that nobody of ordinary intelligence could make a mistake, and the fact that anybody had misunderstood it was sufficient argument to induce the Government to make an alteration. He moved the omission of the words "division in the," and proposed to insert a new line, consisting of the words "electoral division of."

Mr. DRAKE said that the question did not affect the electorate he represented; but it had been pointed out to him that in electorates where there were divisions men had been disfranchised because they sent their claims to the wrong divisions. If a man in the Carpentaria electorate sent his claim to Normanton when he should have sent it to Camooweal he was disfranchised.

Mr. PALMER said that many men had been left off the Carpentaria roll in that way by the registrar in Normanton. He did not think the registrar should have that power. Only the benches should have the power of leaving names off the roll.

Mr. BARLOW said that if the registrar of any division found that the qualification was not within his division he should send the claim to the proper place to be dealt with. He might be considered hypercritical, but he would suggest that there should be a footnote to the effect that "natural-born British subject" meant a natural-born subject of Queen Victoria. He knew an instance in which a person was most indignant because he was asked the question, "Are you a natural-born British subject?"

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said he could corroborate what had been stated with regard to the confusion in connection with claims not being sent to registrars of divisions in which the qualifications were situated. He was of opinion that up to the present time it had been the practice in cases where the registrar of one division of an electorate received claims which should have been sent to the registrar of another division, to forward those claims to the proper court; and he would like an expression of opinion from the Chief Secretary as to whether a claim would be rejected under those circumstances. He thought the suggestion of the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, was a very excellent one—that claims sent to the registrar of a division in which the qualification was not situated should be sent by him to the electoral registrar of the division in which the qualification existed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he saw no objection to that. He thought it was done. It seemed to him to be a matter for instructions. Full instructions had always been issued, and if that was not included it could be added. He did not think it was necessary that it should be put into the Bill. As to the suggestion with regard to "natural-born subject," they could deal with that afterwards.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that as the law stood now a man could send in a claim without going to a magistrate to witness it. It was now proposed that schoolmasters, as well as justices of the peace, might witness those claims; and he would suggest that the stationmasters along the railway lines might be included. They were all responsible men under the eyes of the Government, and if they were added it would help to remove the suspicion that it was the intention of the Government to keep off the roll anyone who was entitled to be put on—though he did not think there was any such intention. He would suggest that where a magistrate could not be found some other well-known person should be allowed to witness the signature. There would be immense hardships in many cases if the clause were passed in its present form. He knew a place about eight or ten miles from Ipswich where there were some thirty settlers, and every time they required the signature of a magistrate they had to leave their work and go into Ipswich. He had received a requisition submitting a man's name for the commission of the peace on account of the provisions of that Bill. Where men had to leave their work in that way it was a loss to the colony—a loss of the 6s. or 8s. a day which they would earn if at work. He hoped that the hon. gentleman would make it as easy as possible for men to get on the roll, while, at the same time, introducing such safeguards as would prevent improper claims being sent in.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said it would be more convenient, if the hon. member wished to raise that question, to do so on the clause dealing with the attestation to the declaration. He understood that the hon. member for Burrum wished to raise that question in a subsequent amendment. At present, however, there was a particular amendment before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN said: The question before the Committee is an amendment to omit the words "division in the," in the 7th line of the clause, page 2, and to insert as a new line "electoral division of." The question now is—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause.

Mr. HOOLAN said there were very serious objections to the magistrates of the colony——

The CHAIRMAN said: The hon. member is not addressing himself to the question before the Committee.

Mr. GLASSEY said the hon. member for Stanley had raised a very important question.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is not the place to raise it.

Mr. GLASSEY said it was very singular that when an hon. member raised an important question another hon. member who got up to throw some light upon it should be ruled out of order. He had no desire to object to the Chairman's ruling; but surely it was not the intention of the Chief Secretary to prevent the fullest possible discussion on that Bill? That was a most important clause.

The CHAIRMAN said: I would draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that the question before the Committee is not the clause, but an amendment in the clause.

Mr. GLASSEY said he was going to ask the Chief Secretary if he would withdraw his amendment in order to allow an amendment to be moved in the earlier part of the clause. As the clause now stood, it provided that a person might deliver his claim or send it by post to the electoral registrar. He thought that a claimant should also be allowed to send his claim by an agent. That was quite a common practice, and it was a very convenient one in some circumstances. Where a person lived a long distance from a post office, and could only send a letter occasionally by some person passing in a train, as, for instance, at some places on the Central Railway, it would be a great convenience to him to send his claim to the registrar by an agent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said he rose to a point of order. The hon. member was not discussing the question before the Committee

The CHAIRMAN said: I have already said that the question before the Committee is an amendment moved by the Chief Secretary, and have asked the hon. member to confine himself to that amendment. I understand that the hon. member wishes to propose an amendment in an earlier part of the clause, and that with that object he asks that the amendment now before the Committee should be withdrawn. Before continuing the discussion he should obtain leave for the withdrawal of the amendment before the Committee. Then he will be in order. But the amendment can only be withdrawn with the consent of the Committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said, with the permission of the Committee, he would withdraw his amendment in order to allow the hon. member to move an amendment in an earlier part of the clause.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GLASSEY said there were many places in the colony where there was no post office, and where there were only occasional trains that carried mails. On the Central Railway there were places where lengthsmen were obliged to wait until such time as a train came along before they could send a letter to the post office; and if in such cases a person could send his claim by a person travelling to the locality in which the electoral registrar resided, it would be a convenience.

Mr. ALAND: He could put it in the post office.

Mr. GLASSEY said he was referring to places where there was no post office, and he could see no reason why people should not have the facilities he proposed. He moved that after the word "by," in the 2nd line of the clause, there be inserted the words "agent or by."

Mr. BLACK said it had frequently been stated that men could not understand how it was that when they had put in their claims their names had not appeared on the electoral roll. It appeared to him that the system suggested by the hon. member for Bundanba, under which they would have agents going round the country professing the greatest desire to collect names, would result in the perpetuation of that complaint. He had no doubt that the hon. member was quite sincere in thinking that his amendment would be an improvement, but he (Mr. Black) thought it would tend to the perpetuation of the complaints they had heard over and over again. They often heard men say, "We gave in our applications to so and so six or eight months ago, and he promised that our names should be put on the roll, and now, when an election comes on, we find that they are not on." He would like to know what district there was in the colony in which a man could not either deliver his claim, or send it by post without difficulty or delay. As to a man having to wait until a train came along, the objection was frivolous. He objected to the amendment on the ground that it would open the way to the disfranchisement of a considerable number of people. Surely any man could afford a two-penny stamp; and he did not know where in the colony there were men who could not without difficulty reach a post office, and so be able to depend upon their claims for enrolment reaching the registrar.

Mr. HALL said he thought the amendment necessary. As the clause now stood an elector might "deliver his claim or send it by post." It did not say he should deliver it personally or by agent, and it would be more satisfactory if the clause stated clearly whether he could deliver it by agent or whether he was compelled to deliver it personally. As the clause stood an elector could deliver his claim by agent.

Mr. PALMER said the objection could be met by the insertion of the word "personally" after the word "claim" in the 2nd line of the clause. There was no station in the North without a mail service, and every station had a mail bag, in which these claims would be as sacred as they would be in the post office, for it was part of the post office, and was paid for at so much a year. He might say he was an agent for delivering these claims, as he often sent four, five, or six claims in a letter directed to the registrar of the district.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said some personal action should be looked for; it was only reasonable to expect that where an application for enrolment was made the applicant should take some personal interest in it himself. It was notorious that what the hon. member for Mackay had referred to had happened frequently. Men had gone about collecting names, not for the purpose of getting them on the rolls but for the purpose of preventing them getting on the rolls. They got a large number of claims and took them to some office, where the right ones were selected and put on the roll, and the rest were torn up.

Mr. GLASSEY said he understood it was the intention of the Committee to give every possible facility to *bonâ fide* electors to get their names on the roll.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is one of their intentions. Another is to checkmate persons who attempt to fraudulently stuff the rolls, or keep people off who should be on.

Mr. GLASSEY said they only had assertion for that; there was no proof that fraud of that kind was practised. What he desired was that the facilities which hon. members professed to give electors to get their names on the rolls, should be given. Did any hon. member maintain that the clause as it stood afforded these facilities?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

Mr. GLASSEY said he did not believe it, and the Chief Secretary had confirmed him in his opinion. The hon. gentleman told them now that it should be a personal action on the part of the individual claiming a vote. What did that mean? It meant that in order to get their names on the roll some persons would have to travel a very long distance to reach an electoral registrar or magistrate, or a school teacher, and to incur considerable expense and loss of time and wages. In many instances, too, it would mean loss of employment to those persons. That could not be denied, and surely the Committee did not desire to subject people to loss of employment, expense, and loss of time and wages in order that they might acquire that which was theirs. He desired that no man should have more than one vote; but—and he said this with some experience—in hundreds and thousands of cases the clause as it stood would necessitate some persons going long distances to reach the officials empowered to attest their claims, and though they might thus be put to considerable expense, they might not even then be able to get their claims attested. Surely that was not a desirable thing at the present time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is better than the present system.

Mr. GLASSEY said it was infinitely worse. The amendment he proposed was not for the purpose of giving persons an opportunity for disfranchising other persons, but to enable *bonâ fide* electors to get their names on the roll in the easiest possible manner. Many persons engaged in work in parts of the interior, at dam-making and other things, might not have time at their disposal to go a long distance to a registrar or

magistrate, and it might be days or weeks before a coach would be going with a mail-bag in which they could post their claims.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Never!

Mr. GLASSEY said it was possible that some person might be going or could be sent to where the district registrar lived, and he could take the claims of those persons and have their names put on the roll. That was a very reasonable proposal, and he could not imagine how hon. members professing to give facilities for enrolment could raise any objection to it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member should talk with more information about the colony when he spoke upon so important a subject as that was. When the hon. member talked of dam-makers in the colony being in such a position that they could not reach anyone who could take their letters to a post office within weeks or months, he talked utter nonsense. There was not a dam-maker in the colony who could not get to a post office in a day.

Mr. GLASSEY: Indeed there is.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he knew better than the hon. member. Let him go as far as Camooweal—and that was about as far as dam-making had gone—and he defied the hon. member to point out a single place where a post office could not be reached in one day, and without any expense whatever. Then the postal charges from even Camooweal to the nearest registrar would be only 2d., the same as all over the colony. It was curious to find an hon. member like the hon. member for Bundanba violating all the principles of the ballot. The principle of the ballot was where a man had a right to a vote to give it to him according to his own information and conscience, free and clear from any interposition of the opinions of anyone else. He was not a great admirer of the ballot himself, because there were some weak principles in it; but all legislation latterly had been in favour of the ballot, and to allow the free actions of the voter to be communicated to the ballot-box without any interference whatever. What was the meaning of the hon. member's amendment? It meant to intercept the real intention of the voter in voting, and to put his vote into the hands of another party. The agent was to collect the votes, and would use them in accordance with his judgment—not the judgment of the men who were going to vote. If, according to the agent's judgment, it was a proper thing to deliver them to the applicants, he would do so; otherwise he would not, and would thereby be keeping down the voters, just as the hon. member would no doubt say the landlords did in the old time. The hon. member wanted to get at the voters of the colony, and to do it in a most outrageous way and before their eyes. He had never known a more impudent attempt to hoodwink, not the Committee, but the public. What was wanted was that the voters of the colony should give a free expression of their opinion at the ballot-box, while the meaning of the hon. member's amendment was, "If you do not vote as I want you to, you shall not vote at all."

Mr. GLASSEY said he had been amused at the ingenious manner in which the question had been fenced by the Colonial Treasurer. The hon. gentleman had a wonderful regard for the purity of the ballot-box, and was extremely anxious that no person should intercept a vote. That was ingenious; but was it the real intention of the hon. gentleman? He did not think it was, but that the real intention was rather to make it as difficult as possible for persons to get on to the roll, so that as few persons should vote as possible. The Treasurer had challenged him to point out a case where a person could not get a letter sent within a few days. Some little time ago he had occasion to send a sum of money by wire to a person in order to bring him to Brisbane quickly, and no less than a fortnight or three weeks elapsed before that wire reached the individual. That individual was 200 miles beyond Cunnamulla; he was engaged with a number of other men putting up telegraph wires. That was not an isolated case; there were many of the same character throughout the colony. It might often happen, in the outlying parts of the colony, that a group of men could afford to send one of their number with their claims to be put on the electoral roll. He wanted to give such persons facilities for getting on the roll, not to destroy the moral effect of the ballot.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said the hon. member for Bundanba started by referring solely to lengthsmen, and said that they were so remote from post office communication that they might be debarred from sending their claims to the electoral registrar. That was a deliberate attempt to blind the Committee. The hon. member was very fond of imputing motives to other people, but he was like the fox in the fable. In doing so he unconsciously displayed his own motive; and the motive of the hon. member was simply that he should have a controlling influence over the very large number of men employed on the railway lines, and compel them to vote what he termed "straight." As to the accessibility of any part of the colony, he need add nothing to what had been said by the Colonial Treasurer. He was perfectly certain that anyone who desired to exercise the privilege of a voter would find no difficulty whatever in placing his name on the electoral roll without the assistance of the hon. member and his colleagues. As to the man working on a telegraph line, mentioned by the hon. member, that man was a casual labourer, and under no circumstances would be entitled to a vote.

