

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 30 JUNE 1892

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 30 June, 1892.

Question.—Formal Motion.—Queensland Trustee Company, Limited, Bill: First reading.—Adjournment.—Assisted Land Settlement: Adoption of Report of Select Committee.—Elections Bill: Resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

QUESTION.

Mr. PLUNKETT asked the Colonial Treasurer—

When will the Government introduce the Stock Tax Bill, referred to in His Excellency the Governor's Speech?

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) replied—

Circumstances have so altered since the Speech was delivered that it is not possible at present to say when, if ever, a Stock Tax Bill will be introduced.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to :—

By Mr. GANNON—

That there be laid upon the table of this House copies of all papers and reports (giving dates) relating to the alteration of the South Brisbane Railway Station from Melbourne street to Grey street.

QUEENSLAND TRUSTEE COMPANY,
LIMITED, BILL.

On the motion of Mr. POWERS, leave was given to introduce a Bill to amend the Queensland Permanent Trustee, Executor, and Finance Agency Company, Limited, Act.

FIRST READING.

Mr. POWERS presented the Bill, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that this House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

ASSISTED LAND SETTLEMENT.

ADOPTION OF REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. DRAKE, in moving—

That the report of the Select Committee on assisted land settlement be adopted—

said: Mr. Speaker,—In moving this motion I should like as far as possible to avoid the two extremes of talking too much, and thereby excluding other hon. members who might perhaps more profitably employ the time, and at the same time of saying too little and incurring the reproach of having neglected to draw attention to the most important points in the report. I, of course, take it for granted, as the report has been in the hands of hon. members for something over three weeks, that they have made themselves acquainted with the main features of the recommendations of the Select Committee. I should like to devote some little portion of time to endeavouring again to draw the attention of hon. members to the actual proposals that have been made to the Government with regard to this system, because I find that there is a very great deal of misapprehension as to what those proposals actually were. In bringing forward anything new, if there is anything good in it, a great deal of opposition is always encountered, and the opposition, as it has done in this particular case, very frequently takes this form: Some hon. members think they would not approve of the proposals, and they misrepresent—I do not say designedly; perhaps through not having heard what the proposals are—the proposals that have been made, and then exert considerable ingenuity in showing that the scheme which they imagine has been proposed would not work. I think it is only fair in discussing a matter of this sort that hon. members should really consider what are the proposals that have actually been made. It has been frequently said since this was first brought forward that the proposal is to take the whole of the unemployed indiscriminately and either give them money to go on the land or put them on the land and provide them with rations. That never has been proposed to the Government or to the House. I will just quote briefly from the proposals which were drawn up in 1887 and submitted to the Government, and afterwards brought forward in this House. I am now quoting from page 63, appendix K—

“That groups of intending settlers be invited to form themselves. It is suggested that twenty adult men—either single or heads of families—would be a convenient number, but that is a matter in which it would be inadvisable to draw a hard and fast line. The only conditions of membership should be good character and fitness for physical labour; but it is suggested that each group should include—in the inauguration of the system—one or more individuals with bush or farm experience; and that no group should be entirely composed of new arrivals unaccustomed to the climate and unacquainted with the country. It would even be desirable that preference should be given in the first instance to persons already resident in the colony.”

That shows clearly that it was the intention of the proposers that there should be a careful selection made of persons who would be fit to go on the land. And then, to show clearly that it was never any intention of mine that these proposals should be taken to be intended simply for the relief of the unemployed, I would point out that in 1887, when these proposals were drawn up, there was no distress anything like there is at the present time. The colony was then, compared with what it is now, in a prosperous condition; and the object clearly was to devise some permanent system, in addition to our present system, of land settlement by which settlement might be made easy to persons of very limited means. On the occasion when I first brought this scheme

before the House—in 1889—the Government were asking the House to vote £250,000 for immigration, and an amendment was moved by the hon. member for Mitchell, Mr. Crombie, to reduce that amount by £100,000. I spoke in favour of the reduced amount—£150,000 instead of £250,000—and in the course of my remarks I again drew the attention of the Government to the necessity of introducing some better scheme of land settlement. These were my concluding remarks—I am quoting from *Hansard*, vol. lix., page 2263—

"If there were a proper system of State-aided land settlement he would cheerfully vote for the continuance of the present immigration system, but they must have that settlement first. He was certain that within the next year or two, or at the next general election, it would be either one thing or the other—either a proper system of land settlement and State-aided immigration or the stoppage of State-aided immigration altogether."

I mention this because I was then introducing this scheme to the House and the Government again, and advocating it as a means by which people could be helped to go on the land, and by which State-aided immigration might be continued without its objectionable features. Two and a-half years have passed since then, and State-aided immigration has been stopped, but the additional facilities for land settlement have not been granted. Further, I think hon. members will bear me out in saying that whenever I have spoken on this subject I have said distinctly that the object was to afford facilities for a certain percentage of people who were unemployed, who might be fit to go on the land and be able to earn a living, but who were debarred from doing so from want of funds. At all events, I am not open to the reproach of having brought this forward simply as a means for relieving the unemployed difficulty. If hon. members will look at it from that point of view—as a proposal to introduce a permanent system by which people who find themselves without employment in the towns may escape as it were on to the land—then I think they will find that a great deal of the evidence which at first sight might appear to be hostile to the proposal really bears out exactly what I have urged. It was a strange thing, as showing the effect of the misrepresentations that have been made, that it was quite apparent to myself and to other members of the Select Committee that many witnesses who came forward to give evidence were evidently under the impression that their opinion was to be taken upon a scheme for settling the unemployed indiscriminately upon the land, and a good many of them no doubt came prepared to condemn that. But even those witnesses who were—I will not say hostile, but unfavourable to any proposal of that kind nearly all agreed that there was a percentage of the unemployed who were fit to go on the land and would, if assisted to go on the land, be able to make a living on it. I think the first witness who was examined, Mr. McLean, said something to that effect, though I think it must have been said in a conversational way, because I do not see it in the evidence. I will refer now to Professor Shelton's evidence, on page 12—

"By the Chairman: You spoke about those men who have had practical experience; you said quite a sprinkling of them were about. I understood you to mean men who are suitable for agriculture, but who are debarred from going on the land by their want of capital? Yes; men who are qualified to go on the lands of the colony."

"Quite a sprinkling, who are debarred from taking advantage of our land laws for want of means? Yes; men who have been on the land in England as agricultural labourers."

The next question, which was asked by Mr. Black, indicates that the committee had some evidence before them that there was a certain number of the unemployed who were suitable men to settle on the land.

"By Mr. Black: We have only 5 per cent. of unemployed who are fit to go on the land? Yes; about that."

"You consider that a large number of suitable men to settle on the land? Yes; in proportion to the population of the colony."

"By the Chairman: Supposing this 5 per cent. of practical men could arrange to settle on the land under some co-operative system and started improving it—that is to say, clearing the land, getting it ready for cultivation, and so on—would the improvements after the first year be security for the advance for rations to keep them going in the first year? It is a hard question to answer. If you give me a piece of land of given area, and let me know the kind of man there, I shall be able to tell you something about it."

"Supposing a number of men arranged amongst themselves, after passing an examination for their fitness to go on the land, say, on Blackall Range; and they started clearing scrub, felling timber, to make the land ready for cultivation: would their improvements be security for their rations? Certainly they should."

Mr. MacMahon was asked somewhat similar questions. I would refer hon. members to question 217—

"Could you find a remedy for that, suppose that the people referred to were otherwise suitable for the work and were willing to go upon the land?—Do you know whether there are men who would be willing to go on the land, but who are prevented by want of means from doing so? During the three years I have been here, large numbers of men have called upon me for employment. I have spoken to them, and have asked them what they knew. Out of the number, 5 per cent., not more, were capable of being put on the land. Give them £100, and they would make a livelihood, certainly, on the land, but nothing more. There was not a man amongst them whom I would trust in my own interest with the management of a farm."

Again, at question 236—

"By the Chairman: This 5 per cent. of men you speak of that would go on the land if given instructions by a careful officer supervising their operations, do you think they would be likely to be a success? Yes, if helped and supervised."

Mr. Soutter was asked at question 414—

"Can you give us any suggestions from your own experience as to the best means of assisting land settlement? The subject of land settlement, to my mind, is one which it is desirable, as far as it is possible, to get practical men to take up. If the object of the committee is to place practical farmers on the land and to assist them, I should say certainly do so; but my experience of the average unemployed at the present time is that to put them on the land would be an absolute farce."

That was almost the first question he was asked, and he refers to the average unemployed as though they were the object of the proposal. Then, at question 415—

"Not being accustomed to the land? On account of their lack of knowledge of agricultural industries."

Again, at question 417 the witness was asked—

"Then with regard to the minority that are fit to go on the land, fit to be farmers themselves?—Suppose there are amongst the unemployed some who are fit to become farmers themselves, could you suggest any form of help that should be given to them to settle? That is a most difficult thing to suggest what could be done with those men; because we have at the present moment the fact standing before us that the farmers now on the land are not in such a prosperous condition as would warrant any more being added to their number."

"That is on account of the present low prices, I presume? Low prices, high freights, and the difficulty of finding central markets to get rid of produce; so that to add more farmers, if they were qualified, to the existing number in the colony is to my mind out of keeping with any notion of common sense."

"And are the farmers who are now on the land working at a loss? Practically they are, as far as my knowledge goes. The most common-sense method of dealing with the subject would be by giving small areas of land, from twenty to fifty acres, to those men to go in for fruit farming. This is a branch of agriculture, or horticulture, which is less difficult to understand than absolute farming. From the farming point of view, a man with an orchard requires some amount of skill."

Then the witness goes on to speak at large upon the subject of fruit-growing. Next, I will refer to the evidence of Mr. G. Glencross Smith, who was certainly not at all friendly to the proposal. The keynote of his evidence will be found in questions 909 and 910—

"You would not suggest the State taking up a scheme of this sort, which is to cost £109 15s. for each settler on the land? Not unless the people were—unless every such settler was—specially adapted for agricultural pursuits, I should not suggest it or encourage it in any way at all."

"Except they were specially fitted? Even then, as a farmer, I consider we have sufficient competition without bringing others into the field."

Mr. MORGAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. DRAKE: I hear the hon. member for Warwick say "Hear, hear." There is no doubt the farmers had taken that attitude, but rather, I think, from a mistaken point of view. At question 876 Mr. Smith was asked—

"You think that the State, owning and finding the land, and being the landlord, might put the tenant—the people—on the land, supply rations, tools, implements; in fact, keep these people going until they could grow a crop; and, then, that the State, as remuneration, should take a portion of the crop? I believe it is workable, a scheme like that, under certain restrictions. Of course, there would have to be very careful selections made."

"The resolutions state that the object is to relieve the present unemployed difficulty. Do you think that men amongst the unemployed at present are suitable to take the place of tenants under such a scheme as this? No. The men would have to be very carefully selected."

I have quoted now the evidence of those witnesses who may be considered upon that point to be most strongly opposed to the proposal, and each one of them admits the presence among the unemployed of a certain percentage who, if carefully selected and assisted to go upon the land, would be able to make a living. If that is so, I think the adoption of some scheme of this sort would be a proper thing at the present time, because, even if only 5 per cent. can be taken away from the ranks of the unemployed and put upon the land, that would at once to a great extent relieve the present difficulty. The Colonial Secretary stated the other day that he was actually feeding 900 families in Brisbane. Well, the number of families who are actually receiving Government rations does not represent the total number of persons who are now out of employment. I think it would be a fair estimate to put the number at 1,000. Now 5 per cent. of that 1,000, which is the proportion gentlemen occupying official positions estimate as suitable for settling on the land, would mean fifty who would be immediately put upon the land under a system of settlement such as that proposed. Hon. members sometimes say that this is artificial. Of course it is artificial, and feeding people, giving people bread and other rations to keep them from starvation, is also artificial. And if we recognise that the present condition of affairs is abnormal, I think we should also recognise that it is necessary that we should adopt some artificial means of tiding over the difficulty. I think a system should be adopted which will give some relief to the unemployed at the present time—relieve the existing distress in Brisbane—and at the same time lead to the establishment of permanent settlement. The committee say they are unable to suggest—

"Any immediate remedy for existing distress which will also have the effect of creating permanent settlement."

In another part of their report the committee state that putting a number of men on the land for the purpose of clearing it would be the easiest and speediest method of grappling with the unemployed difficulty. That is doubtless true, but of course anything that might be done

in that direction is liable to the objection that it would partake of the nature of relief works. What I wish to show, however, is that if the country would adopt permanently some system of land settlement, there would at once be an opportunity offered to put men upon land to prepare it for occupation by those who would afterwards permanently settle upon it. Three schemes of land settlement came under the notice of the committee, as hon. members will see on page 6 of the report—

"The various schemes for assisting working men to obtain a living from the land as set forth in this report may be classified thus—

"The employment of bodies of men under supervision to clear land for future settlement. Payment to be made in rations and wages or half wages, and the land to remain the property of the State with a view of being, as soon as possible, sold in its improved condition at a higher price."

"Working men's blocks. Small areas near to towns or upon lines of railway communication with towns for *bond fide* workers on deferred payments or perpetual lease conditions."

"Village settlements reproducing to some extent the leading features of communal life in young countries. These settlements need not of necessity be in close proximity to towns or to lines of railway."

I should like to say a word first about the second scheme—working men's blocks—because that is the system which, under slightly varying conditions, has already been adopted in New Zealand and South Australia, and which will probably be adopted soon in Victoria. The idea of this system is that land shall be set apart for *bond fide* workers near some town or upon lines of railway. These blocks are small, varying from five acres to twenty acres. The idea is that the men who take up these blocks do not do so with a view of going into business as farmers, but simply keep them as adjuncts to their ordinary means of obtaining a livelihood. The reports we have from South Australia show that that system has been successful there. I quote from page 4 of the report of the committee a paragraph taken from the report of the inspector of homestead blocks in South Australia for 1891—

"In South Australia, under what is popularly known as 'The Blockers' system,' leases with right of purchase, or perpetual leases, are issued for small areas in the vicinity of town to a maximum of twenty acres, in order to enable the thrifty and industrious worker to make a comfortable country home for himself and family. It is assumed that by an intelligent use of his spare time he will be able to cultivate a portion of the land and provide milk, butter, eggs, fruit, bacon, etc., sufficient for the requirements of his family. To that extent the experiment has been successful, and the opportunities offered have been largely availed of."