Mr. HAMILTON said he believed every facility should be given to enable residents to put their names on the roll, but in his opinion the amendment of the hon. member for Bundanba would actually increase that difficulty. A political agent would go round collecting numbers of applications from various individuals, and strike out those men whose politics he did not approve of. He might conveniently lose those applications—it had been done before—and put the other applications in. The hon. member had gratuitously insulted the Committee by saying he believed it was the intention of hon. members to make it as difficult as possible for persons to get their names placed on the rolls. He need hardly retaliate by saying that he believed the intention of the amendment was to put power into the hands of certain political agents to qualify only those persons whose views were in accordance with theirs. As to there being places in the outside districts where persons would not be able to take advantage of the post office, there was not a place in the whole of Queensland where a post office was not accessible to intending electors.

Mr. HALL said he did not see why the word "agent" should not be inserted there, because in clause 13 it was provided that a claimant might be represented by an agent in support of his claim when there was any objection alleged; and if an agent could be trusted to do the one thing surely he could be trusted to do the other! By the employment of agents men would be enabled to put in their applications without having to pay postage—although that might be deemed a small matter—and without having to waste time waiting upon a justice of the peace or registrar during working hours.

Mr. BARLOW said justices of the peace were as thick as blackberries all over the colony. The head man on a station was generally a justice of the peace, and they were continually passing to and fro. If he thought there was any hardship in the matter he should support the hon. member for Bundanba, but he could not see that there was the slightest hardship. If the amendment were carried, the effect would be that exactly the same thing would be done that had been done before to his certain knowledge—namely, that claims would be collected, sorted out, and certain of them conveniently forgotten. Those things were done long before a labour party in Queensland was ever thought of. He did not know that the claims were torn up, but the names did not appear on the roll. To allow any agent to go through the country would be the greatest trap possible.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 4.

Messrs. Glassey, Ryan, Hoolan, and Hall.

NOES, 44.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Plunkett, Cowley, Nelson, Black, Powers, Dickson, Jessop, Morehead, Hodgkinson, Stevenson, Watson, Perkins, Callan, Campbell, Pattison, Tozer, Dunsmure, Jones, Crombie, Stephens, Grimes, McMaster, Lissner, Murray, Luya, Little, Macfarlane, Drake, Isambert, Dalrymple, Casey, Gannon, Annear, Palmer, Corfield, Aland, Smith, Barlow, Paul, Unmack, Hamilton, and O'Sullivan.

Question resolved in the negative.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved the omission of the words "division in," and the insertion of the words "electoral division of."

Amendment agreed to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he proposed to further amend the clause by leaving out the words in question 6 "a natural-born," and inserting the words "by birth."

Mr. POWERS said he would suggest that the question, "What is your age?" should read "What was your age last birthday?" The Chief Secretary had already promised to accept any amendment that would make that part of the Bill clearer and prevent the possibility of mistakes being made, and the question he proposed to substitute was the one generally asked. Anyone familiar with the proceedings of revision courts would know how claims were rejected on account of informality. Good lawyers had had their documents thrown out by magistrates on the ground of informality, and he thought trouble would be saved if his suggestion were accepted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said it seemed a very small point. A man might not be quite sure of his age, and if not he would answer as nearly as he could.

Mr. GLASSEY said there was one matter he wished for some information upon. What was considered a "place of abode"? There had been some doubt in regard to that point. He did not know that any objection had been taken to it hitherto.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The word has not been used hitherto.

Mr. GLASSEY said if a man lived in a hollow log would it be considered a place of abode? He wished the Chief Secretary would give some definition of the term.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said if a man lived in a cave it would be a place of abode, or a hollow log, if it were large enough, might be a comfortable residence. The qualification was residence, and to judge the genuineness of an application it was necessary to know where a man resided—to know where to find the hollow log.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said in his early colonial experience he had heard of men living in hollow logs, and believed that was the place where some people should live at present. It was a pity when the Government were bringing up a matter of this sort that they did not introduce what he thought was the only real safeguard—namely, the educational test. No man who could not read and write was entitled to a vote, because he could only get his opinions from other sources, which might be impure or incorrect. He did not think it was too late to go forward in that direction, because it would be going forward. Education in the colony was perfectly free to anyone who chose to take it, although the compulsory clauses were not enforced. It had been free for more than twenty-four years—a time beyond the age at which people were allowed to vote.

Mr. DRAKE: Immigration has been going on all the time.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said it had been going on to their detriment and to their great cost. If it had been left to the Australians to deal with that matter, it would be dealt with in a very different way, and they would not have acquired those persons whom they had in their midst, and who had been doing an incalculable amount of harm. The only remedy they could possibly have against personation was to make every elector sign his name when he was put upon a roll. The details could easily be arranged, but the main principle was that where education was free to every child, and where they were heavily taxed to support their system of education, they should insist that an educational qualification should be embodied in a Bill like that before them, first of all. He would not propose to strike off the names of persons already on the rolls who could not read or write; but it should be made one of the conditions in future. A division was taken in the House of Commons the other day which decided that the illiterate voter should not exist. It was carried by a large majority, and supported by one of the greatest Radicals in England, and a man of great ability — Sir Wilfred Lawson. That occurred in a country where the difficulties were greater than in Queensland, and it should be done here.

Mr. GLASSEY: They are not greater.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said there was no country where education was so easily obtained as in Queensland. He drew the attention of the Chief Secretary to the matter now, and he had done so before. He knew his opinion was shared by the Colonial Treasurer and by other hon. members of the Committee. He had no intention of moving any amendment, but thought some move might be made in the direction he had indicated.

Mr. McMASTER said he thought it was desirable to have the word "abode" properly defined. He could give an instance of a man claiming a right to vote under the residence qualification because he lived upon a vacant allotment. There was a broken-down waggon there which had been used for carrying about a merry-go-round, and it had been lying there for four or five years. This individual had placed a few bags across the pole, and camped there occasionally. He did not think he had any claim to the waggon, and he was certain he had none to the land. When his attention was called to the fact of a man claiming a vote on the ground that he resided upon that allotment, he said there was no house there; but he was told there was a waggon.

Mr. GLASSEY: The man was quite entitled to a vote.

Mr. McMASTER said it was quite probable the hon. member should think so; but it was necessary to know the whereabouts of the waggon, or hollow log, or whatever residence a man might have.

Mr. GLASSEY rose to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: The question before the Committee is the proposed amendment in paragraph 6. If the hon. member is going to speak to that he may proceed; but if he is not he can ask for the present amendment to be withdrawn.

Amendment agreed to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved that the words "a natural-born" be omitted, with a view of inserting the words "by birth a."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. GLASSEY said it was about time to raise the question previously referred to by the hon. member for Stanley regarding the provisions made for persons signing a statement before a justice of the peace or the head teacher of a State school.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has to be a sworn declaration.

Mr. GLASSEY said that it was a matter of very great importance. If the clause passed as it stood very many persons would be disfranchised—if they were confined to justices of the peace, head teachers of State schools, and postmasters. They would not be able to get on the rolls even in centres of population. In his own electorate, which was very small compared with many, the population was scattered, and there were numerous difficulties in the way of having their claims attested in that manner. What opportunities had working men of reaching a justice of the peace, or even the head teacher of a State school? They could only do so at night, and in some cases they would be obliged to travel a considerable distance, and be at some expense. Why should they insist upon those conditions?

Mr. NELSON rose to a point of order. The question before the Committee was an amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; There is no amendment—the hon. member has not moved an amendment.

Mr. NELSON said he understood the Chief Secretary had moved an amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has been carried.

Mr. NELSON: Well, what is the question?

The CHAIRMAN: The question is—That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that if the question the hon. member for Bundanba was discussing was whether justices of the peace should be required to attest a claim, that properly arose on clause 5; but if he desired to raise the question whether a solemn declaration should be made, he could raise that question immediately by moving the omission of the words—

"And I hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that the foregoing answers to the above questions are true.',

There were two points—the solemn declaration and the persons who were to attest that declaration.

Mr. GLASSEY said that the point he was discussing was the difficulties standing in the way of persons getting on the rolls. He took it that members were sincere when they said that they wished every facility to be given; and that being so, why should they not remove all difficulties and make the procuration of a vote as easy as possible? If it was desirable that the claims should be attested, surely a respectable householder—of whom there were numbers all over the colony—should be allowed to attest a claim? He was sure the signature of a decent, respectable householder would be a sufficient guarantee of the *bona fides* of the claimants. If a person were going to vote in a local election all he had to do was to have his voting-paper attested by some householder, certifying that he was the individual who was entitled to vote. He was not aware of any abuses that would arise if householders were allowed to attest claims. Then, in regard to the other point mentioned by the Chief Secretary, it was unnecessary that the claimant should have to make a solemn declaration. It was a man's right to have a vote, and he should not be put to the trouble and expense of going to those individuals to have his right attested. And then after that he was required to make a solemn declaration that the same was true. He would like to hear the opinion of other hon. members upon those two points.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said that the hon. member had occupied the Committee for ten minutes with a number of absurdities and misstatements without moving any amendment. The hon. member had told them earlier in the evening that owing to his want of intimacy with his mother tongue he had got a dictionary to supply him with a meaning of the word "sedition," but there was no occasion to refer to a dictionary to understand what the hon. member meant when he talked about the "procuration" of a vote. The meaning of procuration was the procuring for a nefarious or improper purpose. He thought the hon. member's bitterest opponent in the Committee could not have expressed the object of the hon. member's extraordinary and lengthy dissertations so clearly, so truthfully, and with such an utter want of obscurity as the hon. member himself had done. The hon. member wanted the clause so amended that the little restraint that no man would object to would be removed in putting in a claim for the exercise of a privilege for which the hon. gentleman professed his willingness to die if anyone dare to rob him of it.

Mr. GLASSEY: It is not a privilege, it is a right.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said the hon. member objected to such an ordinary thing as a man making a declaration that he was entitled to a vote. It would be noticed that when the hon. member discussed any matter it was always to remove from the object that he had immediately at heart any obstacles that could possibly bring forward the conscientious consideration of the man desirous to attain it. In other words, he wanted the procuration of a vote.

Mr. GLASSEY said that the Secretary for Mines was extremely catchy; but he would not catch him so easily as he expected. Why should not a man procure his vote? Why should anything be allowed to stand in the way of a man procuring his vote? The hon. gentleman said that he was extremely anxious that each person should have that vote; then why should he throw all possible obstacles in the way of persons procuring their rights? The hon. member's object was to have as few persons voting in the different electorates as possible; and it was because he saw clearly the object underlying the whole thing that the hon. gentleman felt annoyed. The object should be to give every possible opportunity for a man asserting the right that belonged to him. When an hon. gentleman got up and said that it was a privilege, where was the individual that could confer that privilege?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is Parliament that conferred the privilege on you.

Mr. GLASSEY said that it was the people who had conferred the privilege, and they had the right to demand it. The people had asked Parliament to give them a right, and not a privilege; and they had asked Parliament to give them facilities for procuring that right. He did not see the use of retaining the words "solemnly and sincerely." It ought to be sufficient to say "I hereby declare," and so on; he therefore moved the omission of the words "solemnly and sincerely."

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member had stated that the right to vote belonged to every man. Nobody disputed that. But the hon. member's objection was that the voter would have to make a declaration that the answers he had given to the questions put to him were true. No honest man could object to making a declaration that the statements he had made were correct; only a dishonest man could object to making such a declaration. The only objection he could see was one that did not arise under that clause—namely, that the declaration must be made before a justice of the peace or the head teacher of a school. He thought that "postmaster" might be added, because there were postmasters in many places where justices of the peace were not plentiful and head teachers were absent.

Mr. POWERS said he wanted to ask the Chief Secretary whether he would allow some questions to be put to those making freehold applications, to the following effect:—"Are you the registered owner of the property? Do you hold the property on your account, and not as trustee, agent, or mortgagee? Do you believe the property in respect of which you claim freehold qualification would, if sold, realise £100 above all encumbrances?" He knew that persons filled up freehold applications as loosely as persons filled up residence applications; and as they were very particular with regard to the residence claim, he saw no reason why they should not also be particular with regard to the freehold claim. He knew persons who had applied as mortgagees and trustees and in several other capacities contrary to what he believed was the intention of the Act. He thought that freehold applicants should also give particulars of their qualification, and would like to propose the amendment he had suggested, but he could not do so unless the amendment now before the Committee was withdrawn.

Mr. GLASSEY said with the permission of the Committee he would withdraw his amendment for the present, in order to allow the hon. member for Burrum to propose his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. POWERS moved that after paragraph 9 the following words be inserted:—

(10.) Do you hold the freehold property on your own account and not as trustee, agent, or mortgagee?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he was not aware of any rule of their law which prevented a man who held property as a trustee from voting or from making a claim to vote. The words in the Act were "seized of a freehold estate in possession, either in law or in equity," so that the intention of the proposed amendment was to introduce a new limitation to the qualification to vote, which certainly did not exist according to the present law.

Mr. POWERS: An agent cannot vote under the present law.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said a man could not hold a freehold property as an agent.

Mr. BARLOW: He must have a freehold estate in possession, and not in reversion or remainder.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the word "possession" was used as distinguished from reversion or remainder. But what the hon. member proposed was to introduce a new limitation on the right to vote, which was not proposed in that Bill. But apart from that, it was quite possible to overload the form of claim. A man was required, as the Bill stood, to give particulars of his qualification. A freeholder would have to state that he had "possession for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate at [describing situation as above directed] of the clear value of not less than one hundred pounds above all encumbrances"; and he would have to satisfy the person attesting his claim that he was possessed of that qualification. If they were going to overload the form of claim they might make it a regular catechism, but he did not think it was desirable to do so. The first reason he gave showed, at any rate, that the amendment was entirely out of place.

Mr. BARLOW said it seemed to him that a case might arise where a person might be registered as the owner of a property under the Real Property Act, which did not recognise a trustee, except in the case of a deposited memorandum of trust. He might be registered as the owner although only a trustee, and why should he not have a vote?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: He is entitled now.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member for Burrum was proposing to introduce a limitation. If a man were a conscientious man he would say "Although I am the registered owner of that property under the Real Property Act, I am not the actual owner," and that property would be unrepresented. If property was to be represented at all let it all be represented.

Mr. NELSON said he did not see how the question limited the qualification to vote. It merely required the claimant to state what the facts were.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The facts are irrelevant.

Mr. NELSON said they might be irrelevant, but the claimant was only asked to state the facts, and it was just as well that he should state whether he was the trustee or actual owner of the property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why, if it makes no difference

Mr. NELSON said it might make some difference. He quite agreed that the trustee, being in point of fact the registered owner for the time being, should be entitled to vote, as he was under the present law. But the question was merely to elicit the facts; it would do no harm, and might do good.

The CHIEF SECRETARY asked why should they put idle questions to an elector simply because they would do no harm? The answer to such a question would be perfectly irrelevant, because it had nothing to do with his right to vote. Why, therefore, should they ask such a question? Why not ask a man what was the colour of his hair, or what was his religion, or what were his political opinions? Those questions would be equally relevant. If he held possession of a freehold estate in accordance with the section, he would be entitled to a vote, no matter what colour his hair was or what political views he might hold.

Mr. NELSON said that in reply to that argument he would refer the hon. gentleman to question (3) of the section: "What is your occupation?" He did not know that there was anything in the Act which required a man to be a mason or a bricklayer, or anything of that sort. The two questions were in the same category.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; one is for identification.

Mr. NELSON said one question would be just as good for identification as the other. Why should not a man state whether he was a registered owner in his own right or as a trustee? The whole object of the Bill, so far as he could see, was to prevent people being on the roll who were not properly qualified, and surely the more information they got on that subject the better!

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the hon. gentleman had answered his argument as to the colour of a man's hair by the remark that it might be useful for purposes of identification, and therefore it might be useful to ask that question; but as to how the information suggested affected a man's right to a vote, the hon. gentleman had used no argument at all.

Mr. POWERS said that as soon as the amendment touched the property vote it was objected to as a catechism, but the catechism in the Bill with respect to the residence qualification for a vote was not objected to at all.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That applies to everybody.

Mr. POWERS said the questions he suggested were necessary if a man claimed to vote as the agent or mortgagee of a property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: An agent cannot claim.

Mr. POWERS said that agents and mortgagees did claim.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Dead men and absent men claim.

Mr. POWERS said that agents and mortgagees claimed, and how would that be known unless the question was asked? They simply said, in the terms of the Act, that they were "in possession." They read the Act as they liked, and not as the legislature possibly intended. He was speaking only yesterday to a mortgagee, who was on the roll in the way he referred to. If the amendment he suggested was adopted, he intended, of course, to follow it up by an amendment in the 42nd line, to provide that a man should be in possession of the estate as owner, and not as agent or mortgagee. He did not think those questions of catechism should be objected to as soon as they began to talk about property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he was trying to understand what the hon. member desired. Possibly what he desired would be met by altering the description of qualification in subsection (*b*), lower down. Perhaps the hon. member thought the expression "Possession for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate" was ambiguous, and might be taken to include what the hon. member referred to. He had no objection to remove that difficulty by making that paragraph read "Ownership for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate in possession," etc.

Mr. POWERS said that would be a very satisfactory amendment, and would be some result, at all events, from the amendment which he had moved. To provide that the form should state "ownership for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate in possession" would prevent what was going on now in the enrolment of agents and mortgagees. On the understanding that the hon. gentleman intended to amend the clause in subsection (*b*) in the way in which he had stated, he would be quite willing to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. GLASSEY said he thought the suggestion was a very good one. He would like to draw the Chief Secretary's attention to the fact that the mere statement of a man's occupation would not lead to his identification. Take a case which occurred in his district, where there was one village in which there were fifteen Joneses, ten of them Johns, and all of them miners. How would the occupation lead to identification in that instance? The statement would simply be—"John Jones, miner." As a matter of fact, the colour of a man's hair would be a better means of identification in that instance. If they took a whole mining community there might be at least thirty Thompsons in it, and twenty Thomases amongst them, and the roll would just appear—

"Thomas Thompson, miner, Blackstone, Bundanba."

Therefore the statement of the occupation would not by any means lead to identification, and that was a difficulty which he would like to see met.

Mr. DRAKE said that before the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Burrum was lost sight of, he would point out to the hon. member that in the principal Act there was a section providing that in the case of an elector presenting himself at a polling-booth to vote on a residence qualification, certain questions might be put to him, if required, and the amendment the hon. member suggested would come in very appropriately as an amendment to that clause of the principal Act, by providing that the questions to which the hon. member referred should be put to persons claiming to vote on a freehold qualification.

Mr. PLUNKETT said he would like to ask the Chief Secretary a question upon the clause. He had filled in a good many application forms for enrolment, and, with respect to the qualification set forth in subsection (*b*)—

"(*b*) Possession for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate at [*describing situation as above directed*], of the clear value of not less than one hundred pounds above all encumbrances"—

he might say that he had never yet been able to find out whether an estate was encumbered or whether it was not. If he signed a claim put in upon that qualification, and the registrar afterwards found out that the estate was encumbered, in what position would he stand?

Mr. DRAKE: You would be fined £50.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that no consequences at all would follow to the hon. member. It was quite competent for him to ask the claimant, "Is there any mortgage upon your property," and if he said there was not, the hon. member would have performed his duty, at any rate, and the man who said there was no mortgage on his estate, when there was, would render himself liable to the consequences of having made a false declaration.

Mr. RYAN said that if he understood the Bill aright, a justice of the peace had to satisfy himself that the estate was of the value of £100 above all encumbrances, and what he wanted to know was how a justice of the peace was to find that out. If he made a mistake, and the strict letter of the law was carried out, he would be fined £50 and disfranchised.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is nothing in the Bill to that effect.

Mr. RYAN said he understood there was, from the discussion on the second reading.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is not in this Bill.

Mr. RYAN said he had heard it distinctly stated that a justice of the peace would be fined £50 and disfranchised if he made a mistake.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill does not say anything of the sort.

Mr. RYAN said it appeared to him that if a justice of the peace made a mistake with regard to the residence clause he would be fined £50 and disfranchised. It made no difference what he did with regard to a man who had property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the speech of the hon. member might be all very well at a public meeting; but a member of the House had no right to make statements of that kind. He was supposed to have read the Bill he held in his hands, and he had no right to make assertions about the contents of a Bill which were contrary to fact. The Bill contained no such provision as that stated by the hon. member.

Mr. McMASTER said he would call attention to the provision in subsection (*a*).

The CHAIRMAN said he would point out to the hon. member that the question before the Committee was the amendment of the hon member for Burrum.

Mr. POWERS said that after what had passed he did not intend to press his amendment.

Amendment withdrawn accordingly.

Mr. McMASTER said that subsection (*a*) provided that the application forms should contain the residence for the last preceding six months, giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment. There were a number of young men who resided continuously in private boarding-houses who would be quite unable to give the number of the allotment. He would suggest that instead of compelling such persons to furnish the number of the allotment the name of the landlord or landlady would be sufficient to identify their residence. He had repeatedly known claims returned because they did not state the number of the allotment. He saw one returned last week because the house was described as being the third house in a certain street, without the number of the allotment being inserted. Many permanent boarders would have great difficulty in getting their names on the roll under the clause as it stood.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he thought the paragraph was clear enough, the concluding words of it being "or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it." It might be "corner of Queen street and George street," or "corner of Brunswick street and Ann street," and so on. That would be quite enough.

Mr. DRAKE: Then why require the number of the allotment?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that might be necessary in cases where there were no streets. Or it might be sufficient identification to say, "So and so's house, near so and so, on the Logan road."

Mr. BARLOW said that what was wanted was a circular of instructions to benches of magistrates when they revised the rolls. They did their best, but they very frequently made mistakes. He knew that many claims had been rejected because the number of the allotment was not filled in. He had in his house a plan of the electorate he assisted in representing, and had always put in the number of the allotment in claims that had come before him; but everyone did not possess those facilities.

Mr. AGNEW said that although the clause was sufficiently elastic to cover every claim, benches of magistrates did not always accept it as such. He would give a rather amusing instance in point. The hon. gentleman's own Solicitor-General made application to be put on the roll for the Nundah electorate, and it was rejected. The Solicitor-General described his qualification quite in accordance with the clause, i the bench of magistrates had understood it; but they did not, and the application was returned. On that occasion about 150 applications were rejected. That showed that although the clause might be sufficiently elastic to cover all claims, the benches of magistrates had not got clear enough instructions with regard to it. That difficulty would be overcome by the issue of a circular letter of instructions as suggested by the previous speaker.

Mr. SAYERS said that in his electorate he had never known a claim rejected so long as the description of the residence was properly given. It would be impossible, because there was a great deal of Crown land where there were no allotments, and many single men were permanent boarders in hotels. All they had to do was to give the name of the hotel, and the street in which it was situated. Unless men set themselves wilfully to act against the spirit of the law their claims could not be rejected so long as their residence was described with sufficient clearness to identify it.

Mr. POWERS said the hon. member for Nundah had referred to a case where the Solicitor-General's application had been refused. He himself knew that an application by Mr. Edwyn Lilley had been refused, and also one by his own partner, who lived next door to the returning-officer in Gregory terrace. If there was the slightest informality in the applications the bench threw them out. There were three solicitors who had tried to fill up the forms properly, and each had been rejected for informality. Such being the case, how could it be expected that any working man could fill them up? They had heard of batches of 150 being thrown out, and such would continue to be the case unless plain instructions were given to the benches of magistrates. He was sure the Chief Secretary could do that easily. He would simply have to tell them that it was not absolutely necessary to describe the number of the allotment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the hon. member referred to some instances where applications had been thrown out; but if he knew anything of the particulars of those cases, he also knew that the amended form of claim removed all the difficulties. An Act of Parliament could do a great many things, but it could not teach men grammar or give them intelligence. All they could do was to use the plainest language and trust to the intelligence of people. If any plainer language could be suggested he should be glad to use it. If magistrates could not understand the plainest language the only remedy was to get more intelligent men on the bench; but if they could not be got, what were they to do? They must get the best men they could.

Mr. McMASTER said it had come to his knowledge that many claims had been rejected because the number of the allotment was not given, and that would be the case again if the magistrates acted as they had done in the past. He thought that instead of giving the number of the allotment applicants should give the name of the owner or the name of the landlord.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said in England every house was numbered, and the number of the house must be stated; but in this country the houses were not numbered, and they must do the best they could. What were they to do, then, but to say that the residence must be described in such a way as to identify the place? Surely any ordinarily intelligent man knew what that meant?

Mr. DRAKE said the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, was quite right, and he might go further and say that a

great number of persons who were entitled to vote were debarred from putting their names on the roll because they saw the instruction printed in italics that it was necessary to give the number of the allotment. They could not do that, and so did not put in their claims. Some hon. members said they did not know any cases in which claims had been rejected on that ground. That showed how unequal the practice was in its operation. In some places the revision court was composed of more intelligent men than usual, and they accepted claims where the position of the residence was sufficiently described. In other cases the claims had been thrown out again and again because the number of the allotment was not given. The Chief Secretary said that all that was necessary was that the locality should be sufficiently described to identify it. Then what was the necessity of putting in the words with regard to the number of the allotment? If hon. members would look at line 31 of the Bill they would see there that the claimant must, in answer to the question, "What is your place of abode?" give such a description of the locality of his place of abode as will enable it to be easily and clearly identified. Why should not the same instructions be given under sub-clause (*a*)? Then all the difficulty would be done away with. Further on there was a paragraph "The situation of the property, if any, in respect of which registration is claimed, must be specified in such a manner as to enable it to be easily and clearly identified." Nobody could object to that. There might perhaps be some reason for requiring the number and position of the allotment to be given in the case of a claim for a vote in respect of freehold, because a man was supposed to know the number of the allotment and portion; but it was a notorious fact that hundreds of people had not the remotest idea of the number of the allotment on which they lived.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said if the Bill required that they should give the number of the allotment all the objections that had been made would be well founded, but it did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. DRAKE: It does.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he could not see it.

Mr. GRIMES said it was very easy to ascertain the number of an allotment in any place, either in the country or the town, because that information was given in the local authority notices.

Mr. DRAKE: The lodger does not see it.

Mr. GRIMES said in that case the information could be obtained from the proprietor of the establishment very easily. He could not see the force of the objection that had been taken to that portion of the clause.