Clearly a system like that would not be intended for the immediate relief of the unemployed difficulty, because the supposition is that these blocks are to be taken up by men who are actually in work, and have some spare time which they could devote to the cultivation of small patches of ground which, in many cases, would be little more than large kitchen gardens. There is the advantage in the system that if a man holding one of these blocks happens, through depression in business or other circumstances, to be thrown out of employment and poverty overtakes him, he has the chance of falling back upon his block of land and escapes the unfortunate position of men out of employment in towns and without any means of getting on to the land at all. A further advantage in connection with such a system is that a working man and his family would enjoy a country life instead of having to live in town. I do not wish to quote at length, but hon. members can read the evidence of Mr. MacMahon on that subject. That gentleman states that one cause of the present unemployed difficulty is the disinclination of the people for a country life, and he attributes that

to the fact than an artisan bringing up his family in a town his children conceive a liking for town life and a disinclination for a country life, and, as Mr. MacMahon put it, the son aspires to be a clerk, and the daughter to be a school teacher, and they have no love whatever for a country life. If that has any weight with hon. members, and they consider that that is really one of the underlying causes of the present difficulty, they might seriously consider the desirability of introducing at some time—perhaps not now—a system by which working men would have the advantage of living upon blocks of their own in the outskirts of a town instead of living in a town. Though I think that system is worthy of consideration by this House, it is not the system recommended by the committee. The committee, of course, had in view more particularly the question of the existing distress and how it could be relieved. The scheme of village settlement they recommend is one differing in some respects from the system which has been in operation in New Zealand for some time. It is described under three headings. On page 8 of the report they recommend the adoption of a system embracing the following conditions:—

"1. Settlement by self-constituted groups of settlers, each settler having satisfied an officer, appointed for that purpose, of his capability for doing useful work on the settlement.

"2. Each settler to hold and occupy his own separate section for cultivation purposes; the grazing area to be either held in sections or in common.

"3. Advances within the limits fixed by Parliament to be made on the joint and several guarantee of the settlers in each group."

I do not propose to weary the House by referring to the particular passages in the evidence upon which the committee relied in making that recommendation. The settlement of men in self-constituted groups was based on the scheme suggested in appendix K, and I think it has this very great advantage: That it secures to the settlers at once the benefits of a communal life. A great objection felt by many people to the isolation of the bush is, to a great extent, got over by such self-constituted groups. The settlers would go further out than they would if they went alone; and by going further out they would have better opportunities of obtaining good land. The recommendation of the committee also suggests that those settlers should, first of all, be passed by a Government officer. That is to say, that if the Government are going to assist those settlers with money or with rations, they claim the right, first of all, to see that the men to whom the advances are made are reliable and honest and industrious men. With regard to the advances a great deal of difficulty has been experienced, and the evidence, as stated in the report, has been very conflicting. It is said that giving this assistance is artificial. We have given artificial assistance to a very great many things in Queensland, and I think it is almost too late in the day to raise that question as an insuperable obstacle to the granting of aid. Then the question arose as to whether the security would be sufficient. Upon that point I will refer hon. members to the evidence of Mr. R. M. Cochrane, at page 81. I think my colleagues on the committee will agree with me that Mr. Cochrane showed, in the evidence he gave, that he had very fully considered the subject, and had consulted almost all the authorities upon it. He is asked, question 1454—

"By Mr. Barlow: Do you think it would be a good plan to tie those people down by a joint and several guarantee? I do. In Germany there are something like 2,000,000 of members of people's banks and other co-operative institutions, all of whom are under joint and several liability bond. The system works well there;

but it is unknown to English industrial life, because the co-operative movement there is distributive rather than productive. In Germany it is productive rather than distributive.

"Do you think the conditions of German and English people are so identical you could ever work those bank associations in a community like ours? Under the circumstances I think that it is possible; and for this simple reason: If you take a man who has nothing, he is a cypher; he has no security to give to the Government; he has nothing but his inchoate natural mental and bodily powers that might yield anything or nothing in the future—as one might say, an incorporeal hereditament. These are not enough for the Government to advance upon; but if he joins thirty others in a joint and several liability there is something like security for a moderate advance.

"From your observations in this and other colonies do you consider that it is at all likely that, except in a limited liability company, where, of course, each man's interest is comparatively small and does not involve the whole of his means, any thirty men would agree together as you suggest? I do not see that it is absolutely essential for them to agree in the sense of working together. Each man has his own block. The Government says to them all: We will advance you money on permanent improvements, *pari passu*, as those improvements are erected; but we will not advance you money upon your single responsibility; you must be joined in a co-operative bond. I believe the working men here simply want instruction in the principles of co-operation to adopt it with as great avidity as it has been adopted in England, Germany, and all over the world. In New Zealand it is making gigantic strides."

There was an opinion expressed by some witnesses that, though it was desirable to give aid to settlers going on the land, it was not desirable that the advances should be made by the Government direct. It was the opinion of Mr. Rüthning that there should be a buffer between the Government and the settlers, and he and some other witnesses recommended that advances should be made, either by district trusts specially appointed for the purpose, or by the various local bodies, with somewhat similar powers. They also were in favour of some assistance being given, and were of opinion that if that assistance were given the improvements that would be made by the settlers would be sufficient security for the repayment of the advances and the interest. I shall not detain the House any further, because I have no doubt some of my colleagues on the committee will follow me and give their views upon the question. I am still of the opinion I expressed in 1889—that this question of settling people on the land is really the one in which we shall find the solution of our present difficulties. I think that if a system were adopted by which people in the towns, when they find themselves out of employment, were able to go upon the land, where they could at all events make a living, and perhaps develop into permanently prosperous farmers—I think that if we had some system of that sort we should be very soon able to find employment not only for the unemployed in our midst at present, but for whoever may be out of employment in time to come. I beg to move that the report of the Select Committee on assisted land settlement be adopted.

Mr. PLUNKETT said: Mr. Speaker,—As no one seems inclined to follow the hon. member for Enoggera, I should like to say a few words on the subject. I am surprised to find that the evidence of Mr. McLean, the Under Secretary for Agriculture, has been ignored. Mr. McLean was the first witness called by the committee, and I should like to quote from his evidence, as I consider him as capable of giving an opinion as to the success or non-success of this scheme as any man in the colony. Mr. McLean was born and bred a farmer. For years he farmed in my own district, though I cannot say he made a success of it; but there is no doubt of his being a

practical farmer. Mr. McLean was, as I said, the first witness examined, and I will quote the following passages from his evidence—

"By Mr. Black: You travelled in the southern colonies and New Zealand, Mr. McLean? Yes; and I made a report. [See 'Votes and Proceedings' of the Legislative Assembly, 1887, vol. iv., p. 135.]

"And were you favourably impressed with what you saw in connection with the village settlement scheme in New Zealand?—It was State-aided? Yes. One of the systems that I saw—in fact, I saw two—was State-aided, the other was not.

"What was the nature of the State-aided scheme in New Zealand? I must state, in the first place, that the area of land was too small for the people on it to be able to do any good with it. I have two maps here, showing two of the land settlements, in which the area of the farms runs from five acres to twenty-five acres. A good deal of the land was what is called 'bush' in New Zealand—similar in character to our 'scrub' land. The conditions of the State-aid were that the selector was allowed £20 towards the erection of a house. He was allowed 25s. an acre for felling and brushing—felling and clearing—and 25s. for burning off, and what they call there 'grassing.' The pet idea seemed to be to lay the land down in grass.

"That is a total of £2 10s. an acre? £2 10s. an acre; and £20 for the house.

"Were very many people taking advantage of this scheme? Yes. A good few of the unemployed from in the towns went out on the land under those conditions.

"Were they men that were familiar with agricultural pursuits? As a rule I think they were not. When I visited the settlement at Puhitua—

"By the Chairman: Is that the State-aided one, or the other? Yes; the State-aided one. When I was there I entered into conversation with several of the parties, and made inquiries about the prospects of success. Two or three men I spoke to told me that before this State-aided settlement was inaugurated in the district, those who were there before could find employment occasionally, and by that means were enabled to do some little towards improving their land; but that as soon as the unemployed of the towns came out there was employment neither for them nor for those who were there before.

"By Mr. Black: I assume that you mean so long as those persons got advances from the Government they would not improve their farms? Well, they were employed felling and clearing their land to secure the advantages offered by the Government; of course they worked on the land. Another man told me that as soon as they found the Government money was spent they were making back for the towns.

"Do you know if the farms were improved?—What security had the Government for the repayment of the advances made to the settlers? The Government held no security whatever.

"Then, beyond affording temporary employment to some of the unemployed there was no advantage to the country? None whatever, except that the Government got the land cleared."

That, I think, will be the result of this scheme. Well, I have had some experience in the clearing of scrub land, and I know that if it is left for a time after being cleared, the cost of clearing it the second time would be almost as great as the first time. I have had scrub land cleared at £3 an acre, and in a short time I had to pay 10s. an acre for clearing it again, and if I wanted to get any of it cleared now it would cost me more than it cost originally. Consequently the Government would get no advantage by such a scheme—

"By Mr. Isambert: And got other settlers afterwards to take up the land so improved? I do not know. Anyone might see that it was practically impossible that a man could make a living out of five or ten acres of land for grazing. If there had been any attempt at agriculture, there was little opportunity of disposing of the produce. Those settlers had no market; if they grew anything, they would have to carry it too long a distance.

"What distance? 100 miles from Wellington. There was a small market nearer to the place, Woodville, which is a small town.

"How far is that?—What size is that town? Fourteen miles distant. There are about 500 people in Woodville.

[Mr. PLUNKETT,

"Is farming carried out on the land about Woodville? No; very little.

"To what do you chiefly attribute the non-success of this village settlement besides the smallness of the area? It was practically impossible to make it a success because of the smallness of the area. The selections were too small to make a living on. The settlement seemed to be a temporary experiment to find employment for the people.

"Numbers of those settled were not practical agriculturists? Very few were.

"Do not you think that was chiefly the cause of the non-success of the settlement? No; it did not matter whether practical agriculturists were there or not, because of the smallness of the area they were put upon. You must understand that there are various systems of settlement in operation in New Zealand. There is a system by which companies can select large areas of land—co-operative companies—and divide the land amongst themselves.

"By the Chairman: Is this a non-State-aided system? Yes. An association of not less than twenty-five persons can take up an area of land under this system.

"By Mr. Black: They can take up to 11,000 acres between them? Yes.

"By the Chairman: Do you say that very little advantage was taken of that? The regulations came into operation, December, 1885. I was there in 1887. There was very little advantage taken of them at the time I was there. I may mention that there is another system called the 'Village Homestead Settlement Association,' by which an association of persons, no less than twelve, can combine for the purpose of selecting land.

"Have you any experience with regard to the success or otherwise of that? No. I visited one settlement near Timaru that appeared to me to be prosperous. It was near to the seaport and to a line of railway; it was good land, although the areas were small. It was celebrated for potato-growing. It appeared to be a prosperous settlement.

"Under what system was that? No State-aid on that settlement.

"By Mr. Isambert: An association of persons not less than twelve? No. They were put on the land by the Government; they were not a co-operative association; everyone for himself.

"Was there State-aid there? No. They did not need it.

"Was that a settlement of men who seemed to be practical farmers? They farmed the land very well; they seemed to be making a good deal out of it.

"By Mr. Grimes: Had you any opportunity of getting the price of farm produce? I cannot recollect it so far back. I made inquiries at the time while there. I travelled from Dunedin to Auckland, through both islands, inspecting the country.

"By Mr. Black: Did you see anything in the New Zealand scheme of land settlement which, in your opinion, would be worthy of being adopted here; or which is better than the varied system of acquiring land in Queensland? No. I saw nothing in the New Zealand system that recommended itself to me. I think our varied system is far preferable to it. But I do not altogether agree with our system of village settlement. I think that instead of the selectors getting allotments within township areas, which ought to be reserved by the Crown for future operation, they should live on their selections.

"You mean that it is preferable that a selector should live on his farm rather than live with other selectors in the township? Most decidedly.

"You are not impressed with that New Zealand scheme at all? No; not at all, Mr. Black.

"By the Chairman: Which do you mean—State-aided or co-operative;—which of the three schemes is in operation there? I did not see any co-operative scheme in operation.

"Which is the one you were not impressed with? The State-aided one.

"That is the first you mentioned that you were not impressed with? Far from it.

"By Mr. Black: Do you know if the New Zealand Government are still continuing that system? They had stopped it at the time I was there—that is, the State-aid system. I was informed by the Surveyor-General that the Government had incurred a liability of £70,000 without parliamentary appropriation.

"You said it reduced the number of unemployed to such an extent that the farmers were not able to get men to work for them? But a very large number of them went back to the towns after they had exhausted the Government allowance.

"And was there no system of co-operation at all amongst the men themselves? Not in those that I inspected.

"And, therefore, the Government really had no security whatever for the advance made to the selectors? No.

"I understand you to say that putting them down on those small areas, so far from a market and from a railway, there was really no chance for them to succeed? Not the least chance.

"I do not understand you to condemn the other two systems that you spoke of; the co-operative companies of twenty-five persons, and the village settlement special homestead system? I had no experience, so I cannot condemn them.

"By Mr. Isambert: Mr. McLean, what, in your opinion, should be done or can be done in this colony to facilitate settlement on the land? I think the present system of varied settlement that we have in operation in this colony is as good as you could have; providing good land, suitable land, is surveyed for the people to settle upon. I have had some considerable experience during the last two years in connection with settling people on the land; and I can say that during that time I have sent hundreds of people on the land, where, within my knowledge, the land was good.

"By the Chairman: And accessible? And accessible. There is no difficulty whatever in getting people on the land. I may say without presumption that in some of the village settlements I know of, I have recommended people to go on the land, and those people are bound to be successful in the course of time. The land is good, they have railway facilities for market; and, as a rule, they are the right class of people. They have gone on the land, and they seem determined to make it a success.

"By Mr. Black: Without State-aid? Without State-aid. There might be some little help rendered: I am speaking of those going out West.

"By Mr. Isambert: The chief conditions of success, then, are suitable land, accessible land, and suitable settlers to take up the land? Yes; three essentials in settlement.

"And you think no State-aid would make good agriculturists upon the land of those that are not acquainted with agriculture? No. It would just relieve the labour market. None of them would State-aid make good agriculturists.

"What, in your opinion, should be done?—You say, give good land, accessible land, and get the proper class of people, and settlement will be a success ultimately. But you admit that the settlers would have considerable difficulties to meet in first settlement. What method would you adopt to facilitate operations and to help them in overcoming the difficulty of getting on the land? You mean, after the people have got on the land?—

"Put them on the land, and when there?—I think a good deal might be done by giving the people railway passes.