Mr. HAMILTON said he had no doubt the provision was inserted because the particulars of qualification applied equally to freehold as to residence. When a freeholder wished to show his qualification he had to state the number and portion of his allotment, but there was no direction to the effect that a person applying for a qualification by virtue of his residence must necessarily state the number and portion of the allotment. If it was so, he would object to it. The clause said distinctly, "or otherwise describe the locality of residence." Supposing the claimant lived in Adelaide street, he might say, "In Adelaide street, so many doors from the corner of Queen street, on the right or left hand side."

Mr. AGNEW said he would like members to understand the case he quoted. He did not mean that the Solicitor-General's qualification had been so vaguely described as to unfit him to be put on the roll. Besides giving the qualification, it was necessary to state where the applicant resided, and he stated distinctly where he resided. The name of his house was given, and the district in which he resided; but because he had not stated the number of the allotment the claim was thrown out. He thought the clause was simple enough; but he approved of the suggestion thrown out by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, that the magistrates themselves wanted complete and revised instructions, and if they were conveyed to them all the difficulties would be done away with. He had sat on the bench many times, and had seen the magistrates most desirous to admit claims where they thought they were justified in so doing. In any claims he had filled up, or in regard to which he had given instruction, he generally stated the residence as being so many doors from the nearest hotel, or near the police court, and so on, and never had had any returned. The magistrates should have general instructions.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the magistrates did not want more instructions, but more intelligence. That was the weak point; they had any amount of instructions. They were more particular in regard to the composition of licensing benches, and if the same care was taken in regard to registration benches they would do very well.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said it would be a good thing if people had the power to appeal against the decisions of the magistrates.

Mr. SAYERS said that would not do, because it would take too long to get on the roll. In many cases he had known, where claims had been thrown out, the court had been adjourned for a fortnight to enable people to prove their claims, and every facility had been given to get on the roll. He had never seen any obstructions raised at all. Some hon. members seemed to suggest that very peculiar things had been done; but he was sure everything would be plain enough under the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved that the words "or as the case may be" be inserted after the letters "J.P." on the 29th line.

Mr. GLASSEY said he had an amendment to move before that, which he had moved previously but had withdrawn to allow another to be proposed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he would withdraw his amendment, but hoped he would not have to be continually doing so.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GLASSEY said he had withdrawn his amendment to accommodate the hon. gentleman. He had already given his reasons why that declaration should not be made. No doubt some hon. members might fancy he had an ulterior motive in view; but he did not care whether they thought so or not. If a man had a claim he should be allowed to make it in the most simple manner possible. He presumed that all people were not liars, and that those who made claims were inclined to speak the truth without saying they solemnly and sincerely declared, etc. He moved that all the words in lines 26 and 27—"And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act of 1867"—be omitted.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put; and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 45.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Cowley, Hodgkinson, Tozer, Unmack, Nelson, Hyne, Stephens, Battersby, Watson, Little, McMaster, Annear, Hamilton, Wimble, Pattison, Morehead, Stevenson, Callan, Luya, Plunkett, Murray, O'Connell, Corfield, Agnew, Palmer, Dalrymple, Dunsmure, Lissner, Gannon, Drake, Sayers, Powers, Barlow, Macfarlane, Crombie, Dickson, Aland, O'Sullivan, Black, Paul, Smith, Grimes, and Jones.

NOES, 4.

Messrs. Glassey, Ryan, Hall, and Hoolan.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved the insertion of the words "or as the case may be," on the 29th line, after "J.P."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. DRAKE moved the omission of the words in subsection (*a*) "[giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment (if any), or otherwise describing locality of residence, so as to identify it]," with the view of inserting the words "[giving such a description of the locality of his place of residence as will enable it to be easily and clearly identified]." He was only following the words of the Bill, with the exception that he had substituted "residence" for "abode." He thought the Chief Secretary and other hon. members had admitted that all that was necessary was that the place of residence should be so described as to be easily and clearly identified; and therefore he thought it would be quite sufficient to put that in subsection (*a*). Then, if a claimant for a vote under a residence qualification knew the number of the allotment upon which he resided, he would certainly give it, because it would be the easiest way by which he could satisfy the Act. If he was not able to give the number of his allotment he could give such a description as would, by other means, enable the revising justices to identify his place of residence.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that he did not think the reasons given were in favour of the amendment, but rather the contrary. He thought the clause was far better as it stood. It indicated exactly what they meant. The best description ought to be given that could be given, and that was contained in the clause as it stood. He thought it best to adhere to the clause as it stood.

Mr. DRAKE said that he was surprised at hon. members not standing up and saying a word in favour of the amendment, as he was certain many of them recognised its reasonableness. He was sure that a great number of people outside who were in the position of being qualified to vote would be very glad if an amendment of that kind were made. He had simply moved the amendment because the description as it had previously stood was a pitfall which had prevented a great number of people who were entitled to vote from putting in claims, and it had given the justices of the peace on many occasions an excuse for rejecting claims put in by persons who were thoroughly qualified to have their names put upon the rolls. He had accepted the declaration of the Government in good faith that their object was not to prevent any man who was entitled to vote from getting upon the roll. That was one of the obstacles that had hitherto stood in their way, and he had asked the Government to remove it; but now that they were put to the test they rejected a simple amendment like that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that that sort of thing was becoming a little too common. A question arose upon a grammatical question. The Government thought that the expression and language used in the Bill were better adapted to give expression to their intention than the form of expression suggested by the hon. member. Thereupon the Government were accused of being anxious to disfranchise everyone. They could not express a matter of opinion upon a grammatical question without being accused of evil motives. Where was the imputation of evil motives to end? The hon. member said that the refusal of the Government to adopt one form of grammatical expression rather than another was manifest proof that the Government were actuated by evil intentions. Why not talk sense instead of indulging in that sort of thing?

Mr. PAUL said he thought the hon. member for Enoggera was right in the view he took of the question.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said he did not rise to speak in commendation of the amendment, because he did not think it was any improvement on what might be termed the direction to the bench as it now stood. He might say, however, that a good deal of interest attached to the discussion, because in many cases benches had rejected *bonâ fide* claims on account of the residence not being distinctly stated. He had seen an application for a claim under freehold qualification rejected simply because the applicant had not stated particularly where his residence was, although he had minutely described the freehold in respect of which he had made the claim. He trusted, after the discussion which had taken place, that the benches in dealing with future claims would see that the point at issue was the clear description of the qualification.

Mr. McMASTER said that all he wanted was to draw attention to the fact that freehold claims had been rejected because the numbers of the allotments were not inserted. He was satisfied now it had been plainly stated by the Chief Secretary that if the number was not forthcoming it would be sufficient if the property was otherwise described, so that it might be identified.

Mr. POWERS said the question was not one of grammatical expression; it was a question as to what construction a bench of magistrates would put on the expression—whether they would still say that the number of the allotment and the portion must be stated, notwithstanding the discussion which had taken place. He was of opinion that the benches would consider, since attention had been drawn to the matter, and the Committee had not made any alteration, that the Committee approved of their action.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the matter seemed to lie in a nutshell. More intelligent magistrates were wanted. But if every member of Parliament had a right to nominate persons for the commission of the peace, what could be expected? The way to get over the difficulty would be to have a higher class of magistrate than the ordinary magistrate, or a District Court judge, where possible, to deal with such matters. The hon. member for Bundanba had offered to sacrifice his life, or the life of anyone else, if he did not get his vote, and the Committee should see that votes were securely guarded.

Mr. FOXTON said he thought there was a good deal in the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Enoggera; and he agreed with a great deal of what had fallen from the hon. member for Balonne. He had known instances in which magistrates had rejected claims for the franchise because the number of the allotment and the number of the portion were not stated. He had only to call attention to the fact that it was almost impossible for many persons to state the number and portion or the allotment on

which they resided. Many estates had been cut up, and the subdivisions were not on the official maps, so that the number of an allotment could only be ascertained by a reference to the deeds of the land itself or by a search in the Real Property Office, which was, of course, out of the question. He thought the object of the amendment might be attained by omitting from the subsection the words "if any," and inserting in lieu thereof "if known to the applicant." If a claimant was able to give the number of the portion or allotment he ought to do so, but if he was not able to do that his claim ought to be admitted, provided he gave such a description as would enable his residence to be clearly and easily identified. He was well aware that it was the opinion of some hon. members that the magistrates who had to administer the law would not reject a claim if it contained such a description; but he was not quite so certain that benches of magistrates would take that view of the matter. He thought it would be much better to put it in black and white in an Act of Parliament than to trust to benches of magistrates to follow the opinions expressed by individual members of the Committee.

Mr. BARLOW said the whole difficulty appeared to be in the words "if any." If those words were omitted that would remove the difficulty, and the subsection would read, "Giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment, or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it."

The CHIEF SECRETARY said some hon. members appeared to think that whenever some justice of the peace in some country town had made a mistake in construing an Act of Parliament, it was the business of Parliament immediately to alter the law. He did not hold that opinion. Another thing that occurred to him was that it was a rule in discussing a document to have it before them; but they had not got the documents which were being discussed. If they had, it might be seen that the claims which had been rejected by the magistrates contained no particulars at all.

Mr. ALAND said he believed it was a rule in construing Acts of Parliament to read one clause with another, and therefore he hardly saw any necessity for the amendment, because any bench of magistrates having claims before them to adjudicate upon would have that clause before them which stated that the description of residence was sufficient if it would enable the place to be easily and clearly identified. He did not see any difficulty in the matter.

Mr. BLACK said the clause was sufficiently clear. Could any hon. member quote a single instance in which any elector qualified by residence in, say, Queen street, had had to put in his claim the number of the portion or allotment on which he resided? It was no use referring to cases the particulars of which they could not have before the Committee. In his own case he did not know the number of the allotment; he had simply put in "No. 1, Harris Terrace," and his claim was not thrown out by the bench. He did not know a single instance in which a claim had been thrown out because the number of the portion or allotment had not been given, provided the other particulars were furnished to identify its qualification, and he believed that method of dealing with claims prevailed all through the colony. Subsection (*a*) gave every facility to every man who had acquired a residence qualification to be enrolled, either by giving the number of the portion or allotment, or, if he did not know, otherwise describing the locality or residence so as to identify it. He did not know where those stupid magistrates were who had been referred to. He had never come across them, and he believed that the ordinary magistrates who revised the rolls were sufficiently intelligent to understand a clear provision like subsection (*a*).

Mr. GANNON said there were some benches of magistrates who thought it was their duty to prevent men getting on the roll.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. GANNON said there was no doubt about it. He had known many properly qualified men whose names were struck off the roll or not put on, and he would support the amendment if it went to a division, as he thought it was the duty of the Committee to provide an easy way for every man possessed of the requisite qualification to get on the roll, and not to put any difficulties in the way of registration.

Mr. FOXTON said he would like to point out that the remarks of the hon. member for Mackay exactly coincided with what he had suggested. The hon. member, instead of using the expression contained in the Bill, used the words, "if known to the claimant." That was the way the hon. gentleman read it.

Mr. AGNEW: What magistrate could tell whether it was known to the claimant or not?

Mr. FOXTON said the claimant himself knew best whether he knew it or not, and probably he would give the information if he knew it. But what he wanted was to prevent a claim being unnecessarily rejected if that information was not given by the claimant.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he would ask the hon. member who had proposed the amendment what was the difference between his amendment and subsection (*a*) of the clause?

Mr. DRAKE said he proposed to omit the words in the subsection referring to the number of the portion or allotment. It was admitted by all hon. members that it was not necessary that the claimant should give the number of the portion or allotment; and it was not only unnecessary, therefore, that the words should be there, but it was absolutely mischievous. He could not help thinking that the position of the Government with regard to that amendment was somewhat inconsistent, because in another part of the clause it was proposed that the question should be put to the applicant, "What is your place of abode?" and the claimant was to give such a description of the locality and place of abode as would enable it to be easily and clearly identified. That was very clear indeed, and if that was sufficient instructions to the claimant as to how he should describe his place of abode, it was also a proper way of telling him how to describe his place of residence. He could not see any difference between the two. The amendment he proposed would really carry out what was said to be the intention of the Government. The hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, had suggested that the words "if any" in the section should be omitted. That was following very much the same idea, and if hon. members preferred to accept that suggestion he would be perfectly prepared and willing to withdraw his amendment, but otherwise he could not see his way to withdraw it. Those instructions were to appear on the face of the claim, and it was desirable that it should be put in a clear form before the claimant how he should describe his residence in order to satisfy the justices. If the object was to make these instructions clear, then it was better that the description should be given clearly, as it was in other parts of the Bill, rather than in the way proposed in the clause under discussion, which required the claimant to state the number of the portion or allotment, as if that was primarily necessary.

Mr. BARLOW said he was inclined to ask the hon. member to withdraw his amendment for the form in which he (Mr. Barlow) proposed to suggest it. The form he suggested would read, "Giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment, or describing the locality of residence otherwise so as to identify it." He thought that would meet the case.

Mr. STEVENSON said the clause as it stood supplied the alternative, and it was absurd to waste their time debating a point like that. He hoped the hon. member for Enoggera would accept the advice given him and withdraw his amendment.

Mr. DRAKE said he would withdraw his amendment if the Committee agreed to accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow; but there was no use in his withdrawing if that hon. member's suggestion was to be negatived also.

Mr. HAMILTON said he quite realised that the motive of the hon. member for Enoggera was to simplify the instructions to the elector, and if the amendment would have that effect he would support it. He had been inclined to support it at first, but he saw that the clause as it stood was superior, and there was only a difference in the wording. The clause distinctly stated, "Giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment (if any), or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it." A magistrate who could not understand that must be a first-class ass, and the hon. member's amendment would not make it any clearer.

Mr. RYAN said he did not wish to cast the slightest doubt upon the magistrates of Brisbane, but he could, if necessary, bring a number of claims to show that names had been rejected in the Barcoo district on that very section. For instance, a few people lived on the Barcaldine Reserve, and they had no other way of identifying their residence but to say they lived on the northern, eastern, western, or southern portion of the reserve; and yet the magistrate, who was not an ignorant man, rejected those claims on the ground that the residence was not clearly defined. The same difficulty had arisen in other parts of the electorate; and, as he considered the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Enoggera would make the section more lucid, he would vote for it.

Mr. DRAKE said that with the permission of the Committee he would withdraw his amendment in favour of that suggested by the hon. member for Ipswich.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the amendment be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 36.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Cowley, Unmack, Hodgkinson, Tozer, Black, Plunkett, Smyth, Smith, Grimes, Aland, Dickson, Barlow, Agnew, Luya, Macfarlane, Callan, Dunsmure, Little, Battersby, Jones, Dalrymple, Corfield, O'Connell, Murray, Crombie, Annear, Morehead, Pattison, Wimble, Hamilton, McMaster, Watson, Stephens, and Hyne.

NOES, 11.

Messrs. Drake, Powers, Glassey, Hoolan, Hall, Ryan, Foxton, Gannon, Sayers, O'Sullivan, and Isambert.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the CHIEF SECRETARY, subsection (*b*) was amended by the substitution of the word "ownership" for the word "possession," and the addition of the words "in possession" after the word "estate."

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 4, as follows:—

"Forms of claims may be provided by the Government Printer, with the sanction of the Minister.

"Every claim so provided shall have printed at the foot or on the back a note in the following form or to the like effect, that is to say:—

Directions to be observed in answering the questions and filling up the claim.

(1.) Name.—The claimant's name must be written in full.

(2.) Place of abode.—The claimant must give such a description of his place of abode as will enable it to be easily and clearly identified.

(3.) Particulars of qualification.—The answer to this question must set out a description of the claimant's qualification in such one of the following forms as is applicable, or to the like effect:—

(*a*) Residence for the last preceding six months at [*giving the situation and number of the portion or allotment (if any), or otherwise describing locality of residence so as to identify it*];

(*b*) Possession for the last preceding six months of a freehold estate at [*describing situation as above directed*], of the clear value of not less than one hundred pounds above all encumbrances;

(*c*) Householder at [*describing situation as above directed*] for the last preceding six months, the house being of the clear annual value of ten pounds;

(*d*) Holder of a leasehold at [*describing situation as above directed*] of the annual value of ten pounds, the lease of which has eighteen months to run;

(*e*) Holder for the last preceding eighteen months of a leasehold at [*describing situation as above directed*], of the annual value of ten pounds;

(*f*) Holder for the last preceding six months of a license from the Government to depasture land at [*describing situation as above directed*].

(4.) The situation of the property, if any, in respect of which registration is claimed must be specified in such a manner as to enable it to be easily and clearly identified.

(5.) If the registration is not claimed in respect of residence, the eighth and ninth questions need not be answered.

(6.) The claimant may fill up the blank in the paragraph relating to a polling district, or not, at his option.

(7.) The claim must be signed by the claimant with his own hand, or, if he cannot write, with his mark, and must in either case be declared before and attested by a justice of the peace, or an electoral registrar, or the head teacher of a State school.

On the motion of the CHIEF SECRETARY, paragraph (*b*) of subsection 3 was amended by the insertion of the word "occupation" in place of the word "possession," and the words "in possession" after the word "estate."

Mr. DRAKE said that as notice had been given of some amendments to alter clause 5, with regard to persons allowed to take declarations, which, if carried, would involve necessary alterations in clause 4, he thought that those amendments should be considered before finally disposing of clause 4.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said that before proceeding with the amendments in clause 5, he had an amendment to move in subsection 7 of clause 4. The subject had been before referred to by the hon. member for Balonne. He agreed with that hon. member that at the present time it should be an indispensable qualification of an elector that he was able to read and write. He contended that an elector, to have any intelligent knowledge of the affairs of the country, must be in a position to read what was going on, and should also be able to write. He would go further, and say that unless an elector could both read and write he was really not in a position to exercise an independent vote at the polling-booth, but must act as an automaton, not knowing what name he was striking out except under

direction. He therefore thought they should mark their sense of what they considered should be the intelligence of the electors by restricting their claims to the franchise, and would move that the 7th subsection of the clause be amended by the omission of the words "or, if he cannot write, with his mark."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the game of the hon. member for Bulimba was not worth the candle. There might perhaps be a dozen unfortunate old fellows in the colony, who came out thirty or forty or fifty years ago, to whom the amendment would apply. The hon. member was of opinion that those men had no intelligent knowledge. Would the hon. member tell him what "intelligent knowledge" meant? He had never heard the phrase before. If the hon. member thought that because a man could not read or write he had no intelligence, he never made a greater mistake in his life. Many men who could not do either had better brains than the hon. member himself, and that was saying a great deal. Why should they take up time by discussing the claims of two or three or a dozen old fogies who were in the colony, and who could neither read or write, when in another three or four years they would be taken to another world? He supposed all the natives of Queensland would be able to read and write, because they got their education for nothing. Really the hon. gentleman's little game was not worth the candle. There was nothing in it.

Mr. BLACK said if he understood the suggestion of the hon. member for Bulimba, he did not think it was likely to apply to those twenty or so old fossils who had been referred to. He did not think it was intended to make the amendment retrospective, and therefore they would not be affected.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It will if they remove from one district to another.

Mr. BLACK said if they were so aged and infirm they were not likely to remove. He thought the time had arrived when the educational test should be applied. They had had a most liberal Education Act in force for twenty years, and at the present time they were spending £250,000 a year in educating the people. The education vote last year was £258,000. The means of education were within the reach of all people who had been born in the colony, and he thought the time had arrived when they should expect those who intended to exercise the franchise in an intelligent manner to be able to read and write. He did not know where those people were to be found who were entitled to take a part in the election of representatives who were unable to read and write. The only ones he knew of were some of those who came here as immigrants, and the sooner they learned to read and write the better. He was entirely in accord with the amendment of the hon. member for Bulimba, and he hoped when they came to the next clause further effect would be given to it by excising the words in reference to the education test. He did not know that any sound objection could be raised against insisting upon a reasonable educational test for a voter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he was disposed at first sight to support the amendment which the hon. member for Bulimba had moved, and which had been indicated by the hon. member for Balonne that afternoon, because it was pointed out that for more than twenty years there had been free education in the colony, and that almost all the natives of the colony entitled to vote could read and write, and moreover because the amendment would not have a retrospective effect. He confessed he did not think that any new arrival who could not read and write ought to have the franchise; but at the present time there were a number of people who had the franchise, and who had had it for many years, who could not read or write. If by any chance they were left off the electoral roll, or ceased to be qualified for any one district in which they had been qualified, they would be disfranchised, because they could not get on the roll under the new law. He thought that would be a hardship to them, and sufficiently serious to counterbalance the arguments on the other side. Otherwise he would have been disposed to support the amendment. But it might have the effect of disfranchising a great many men who had enjoyed the franchise for many years, and for that reason he did not think the amendment should be agreed to.

The HON. B. D MOREHEAD said he thought the difficulty suggested by the Chief Secretary could be got over. He had not the slightest desire to disfranchise anyone at present on the roll, but any further claimants to be put on the roll ought to be disqualified if they could not read and write. There was not a member of the Committee who would not agree that a man who could not read and write was not competent to hold proper opinions on political questions, or say that a man was competent or otherwise to represent a constituency. He could quite conceive the hon. member for Bundanba reading a speech, perfectly correctly of course, of the Chief Secretary's to some constituent of his who was not able to read or write, and even by an inflection of the voice or laying particular stress upon certain words, and reading it in that way with the manifest intention, of course, of influencing the elector against the Chief Secretary. He would go further. He could quite imagine a gentleman of an inventive turn of mind inventing a speech and saying to an illiterate elector, "Here is what your member said." He had known as bad things as that done in electioneering. An unscrupulous man, who might be regarded as a sort of demigod by certain people, and who had forced himself forward by power of check—which, in his opinion, was the greatest power on earth, and greater than that of money—might bring a great deal of influence to bear.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You have your share.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he might have his share, but he also had his share of discretion, which some hon. members had not. He could quite understand a man who had no regard for truth reading an imaginary speech to illiterate electors, and being able to fool the poor people he was reading to, and getting the votes of those ignorant people, who, probably, were as intelligent, and, in nine cases out of ten, a great deal more honest than himself. He would not interfere with the nineteen or twenty poor old fossils alluded to by the hon. member for Stanley. No injustice would be done to them, because they could easily be kept in their position, and at the same time other ignorant old fossils would be prevented from getting on the roll in the future. Surely it was a standing disgrace to the colony, with its grand educational system—a system that he did not altogether hold with in some respects, although he knew it had done good for the colony, and would do more good in the future—if they allowed those persons who could neither read or write to vote for the election of members of that Assembly. When they had enabled all their young men to go to the fount of knowledge who chose to learn to read and write, and a great deal more besides, they should make the educational test the supreme test as regarded the electors of the colony. So far as those who came to the colony

rom other countries were concerned, they should not be allowed to vote unless they could read and write.

Mr. BARLOW: Do not bring them out.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he would not go so far as that, because the colony would come to nothing if they had no more population. At present it was as well to stem the tide of immigration, and he agreed with the Government for having done it; but Queensland could never be a great country without population. He was reading an article in an English paper a few days ago, which remarked that the population of Queensland was 30,000 less than that of Birmingham, while that of the great territory of South Australia was 52,000 less than that of Leeds; and it suggested that probably people out here tried to find each other with telescopes. If there were more people here there would be less trouble, and he hoped there would some day be a selection committee in England to examine into the past careers of those who might be immigrants at the expense of the colony. The motion of the hon. member for Bulimba should have his heartiest support, and if it were carried they would have almost in the immediate future a body of electors who would be able to judge for themselves. Their rolls would soon be free of people who were unfortunately unable to judge for themselves, and who were the prey of those agitating demagogues who at the present time were so injurious to the colony.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said there was one other argument that the hon. member might have used with equal force, and that was that if the people who were unable to read and write were not allowed to vote, and were thus to a certain extent penalised, parents would see that their children attended the State schools.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member for Balonne had slightly misunderstood him. What he meant was, that they should establish an educational test as well as inquire into the character of the immigrants who came out. Hon. members must not jump at the conclusion that because a man could write therefore he could read; because he remembered the case of a most estimable citizen in another colony, and a man of great wealth, who could sign his name but could not read a word. If he stopped in the middle of his signature he had to start afresh. He did not think he could support the motion of the hon. member for Bulimba, and he thought it would be a good thing if some people in the colony who could read and write could not do so. It would be a very dangerous and somewhat invidious thing to establish that test at present.

Mr. McMASTER said he could not support the hon. member for Bulimba. It would be a very hard thing if any man now on the rolls were left off because he could not read and write. It would be adding insult to injury. He knew a few very intelligent men who took an active part in politics, and knew all that was going on, who could not fill up a form. The few amongst them who could not read and write would soon go off the stage, and as long as it was not made a test in selecting immigrants they should not be disfranchised when they came here. Even if it were made a test at home, he was afraid some of the best men they could have would be debarred from coming—men of the very class they most desired.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there could be no doubt that under the Bill there was not the slightest attempt made to disfranchise any members of the community. The matter of an educational test had been discussed before, and he was of opinion that, with the educational system they had, it was a legitimate thing that they should enact that no man who could not read and write should have the franchise. But they had deliberately allowed a certain number of men in the community to have the franchise, and they had exercised it up to the present time, and they ought not now to disfranchise men who had had the franchise before, unless due reason was shown. There was nothing to show that those men had abused the privilege; but for the future it would be a proper restriction to put upon the franchise that the young generation should be able to read and write before they were put on the rolls. The men at present on the rolls who could not read and write were not the poor, miserable lot of beings that the hon. member for Stanley referred to. He knew many of them —honest, respectable men—who could exercise judgment in the affairs of the colony as well as men who could read and write. He was disposed to follow to some extent the amendment of the hon. member for Bulimba—that was, for the future all men on the rolls who could not read and write should be debarred from that privilege.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: That is all that is wanted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the amendment went very far beyond that, because if a man who could not read and write dropped off the roll he could not go on again, even if he had been on the roll for twenty years. There would have to be a saving clause.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: There is no objection to that.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that would be only justice. After the expense they had gone to in seeing that the men of the young generation were educated, they should insist that there should be some means of ascertaining that they knew what was going on in the government of the country before they exercised the franchise. He thought it was perfectly right to provide that in future every man who came to the colony without being able to read and write should remain without a vote; but all those who had been on the rolls before should be provided for in the amendment of the hon. member, so that they might retain their rights.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that he would not like to assist in disfranchising any man who had already exercised his vote; but there was a great deal in the proposed amendment with regard to the future. There seemed to be an impression in the Committee that all the young people in the colony were being educated, but that was a mistake, as there were many who were not being educated at all. If the amendment were carried, it would prevent those young men from voting. He knew one family in West Moreton, in which there were nine children ranging from eighteen years of age to six months, and not one of them had ever been in a school. If the amendment were passed, it would be a very strong inducement for the parents to educate those children, so that they might exercise the privilege of the franchise. With regard to those coming to the colony, the idea thrown out by his colleague was a good one—that the free immigrants should be tested. If they invited immigrants to come to the colony at its expense, they had a perfect right to test them in the matter of reading and writing. He would be glad to assist the hon. member for Bulimba, if he would except the old residents who already enjoyed the right to vote although they could neither read nor write.