"By the Chairman: That is the help you are referring to? Yes. A great number of people come to me and make inquiries about the land. My advice to them, as a rule, is, 'Go out West, or North.' The question then put to me is, 'How am I going to get there?—Will the Government give me a pass?' I say, 'I cannot answer that question; that matter belongs to another department.' When there are men I know who are likely to make successful settlers, who are earnest in their desire to select land, I give them a letter to the Under Secretary for Lands, and, as a rule, I think arrangements are made to provide a pass over the railway to go and select land.

"By Mr. Isambert: What further suggestions could you make? Another thing would be, if the Government could afford it—and it would pay the Government well—to have a ranger, or some person intimately acquainted with the country, residing, for instance, in our inland towns, that would take the people to the land and show them over it to select.

"By Mr. Grimes: In batches? Yes.

"Arrange for periodical visits? Yes. A number of them at a time.

"By Mr. Isambert: What further recommendation would you make to facilitate settlement? I think one important matter is this: You should have proper markets in the different towns. Take the city of Brisbane, for instance. There is practically no market that the farmer can take his produce into.

"By the Chairman: Except to consign it to agents? Except consigning it to agents. I can give you an illustration of benefit derived from the farmer being able to sell his own produce in the market, that took place recently in Sydney when Professor Shelton and I were on our way to Adelaide. We went into the market one morning and saw one of our Queensland fruit-growers there. We entered into conversation with him. He told us that he had been shipping pineapples to Sydney for some considerable time, but he could get nothing for his produce—no returns of any value. At last he determined to go to Sydney, and sell his own fruit himself. He went to Sydney, and took a stall in the market, for which he paid a shilling a morning; he sold his pineapples as they came down from Queensland, and he found by that means he was able to make some money out of his land."

Further on Mr. McLean says—

"There is another point I should like to refer to, in reference to the land surveyed for the village settlements: I think the Government ought to be provided with information of the quality of the land before it is surveyed. I know of numbers of village settlements surveyed that it would be a sin to put a person on. Mr. Black, you know some of them. Of course, the land should be of good quality, with command of water, and suitability in every respect. In one case, I was sent out to inspect some land, 25,000 acres, that a surveyor had reported on as suitable for wheat and that ought to be divided for village settlement; I was ten days going over the ground with the same surveyor, but he could never show me one acre that was suitable for growing wheat.

"Have you any present suggestions—any other suggestions—to make now? Yes. I think if we had our college instituted, it would go a good way towards promoting the interests of the agricultural community. It may not do much for promoting immediate settlement; but it is very essential for the agricultural industry of the colony. Professor Shelton will be able to say more about that. I may say, further, that the village settlements here have been successful where the land was good, and where facilities for a market were good—where they were anything like reasonable at all—and I am quite confident, Mr. Chairman, in saying that where good land is given, and facilities are provided for putting the people upon it, there is very little need for State-aid, further than indirectly.

"There is very little need for direct State-aid? No need. You will find plenty of people to go on the land if you give them good land. The Government should provide every facility for getting the people on the land to settle."

I will quote just one more—

"Referring to the State-aided schemes: you have not come across any practicable scheme after the one or two suggested, according to which settlement could take place? From my own personal knowledge, it would be throwing away money for the Government to put the people on the land; and a waste of time and energy of the people."

I may say that these remarks exactly agree with my knowledge of settling people on the land. I can assure you that there are far more difficulties in the way of settling people on the land and putting them in a position to make a living than residents in the towns have any idea of. I have had thirty years' experience in farming, and, for humanity's sake, I would not allow men to be sent away from Brisbane who have no knowledge at all on the subject. It would be a most unwise thing. I would very much like to see some way out of the difficulty; but I have read the report fairly well, and do not think the united wisdom of the gentlemen composing that committee has solved the difficulty. I am in the very same position myself; I do not see how it can be done. I agree with the remarks made by Mr. McLean, from my own knowledge. It would be a very good thing if we could do it; but no good results will ever accrue, either to the men themselves or to the country, if this report is adopted.

Question put—

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall detain the House a very few minutes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We want to hear the committee; we want to know all about it.

Mr. BARLOW: I was waiting for the Government.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: And we were waiting for you.

Mr. BARLOW: I have submitted my views in the form of an appendix to the report. There were two or three impressions that were fixed into my mind, and the strongest of all was the injustice of subsidising competitors to our farmers, who are now, many of them, in hard circumstances. I have heard to-day that there has been considerable difficulty with the rents of selectors, and under such circumstances it would be unjust, as it would be at any other time, to put alongside of men who have gone upon the land and borne the burden and heat of the day a number of State-aided competitors. The next fact in the evidence that struck me was that the unemployed as a whole are not adapted to go on the land. I therefore suggested, in my addendum to the report, a scheme which I submitted to everyone of the witnesses, purely as an experiment—namely, that some fifty men or so should be put under an overseer, and be instructed and taught what was necessary, and in that communal fashion they should do the rough work for a certain number of farms, and afterwards take up the farms by lot and work out their own salvation on them. I entirely dissent from the doctrine, and so does the hon. member for Mackay—we have sent in a joint protest against it—that we should make these men jointly and severally liable. That would never work. No man of spirit and energy would consent to have his earnings mortgaged in that way for the advantage of all the rest; and, however pleasing these schemes may be as theories, I am quite certain that co-operation can never succeed except as a mercantile undertaking. Where a company is formed and a certain amount of capital is put in by working men, who put in their labour in addition, and always presuming that some effective means of superintendence can be obtained, then co-operation may succeed, and probably will succeed. But I do not think it will succeed in the case of an aggregation of farmers at some distance from one another. My attention has been given to the financial side of the question, as I am not a practical farmer, but only willing and anxious to learn, and the impression made upon my mind is that unless the Government are prepared to extend a very great deal of indulgence and forbearance to these men, these schemes will not succeed.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: At the expense of the taxpayers.

Mr. BARLOW: I say this with regret, because I attended all the meetings but one of the committee, in the sincere hope that some way of escape out of our difficulties might present itself. Although it is quite possible that an experiment of the kind I have indicated might be tried, the evidence disclosed the fact that a selection must be made of the best part of the unemployed, and we should be left with a residuum who are not fit to go upon the land. I do not think I need say any more. The committee have thoroughly thrashed out the subject at a large number of meetings. The tendency of the whole of the evidence, as I understood it, is that until we have a larger population, and have a more considerable market for produce, and some articles for export, it will not be fair to existing farmers to carry out any extensive scheme of this kind. I do not think there has been any evidence that the New Zealand schemes have been a great success. It seems that there is no way of escaping from

the present difficulty. No one will be more glad than I if some scheme can be suggested; and no one feels more than I do for the people without employment, who, in many other cases, have inherited the sins of their predecessors. The principle we have gone upon in past times of borrowing money and squandering it to carry on an artificial system and prop up the colony, with its handful of people and its immense resources, upon a false basis, has now recoiled upon ourselves; and the only way of escape is by economy amongst ourselves. I speak for myself as well as for the unemployed.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: Economy amongst ourselves means more unemployed. A reduction of wages is what we want.

Mr. BARLOW: If we do not spend money upon luxuries and so on, which involve taking capital out of the country, more capital will remain for the employment of the unemployed in the creation of a wages fund. But I shall not detain the House any longer; the opinions I have expressed in the addendum to the report are what I consider to be the net result of the proceedings of the committee.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—There is no doubt that this Select Committee, appointed for the purpose of endeavouring to evolve some scheme by which the unemployed difficulty could be removed, took a great deal of trouble in collecting as much evidence in the time at their disposal as they could get; and I regret very much to have to say that the evidence is not of such a nature as to encourage the Government in advancing the very large sums of money which would be necessary to settle the unemployed on the land by means of State aid. There is one good thing, however, which this committee has done. It has enabled us to bring together in a concrete form the various methods of land settlement which have been adopted in other colonies, and also to examine personally some of those gentlemen who have advocated this scheme for some time past, and to ascertain from them whether their ideas were theoretical or practical. And I think it will be found by hon. gentlemen who read this report that most of their suggestions are thoroughly theoretical. Very few of those gentlemen, however sincere they may be—and I believe several of them were very sincere—were practical farmers. They were gentlemen living in Brisbane—solicitors, surveyors, and gentlemen who were not practical farmers, but who had had this idea in their minds for some time past; who have been in the habit of issuing pamphlets on the subject, and who have got up a cry about settling the people on the land, giving them State aid—assisted land settlement—without even having arrived at a practical solution of the difficulty as to whether, first of all, we have got the money to do it—where the money was to come from; or whether it would be fair to the general taxpayers of the country to relieve the unemployed difficulty by making the general population of the colony pay. That is really what it amounts to. I would say with reference to the evidence that it is perfectly useless quoting questions and answers, for you can get questions and answers to meet any particular view any hon. member likes to take. I never heard more conflicting evidence given than we have got in this report. It can be twisted and made to prove anything you like. We had some who professed to know all about the subject, but when we came to question them we found they had never been in the bush in their lives. They knew nothing whatever about farming, and they were especially sincere in their desire to put the people on the land and giving them a lot of money for doing it. But when those gentlemen were asked to give us some idea of the amount of money which was

necessary, the sum of £100 seemed to be a nice round easy sum to handle, and that was generally the amount which was going to solve the difficulty. They thought £100 each would be enough. But when they were asked to point out in what way this £100 was to be expended, the amount of material and rations which was going to be furnished with that £100 was something extraordinary. It would have been more likely to take £300 than £100 to provide all the tools, implements, rations, clothes, and everything that was necessary for two years; and in no case was any provision ever made for the personal expense of the farmers, or for such things as divisional board rates. It was simply, "We must have the pick of the land. We must cut that land up into small areas. It must be near a good water supply, where irrigation would be possible. It must be close to a railway station, in order that we can get our produce to market; and it must be near a market where we can sell our produce." Strange to say, when we examined practical men, such as farmers—and we had several who came and gave evidence—they all pointed out that they were at present suffering from a very severe depression, and they were unable to find a market for the produce they were growing, and they thought it would be manifestly unfair if they, having borne the burden and heat of the day, and having incurred—many of them considerable—liabilities, were now to be brought face to face with competition by State-aided farmers without the responsibility of having to repay the advances. They considered the burden would rest very heavy upon their shoulders.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They would be fighting themselves with their own money.

Mr. BLACK: That was the opinion of the farmers. They did not see the advantage of this scheme at all. They thought that if anyone was entitled to assistance in these bad times it was they themselves; and I must say that if some scheme were ever to be carried out for the purpose of assisting farmers, my opinion is that we should assist those who have shown their *bona fides* by going on to the land—men who have shown their suitability for agricultural pursuits by going into the bush, clearing their farms, and struggling, to the best of their ability, to make a decent living, but who still find themselves somewhat in arrear and hampered by want of better prices for their produce. If anything could be done, those are the men I would like to assist, because they have in the great majority of cases shown that they are men who understand what they are doing. I think it would be no use going into Brisbane and attempting to relieve the present depression by getting a large number of the unemployed to settle upon the land. That would be only to make things worse than they are at the present time. We should add very considerably to the annual expenditure of the colony, and I am very much afraid that the chance of the Government ever getting reimbursed for the advances would be a very distant one indeed. There was one point came out in evidence that is worthy of note. I took the opportunity of asking several of the witnesses this question, "Do you consider that the present very varied land laws which we have in Queensland are sufficient to meet any reasonable requirements of people desiring to settle upon the land?" and the reply was universally "Yes." No colony, and I do not think any country in the world, has greater facilities for land settlement than we have, and at a lower rate. There is no colony which sells land on such advantageous terms to the small selector as Queensland. There is no colony that I know of where a man desiring to go on the land can get his land for

2s. 6d. an acre, to be paid in five years. It is practically giving the land away, and I do not think it would be judicious to devise any scheme of land settlement by which we would settle a large number of unsuitable people on the lands of the colony. I am not going to quote any of the evidence, but I would ask hon. gentlemen to refer to the evidence given by three of the unemployed who came and gave evidence. Those are the men representing the class which it is intended to benefit by this scheme of assisted land settlement. Their names are Messrs. Gallagher, Shackleton, and Calder. One gentleman, named Shackleton, one of the unemployed, gave evidence; and if hon. members will look at page 63, they will see some of the very, very vague statements to which the Select Committee had to listen. I agree, to a certain extent, with the evidence he gave. It was to the effect that if you put people on the land, you must employ them to produce something which can be exported. He was right so far, and he evidently thought that sugar was one of those commodities which could be grown here and placed on the markets of the world. He knew all about it; and this was part of his evidence, as hon. members will see on reference to question 1099—

"Have you calculated the yield you would get from eight acres of cane, twenty-five tons to the acre? No, I have not, because seasons vary, and so does the land. You will get much more from some than from others."

He went on to point out that he would get six tons of sugar to the acre; that from twenty-five tons of cane he would get six tons of sugar. He knew all about it—he had been four years on a sugar plantation at Mackay. His evidence was so astounding that the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, was rather staggered, I believe. This is some of Mr. Shackleton's evidence, beginning with question 1125—

"By Mr. Barlow: What do you calculate as the production of cane per acre on this scrub land which you wish to get? Twenty-five tons to the acre."

"How much sugar would that cane produce; or how much would you expect it to produce? I do not know the quantity of juice there would be in a ton;—I do not know how much sugar comes from a ton of cane."

"What would be the proper yield, the fair expectation of sugar that that cane would yield? Well, about six tons."

"About six tons of sugar from twenty-five tons of cane!—Why, you would be millionaires in a short time. With the land and the implements and the rations—the £100 given by the Government, which I understand you to say would furnish rations for two years—you would have all the assistance you want to feed your family and yourself upon what you grow on the land? Yes."

"And in two years you expect that twenty men would have 1,000 acres of cane ready to be cut? Is that what I am to understand you to have said? Yes."

"The result would be that the net proceeds at £15 per ton of sugar, free on board, would be £37,500, less manufacturing charges. That appears to me to be an incredible result. If 1,000 tons of cane produces 2½ tons of sugar to the acre, that result would be brought about by the expenditure on the land of £6,000—£2,000 advanced by the Government, and £4,000, the value of the labour of the twenty settlers at £100 a year each during two years. Can you throw any light upon the matter? You would require an expert who understands cane to say how much juice it will yield. Many a season it is not known what will be turned out by the mill."

That is really a specimen of the unreliable nature of the evidence which some of the unemployed gave.

Mr. GRIMES: Read question 1062.

Mr. BLACK: This is the evidence he gave there—

"To have any prospects of success what area of cane do you think twenty men would have at the end of two years ready for crushing?—We want to see what the probable results would be? I think they ought to have from 800 to 1,000 acres."

He was talking of scrub land. There was another of the unemployed who gave evidence. His solution was to give each man £100, and forty acres of land on the Barcoo, where he was to grow sufficient food for his family. The hon. member for Barcoo, who was present that day, was rather astounded at Barcoo above all other places being selected for the maintenance of a family. It may be supposed that land settlement is not progressing in Queensland at a rapid rate; but the evidence of Professor Shelton is to the effect that it is going on at a most rapid rate all through the colony. He said that in his travels he never went out a second time in a district without seeing new farms start up in all directions, and that is borne out by the report of the Lands Department just laid on the table of the House. Whereas in 1890 we had only 879 agricultural selectors, selecting 173,251 acres; in 1891 we had 1,145 agricultural selectors, embracing 252,728 acres. That means that last year there were 266 more selectors selecting 79,477 acres more than in the previous year. It must be borne in mind that I am not including grazing areas; and a matter worthy of consideration is the fact that out of those 1,145 selectors, no less than 907 were homestead selectors. It is, therefore, evident that *bona fide* land settlement, under our very liberal land laws, is progressing at a very rapid rate; and I do not think any facility the Government could give would be more conducive to land settlement than the facilities which our Land Acts give at the present time. I candidly say that I do not think the result of the work of the Select Committee has been to show this House or the country that any assisted land settlement would be beneficial to the men. It was said over and over again that not more than 5 per cent. of the unemployed were suited to go on the land; and, even assuming that 5 per cent. of the unemployed were willing to go on the land, I say that there are facilities offered by landholders at the present time by which they can get employment—certainly it is in the tropics—on the sugar estates. All they have to do is to go on some sugar plantation and work one or two years to show their ability for that description of labour, and they can at once take up land on those sugar estates, where they will have the benefit of a mill close by for the purpose of crushing the cane they grow. These offers have been open for some time, and are still open. In the Agricultural Department there is a list of planters in the North who are desirous of cutting up their large estates. All they want is to be assured of the *bona fides* of the men desiring to embark in the undertaking, and the terms are most liberal. I consider that any man who desires to settle on the land should certainly show his ability to do the work by going on the land and working for fair wages, for twelve months, say, until he feels himself in a position to become a lessee of one of the numerous farms which are open for him to take up for the cultivation of sugar. The working men's blocks in South Australia are referred to on page 4 of the report. Those blocks vary from five to twenty acres, but the conditions in South Australia are very different from those which prevail in Queensland. Not one witness could point out where those working men's blocks could be selected in this colony, and I contend that if a man can get eighty or 160 acres, as he can under our present law, he is in a far better position than a man who can only take up from five to twenty acres. We know that in the West these small areas are no good—that a man cannot make a living on them. The complaint made by many of the village settlement selectors is that the area is too small—

[Mr. BLACK,

that they want larger areas. There is no system of land settlement for the so-called poor man which is more advantageous to him than our agricultural selection, known as the homestead selection, under which a man can take up 160 acres. If that area of land is beyond the means of a small selector, let him take less; but a man will feel far more independent if he selects land under that system, pays annually the small rent demanded, works out his own salvation, and becomes the owner of that piece of land when certain conditions have been fulfilled, than he will by taking up land under the fostering aid of the Government, and having to go to a Government officer for a few pounds whenever he wants anything more, never knowing whether he will ever be able to pay it back. The former system is one which experience has taught us has given general satisfaction to selectors. Every sympathy should be shown to those selectors who are already on the land, because they are really the best colonists we have; and I do not think it would be fair to introduce any scheme of assisted land settlement by which the 5 per cent. of the unemployed who are assumed to be suitable to settle on the land would be brought into competition, under more advantageous circumstances, with those who have already spent their all on the land.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—It was with great reluctance that I agreed to sit on this committee, as I felt sure from my past experience in farming that any report we could make would necessarily be a barren one, and my opinion has been borne out by the report which has been discussed this afternoon, and by the evidence which has been collected. I felt sure that while we should be able to get plenty of witnesses to give us theoretical schemes, which are all very well on paper, we should have very great difficulty in getting any really practicable scheme that we could confidently recommend to the Government. I knew that the farmers who were already settled on the land had as much as they could do to make both ends meet, and that in many cases they were leaving their established farms and engaging as workmen on other farms where they could get work. I also knew that the extravagant notions of the present unemployed in Brisbane were such that we should never be able to meet their ideas with any scheme that might reasonably be proposed. The hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, has given the House some idea of what those extravagant notions are. Their ideas of farming are such that it would be absolutely dangerous to settle them on the land by means of borrowed money, for it is certain that as soon as the money paid to them by the Government was expended they would make extra demands upon the Government or abandon their farms, which would then go back again to a state of nature. We have not been able to confidently recommend any scheme of assisted land settlement that would be of any assistance to the unemployed in Brisbane. One scheme that has been suggested is that they should be employed in clearing land, but it is very doubtful whether that would be at all remunerative to the Government, or whether they would ever get back again from the land sold the amount of money that would be expended upon it in that way. A better way of relieving the distress existing among the unemployed would be for the Government to strain a point and assist divisional boards with loans of money to be spent in a certain way—namely, the carrying out of certain works on which the maximum rate of wages should be such that it would be just sufficient to keep a man and his family in bread and the other necessities of life. That might be done, I think, leaving it open for those

who are really destitute—preference being given to married men to apply to the divisional boards for work at that rate. I do not think it would be advisable to fix the rate of payment above what is now paid by agriculturists, which is about 3s. 6d. a day. If the unemployed were settled on farms of their own they would not be able to earn more than that by their work. By such a scheme the money advanced by the Government would be distributed, and the divisional boards would, no doubt, see to it that work was only given to those who were really in need of work to prevent them from starving. I am confident that that would be the cheapest way for the Government to go to work. Under the present system of doling out rations the privilege is often abused. Ne'er-do-wells, who never wish for work and never will work, are obtaining rations in many cases, while those who are really destitute, and who for shame's sake do not care to make it known, have no assistance given to them. It is very noticeable that in the evidence taken by the committee it is not shown that there is any place in the world where assisted land settlement has been a success. We have heard a great deal about America, and when we called in Professor Shelton we expected that we should get some really practicable scheme from him; but we found from his evidence that in America no assistance is given to agriculturists. The only assistance that had been given there was in one or two instances where there had been a severe drought or flood, and the railway companies had provided the farmers with seed to start again, accepting their note of hand until the crop was reaped; and, of course, it was good policy on their part to secure the traffic on their railway lines. That is the only assistance given to agriculturists in America, so far as we could learn from Professor Shelton. The scheme started a few years ago in New Zealand, when in that colony they were in the same position as we are in at the present time, was not a success. Those who settled on the land under its conditions only did so for the time being, and to get over temporary difficulties. They very soon found that the work they would have to do to make a living out of the land would be very much harder than they were accustomed to do in following other employments, and as soon as things improved they left their farms and went back to other employment. I am confident that just the same result would follow in the case of a very large number of those who might be selected from our unemployed to go upon the land. I quite agree with the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, that our land laws are very liberal, and we cannot well improve upon them. The block system in South Australia is certainly no improvement upon them. Under our homestead system a man has only 6d. an acre to pay for his land, and it becomes his own in five years. Under the South Australian block system a man has to pay 1s. 10d. an acre for the land he occupies under that system on a continual lease, and probably something more.

MR. BLACK: With a possible increase.

MR. GRIMES: Yes; with a possible increase in the readjustment of rents in future years. I regret that we were unable to obtain evidence of a practicable scheme to put before the House, but as I had not much hope of it from the first when undertaking my duties on the committee I have not been very much disappointed.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The report laid before us by this committee is a disgrace to the colony. It was never intended from the beginning that that committee's labours should come to anything. We boast here of our land laws. We are told that they are the most

liberal land laws in Australia; but one fact is worth a thousand assertions. Here, a woman takes up a selection, and she marries a young man who has another homestead alongside of her own, and because she marries him we take the homestead from her, whereas if she lived with him without marrying him we could not touch her property. Is that a liberal land law? There is one thing I must say in connection with this, and that is that though I fight sometimes with the Chief Secretary he has always tried to remedy every case of that sort brought before him. There are many cases of that sort that could be mentioned. We have never had any encouragement for land settlement in this colony. Fancy a Secretary for Lands sending to his land ranger and asking him, "Do you think that man has carried out sufficient improvements on his place?" And the ranger writes back, "I think he ought to lay out £3 more." Fancy such cheeseparing as that going on! When the hon. member for Mackay was Secretary for Lands he would not tolerate anything like that. There has been no encouragement of land settlement. If there was any, how is it that we allow £65,000 of land-orders to lie idle in this colony? Could not every £1 of that be utilised in the settlement of the land? Why should we not have, as we had before, free selection before and after survey? At the present day every obstacle is thrown in the way of settlement taking place, but it used not to be so. I do not agree with what has been said here, because I am positive land settlement has not been going on as it ought to be. Then a gentleman comes here and tells us that no assistance has been given to land settlement in America. Is it not a matter of history that the State of Oregon was purchased from the British Government, and in three years was settled to such an extent that it had risen to the dignity of a State, which meant that there were 40,000 people in it. All that was done in three years. There never was any obstacle thrown in the way of settlement in America, but obstacles are thrown in the way here.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: An hon. member says "No," but I am mixed up with the settlers, and I know something about it. One gentleman gets up and tells us that people can get cheap land here because they can get it at 6d. an acre. I say no man can get land here at 6d. an acre.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Half-a-crown an acre.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Or half-a-crown an acre.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes, in five years.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: I say the heaviest tax laid upon any selector in this colony is laid upon the homestead selector. He pays more than any other living man for his land. Take for instance a man who has got a corner selection of 160 acres, which is all he can get. He has got to fence in the whole of it, and can anyone tell me what that will cost? Then he has to build upon it. You tell me you are encouraging settlement, and you invite capitalists to come into this colony and take up our waterholes and the finest land we have at 10s. an acre, and ask no questions of them for ever after. An unfortunate selector takes up 160 acres, and you send spies out to watch every yard and every panel of fencing he puts up. That is a fact.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: It is a fact! Go and read the land laws.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. Does he think I have not read the land laws?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: You do not seem to have read them.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The hon. gentleman will take my word for it that I have read them, and I believe that nothing I say with regard to the homestead selector can be contradicted. I say there are spies employed by the Government to watch him; when I say "spies" I mean land rangers. I know of a case in Fassifern where the ranger was going out, and he met the owner of a selection driving a team of bullocks with a load of timber. The selector said, "You won't find me on my ground to-day;" and the ranger said, "All right, I know where you are," and that very night he wrote to the Minister to say he did not find that man on his ground.

Mr. BARLOW: He had no right to do it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: He did it. There should be some liberality, and give and take about these matters, and no Secretary for Lands should oppress a selector. I talk very ugly here sometimes, and some people may think I have a "down" on the present Secretary for Lands. I believe he is as much a gentleman and as glorious a man as we have in the colony. At the same time, I do not think he should be sitting there as Secretary for Lands. It is not his nature to spread settlement in the colony. The hon. gentleman has been too long kanaka driving to make a good Secretary for Lands. We have had a few good ones, some of whom have also been a good deal among blacks. I will say that Mr. Black, the hon. member for Mackay, was really a good Minister; but he is not the best we ever had, though he was very near the best. I know that wherever there was a case of the slightest hardship, if a single doubt could be found he would give the settler the benefit of it. Is that done at present? What is to be done with those £65,000 worth of land-orders?

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: Use them on the land.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Will the hon. gentleman accept those repudiated land-orders as payment? They are still out, and we could easily utilise that £65,000 in the present state of the colony, and get a great many people to settle. As for thinking you are going to the corners of the streets of Brisbane, and get loafers to go and settle on the land, you will never do it. Of the cotton bonus that was given in West Moreton a good many years ago, not 1s. was ever wasted. The farmer grew the cotton and got the land-order, which was made transferable, and he bought land in his sons' or daughters' names. That bonus encouraged settlement more than anything else ever did. Lately we have not been encouraging settlement at all. For the first three or four years we were doing very well. Then, as to the report of this Select Committee; we all knew from the beginning that no report would be brought up worth 6d. There has been a lot of time wasted. The committee was appointed to do what? Simply to walk up the hill and down again. With the slightest encouragement from the Government you could have any amount of settlement to-morrow.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sure the House will sympathise with the lady who has to choose between a homestead and a husband. I know the hon. member for Stanley has a strong sympathy with people desirous of settling on the land and those who are already settled on it, and he thinks that the land laws of the country ought to be administered as they were administered by a former Minister, who, as I heard him described here on one occasion, though he broke the strict letter of the law, made many a poor man's heart happy. The hon. member, I know, would like to see our laws administered on those lines. I am not prepared to advocate that any Minister should break the law in the administration of his department; but

certainly he ought to administer the law in a liberal spirit, and not stick too strictly to the letter. With regard to this report, I have no doubt that the members of the Select Committee endeavoured to obtain all the information that they thought available on the matter that was remitted to them by the House; and I am only sorry that the results that have been achieved are such that they must fall very far short of the anticipations indulged in by my hon. friend, the member for Enoggera. I think the committee did not take a very broad view of the matter that was remitted to them for inquiry. I have been looking at the commission they got from this House on the 8th April, and I find that they were asked to inquire into and report upon the best means of facilitating the settlement on the land of people now unemployed in this city; and they were also asked to inquire into and report upon the general question of assisting land settlement. They appear to have directed their inquiries almost exclusively to the first of those instructions—the settlement of people at present unemployed in the towns upon the lands of the colony. They appear to have set out with the idea that some means might be found of transplanting scores or hundreds of the people now walking about the streets of Brisbane on to the land in the country districts in a month or six months hence, and making them useful colonists and wealth producers. The idea running in their minds was no doubt a very laudable one, but I think it was a great mistake to imagine that the best way of achieving that end was by transferring men direct from the ranks of the unemployed to the ranks of the farming class. If they had addressed themselves to the question how to assist the men already on the land, and solved it, they would by that means indirectly, though not so rapidly, have achieved the purpose the House had in view when it remitted this inquiry to them. I do not think the Government of the country has done in the past, or is doing in the present, its duty in this direction, which ought to be to encourage the people who are already upon the land. If you make those men—I mean the farmers and graziers—prosperous, they will find profitable employment for all the people we have here at present, and induce others to go and follow their example. I am sorry that the members of the committee, in whose general ability I have not the least doubt, did not address themselves to the particular view of the subject.

Mr. BLACK: It was not remitted to the committee.

Mr. MORGAN: The questions referred to the committee were—how to relieve the distress, and how to facilitate the settlement of people on the land. The means that I suggest are not so direct, but I am sure they would have been much more effective than the means recommended in this report. Now, what have we in the report? An inquiry into the system that prevails in New Zealand, with a synopsis of the law existing there with regard to village settlements—a scheme which has not been a success, but at best, on the showing of the committee, only a partial success. Then we have a description of the blockers' systems of South Australia, and the suggested scheme which the hon. member for Enoggera so strongly advocates—that of State-aided village settlement. In my opinion the New Zealand system has proved in its own country so partial a success that it would be extremely unlikely to find very much favour if introduced into this House in the form of a Bill either by a private member or by the Government. With regard to the blockers' system in South Australia—and there is a good deal to recommend in it—it appears to me that two things are essential before you can adopt that scheme.