Mr. SMYTH said that he could not support the amendment, because when they spent a large amount of money in bringing people to the colony — such as agricultural labourers— those persons should not be disfranchised because

they could not read or write. Hon. members would agree with him that some of the best colonists could neither read nor write. Many of the best miners on Gympie would be wiped out completely if the amendment were passed. He did not know whether the Chief Secretary or Sir Charles Lilley was the author of the Education Act, but it was the best Education Act in the world. Some of his best friends and constituents could neither read nor write, or if they could they were only able to do so very imperfectly, and it was not likely he would support an amendment which would disfranchise some of his best friends. If they could not read or write, it was no fault of their own. It was the fault of an imperfect Education Act in Great Britain, perhaps. Under the Education Act in this colony every boy could get an education very cheap, and if any of those children could not read or write it was very often the fault of their parents. Perhaps such an amendment might be introduced in ten or fifteen years, but it was a great mistake at the present moment. He intended to oppose the amendment, because he did not think it was a crime if a man was unable to read and write. He had spoken the other night about the way in which certain persons in the colony voted through secretaries. He had since consulted various hon. members, and he found that that could be got over. A man who had the franchise, and who voted knowing how he was voting, would not be in the hands of any clique or secretary. He would vote for himself. He hoped the Committee would not accept the amendment. No doubt it sounded very nice, but it would disfranchise men who had toiled hard, but who were in the unfortunate position that their parents had not been able to educate them.

Mr. BLACK said that since the discussion had commenced he had looked up the census returns, and he was inclined to think they were undertaking a very large order. He had had no idea when he heard what the hon. member for Stanley had said that there was anything like the number of people in the colony who were, according to the census returns, unable to read and write. To his astonishment, he had found there were no less than 60,094 males. Under the age of seven—after which they might assume that the lads of the colony were able to read—there were 40,000.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And then there are all the kanakas and Chinese.

Mr. BLACK said there were about 20,000 of the male population unable to read and write. No doubt that included the kanakas and Chinese, although a great many kanakas could read and write; but he thought it might safely be said there were no less than 10,000 male European adults in the colony unable to read or write. He would be very sorry to do anything which would disfranchise that large number.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: It is not proposed to disfranchise them.

Mr. BLACK said he was sure the discussion would do a great deal of good, and probably in the course of a few years would result in the educational test being applied. If it was understood that it was going to be applied at some not far distant date, it would be a good thing; but if the amendment was likely to disfranchise 10,000 male adults who at present enjoyed the franchise he certainly thought some steps would have to be taken to ensure the continuance of the electoral rights to those men so long as they remained in the colony. Probably that was all that would be required; but he maintained that it would be a good principle to enunciate that, provided the existing rights could be protected, all future claimants would have to be able to read and write.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said he had no desire whatever to interfere with existing rights. The Colonial Treasurer had placed the matter in a very clear light; and he believed that if the Committee were in favour of the amendment, the Chief Secretary was prepared to submit a subsequent amendment which would protect all who now enjoyed the franchise. His experience agreed with that of other hon. members with regard to some of the ablest men in the colony—the pioneers of the colony—being men who could neither read nor write. Some of them laid the foundations of their fortunes in the colony, and their descendants now occupied high and creditable positions. There could not be a very large number of electors in the colony who could neither read or write. His attention was drawn to the matter by reading the 33rd and 34th paragraphs of the report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the year 1891—

"The annual returns from head teachers for the year 1891 show a total of 721 children between the ages of five and thirteen, who reside within two miles of a school, and whose education is totally neglected. Of these 386 are boys and 335 girls. The number of neglected children thus reported was 122 more than it was in 1890.

"The number of children reported as not attending school the minimum number of days required by the Education Act (60 in the half-year) was 5,194—viz., 2,532 boys and 2,662 girls. This is an increase of 349 on the number reported in 1890."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. W. O. Hodgkinson): There was an increase of 4,000 children in the average daily attendance for 1891—the largest increase in the history of the colony.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said that considering the number of children who were not benefiting by the educational system it was not premature for the Committee to express their sense of the necessity of electors possessing the qualifications insisted upon in his amendment.

Mr. AGNEW said he did not see his way to support the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Bulimba. The hon. member said that some of the most brilliant of the pioneers of the colony could neither read nor write, and he (Mr. Agnew) could not see why those brilliant people who were still to come to the colony should be precluded from voting if they could not read or write. A vast number of the people likely to come to the colony when immigration was resumed were people who lived in those portions of England where there was the greatest difficulty in getting education; in fact, they were the least educated of any class in England, Ireland, or Scotland. He knew that in Scotland it was difficult to find anyone who was not capable of reading or writing. The whole thing was simply a rehash. He remembered reading that a member of the House of Lords once introduced a Bill to prevent any man from voting unless he was able to read and to write so that his writing could be read; and yet, when the Bill was presented to be read by the Clerk of the House the Clerk could not read it. It would be unfair, after inducing people to come to the colony, to deprive them of the right to vote, and he intended to oppose the amendment. It was not necessary that a man should be able to read and write in order to judge of the actions of members of Parliament; in fact, a large number of people were often misled by what appeared in the newspapers. They had the opportunity of listening to the addresses delivered by the candidates at election times, and they could easily ascertain whether their members carried out the pledges they made, though they could not read or write.

Mr. PALMER said that there were lots of people who could just sign their names and no more; so that being able to sign one's name was no great educational test. At the same time he intended to support the amendment, because he looked upon it as a slur on any man not to be able to sign his own name when sending in his claim to exercise the franchise. He never knew a foreigner who could not read or write, and he thought that there should be some educational test.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he held in his hand a copy of the *Times* weekly edition of 20th May, 1892, which contained a report of a debate in the House of Commons on the illiterate vote. In that report it was stated that—

"Mr. Webster, on the motion for going into Committee of Supply, called attention to the provisions of the Ballot Act in regard to the illiterate vote, and moved a resolution declaring the opinion of the House that, in the interests of true freedom of election, the clauses in the Ballot Act which permitted the illiterate vote should be repealed."

Various reasons were given for moving that resolution, but it was unnecessary to trouble the Committee with them.

Mr. HYNE: Read the principal reasons.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he would read the reasons if it were desired. Mr. Webster, the report went on to say—

"Asserted that by means of those clauses, especially in Ireland, the secrecy of the ballot was violated and the wishes of the electors were frequently thwarted."

Mr. GLASSEY: Hear, hear!

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he did not wish to bring in any nationality, and therefore did not at first read that portion of the report.

Mr. GLASSEY: I will give you the reason by-and-by.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the hon. member need not interrupt, but could go home and get into the House of Commons and see where they would put him. Mr. Webster continued—

"In England and Scotland the proportion of illiterate voters was trifling, but in Ireland one voter out of every five claimed to be unable to put his mark against the names of the candidates. In many cases, he maintained the illiterate voters were intimidated by the Roman Catholic clergy; and in others, as at Waterford, by the mob."

Those were the two special reasons he mentioned. The quotation was from the *Times*, and if the hon. member for Bundanba was going to correct it he could do so.

Mr. GLASSEY: I was going to refer to it by-and-by.

Mr. HOOLAN: The *Times* is nothing but a record of lies.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he had no doubt that now the hon. member for Burke had expressed that opinion the circulation of the *Times* would at once diminish. The hon. member had better go home and personally intimidate the *Times*. He (Mr. Morehead) would pass by the remarks of some of the members in the House of Commons, and quote what was said by Mr. Balfour, the leader of the House—

"Mr. Balfour hoped the House would pass the resolution. The Ballot Act had undoubtedly been violated under cover of the clauses which were intended to give special protection to illiterate voters, and the illiterates of the three kingdoms did not constitute a class upon whom it was desirable to confer the grave responsibility of deciding on the character and policy of the Government of this country. If these two points were considered together it must be felt that it would be impossible ever to touch again the question of the franchise without dealing in a drastic manner with this subject, in accordance with the general principle laid down in the resolution. The Government, however, committed themselves only to the general proposition, as it would, of course, be impossible to introduce a measure embodying it in the present session."

Sir Wilfred Lawson, who certainly could not be called an extreme Tory, supported the motion, "expressing his belief that the clauses relating to the illiterate vote tended to weaken the protection of the ballot," and the motion was carried on division by 115 to 50. That showed the tendency of public feeling in the greatest deliberative assembly in the world. With regard to the statement which had been made that the amendment of the hon. member for Bulimba would interfere with what might be called vested rights, it was only proper to point out that there was no intention on his (Mr. Morehead's) part, or on the part of the hon. member for Bulimba, to interfere with any existing rights. The only desire they had, and he believed that it was shared by many hon. members, was to prevent in the future any persons who could not read or write getting on the roll. There was a strange inconsistency in the remarks of the Chief Secretary. The hon. gentleman admitted that he did not think any imported person who could neither read nor write should get on the roll. But why not apply the same principle to those now in the colony?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because they are on the roll now.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the hon. gentleman did not seem to apprehend that it was not the intention of the mover of the amendment, or any member who had spoken in favour of it, to interfere with any person whose name was already on the roll. The intention was simply to prevent any new claimant, who desired to exercise the franchise, getting upon the roll, unless he could read or write. It was all very well to say that some of the pioneers of the colony could not read or write, and he was aware that some of the greatest men in the world could neither read nor write—he quite agreed with the ejaculation of the Treasurer that they were great men in spite of not being able to read or write; but surely the hon. member for Nundah would not say that they would not have been more knowledgable men, and better men, if they had been able to read and write!

Mr. AGNEW: It was not their fault that they were not able to read or write.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the hon. member led them to suppose that it was a virtue they were not able to read or write. All that was asked was that in future additions to the rolls it should be a *sine qua non* that persons claiming to be enrolled should be able to read or write. That was the only way in which they could have an absolutely perfect check against personation, because a man could not be fully apprised of what was going on in the country unless he was able to read—without getting the information from other sources than those from which it was obtained by most people. If a man went into a polling-booth, and they had any doubt as to his identity, all they had to do was to get him to sign his name, and have that signature recorded; and in that way they would have a check against what was really at the present time one of the greatest blots in their system of electoral representation. He hoped the hon. member for Bulimba would go to a division on the amendment. If he did, he (Mr. Morehead) would vote for it, as he knew that the intention was not to interfere with existing interests, but to have a more intelligent roll of electors in future.

Mr. GLASSEY said the hon. member for Balonne should not be so thin-skinned as to object to interruptions, for no hon. member was more given to interruptions than that hon. member.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: He is able to take care of himself.

Mr. GLASSEY said other hon. members were able to take care of themselves as well as the hon. member for Balonne, and would do so. In his remarks earlier this evening the hon. member had mentioned that that question had recently been considered in the House of Commons, and from what was done there the hon. member appeared to think it was reasonable to infer that it was the tendency of the age that some educational test should be set up. He (Mr. Glassey) interjected that he would explain the reason by-and-by. The hon. member had read from the *Times*—a newspaper that did not stand very high in the estimation of numbers of persons as a truth teller.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Does it not report members' speeches truthfully?

Mr. GLASSEY said that was clearly shown by the notable case that took place a little while ago, when all sorts of scandalous things were alleged by the *Times* to have been committed and done by Mr. Parnell, and the proprietors of that paper had to knuckle down and admit that there was no truth in their statements. There was a considerable resemblance in what was taking place here to what had taken place in the British House of Commons recently. A considerable number of members of the House of Commons saw an opportunity of possibly disfranchising a large number of persons prior to the general election coming on now in the old country.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. GLASSEY said there was something of the kind, and no member of the Committee knew the circumstances better than the Chief Secretary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know the contrary is the fact.

Mr. GLASSEY said the great question to be decided in the old country at the present time was the question of home rule for Ireland; and knowing that a very great number of voters in Ireland would vote for that measure, and that a large number of those voters were illiterate, as they had had no opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of reading and writing, the object was to prescribe a test which would be the means of disfranchising these people.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No attempt has been made to do it.

Mr. GLASSEY said it struck him that there was a great desire amongst some members of the Committee to disfranchise a considerable number of people here in the way now aimed at, and in other ways which he had referred to before. It was deplorable that in the present state of affairs they should be asked to take a step backwards. Hon. members seemed to think that so long as they did not strike off the roll the names of illiterate persons who were on it at the present time they did all that was required. He had pointed out before during the debate that there were some 26,000 adult male white people who were not on the rolls; and if the proposed amendment was passed, how were their rights to be guarded?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Are there many of them who cannot read and write.