First, you must get the blocker, and then you must get the block. You are not likely to get the land required in or about any town of considerable size that could supply a market. Where will you get land for blockers anywhere around Brisbane? These blockers must have workmen's trains; they must have a market for their produce. Theoretically, the scheme has much to recommend it, and if you had land held by the Crown within ten, twelve, fifteen, or even twenty miles of Brisbane, you could cut it up into thirty or forty-acre blocks; then you could supply the men, let them go to work when they could get work, and when they had no work go upon their little blocks and attend in a small way to the cultivation of food for themselves and their families and a little surplus for market. That scheme might do a great deal in relieving the ranks of the unemployed; but are the committee prepared to recommend that the Government should step in and buy back the necessary land for the purpose of utilising it for this purpose? The scheme itself looks very pretty on paper, but is it practicable? Then we come to the recommendation of the committee that we should have co-operative settlements. They recommend the trial of the system of co-operative settlement by self-constituted groups. Each settler must satisfy some officer as to his capability of doing useful work on the settlement. Now, where are you going to get this officer; and if you get the officer and the man capable of doing good work, may you not get men able but unwilling to do the work, whose only anxiety is to get the monetary assistance which this Parliament may vote and then get rid of their responsibility as members of the community as soon as possible? I believe that is what would happen in a large majority of cases, and that not more than a very small percentage of these men would remain for any length of time on the co-operative areas after they had got the last shilling they were likely to get out of the Government. I am entirely at one with the members for Mackay and Ipswich in their objections to the joint and several bond. That would operate to the benefit of the least worthy of these people, and to the injury of the most worthy. And I would point out that serious objections will be raised to this scheme in the interests of the men who at their own expense have gone on the land, who have found the money and found the enterprise, and who may find themselves in this position: That money may be voted from the public Treasury to enable other men to become competitors with them in an already congested market. I do not think that would be a just thing to do at all. If you want to give aid to the settlement of people on the land, then give it to the men who have already gone there at their own expense; but there would be very serious objection made by the farming community all over the colony, and by their representatives in Parliament, to any proposal to spend public money in helping men on the land to become competitors with those already there.

Mr. GLASSEY: They are only loans.

Mr. MORGAN: The loan can easily be spent, but it would be very difficult to recover it. I will not go into the evidence given, because it is useless. I do not think this matter is likely to be received with approval by members of this House, but I should certainly have liked to have heard the views of the Secretary for Lands and the Government on the question, and how they propose to act in regard to these village settlements. While I am on the subject I would like to call the attention of the member for Oxley, Mr. Grimes, to question 1561, in the examination of Mr. Maximilian King, who gives evidence with which I largely agree, and who appears

to be a man of some experience, as he is engaged in the produce trade. He was asked by the member for Oxley a question in regard to freight charges on flour, and that question merely proved that the hon. gentleman who asked it was not aware of the facts of the case, and it also proved that the gentleman who answered the question was not aware of the whole of the facts of the case. I would like to take notice of the question, because the hon. member for Oxley, being a member of Parliament, is supposed to be familiar with railway tariffs, and should be careful of his facts and arguments, and having got his arguments into print should be prepared to establish them as facts or withdraw them. He has conveyed a wrong impression to his witness, and he has got into a public document information which is not correct. The information is this: That the wheat-growers of Queensland, though seriously handicapped by freights to port, have the advantage of a differential rate—lower rate, I presume he means—in trading with the Western districts.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. T. O. Unmack): So they have most certainly from Warwick.

Mr. MORGAN: They have nothing of the kind.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Most certainly.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman was talking about flour.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; certainly.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. member for Oxley was talking about flour.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So was I talking about flour.

Mr. MORGAN: We must be at sea as to the meaning of the word "differential." I understand a differential rate to mean a rate of freight that is lower than that conceded to the same freight from other districts.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Exactly what I understand.

Mr. MORGAN: I say we do not get the benefit of such a differential rate, and I want to see that put right—either proved or withdrawn. I say we have no differential rates to the Western district. We have a through rate; and before a statement like that I have referred to is made, either directly or indirectly, it ought to be examined into.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Warwick, in the course of his remarks, spoke against State aid to enable a class of men to compete with those already on the land, and he was correct in saying that such a scheme would have very strong opposition from the farming communities and their representatives. I must say that I am disappointed in the results of this inquiry. The only result that I can see is that it shows many people who favour State aid do not comprehend the situation at all. Why the committee did not travel beyond the first part of their commission and inquire into the best means of assisting land settlement may possibly have been in consequence of the constitution of the committee, because the hon. members for Oxley and Mackay were the only members who had any practical knowledge of land settlement at all, either here or in the old country. The others did not know the conditions under which men settled on the land are working. Anyone who knows the conditions under which persons are struggling for a living, and have been for years, will know perfectly well that it would be perfectly useless to settle, perhaps, three-fourths of the present unemployed in the towns on the land. If they received a grant of £100

each they would stay on the land until it was spent, and that is all. The greater number of people have no idea of the hardships people have to endure who get a living upon the land. I am familiar with most parts of West Moreton, which is the district I know best, and can understand the conditions under which the farmers there are living. They have to work early and late, and their families also; they have to live very nearly and make the best of everything, or else they cannot get on at all and have to leave their selections. I do not believe in subsidising people, even those who are already on the land; but there are certain means of assisting people who are there already, by which they may be prevented from throwing up their holdings and swelling the ranks of the unemployed. For instance, we know that it is absolutely necessary that a farmer should have roads that he can travel upon, and I think it would be within the province of the Government, where mistakes have been made and the best roads have not been surveyed, to spend money in opening better roads. That would be a legitimate assistance for the Government to grant. I would not ask the Government to subsidise them by lending them money to carry on their farms, because I do not think it is right to use the taxpayers' money for that purpose; but there is no doubt that great mistakes have been made in surveying roads, which render a great deal of Government land almost useless. The farmers have taken up that land, and it may be said, "Why did they not see about the road before they took it up?" But people who say that do not know much about taking up land in mountain scrubs. One-half of those who take up land in these scrubs do not know their way out again; you have to find your way along like a wallaby, without knowing where the roads are. It would require a surveyor with a compass to find his way out, and the farmers are not surveyors. The Government have given assistance in that direction in some cases, and I believe they will be prepared to do it again. I will now point out another way in which the Government may give assistance. Under our land laws a settler has to pay rent on the 31st March, and if he does not pay it till April he has to pay an additional 5 per cent. as a penalty. Then if he does not pay it till May he has to pay 10 per cent., and if not till June 15 per cent. I think the Government might grant redress in that matter. If the law were strictly carried out the Government could charge these men who cannot pay their way or borrow money 60 per cent. per annum as a penalty. We have been borrowing money, and paying 4 or 5 per cent. for it, and I do not think there is a private merchant or trader, with any sense of honesty or fair-play, who would take advantage of his constituents like that. A man who would take advantage of the necessities of his customers in that way would be looked upon as a black sheep and a swindler. I have been told that these cases cannot be relieved.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: I relieved one last week.

Mr. SALKELD: I have seen an official letter from the Under Secretary for Lands, which said that the penalties could not be removed. I came down to see the Secretary for Lands about it, and understood that that gentleman was going to make some concession; but the farmers are under the impression that they are tied by the law. Those things should not be. I met that farmer at the Ipswich show, and he spoke to me about it then. I do not think people should be so fixed that they cannot get a thing put right unless they get a member

of Parliament to do it for them. Members of Parliament should not be able to get more done than anybody else, and I hope the Minister for Lands will do right in these matters. These are some legitimate grievances that can be remedied. Some legitimate assistance could be given to people to induce settlement on the land. I am quite sure that a man who is fined because he is in a fix will not be likely to advise any of his friends to take up land. I do not think this House can do anything so far as regards settling on the land the great bulk of the people who are living in the towns. Nine-tenths of them could not live if they were put upon the land, and it is absurd to talk about giving them land alongside railway stations. It must be good land and within a reasonable distance of a market. There is no such land to be got, and that is why settlers have had to go into out-of-the-way places miles and miles away from the means of communication, over intolerably rough roads, and away from a market, and to take inferior land into the bargain. If this report has done nothing else, it has demonstrated that all this talk about finding relief for the unemployed by State-aided settlement on the land is futile. I believed when they started that their finding was the only thing they could do. I never expected to find anything else, and I think the committee have shown their good judgment in refusing to recommend any more than they have done. They practically admit that nothing more can be done. If suitable areas of land are surveyed, and reasonable roads provided to the land, and if there is a deferred system of payments that will settle people on the land, and if that is done, and provided that the State has not to find any money, I would be quite willing to offer every inducement to people who wished to go upon the land but had not the means. I can hardly conceive, however, of a man being likely to succeed on the land if he cannot pay the small payments now required. Say he takes up eighty acres, he has to pay 6d. an acre per annum—that is £2; and if he cannot pay that amount I do not see how he can make it succeed. It is a very small sum. However, if it would be a help I would be quite willing to have a deferred system of payments. If they are unable to make a living by settling upon the land, then I maintain that if people are not doing well for themselves on the land, they are not doing well for the State. There is no use in having people starving on the land. I really think this matter of the rents may become a very serious one. I certainly feel very much obliged to the Secretary for Lands for stating that every case would be considered on its merits. It is an unfortunate thing that the Act was made so stringent. There is nothing that can justify the Government of the country in making money by the unfortunate circumstances of the settlers.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS said: Mr. Speaker,—I should just like to say a few words in reply to the statements of the hon. member for Stanley. He appears to have a standing grievance against the Lands Department, and seems to think that it is the one object of the department to keep people off the land, and to prevent them earning an honest livelihood when they are there. Now, I maintain that the very opposite is the case. It is the desire of the department—and, I believe, of every Minister who has ever presided over it—to settle a genuine class of agriculturists on the land, and to do everything possible to assist them. I am afraid the hon. gentleman is so susceptible to the influence of the females in his own electorate that he brings cases before the Minister without first considering whether they are just or fair.

The hon. member cited instances in which the department has dealt very harshly with female selectors who selected before they married. Now, the Secretary for Lands for the time being has to look after the interests of the whole colony; he has to see that land is not obtained by fraud or misrepresentation; and there are cases where men who have selected homesteads, and were engaged to be married to young women, have induced those women to take up land just a short time before their marriage, in the hope that they will be able to obtain 320 acres instead of 160 acres at 2s. 6d. an acre. Where they have been *bond fide* cases, in which women have selected some years prior to their marriage, in most instances those women have got their deeds, when it has been shown that they really selected the land before their engagement; but where it has been known to the department that the selection has only been taken up a few weeks or a few months prior to their marriage they have been refused—and I think rightly so. The hon. gentleman really does not want settlement on the land. What he wants is to allow people to acquire land without settlement. He wants people to be able to obtain 160 acres without going near it. The hon. gentleman has brought cases to me where single girls have selected, and where he has admitted that they have never been on the land for a single day or night, and where they have effected no improvements, and the hon. gentleman says, "Sure you would not have an unprotected girl live all alone on her selection?" The object of the Minister is to see that the land is taken up, and that he gets *bond fide* settlement in exchange for the land; and I maintain the Minister would not be doing his duty if he gave away our lands for 2s. 6d. an acre and got no settlement whatever. With regard to what the hon. member for Fassifern has said, the hon. member knows well what the Acts provide. It has been passed by Parliament, and has been recognised by every Parliament. If there were no penalty for deferring the payment of rent, men would not pay.

Mr. SALKELD: Sixty per cent. is too high.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: It is not 60 per cent for the first month—it is only 5 per cent. It is not asking interest on the money. The Government do not want it; they do not say, "We will let it stand over and charge this amount." It is really penalising them for not paying when the money is due, and that is only right. The hon. member for Stanley and the hon. member for Fassifern think they have grievances, but in no single instance since I have been in the Lands Department, or before, has land ever been forfeited for non-payment of rent only. So long as a man remains on his selection and cultivates it, or does his best to hold his farm, no Secretary for Lands has ever forfeited his selection; and I do not believe any Minister ever will do so. When a man will not pay, and will not live on his land, then of course it must be forfeited, because there are plenty of other people who are quite willing to take the land. In no single instance has a man ever been turned out of his selection simply because he is not in a position to pay his rent. Every leniency has been shown so long as the department has been satisfied that the man is residing on his land and trying to work it. I should now like to say a few words with regard to the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera, for the adoption of the report. I really would like to know what the hon. gentleman means by his proposition. We have the report signed by the chairman out of all the members of the committee.

Mr. DRAKE: That is because it is the committee's report.

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The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: It is a majority report.

Mr. DRAKE: No, it is not; it is the committee's report.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: Then we have an addendum by two members of the committee which strongly objects to the main principle of the report—in fact, the only one in the report.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: The backbone of the report.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: I really cannot understand what the hon. member meant by the remarks he made. The addendum objects to what is really—as the hon. member for Balonne has put—the backbone of the report. It is really the only thing, so far as I can see, that the people who gave evidence are desirous of obtaining. A great deal has been said about village settlement in New Zealand and also about the blockers; but I maintain that the favourable conditions which exist here do not prevail in those countries.

At 7 o'clock,

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

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 the proposed new clause, as follows:—

No elector shall be entitled to have his name entered upon more than one electoral roll—

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON said the question of one man one vote was brought very prominently before the electors of Bulimba who had so recently returned him as their representative. When he stood for that electorate he was told that unless he consented to the principle of one man one vote he had no business there; and he at once met that statement by denouncing it as a fad. Thereupon he was told that he had not the slightest chance of election; but the result of the contest had shown that he had some business in Bulimba. He had been returned by a very unmistakeable majority upon no ambiguous declaration concerning one man one vote, because that was a platform upon which his opponent endeavoured to obtain the representation of that electorate; and therefore he felt it his duty to point out that, at any rate, one very important electorate in the colony had expressed its entire dissent from the principle of one man one vote. He had always regarded it as a doctrine which emanated chiefly from men who were jealous of the superior prosperity of men who had obtained a freehold qualification in different electorates of the colony. He could not see on what grounds objection could be made to men who invested their savings in different electorates having a voice in the local politics of the electorates in which they were so interested; and he might point out the circumstances, which would be within the personal knowledge of many hon. members, that gentlemen of prominence in the community, who conscientiously abstained from enrolling themselves as voters on more than one electoral roll, had not the slightest objection to exercise an influence, and a very strong influence, on the result of elections in neighbouring electorates. To his mind men who could reconcile that with the strict principle of one man one vote were showing a pharisaical observance of the letter and an open violation of the spirit of one man one vote. It also showed that in considering the amendment hon. members were endeavouring to introduce a principle which

ould not be carried out effectually, and therefore he maintained that at the present time it would be unwise, as it certainly was outside the scope of that Bill, to restrict the privilege of any elector in the colony. They had no encouragement to do so by the acceptance of the principle in the other colonies or in the old country. The opinions of Mr. Balfour, as communicated by cable lately, were too ambiguous to enable them to distinctly understand that he was an advocate of one man one vote. But Lord Salisbury, within the last two years, had in several speeches distinctly denounced the one man one vote proposal, and asserted that the freehold franchise was the very foundation of the unwritten Constitution of the mother country—that it had been the protection and conservation of that Constitution throughout troublous ages. He (Mr. Dickson) believed he was quite justified in saying that at the present time in Victoria the number of members of the Legislative Assembly in favour of one man one vote was relatively, if not absolutely, less than it was before the last general election. The scheme, as he had said, would really be inoperative, and it was entirely outside the scope of the present Bill. He would offer it his uncompromising hostility, in whatever shape or form it was endeavoured to be introduced into the legislation of the colony.