Mr. GLASSEY said many of them might not be able to read and write; and when they considered the social circumstances of many people in the old country, was it any wonder that many of them could neither read nor write?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: We do not wonder at that at all, but we wonder very much at the proposal to give them the franchise when they come here.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would like to know if it was thought desirable to induce those people to come here and then tell them that, though they must be subject to the laws of this colony, they should have no voice in making them? Were hon. members going to tax those people when they came here? Did they tax them now? In case of an invasion would they ask those persons who could neither read nor write to defend the country in the government of which they had no voice? Notwithstanding all the obligations they would impose upon those persons, they would debar them from voting because they could not read and write. He knew something about the old country and about the colony, and he contended that the attempt to debar these people from the exercise of the franchise at this juncture, when they were practically on the eve of a general election, was manifestly unfair. The proposal would only add to the number of persons who must be disfranchised by the passing of the Bill.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The Government do not support it.

Mr. GLASSEY said the Government were going to support some provision for those on the roll if it was carried.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If you give such strong reasons in favour of it, the Government may have to support it.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would regret it very much, but it would make no difference to him. Some of the ablest men in this country, or in the old country, could neither read nor write. Very often the most practical men to be found in conducting mining affairs had had no opportunity of learning to read and write, and when the mining Act was passed some years ago provision was made for those persons obtaining certificates after serving a certain time. The reason given in favour of the amendment was that certain persons were likely to influence illiterate electors at election times, and the hon. member for Balonne had in that connection alluded to himself. He did not know that he had any extra influence in inducing electors to vote contrary to their wishes. The hon. member might have had some experience in that business, but he (Mr. Glassey) had none. When they knew the dodges that were resorted to by some members of the Committee, even during the elections in 1888, it was surprising to hear the arguments they used that evening in suggesting that electors might be influenced by secretaries of societies and so forth. Had they forgotten the whisky and beer that were poured out like water at the last general election? Would any member on the bench on which he was sitting resort to such a dodge for the purpose of influencing an election? He would not, and he was sure not one of his colleagues would. Let them consider the very large number of persons who had worked in factories in the old country before education was so universal as it was at the present time. As a lad of seven years of age, he himself had worked in a factory. What opportunities had children under that age of learning to read and write? Persons were asked to come out to the colony, and when they came out they were insulted because they were not born in Australia. That was what had happened to himself and to thousands of his fellow-countrymen because they happened to be born in another land. It was unfair and unmanly to have it constantly said to them, "What do you know about the country? Who are you? Why don't you go back?" Was that

fit language to be used by members of the House, more particularly by a member who had occupied so exalted a position as the hon. member for Balonne? It was cowardly and contemptible, although, so far as he was personally concerned, he did not take much notice of it. Two-thirds of the people in the colony had been imported, and many of them had been brought up quite as respectably as the hon. member himself. He should oppose the amendment. It was an attempt to take an undue advantage of a number of persons in the colony who had not had an opportunity of acquiring the knowledge of reading or writing, and many of whom were not on any of the electoral rolls. In addition to all the other obstacles placed in the way of men getting on the rolls, it was now proposed to impose an educational test. It was exactly on a par with the action taken in the British House of Commons, which was intended to disfranchise a vast number of the Irish people who, in consequence of wrong and misgovernment in the past, had had no opportunity of acquiring the knowledge of reading and writing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the hon. member for Bundanba, when he said the action of the House of Commons was taken in order to disfranchise a vast number of Irishmen before the general election, ought to have known what he was talking about. It was merely an abstract resolution, which would have no effect whatever on the general election. The hon. member either knew that or he did not. If he did not know it, he ought not to have been so positive in asserting as a fact that it was so. If he did know it, he ought not to have made the statement he did. With respect to the number of men at present in the colony unable to read or write, he did not come to the same conclusion as the hon. member for Mackay. The total number of adult males in the colony at the time of the last census was 60,094, including Chinese, kanakas, and everybody else. He preferred to take nine as the age under which persons could not read or write, there probably being as many above nine who could not read or write as there were younger than nine who could read or write. That gave 49,882. Adding to that the number of adult kanakas, and half the number of kanakas under twenty-one, the total came to about 57,500; that would leave about 2,600 adult males who could not read or write. He did not believe there were more, but there were no means of ascertaining the exact facts. If all those at present on the rolls were excepted, it would not be any great hardship. If he voted for the amendment, it would be with the view of inserting a saving clause reserving the rights of all the men who were at the present time on the roll.

Mr. LITTLE said he could assure the hon. member for Bundanba that the words he had complained of were not used by the natives of Australia. What they complained of was that men who had hardly been twenty-four hours in the colony attempted to dictate to them what they should do and what they should not do. He should not vote for the amendment, because there were a good many men in the colony who could neither read nor write, and who had never had their names on the roll. If the amendment was carried, those men would never have an opportunity of obtaining the franchise. The Bill put no obstacles in the way of men getting on the rolls, but the amendment did; therefore, while supporting the Bill he could not support the amendment.

Mr. BARLOW said that one of the arguments of the hon. member for Balonne was that the signature would afford means of identification. Both that hon. member and himself had in their early days followed the same occupation—that of a bank clerk; and the hon. member would confirm what he said, that if a man made an elaborate signature of a sort of copy-book character on ordinary occasions, during the excitement of an election his signature would not be a bit like the one attached to his claim to vote. But the Act provided that no friends could be taken into the polling-booth, and that the names must be struck out before the scrutineers and the other persons present. That was a very great safeguard. With regard to people who could not read and write, his experience was that they were more suspicious than those who could. If asked to sign a transfer of property, they would want to take it home first. He just took it home and showed it to some one else. The man who could not read or write was far more careful and suspicious than the man who had the advantages of education. The mere test of signing a claim was no test at all, because in a week's time a man could be trained to make his signature. He thought it was unfortunate to bring up the question. The debate might do good—it might direct attention to the subject; but as for cutting off a large number of people because they could not read or write, some of the most respected conservative members of the community—men who were not given to excesses of a political nature—belonged to that class, and it would be a mistake if they were struck off the roll.

Mr. HAMILTON said the argument in favour of the very low educational qualification proposed was that persons in possession of that qualification had sources from which they could get political opinions which otherwise would not be open to them. There was an objection to passing the amendment, and it was that it might be considered a disfranchising Bill. At any rate, there were one or two individuals who were always preaching the doctrine of hatred and malice both in and out of the House—he did not say who they were, but they were generally known—and they had sedulously tried to make out that the Bill was a disfranchising Bill; but although they had done so, not one single clause could be pointed to having that effect. But, if the amendment were passed, then there might be some slight foundation for their statement. The amendment proposed did not cover the whole ground. The clause would require a subsequent amendment, providing that all those now on the roll who could not read or write should continue to exercise the franchise, and if that were carried it would not be open to the same objections. One of the objections urged by an hon. member was that the amendment was taking an undue advantage of a number of persons at present in the colony; but it certainly would not be taking an undue advantage of them if it were carried as suggested, and if the persons now on the roll were allowed to remain there and exercise their privilege. Of course there were many persons now in the colony who could not read or write, and who were not on the roll; but that was an evidence that they did not value their privileges.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said he did not wish to delay the Committee further than to say that his desire was not to in any way restrict the franchise. He need not go over the arguments again. He thought it was in accordance with the spirit of the age, and the spirit of their educational institutions, of which they were justly proud, that the electoral power should be placed in the hands only of educated persons. Those hon. members who imagined that the amendment had been introduced for the purpose of preventing persons from getting

on the roll, were labouring under a misconception; they were either doing that or misrepresenting the case, because, after the remarks of the Chief Secretary, they could not but be aware of the true spirit of the amendment. If the sense of the Committee confirmed the amendment, he was quite willing to accept such subsequent amendments as the Chief Secretary might think were necessary to protect existing rights, and give the franchise to those persons already in the colony who could not read and write.

Mr. O'CONNELL said he did not think the gentleman who had introduced the amendment had in any way proved his contention. One of his contentions was that education of that mild sort would give intelligent knowledge. Now, he was quite certain that the ability to read and write would never confer upon the person who had that knowledge the intelligence to know what was the best course to pursue at election times. He did not think that the fact of a man being able read and write would confer any high intelligence upon him. From his experience it had rather the contrary effect. A man who was educated only to that extent very often got hold of literature which he could not understand, and was very much misled by his inability to read it intelligibly and understand it, and he was not able to form any very high or correct opinion of what he had read. He did not think, therefore, that ability to read or write conferred any very great intelligent knowledge. Another suggestion that was made was that a man who could not read or write would be very easily misled. Now, anyone who had any knowledge of elections knew that quotations were constantly made during election addresses, and the audiences had very little opportunity of verifying the quotations, and even if they had the knowledge to verify them it was very unlikely that they would take the trouble to see whether they were correct or not; so that that argument did not carry much weight. Another argument had been used, that by withdrawing the franchise from illiterate people it might induce them to send their children to school, but he did not think that was likely to be borne out in actual practice. He did not think that parents who were so careless about the welfare of their children would be induced to send them to school through the mere fact of the children, if they could read and write, being entitled to the franchise when they attained the age of twenty-one years. If parents were so careless of the welfare of their children that they would not send them to school on account of the great advantages they would gain, they would not send them to school on account of the one advantage that they would be able to vote when they obtained the necessary age. He knew very many intelligent men in the colony who would be disfranchised if the amendment were carried; and he could not see any very great disadvantage in leaving people who could not read or write to vote, because many of that class of people had opportunities of learning what was desirable or undesirable for the country, and they formed very fair opinions as to how it was desirable to vote at election times. For those reasons he could not see his way to vote for the amendment.

Mr. PAUL said he simply rose to enter his protest against the cruel waste of time that took place in that House. They had been six hours getting through three clauses of the Bill. He appealed to hon. members not to make second-reading speeches in Committee. The subject had been discussed fully on the second reading.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It has never been discussed at all.

Mr. PAUL said that all he could say was that if every member of the British House of Commons talked the nonsense that the majority of members talked, they would never do any business at all.

Mr. POWERS said the only reason given why they should disfranchise that large number of people was that the House of Commons had lately passed a resolution in the same direction. If they were to follow the House of Commons in that, they should do what both the Liberals and Conservatives there did, and that was to decide to confer the franchise upon every man, and go in for the principle of one man one vote. Both parties there had declared in their programmes that that principle should be adopted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Where did you hear that?

Mr. POWERS said it was in the *Courier*. Mr. Balfour, Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Gladstone had included it in their manifestos, so that if they were to follow the House of Commons they would have to do what people elsewhere were doing, and advance with the times. The Committee appeared to be going back so far as the enfranchisement of the people was concerned, and the motion before them would show how far backward they were disposed to go. He was glad so many hon. members had spoken against the amendment, which ought not to have been jumped upon them as it had at more than the eleventh hour, and which would disfranchise hundreds of people.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Burrum appeared to be indignant in the little speech he had made. They knew the hon. member, like a good many others that evening, had been speaking to his constituents; and more hon. members were monopolising the time of the Committee and the columns of *Hansard* in that way. When they came to the question of one man one vote he should have something to say, and should show the hon. member how it would disfranchise a large number of electors in his (Mr. Annear's) constituency, and prevent them voting in the hon. member's constituency, where they had spent £80,000 or £90,000. It appeared to him that the hon. member for Bundanba must have fallen into bad company during the few years he had been in the colony. He (Mr. Annear) had been in the colony nearly thirty years, and had worked with all classes, and with Irishmen in particular, and had never been insulted by anyone. If the hon. member would be less aggressive both inside and outside, and not go into other people's constituencies and use language unbecoming to a member of Parliament, he would receive no insults either. He was much struck with a remark made by the hon. member for Balonne, that some men influenced others by giving them false information regarding questions before Parliament. The Bill was one which would enfranchise every man in the colony who was over twenty-one years of age, a British subject, and a resident for over six months; and prevent what they had seen during the last few weeks. Those men who thought they were able to lead the destinies of the colony got a simple fellow to sign three forms in blank, which were used to get his name upon different rolls about Brisbane. There was an open-air meeting on Saturday night, and one of the friends of the hon. member for Bundanba told them that under the Bill a valuator would be sent round to value their properties, and if he was not friendly, and valued the property at £99 19s. 11d., the men would be disfranchised. That was an absurd statement to put before intelligent people. Even if the valuator did do that there was still the residence qualification. The hon. member for

Bundanba did not address his remarks to the Committee; but invariably he addressed the gallaries when he got up to speak in the blatant way he did on nearly every occasion. The Bill was a measure demanded by the people, and one which would enable every man who was qualified to have his name on the roll. He had met hundreds of honourable and good men who could neither read nor write, and it would be a great injustice to leave them off the rolls. He would take care that if the Bill passed there would be sufficient copies of it for the people to see in his electorate, and those people had sufficient intelligence to understand what was placed before them. As to the 26,000 men the hon. member spoke of, they could all be enfranchised. There were sufficient magistrates in the colony, and it was a very isolated place where there was not a State school. The electoral registrars in the different parts of the colony had a great deal to do, and they facilitated things as much as possible. He had sent in many claims, and when any had been informal, they had been rectified. In the last four or five years he did not think more than five claims had been returned by the bench in his electorate.