Mr. SAYERS said he intended to support the amendment, although he did not, like the hon. member for Burrum, believe that it would settle the difficulty they were labouring under at the present time. He (Mr. Sayers) did not see why, because a man had a dozen allotments worth £100 each in different electorates, he should have a vote in each of those electorates, and another for residence if he happened to live in another electorate; while another man, who was, perhaps, just as good a colonist, had only one vote. It had been argued over and over again that property should be represented, and property would be represented even if plural voting was abolished, because money and property had power. He would support the amendment, and do all he could to assist in carrying it through committee.

Mr. MURRAY said he intended to oppose the amendment, as he was entirely opposed to the principle of one man one vote. He thought the franchise was quite liberal enough, when under it a man who strolled over the border and lived here for six months could exercise as much power as a man who had spent the whole of his life in the colony, identified himself with its interests, and bound himself to it by ties of property and family relationship in such a way that it was impossible for him to get away from it. That principle would enable a class of men to exercise a strong political influence at their elections, who, before the evil effects of their voting could be felt, could pack up their little bundles and stroll over the border again and escape, leaving the responsibilities of their action to the permanent residents of the country. No one who had the interests of the country at heart could possibly advocate such a system as that. What was property after all but accumulated industry? A man might have property in an electoral district in which he did not reside, but surely it had cost him labour and economy to acquire it, and the labour he did in acquiring it was surely as useful to the colony as his residence in the district for six months would be. Had he thought that proposal was to be pressed upon the Committee, he would not have withdrawn the amendment he submitted yesterday; because he thought that, if any man who resided in the colony for six months was entitled to a vote, any man who identified himself with the country, acquired

a little property, was married and rearing a family in it, was entitled to two votes. Such a man was entitled to one vote for his manhood, first of all, to put him on a level with the professional sundowner who only walked over the border six months ago, and then he was entitled to a vote to represent and protect his family and his home. That might be admitted as only fair and reasonable. He approved of giving every man in the colony a vote, provided that he was a worthy citizen, of sound mind, amenable to the laws of the country, and capable of supplying his own wants. He would be sorry to see anything done to deprive such a man of his vote. He was not prepared to go further than that; but a man who was permanently settled in the country and identified with it as the land of his adoption was entitled, in his own interest and in that of the country generally, to two votes. The amendment he had prepared was, he knew, irrelevant, and he had not proceeded with it; but he had discussed it and the principle of one man one vote with his constituents. He held several meetings of his constituents at which he condemned *in toto* the one man one vote principle, and spoke strongly in favour of the amendment he had referred to, and wherever he spoke the principle contained in that amendment had been approved of and appreciated. He hoped the Committee, in its wisdom, would give no countenance to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Burrum.

Mr. FOXTON said he was one of those who believed that the principle of one man one vote was in theory a perfectly correct one, and if a scheme could be drafted by which it could be applied so as to give each man his proper share in the government of the country, it would be an excellent thing. Such a state of things, however, could only exist in a country over which the population was fairly evenly distributed. He had recently addressed his constituents upon the subject, and he had then pointed out the preponderance of representation such a system would give to the metropolitan and coastal constituencies, as against the large producing districts of the interior, upon which the welfare of the colony mainly depended. Before giving a few figures to show how it would work, he would say that while he believed a very large proportion of the people in the districts of the interior were in favour of the principle of one man one vote, he feared they did not fully realise the effect of its adoption upon the districts in which they lived. From returns given in the statistics of the colony, which though not the latest were suitable for the purpose of his argument, he found that in the district of Brisbane North there were no less than 4,225 electors, and that electorate returned two members to the House. Then in the six electorates of Carnarvon, Murrumbidgee, Balonne, Bulloo, Maranoa, and Warrego there were only 3,675, or nearly 600 less than in Brisbane North. The area of country the members for those districts represented stretched from Stanthorpe in the east to the most western boundary of the colony, from the southern boundary of the colony northerly to a point nearer to the Central Railway than to the Charleville railway, and comprising a total area of 180,000 square miles. If the principle of one man one vote was to be adopted, the necessary corollary was that the electors should be distributed evenly over the electorates throughout the whole of the colony. In order to make the principle work with even justice it would be necessary either to give North Brisbane six members or to cut down the representation of the six electorates he had mentioned to two, or even less. The same argument would apply to the large towns on the coast as compared with the country electorates lying to the west of them.

There were certain electorates, such as those on the Downs, and possibly in West Moreton and the Wide Bay and Burnett, where the number of members returned would not be materially affected; such would possess a 72nd portion of the electoral power of the colony. But the contrast in the instances he had mentioned was most marked, and he was afraid the electors in the Western districts did not realise what it would mean to them and to their districts. It had always been a complaint by representatives of country electorates that Brisbane was over represented already, and that many members for Western electorates took up their residence in the capital and became merely representatives of Brisbane. It had even been said in the House that it would be a desirable thing, if it could be carried out, that Brisbane should be deprived of all representation, as it would still be fairly represented by the country members who resided there. That was said during a discussion on the Estimates, when it was proposed to spend large sums in and around the metropolis. The evil here complained of would be aggravated if the principle of one man one vote, under their present system, were adopted. If some such system of representation as Hare's could be made to work—always presuming that the population was fairly distributed over the whole colony—it would be sound policy to adopt it. New Zealand had been referred to as a colony where the system of one man one vote prevailed. But the geographical conditions of New Zealand were quite different from those that obtained in Queensland. It was a compact colony, over which the population was fairly distributed, and the principle might be applied there with far more fairness than in any of the continental colonies, not excepting Victoria. For those reasons he could not see his way to support the amendment of the hon. member for Burrum. Besides, that Bill was not the proper place in which to introduce it. It was quite outside the scope of the Bill, and would require, in order to avoid the injustice which had been pointed out, a very elaborate scheme and a complete alteration of the entire system of their elections.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that at the last general election the subject of one man one vote had scarcely been mooted, although since that time it had become one of the burning questions of the colony, more especially with the labour party. When the question first presented itself to him he thought it an extremely fair one, but after he had gone more deeply into it he began to see that it would lead to a great amount of trouble and injustice. Would not such a system tend very much to class legislation? The working population would be represented in Parliament in a much greater ratio than capital. Supposing they took as a basis that the difference between capital and labour was as one in fifty, or, in other words, that there was one employer to fifty labourers. The employer would have no more votes than the worker, and the result might be that capital would be represented by one member as against fifty representing labour. Capital would be nothing, while labour would be everything. Supposing that under those circumstances the labour party brought in a Bill to reduce the working day to four hours, with wages at 8s. per day, would not that upset the financial calculations of every employer in the colony? And with regard to the finances, money might be borrowed and lavished in such a way that it would be impossible to pay the interest on it, and carry on things as they ought to be carried on. Personally, although he was entitled to three votes, he had never exercised but one. Although he had done that on principle, he could see that if the system were carried out generally

it would work very unfairly. It could easily be seen why there was such a demand for one man one vote. The labour party thought, and in some cases they had a right to think, that they were not getting justice, and that the only way to get justice was through the legislature. Therefore they thought that if their power was greater in Parliament they would have a better chance of getting what they wanted. But he did not think that one man one vote would make matters much better than they were. He would go this length with the labour party: That an employer of labour ought to have a vote for the premises in which his work was carried on in addition to a residential vote. That would give him two votes, but he should not have any more. He did not think it right that any one man should purchase a piece of land in every electorate in the colony, and have a vote for each. It might be only a vacant allotment of which no use was being made, and which was being kept for the sake of the unearned increment; but if a man conducted a manufactory on a piece of land, and employed labour, then he was perfectly entitled to have a vote for it. He would go that length, but he could not go the whole hog and give his assent to the principle of one man one vote. In the meantime he was going to oppose the amendment that had been moved.

Mr. PAUL said he must say at once that he was going to vote against the amendment. He should be very sorry to give a silent vote, and would give his reasons briefly. He thought everybody would admit that the dominion of Canada was one of the brightest colonies under the British Crown. It was a country in which there had been a great amount of prosperity, and there was not the slightest doubt that had been brought about by good government. They found there that not only was there a residence qualification, but a vote was given to the holder of property. He found, on referring to the Electoral Franchise Act of Canada, the following provision:—

"(7.) If a farmer's son is not otherwise qualified to vote in the electoral district in which his father's farm is situated; and—

"(9.) If his father is living, is and has been resident within the electoral district continuously, except as hereinafter provided, with his father for one year next before his being placed on the list of voters or the date of the application for the placing of his name on the list of voters, if the value of such farm is sufficient, if equally divided among the father and one or more sons as co-owners, to qualify them to be registered as voters—in which case the father and such one or more sons as so desire may be so registered as voters; and if there are more such sons than one resident as aforesaid, and claiming to be registered as voters in respect thereof, and if the value of the farm of the father is not sufficient to give the father and each of such sons the right to vote in respect of such value, if equally divided among them, then the right to be registered as a voter and to vote in respect of such farm shall belong only to the father and the eldest or so many of the elder of such sons, being so resident as aforesaid, as the value of such farm, if equally divided, will qualify."

He would not detain hon. members long, and he only wished to say that it was nonsense to think that a person who simply "humped his drum" should have the same electoral rights as the man who worked hard and accumulated property. If that was the law there would be no incentive whatever to persons to attain high positions in life—if everybody was to be put on an equality so far as voting power was concerned. That was the reason why he gave his unqualified vote against the principle of one man one vote.

Mr. NORTON said he had not spoken on the details of the Bill in committee, because, although some of the clauses seemed to be exceedingly stringent, he must confess he did not see how any of the remedies which had been suggested to avoid that stringency could have been carried

out or brought into operation without creating very great difficulties. But on that one particular question he must say a few words. He did not profess to know what was really intended by one man one vote, but he presumed it meant that every man was to be entitled to a vote, and that no man was to have more than one vote.

Mr. POWERS: The amendment does not say that every man shall have a vote.

Mr. NORTON said he was aware it did not say that, but that he presumed was the intention of it; and if it was not now embodied in the clause it would be embodied by-and-by if the principle proposed became law. He put it to the Committee in this way: He knew, and he believed every member of the Committee knew, in every district there were certain men who had risen from the ranks; men who had, by their industry, perseverance, and thrift, accumulated wealth. They had got property here and there in different parts of the country, and, according to the present electoral law, they were entitled to vote in those districts, though they might not reside there. Now, those men were entitled to some consideration. In the same districts there were other men, many of them who had begun with very considerable sums at their command, who had gone on from year to year not improving their position, but making it worse if possible. Now, if the principle which he understood to be intended by the proposition were carried, then he said they would be placing on a par with men of the highest intelligence and thrift any rogue who was clever enough to keep out of prison; every lunatic or idiot who was not quite too great a lunatic or idiot to entitle him to be put in Woogaroo; and every drunken loafer whom they came across at the street corner from month to month and year to year, and who was prepared to sell his vote for a shilling or a drink. Those men would be placed on a par with the most intellectual and thrifty men in the colony. That was the position, and he thought they ought to look at it carefully. When he was before his constituents a few months ago he referred to that question; not that he was asked to do so, but because it appeared to him that if the principle was adopted it must be adopted in the way he had said—that every man must have a vote, and that each man should have only one vote. Taking that view of the case he told his constituents distinctly that if the matter came forward during this session, or at any time he was a member of the House, he should give it his most hearty opposition, and he told them also—and he repeated the words now—that he would rather give to the thrifty man, who by his perseverance and industry accumulated wealth, twelve votes than he would give one vote to a drunken loafer who served the colony in no way whatever. He made a point of repeating that statement now. He might possibly be wrong in his interpretation of what was meant by the hon. gentleman who moved the amendment, but he felt that if the amendment were adopted as proposed, the ultimate result in the near future would be the adoption of the principle he had spoken of, and therefore he gave his most hearty condemnation to the principle which had been brought forward.