Mr. HALL said it was reassuring to know that the Government did not intend to support the amendment. He was not at all surprised that the amendment had come from the hon. member for Bulimba. It would not be surprising if that hon. gentleman, at a later period, proposed another amendment to do away with the residential qualification altogether, and restrict it to property. The amendment was a retrograde movement, to do away with the illiterate vote so long as there were such a number of illiterate voters already on the rolls, and likely to be until the school accommodation could provide for the whole of the children. When everyone had the means of being educated, it might be necessary to abolish the illiterate vote; but he intended to vote against the amendment on account of the fact that there were a large number of people who already had the franchise who were unable to read and write, and also because there were numbers of children now growing up where schools were not provided for them.

Mr. MURRAY said that he did not intend to support the amendment of the hon. member for Bulimba, being satisfied that it would disfranchise many capable and desirable colonists. Nor did he think they had any evidence before them to prove that those who could not read and write voted with less discretion than those who could. He was perfectly satisfied that the fact of a fool being able to read and write would not make him a wise man, and he was sure that the voters of the colony who could not read and write were just as capable of forming a sound opinion upon political questions as those who could. Besides, he did not think that the evil complained of was a great one. He believed that the number of adults who could not read and write was very small. He could not see any arguments that had been brought forward to show why they should attempt to disfranchise those who were so unfortunate as to be unable to read and write.

Mr. NELSON said that he was very much surprised to hear the remarks of those opposed to the amendment. They seemed to be very contradictory. The hon. member for Normanby began by saying he would oppose the amendment because it would disfranchise a large number of people, and almost in the same breath he said that the number of people in the colony who could not read and write was very small. It would be a serious question for the Treasurer to consider whether they were justified in spending a sum exceeding £250,000 annually on education. One would think from the arguments that had been used that education was a very bad thing—that it was the worst thing a man could do to educate his children. Far better to leave them alone; if they could not read and write they would be able to take the very best view of political matters. That was the conclusion anyone would come to who listened to the arguments of some hon. members. The whole weakness of their argument lay in the fact that they would insist in putting a very much larger application on the amendment than was intended. They had been assured repeatedly by the mover of the amendment, by the Chief Secretary, and by others, that it would not affect any person in the colony at present whose name was on any roll. All vested rights were to be preserved. To whom, then, would it apply? Only to new claimants. Was it a reasonable thing to allow that people coming to the colony—because it would apply to them particularly—and who resided in the colony for six months, that three months after, at the outside, they should be put in the same position as those who had been living in the colony all their lives? Could they know the affairs of the colony– more particularly if they could not read and write, which was the only test they proposed to put upon them—as those who had lived here all their lives? That was a very small test to ask—that they should have so much intelligence or so much education as to give some guarantee that they were able to grasp in some way the affairs of the colony, and that they were able to make use of the literature which was produced in the colony. It was not much to ask that every man who asked for a vote should be able to sign his name to his claim. He thought it a reasonable thing, and he intended to support the amendment.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said that he intended to vote against the amendment—not because he did not think it an exceedingly good amendment. He believed it would be carried into law, and he believed further that it ought to be carried into law; but he did not believe that the present moment was an opportune one for introducing an alteration in the basis of their electoral system. Apparently the framers of the Bill had no such intention. It appeared to him that the Bill they were discussing was simply for the purpose of applying more strictly the tests which had previously existed, and on the lines which had previously existed—to prevent fraud on the old lines. It did not appear to be intended to alter the basis on which they went, and therefore he did not feel disposed to support the amendment. But when the hon. member for Burrum told them that the only reason he had heard in the Committee in support of the amendment was that it had been adopted by the British House of Commons, the hon. member appeared to have kept his ears shut. He had heard from the hon. member for Murilla, the hon. member for Balonne, and the hon. member for Bulimba a great many reasons in favour of this amendment. In the first place, if the people were enjoying the advantages which they did under their educational system, and if they exercised the sovereign power—the reigning, the kingly power—it might very well be expected that they should be able to read and write. And when the hon. member for Burrum ascribed that to the British House of Commons, apparently the hon. member was not aware that such restrictions had existed and still existed in the great United States of America. They had existed there for years. The United States had not borrowed it from the British House of Commons, nor had they introduced the limitations which were on their statutes in

order to annoy anybody, either in the North of Ireland, or the south, or the east, or the west. They had done so because, he presumed, they believed that education was intrinsically valuable, and on that belief the founders of the American Union and the people who governed the United States had always acted. In Connecticut the law required that the elector should be of good character, and possess fair ability to read any part of the Constitution or State law. In Massachusetts there was the same provision, with the addition that the elector must be able to write. In the State of Missouri the law required that all new voters after 1876 should be able to read and write. So he thought, first of all, that reasons in favour of the amendment had been adduced; next, that it was not necessary to look to the British House of Commons, also that there were precedents for the amendment, and, further, that those precedents were good and wise, and would some day be followed in Queensland, and probably in the other colonies.

Mr. CALLAN said the hon. member had told the Committee certain things about America, but the hon. member knew very well that a man was allowed to vote in America, and no question was asked as to whether he was able to read or write.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Were you in Massachusetts, Connecticut, or Missouri?

Mr. CALLAN: Never mind Massachusetts, Connecticut, or Missouri. It was the same all over America—there was no question as far as education was concerned; it was simply a question of a man's vote. As for the amendment, it was not a question of what education might have done for those who were in the colony, but it was a question as to those who might come afterwards. It was likely that there might be immigration for the next fifty or hundred years; and possibly a great number of those immigrants might be unable to read or write. It would be a shame not to allow them to vote simply for that reason; therefore, he would not support the amendment.

Mr. PLUNKETT said the present time was very inopportune for making such an amendment. A good many people thought the Bill was brought in more for the purpose of disfranchising people than enfranchising them—though he did not share that belief—and he thought it would have been wise not to have proposed the amendment, especially on the eve of a general election. He would be willing to increase the number of persons who might witness signatures to declarations; but he would not support the amendment now before the Committee. He knew a good many men occupying good positions in the colony who could not read or write; and if those men had done so well, why should others be debarred from coming to the colony and doing the same? In times past Queensland had not been so very attractive to immigrants—large sums of money had been spent in bringing them out—and the attraction would be diminished if people were told that though they might pay their own passages they would not be allowed to vote if they were unfortunate enough not to have been taught to read and write.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said he could not say he was sorry he had introduced the amendment, considering the expression of opinion it had elicited from hon. members. It was difficult to remove sentimental feelings, but he still maintained that the views he had expressed were thoroughly sound, and that any person who aspired to the exercise of the franchise in this age of education should possess at least a rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing. Perhaps the most encouraging speech on the question was that of the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, whose support he hoped to have on a future occasion. Having obtained a full and, to his mind, satisfactory expression of opinion from hon. members, as he had no desire to divide the Committee on the question he would ask permission to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. POWERS said he wished to know whether the Chief Secretary would accept an amendment which would enable claimants to get their declarations witnessed by postmasters, members of divisional boards, and masters of vessels. In the country districts there were many men who could not, without considerable loss of time, get to a justice of the peace, a head teacher, or the electoral registrar. He would like to know whether the Government would accept some other person not altogether under Government control as witness to the signature to a declaration, such as a postmaster, a member of a divisional board, or a master of a vessel.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The master of a vessel?

Mr. POWERS said he suggested the master of a vessel for the purpose of allowing sailors to get on the roll. Would the Government accept any of those officials?

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he did not see his way to accept the amendment suggested by the hon. member. Some postmasters were certainly qualified, but others were not; many of them were casual persons appointed at £12, and in some cases £6 a year, and they were certainly not sufficiently qualified. As to allowing the master of a vessel to attest a claim, if a sailor wanted to get his name on the roll and was in port he could easily find a justice of the peace or the electoral registrar; and as to members of divisional boards attesting declarations, it was not convenient, for reasons which it was unnecessary to give in detail, that many of them should be entrusted with that power.

Mr. FOXTON said he would suggest that that members of the police force should be availed of for the purpose of attesting declarations. There was a very large number of schools in country districts which were merely provisional schools, and the head teachers of those schools would not, he took it, be eligible to attest a signature under that Bill, as they, technically speaking, were not head teachers of State schools. The members of the police force were as a rule intelligent men, and had a capital local knowledge, and it would be a great convenience if they were allowed to attest the signatures of claimants. He did not propose to move an amendment, but he certainly thought that such a provision would remove many of the objections to what were alleged to be the difficulties in the way of persons getting their names on the roll.

Mr. PLUNKETT said he did not think it would be wise to place that duty in the hands of the police, but he believed it would be a great convenience to electors in some places if the head teachers of provisional schools could attest signatures to declarations. As a rule, State schools were in the centres of population, where justices of the peace were available; but in districts where provisional schools were established it was not so easy to find a justice of the peace.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that matter had been very carefully considered by the Government. He had considered it very carefully in conjunction with the Secretary for Public Instruction. He had also had some experience of that department himself, and he did not think it would be desirable to entrust that power to the head teachers of provisional schools. There were some who, of course, might very properly be entrusted with it; but there were a great many to whom the power should not be entrusted. As to allowing the police to do that duty, he thought that would be a mistake. The electoral registrars in nearly all country places were members of the police force, and were appointed especially for that purpose, but the police generally were not conversant with the work, nor would it be desirable to entrust them with the power to attest those declarations.

Mr. POWERS said he would like to know whether he was to understand that the Government would not accept the suggestion to allow teachers of provisional schools to attest the signatures of claimants?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. POWERS said wherever there were teachers of State schools there were justices of the peace.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Oh! dear no!

Mr. POWERS said he did not know of any place at the present time where there was a State school without a justice of the peace being handy, but there were many provisional schools which were a long distance away from any justice of the peace, and it would be a great convenience to electors to be able to have their signatures attested by the head teacher of a provisional school. However, if the Government would not accept the suggestion, it was no use pressing it, as the Chief Secretary had stated that it had received careful consideration by himself and the Secretary for Public Instruction.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said he had no hesitation in saying that it would be a very wrong step to entrust that duty to the masters of provisional schools. He thought it was a great pity that any election matters should be imported into the State schools at all. It was an element which would have a deterrent effect on many reforms that were being carried out by the department. For instance, one of the means by which economy was sought to be exercised was by increasing the number of pupils, and if the head teachers of State schools were compelled to take something more than the supervision of schools, and the duty imposed by the Bill was cast upon them, it would interfere with their ordinary duties. The working classes found it inconvenient and a loss to their pocket if they had to attend to get their names placed upon the roll within any specified hours; but he thought it was most unfortunate that any electors should be allowed to go on to school premises while the school was going on and interfere with the progress of the business by calling upon the head master, perhaps in the middle of a class, to attest the signature to a claim. But, unless the would-be elector was given the privilege of going at any hour that might suit him, he would be exposed to a deprivation. Although he opposed a duty of that kind being given to schoolmasters, he did not, in deference to his political chief, press his objection. But he could not approve of the duty being extended to provisional schoolmasters, nor did he think such a proposal would commend itself to the Committee.

Mr. DRAKE said he would point out that the difficulty suggested by the Secretary for Public Instruction would be obviated by the adoption of the New Zealand system, which provided that the signature of a claimant might be attested by any elector of the district.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said that was practically the system they were proposing to do away with and not to introduce. That system would practically be equivalent to having no attestation of signatures at all.

Mr. GLASSEY said he was sorry the Secretary for Public Instruction opposed the insertion of the teacher of a provisional school. A provisional school teacher held that position in consequence of the limited number of scholars attending his school; but if the number increased sufficiently the school would cease to be a provisional school, and then the objection the hon. gentleman raised would occur, and the teacher would be called upon to attest claims of electors going to him for the purpose. The clause should include the teachers of provisional schools.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Half of them are girls.

Mr. GLASSEY said he did not see why women should not attest these claims as well as men. If they were competent to teach they were competent to attest signatures. He would move that the word "provisional" be inserted after the word "State" in the last line of the clause; and he intended after that to move the insertion of the words "or householder."

Question put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 12.

Messrs. Sayers, Plunkett, Glassey, Hoolan, Ryan, Hall, Macfarlane, Powers, Drake, O'Connell, Isambert, and Gannon.

NOES, 36.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Black, Dickson, Paul, Unmack, Hodgkinson, Cowley, Nelson, Hyne, Stephens, Palmer, Watson, Dunsmure, Stevenson, Tozer, Casey, Smyth, Wimble, Luya, Little, Smith, Lissner, Corfield, Agnew, Grimes, Murray, Crombie, Annear, Barlow, McMaster, Morehead, O'Sullivan, Pattison, Dalrymple, and Jones.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would move the insertion of the words "or householder" after the word "school" in the last line, and would take the sense of the Committee on that, though he did not suppose hon. members would endorse his view of the subject.

Question put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 4.

Messrs. Hoolan, Glassey, Ryan, and Hall.

NOES, 43.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Cowley, Nelson, Black, Hodgkinson, Tozer, Unmack, Paul, Hyne, Stephens, Palmer, Watson, Jones, Dunsmure, Stevenson, Casey, Wimble, Luya, Little, Smyth, Lissner, Corfield, Dalrymple, Agnew, Grimes, O'Connell, Sayers, Isambert, Drake, Macfarlane, Gannon, Annear, Murray, Powers, Barlow, McMaster, Smith, Crombie, Pattison, Dickson, Morehead, and O'Sullivan.

Question resolved in the negative.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the House do now adjourn. We shall go on with the same business to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 11 o'clock.