Mr. DRAKE said on that occasion he might be pardoned for disagreeing with the Hon. the Speaker without incurring the censure of the Committee. The hon. member had used a very extraordinary argument when he said that he would give twelve votes to certain individuals in the community rather than give one vote to certain other persons. It was very well to state a proposition of that kind, but would the hon. gentleman lay down any system by which he could exactly appraise

the exact number of votes that the gentlemen whom he so highly esteemed should be entitled to? As soon as they tried to lay down any lines upon which they would distribute the franchise they found themselves at sea, and that the trouble was very much greater than they expected. His opinion was that they would never succeed in finding a sure resting-place anywhere short of political equality at the ballot-box, and that was why he advocated the abolition of plural voting. The amendment of the hon. member was in the direction of the abolition of plural voting, which did not mean exactly the same thing as one man one vote. What was called one man one vote might mean one thing in one man's mind and another thing in another man's; but they all knew what was meant by the abolition of plural voting. The hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, said that the question had hardly been mooted until the time of the last general election; but the hon. member was in error there, because in the year 1887, when he (Mr. Drake) had the honour of contesting an election with the hon. member for Bulimba, he declared himself entirely in favour of the abolition of plural voting, and he had not changed his views since then, nor had the hon. member for Bulimba changed his. At that time it was treated as a very minor question, as one that did not matter much; and what was the reason why there was such a difference of opinion now in regard to it? It was simply because a party called the labour party were advocating the abolition of plural voting. He respected the hon. member for Bulimba, who had not changed his opinions, but he had not so much respect for the hon. members who professed to hold certain opinions at one time and then changed them simply because other hon. members advocated those views. And that was what had really taken place upon a great many occasions. A great many hon. members had expressed themselves in favour of one man one vote. The hon. member for Carnarvon said that the principle was theoretically correct. But anything that was theoretically correct could not be wrong in practice. Everything existed in theory before it was put into practice, and if the theory were sound the thing was right. Even a railway bridge or a cathedral existed in theory before it was constructed, and if the theory were correct, and the work well carried out, the bridge would carry the train and the cathedral would not collapse. He noticed that hon. members who opposed the motion of the hon. member for Burrum did not attempt to defend the present system, because they could not do it. The present system was altogether illogical, and could not be defended in any way. People said property should be represented; but it was only property of one sort—land; but property might exist in various other forms. It was also not consistent, because it only proposed to give a vote for landed property under certain circumstances. One man might have any amount of landed property, and have no vote in respect to it, while another man might have a vote in respect to a much less amount. He would ask any hon. member who tried to defend the present system on any rational ground to consider the case of two men who came into this colony each with £1,000 capital. One of them settled in Brisbane, for instance, and spent his money in establishing an industry, buying machinery, and employing a lot of people, and taking the risk of success or failure; but the other bought ten allotments, worth £100 each, in constituencies in and about Brisbane. Now, under the present system the former would have only one vote, while the other would have eleven; so that in those cases property would not be properly represented,

It had been stated that the abolition of plural voting would throw all the political power into the hands of the metropolitan constituencies; but he thought it would have the very opposite effect. Although he represented a suburban constituency, he said that it was in the city and suburban constituencies that the power of the plural vote was felt, because it was only where population was crowded and the constituencies close together that it was possible under their system, which required personal attendance at the poll, for one man to cast a number of votes. A man might have votes for a great number of squatting constituencies out West, but he could not possibly poll them.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: Did you not propose to meet that by voting by post?

Mr. DRAKE said that he had made a proposal that where a man went from one constituency to another he should, until his vote had matured in the fresh constituency, have the right of voting by post in the old constituency. The abolition of plural voting would operate directly in favour of the outside constituencies as against the metropolitan constituencies. He did not think it was possible by giving any number of votes to particular persons or by withholding votes from certain persons to put men on an equality. Men were not on an equality. A man who was thrifty and intelligent, and who acquired property, if he had spent his life well would exercise an influence at the ballot-box which would be far greater than he could exercise by means of ten or twenty votes. He did not think that any man, however much he might be in favour of the political inequality of the ballot-box, could lay down any satisfactory lines upon which that inequality could be established; and until some one did that he would hold to his first opinion that there was no safe resting-place until they got political equality at the ballot-box. He did not believe that it would operate in the way that some hon. members feared. Only recently, in New South Wales, when a similar proposal had been before Parliament, Sir Henry Parkes had caused a return to be made showing how many plural votes there were, and he declared to Parliament that the result of the proposal would not have anything like the effect which had been anticipated. He was sorry that the Colonial Secretary, in view of the discussion, had not got a similar return prepared. Of course, it might be a heavy task, but still it was not a difficult task. The hon. gentleman might have found exactly how many voters in the colony were entitled under the present system to vote more than once, how many were entitled to vote three times, and so on.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. Tozer): How could I do that without knowing?

Mr. DRAKE: It could be done by taking the names on the rolls.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I should want to identify the names as well.

Mr. DRAKE said that of course the difficulty might arise that there were two persons of the same name. It was a great pity that the suggestion of the hon. member for Burrum had not been carried—that some question should be added to the form of claim as to plural voting, which would in course of time enable the Government to find out how many plural voters there were. He felt sure that, as in New South Wales, the number would prove to be much smaller than was generally believed. He intended to vote for the amendment, because he thought it was the right thing. He thought there was no other system of voting that could be proposed which was so just as the principle of one man having one vote and one vote only. Until someone proved that the present system was just, he would hold

to the conclusion that hon. members knew it was unjust, and that they only clung to it because the party that happened to be in power thought that under the old system the injustice would work for their benefit.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said that the hon. member advocated the doctrine advocated by several members on the cross-benches—that was the system of levelling down—bringing all down to the lowest level. He advocated the destruction of all aspiration to get higher than the lowest rung of the ladder. The hon. gentleman had talked a great deal about thrift, and of what could be gained by thrift. He had pointed out that all that was to be gained by thrift was that those who by industry, by suffering, by intellect, and by other things, got on a little better, or in some cases a great deal better, than those who had started under exactly the same circumstances, should be brought down to the same level as those who had failed. They were all to be on the same dull level, at the bottom of the ladder. The hon. gentleman had enough intelligence to know that there was no equality in the world, although he pretended that he believed that all men should be equal. As Pope had put it—

“Order is heaven's first law; and this confessed,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,
More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense.”

He could go on with it, and he could allude to “all the blood of all the Howards,” if the hon. member wanted him to go further; but that was what Pope had said 120 years ago or more, and it was true now. The hon. gentleman could not crush them down, nor could all the power of the party that he went with push or keep them down to their level. They might strive as they chose to drag them down to their level. The party to whom the hon. and learned member was allied was not the party of progress, because they were determined that there should be no progress in the colony, and that there should be no inducement for men to get on. They were all to be tied down, and were not to be allowed to acquire property. The principle of one man one vote had not been recognised up to the present time in the legislation of the colony, and he trusted that the amendment would not be carried. If it were carried he was certain it would be a most disastrous thing for the colony.

Mr. GANNON said he might say at once that he was going to vote for the amendment. When he was a candidate seeking election he said he was in favour of one man one vote, though at that time he did not know it was going to be the question of the day as it had since become. There was then no labour party to frighten people, as some hon. members seemed to be frightened now. He once heard the Chief Secretary, when addressing a public meeting, use the words, “Government of the people, for the people, by the people;” and he considered that if the amendment was carried it would be government of the people, for the people, by the people. He took a special note of those words at the time he heard them, and now he returned them to the hon. gentleman. Hon. members who opposed the amendment said that property would not be represented if they passed the amendment; but the fact was that property was largely represented under the Local Government Acts by the dual vote—and even up to three votes. The amendment would not take away the representation of property under those Acts. Another argument was that it would give a raw new chum the same power as an old colonist who had accumulated some means. That was a good argument; but the difficulty could be got over by

providing that anybody who came in hereafter would have to be two or three years before he could exercise the franchise. A short time ago he met the Hon. Mr. Darling, of South Australia, in that Chamber; and being anxious to learn all he could about one man one vote he asked that gentleman whether in South Australia, where it had been the law for thirty-one years, it had made any special difference in the representation of the people; and the reply was that it had not. He believed that manhood should be represented before property. With regard to the argument that the amendment would put the drunkard on a level with the man of thrift, it could be provided that drunkards should be disqualified after a certain number of convictions. He was going to support the amendment because he believed it would do good; and even if it did not go through now he felt sure that it would become law within the next three or four years.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said the hon. member for Enoggera must have done great violence to his own feelings in making the speech he had made; but the arguments he had used would not convince any member of the Committee. The hon. member for Toombul stated that he heard the idea of one man one vote enunciated some time ago; but he never heard it spoken of until that political fraud, Sir George Grey, came to Sydney, and in popularity hunting laid it down as a cardinal principle. That was the first time he (Mr. Perkins) heard of it. He had certainly never heard it in that Committee. Nor had he heard the matter discussed at any meeting—public, private, or political. But it was all nonsense for the hon. member for Toombul to say that it was an original idea of his own. The hon. member must have borrowed or stolen it from somebody else.

Mr. GANNON: I never said it was an original idea.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said he understood the hon. member to say he had originated the idea. What happened after Sir George Grey enunciated the idea in Melbourne or Sydney after the Federation Convention? They were all at sixes and sevens in Victoria, one politician trying to top the other in popularity hunting. The cry of one man one vote was adopted by the party who wanted to get into office. The party at present in office adopted it. The Premier made it one of the cardinal points of his platform, but had since thrown it on one side. The Premier of New Zealand was also holding it out as a bait to catch certain votes; he too was popularity hunting. Some men were so bereft of principle that they would do anything to get into office or to keep in office. The hon. member for Toombul had stated that the question ought to be thrashed out by the Committee. It had been pretty well thrashed out already. South Australia had been cited as an illustration, as an instance of the benefits to be derived from the adoption of the principle of one man one vote. Had one man one vote placed that colony in its present position? Certainly not. Were it not for the accidental discovery of Broken Hill by a stockrider what would be the condition of South Australia at the present time? Growing four bushels of wheat to the acre would not make a country prosperous, no matter what sort of labour was employed. He contended that many of those who had adopted the cry of one man one vote in their hunting after popularity had since abandoned it. When they had the opportunity of giving effect to it they failed to use the opportunity, and the question was now lying dormant. One man one vote meant that one man was as good as another, and that he unhesitatingly denied. There were some men

in the colony who were as good as twenty other men. There was nothing in Scripture about one man being as good as another; on the contrary, it was distinctly stated that there were different orders. If they wanted proof that one man was not as good as another, they need not go beyond the floor of that House. Was a man's property to represent nothing? Was a man who came across the border with his horse to go shearing or droving, or to engage in any other employment, and had lived in the colony the requisite probationary period to qualify him to vote, to have as much say in shaping the destinies of the country as the man who by many years of hard work and self-denial had acquired a little property? Surely not! He (Mr. Perkins) had had many opportunities of voting in other parts of Australia, but had never taken advantage of those opportunities. He thought that if there was to be any legislation on the matter, a man should be restricted to two votes—that was, property should have one vote, and the man the other. A man who was of migratory habits, continually going from place to place, was not to be as much trusted with a vote as the man who was rooted to the soil in some shape or other. If those persons whom it was intended to benefit by introducing the principle of one man one vote became the owners of property, they would be more jealous of their rights, whether the value of their property was great or small, than any member who had spoken against the amendment. It was all very well for those who supported the proposal to talk and howl; but let one of the labour people get property, and let anyone attempt to interfere with it—even to the extent of putting on a 5s. tax—and they would complain louder than the great landlords. It had been said that Mr. Gladstone was in favour of one man one vote. Mr. Gladstone was in favour of a great many things, but before he could accomplish anything in regard to that question he had to face a general election in England. He was the leader of a great party, and it was well known how easily he could evade the matter after the election was over. He had evaded a great many things in his lifetime, and was so profuse and fertile in excuses that he would have no difficulty in finding an excuse for letting that matter slip until he dealt with other more important questions. So that very little importance was to be attached to the fact that Mr. Gladstone had promised that he would go in for one man one vote. He had other fish to fry before he got to that, and the question was not within the range of practical politics during the next session of the Imperial Parliament. No one in the colonies had the notion in their heads until Sir George Grey started his public meetings in New South Wales, and, he believed, in Adelaide. Sir George Grey also preached the gospel of one man one vote in New Zealand, and the present Premier of New Zealand, Mr. Ballance, had promised to make it one of his election cries.

Mr. DONALDSON: It is the law in New Zealand at the present time.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said he did not think it was, but he might be mistaken. No one could accuse him of having changed his opinion on that subject. He did not want any man to vote fifteen times during an election, and the cases where that was done were extreme cases. He should be ashamed of himself if he ever exercised the right to vote in more than two electorates. He had had the opportunity of doing so thrown in his way, but he had never availed himself of it, and he trusted that a settlement of the question would be arrived at on the lines he had suggested—namely, that property should have one vote and the man another vote.

Mr. SALKELD said the hon. member for Cambooya was mistaken in thinking that was a new idea introduced to Australia by Sir George Grey. He had believed in the principle since he had been in the colony. He knew there were potent arguments against it, but the arguments which ought to carry most weight were in favour of it. Hon. members asked why a loafer who had only been in the colony six months, and had no stake in it and done nothing for it, should have the same political power as a man who had been in the colony all his life. He would point out to those who argued in that way that their present system permitted just the same thing.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: That is its imperfection.

Mr. SALKELD said if so, how was it that there had been no attempt to remedy it? How did it work? So far as the town and suburban constituencies were concerned, it unduly favoured the holders of small allotments waiting for a rise in the market, a class of voters who deserved less encouragement than any other. In the country districts it enabled non-residents holding small allotments in a district to turn the scale in an election against men who had invested their all in that district. If hon. members were sincere in their argument about the worthless loafers, they would do away with that anomaly that existed under the present system. It appeared to him that the great cry against the one man one vote principle was from the allotment holders, who could turn the scale in elections, and who, because they did not want to lose their hold of the political power which the present system gave them, raised the "red spectre." It appeared that members on the bench in front of him had raised such an alarm that anyone who professed liberal or progressive views of any kind now was set down as an anarchist and all the rest of it. He did not wish to be held responsible for the views of any member of the Committee when he did not agree with them. He did not belong to the labour party, though he thought a great many of the views and principles they held were sound. He did not agree with all their views by a long way. He did not agree with all they said on public platforms, and had no sympathy with it, but he refused to enter what he called the "Tory camp." He believed the manifest retrograde tendency of the present Parliament had so alarmed thousands of working men as to drive them to join the labour party, though they did not agree with much that that party advanced. He saw from the reports of the debates lately that the hon. member for Balonne had urged that all party considerations should be dropped, and he supposed the hon. member alluded to the parties that before the general election were led by Sir S. W. Griffith and Sir T. McIlwraith. He wished to say that, so far as the party led by Sir S. W. Griffith was concerned, they had handed over everything to the other party, and were carrying out the policy of the other party from end to end. He did not call that a compromise or a coalition at all. He hoped hon. members who held views similar to his would not be deterred from speaking or voting in accordance with those views, no matter what the Committee thought of it. He had heard it said lately that there were only two parties in the colony now—the law and order party and the labour party.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Did you say the "lower order" party?

Mr. SALKELD: No; that might have come from the other side of the Committee—from the hon. member for Balonne.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: You need not insult him when he is away.

Mr. SALKELD said he would say the same thing if he was here.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: You would not say it outside.

Mr. SALKELD said he had not referred to the hon. member for Mackay, and the hon. member for Balonne was able to take care of himself. He would say he was a law and order man himself, and hoped he always would be, and he would like to see good government and strong government carried out, but law and order would not suffer if every man in the community had a vote. What he was afraid of was that a number of men, believing that those who now held the power were going to fasten their chains upon them and consolidate their own political power, might be led to vote for candidates they did not altogether approve of. There was a great danger of that taking place. They did not object to law and order, but they would not have retrograde legislation.

Mr. ANNEAR: What about the mob rule the new member for Bulimba was subjected to?

Mr. SALKELD said that if "mob rule" meant physical violence or intimidation he had no sympathy with it, and he would back up any Government in preserving for every man his just rights and protecting him from assault and intimidation, but he was not going to throw over all the liberal convictions of his life for fear he should be classed as outside the law and order party. He wanted to see every man in the community have one vote, and only one vote, and he also wanted to see the majority of the voters in every electorate carry the election without being influenced by cliques and intriguing electioneering agents on some side issue or other. If they had that he should not be afraid of the result to the colony, for nearly everybody was in favour of good government; they had no desire to go back to a state of savagery, where neither life nor property was safe. Since the present Parliament came into existence the control of nearly all the Government departments had been taken out of the hands of the legislature. That would have to be put right in the future. The people, when they got a greater share of power, would insist upon it. Although one man one vote might not be carried in the present House, he believed it would find great favour when the general election came on, and there was very little doubt that the next Parliament would see it become the law of the land. He deeply regretted to see party spirit running so high. Nothing would tend so much to the good of the colony as to see a cordial understanding amongst the various classes of the community. He did not want to see the community divided into two hostile camps—the working men on one side and the property-holders on the other. But it seemed very likely, and there was no doubt that the House, by its legislation during the last two sessions, had done a great deal to bring about that unhappy state of things. There were certain reforms that must be made in a progressive community, and that embodied in the amendment of the hon. member for Burrum was one of them. The system prevailed in South Australia, in New Zealand, and in the United States of America; and from America they had a great deal to learn, no matter what exaggerated statements might be made about the country being governed by lynch law and mob rule. It was chiefly in the Southern States that mob rule prevailed, and it should be remembered that the Southern States had been cursed with the curse of slavery, and that that was one of the legacies it had left behind. Leaving out a small section, there was not a more law-abiding people in the world than the people of the United States of America. A good deal had been said about caucuses, but nowhere was political organisation so complete

as it was in Great Britain at the present time, and he believed that in Great Britain one man one vote would be an accomplished fact before the expiration of the term of the next Parliament. Some people seemed to imagine that it would bring ruin and revolution in its train. The same thing was said in England many years ago about the adoption of the ballot. But the change had been quite the other way. After being a witness of the hustling and riot which prevailed in England under the system of public nomination and open voting, he was quite charmed at the first election he witnessed in Queensland to see the way in which the ballot worked. With practical experience of it, the same change of opinion would take place with regard to one man one vote, and people would never dream of going back to the old system. He should support the amendment.

Mr. HOOLAN said he did not suppose that anything he could say on the question would assist the object the hon. member for Burrum had in view. Why the hon. member should have brought forward an amendment of that kind, he did not know. However, that was the hon. member's own concern. It was a very strange thing that anybody should attempt to interfere with and annoy a number of people who enjoyed what they evidently considered a very great privilege, and one to which they clung very tenaciously. The privilege of dual voting seemed to be a very favourite privilege around Brisbane, and those who enjoyed it could not be blamed for sticking to it as tightly as possible. It was the duty of a man to hold fast what he possessed until it was wrested from him by someone else who had a better right to it. In Brisbane, a man did not need to be a very large capitalist to be able, if he chose, to record his vote at fourteen different elections, even assuming that they were so far advanced in progress or radicalism as to have all the elections on one day. There were a number of people in Brisbane who had fourteen votes, and he believed that some of them had more. Now, admitting that all elections were held on one day, there would not be the slightest difficulty in any Brisbane gentleman recording a vote in fourteen places. North Brisbane one vote, South Brisbane one, Fortitude Valley one, Bulimba one, Toombul one, Enoggera one, Nundah one, and so on; and under very speedy conveyance he might possibly vote at Caboolture and some other outlying district. If the election system was continued as at present he could record his vote in twenty-five or thirty electorates without any trouble. That undue privilege was accorded to thrift, or what was called thrift. He took it that the strict meaning of thrift was the accumulation of the earnings of daily labour; but the ordinary accumulations were the result of speculation. How, therefore, could it be said that the property vote was purely and entirely due to thrift? No doubt it was in some instances. If they could trace the man who saved £100 and invested it in a little three-cornered allotment, it might be possible to assert distinctly that that was a case of thrift; but there were hundreds and thousands of votes that were given for anything but thrift. A man might be the biggest rogue in the world and yet become possessed of a property vote. There was nothing to prevent a man on a goldfield, as he knew had been done, robbing his mates, and coming down here and investing his money in suburban allotments. Was his a vote for thrift? That man could most decidedly be proved to be a rogue and thief, and be put in gaol if his mates chose to take action against him. He also knew a man who came down from a Northern goldfield with £400. He invested it, and in three years sold his investment for £1,400. He bought a lot of city and suburban

property, and stood on the roll to-day as a voter. How did he gain that £1,400? Well, he might as well out with it: By selling his wife to a Chinaman. In that case it was the unfortunate Chinaman who really ought to have the vote, because he made the money in the first instance. Thousands of instances could be given of the absurdity of the vote for thrift. The vote that would be recorded at the general elections would be almost purely and entirely a vote gained and originated by speculation; and many of the votes could be traced back to absolute dishonesty, because many of the individuals who would exercise the franchise had never been thrifty; they never had had occasion to be. Some were born with money, and had continued to handle money through the instrumentality of financial institutions and the characters they bore. Was the vote for thrift in those cases? Those people had probably been born with expensive habits, had lived with expensive habits, and would probably die with expensive habits. Now, if they wanted to make the thrift vote a fair vote they must go even further, and give a vote to those who invested their funds in steamships and large manufacturing concerns that required the greatest amount of thrift and expenditure of brain power to carry on; but yet those people got no vote for their thrift. As matters stood now the man who gained £100, no matter how he gained it, and invested it in property on a rocky eminence, or in a three-cornered allotment, or a little swamp, was entitled to exercise the franchise, no matter who he might be. He might invest in a number of rocky eminences and frog swamps. He might be the greatest rogue in the world, the greatest and most notorious speculator, the biggest shuffler and spieler, the most cowardly and brutal wife-beater, and the most disgusting drunkard—and yet he would be entitled to his vote for thrift. He might be no use whatever in the world; he might be born bad, live badly and corruptly—his whole example might be bad and for evil; his every thought in life might be bad, and yet he was allowed the important privilege of the franchise. He maintained that there were thousands of men in the community who could be pointed to who were the very best of citizens, who never had been and never would be worth £100 in property, and who, if they had property, would never exercise the property vote because they knew it to be an improper privilege. Now, if it was necessary to give special electoral rights to individuals, why not give a vote to piety? Surely they were all Christians, and they had among them a number of Christian gentlemen who devoted their whole lives to the teaching of religion. Their life was more or less one of sacrifice; and if any class of people had superior rights, surely it was the clergymen of the colony. That right surely belonged more to the men who looked after the spiritual welfare of the people than the man who went to the racecourse with £5 in his pocket and came back with £500, which he invested in five allotments, and in two or three days recorded five votes on account of them. People seemed afraid of equalising the whole of the community. They talked as if the poor unfortunate people whom they called thieves and vagabonds had a different origin, or as if they themselves did not come into the world in the ordinary way, but came down from the clouds, ready-made and ready-dressed, in a beautiful dogcart, with a silver-mounted whip and a footman to wait upon them. Surely some of those people must remember their own ancestors! If they were rich, and even if their fathers were rich, perhaps their grandfathers were not; and if all the ancestors they could trace were rich, they could go back to Adam and Eve, who stood naked in the Garden of Eden. All people had pedigrees, and some of their ancestors might have known

poverty in its direst forms. Many people were apt to use the terms "loafer," "vagabond," "worthless scoundrel," and so on, or "vile drunkard," which was an epithet which should not be on anyone's lips, because anyone might become a drunkard, although the vileness might be admitted. Many a good man had had to travel about with a swag, and many of those who had founded the first families in New South Wales and Victoria—he could not get on a tender spot by mentioning Brisbane—had tramped about with their swags, and some had done even worse. Some of them had been tied to a post and unlawfully flogged for crimes they had never committed. People should remember those things when they used those epithets, because in these times when property went up and down—and they were told by people who ought to know that things were in a shaky condition—they did not know who might have to take up his swag next. It did not do to hurl those epithets at men whom they might be compelled to meet at the roadside and exchange the compliments of the day with within a little while. He cared very little whether the amendment was carried or not; it would be carried as soon as it was necessary, and then if it were not found beneficial it would be obliterated in the ordinary course of affairs. At any rate, it was a matter that some very clever people who could not be said to belong to the labour party advocated from the strength of their own convictions. Very clever people in the adjoining colonies believed in it, and so did clever people all over the world; and he was convinced the principle would be adopted in Queensland eventually, no matter what the property-owners might do. The property vote gave no equalising power to the man of intellect. The post of Queensland lived in Brisbane—a man whose natural gifts every man should admire and pay a certain amount of respect to—and if any man should have any privilege it was Mr. Stephens. But he had made inquiries and found that his name did not appear on any roll for a property qualification. That was one man who was entitled by his abilities to this privilege, if any man was. Then they found there were very few clergymen with property qualifications, except those who had begun to forget their vows and ordinances and to acquire money and corner allotments. Next take some of the very best institutions they had, such as convents. Some of the clergy had acquired votes on account of those laudable institutions, not for the institutions themselves, but for the land on which they stood. It was the institution which did good, not the land; that was worth nothing. Let them take from amongst themselves a man of great intellect, and another man who was good at making money. Take the Chief Secretary as an example of the former, and strip him of his wealth and send him to one of the adjoining colonies as a beggar without a shilling. Then let them take a man who was not very intellectual, but who was in the habit of acquiring wealth, such as the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Pattison, and let them try to compare the two men and the value they would be to the community, placing the intellectual and mental endowments of the one against the money-acquiring abilities of the other. The Chief Secretary would completely outstrip the hon. member for Rockhampton, unless another Mount Morgan jumped out of the ground, and if it did the hon. member for Rockhampton would completely outstrip the Chief Secretary in the matter of obtaining votes. If another Mount Morgan cropped up, the hon. member for Rockhampton could immediately obtain a powerful influence at the ballot-box; whereas the Chief Secretary, although his value would be infinitely greater to the community,

would have to plod along earning money in the ordinary way of his profession. Various reasons could be speciously put forward to show why property-owners should have a vote in order to protect their property; but their property would be protected all the same. If they went to New Guinea, they would have to get a very large tract of country to be of the value of £100; but if 10,000 loafers and vagabonds went to New Guinea, a man who had done nothing to improve the property, and who ran no risk, might go from Brisbane with his thousands of pounds, and at once buy and sell them in the matter of voting power. The labour party were very little interested about that matter. It was a matter that could be very fairly left to the working men of the colony, and to the business men, apart from the pure capitalist who exercised an undue influence over his fellow creatures, and over the representatives of the State by means of speculation, and not by any citizen rights. The question of one man one vote could be safely left to the classes he had mentioned. It was in their hands and not in the hands of the labour party, who were not particularly anxious about it. It was in the hands of such men as the hon. member for Burrum and the hon. member for Enoggera, who could fairly lay claim to be on an equality with anyone in the colony. They had no connection with the labour party; but they were the advocates of the principle which was believed in by many thousands of the commonwealth. In their hands it was about to become law, whether for good or evil. He hoped it would be for good.

Mr. GLASSEY said that had it not been for the remarks of the hon. member for Balonne he would not have risen. That hon. member had stated that there were certain persons in the colony—if indeed there were not certain members in that Committee—who desired to bring down everyone to the lowest level. He was not aware of any such persons, and he absolutely repudiated any such statement so far as he was concerned. There was no justification for, or testimony to support, the statement. Any fool could make statements, but it was another thing to prove them; and he had heard no testimony adduced in support of those wild and reckless statements. He had never advocated the levelling-down process. He had urged that the vote belonged to the man, and not to the property; and he contended that the man who withheld from another that which he had no right to withhold, and the individual who claimed that right ought to have an equal voice. When hon. members got up and spoke in such a way as to command attention, he thought they should be actuated by a desire to make truthful statements. It had been said that the Conservative party learned nothing and forgot nothing, and that was applicable to those hon. members who were opposing the proposed clause. There was an undercurrent of fear running through it all—fear that by extending the franchise, or, at all events, by destroying the accumulation vote, they would put all persons on terms of equality, and that property would be insecure. But such statements had been urged in England whenever any reform was advocated. When the great reform measure of 1831 was being urged the same cry had been raised. Property would be insecure, it was said, and persons who had no stake in the country were only desirous of obtaining political power in order to use that power to bring down those who had property to their level. Had that been the result? The same thing had taken place when Catholic emancipation had been demanded. There was a hobgoblin cry raised that the property of the Protestant population would be endangered if their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen were allowed to have a voice in conducting

the affairs of the nation. But no harm had resulted from carrying out that reform. Right up to the present moment when any measure of reform had been urged by those who were a little in advance of the standstill party, they had been branded as levellers. It was astonishing in that enlightened age that hon. members, who must be thoroughly conversant with those matters of history, should stand up and use such miserable arguments. There was no truth in the statement made that there were certain parties in the Committee and in the country who desired to obtain more political power with the view of depriving others of their accumulations. He coveted no man's goods—not even a single blade of grass or an ear of corn—and unless there was some evidence to support those statements it was unfair for hon. members to make them. In the old country they were in the throes of a general election, and so strong was the feeling on the question of one man one vote that both political parties had declared in its favour. Mr. Gladstone had declared emphatically in favour of the principle; Mr. Balfour had practically declared in its favour; and Mr. Parnell before his death had declared in favour of one man one vote. It had been law for many years in South Australia, and had recently become law in New Zealand. Was property less secure in either of those colonies? It had been carried through the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales by an overwhelming majority, but had not yet been carried into law there, because it was blocked by the Upper Chamber. He thought it was not unreasonable to ask those individuals who opposed the amendment on the ground that property would be less secure, to give some information in support of their statements. Let them show if they could, where the principle of one man one vote had been injurious to the well-being of communities where it had been introduced. Instead of that they simply got up and made wild, outrageous, nonsensical statements to the effect that certain parties desired to acquire other people's property. He was not acquainted with those persons, and so far as he was concerned he gave those statements a flat denial. The man who had worked for his property should have it protected. He had no desire to injure any man's property; he had no desire to urge a policy of levelling down; but he had a great desire to urge a policy of levelling up. He cared not for hard names—many hard words had been hurled at him, and his bones were still whole—but the hon. member for Balonne would pardon him for saying that it was unfair and unmanly to hurl those wild and reckless statements at him and his friends near him, because they differed from that hon. member. Was it fair that because they supported the amendment they should be called anarchists and levellers—persons who wanted to bring about disorder, destruction, and a violation of the rights of property? He trusted that though they differed in opinion from other hon. members they might be given credit for honest motives. He did not suppose that anything they said would be taken any notice of by the hon. member for Balonne and those who thought with him. That was a thing he did not care for; but he objected very strongly to the statement being constantly made that they were craving other people's property. Until the question was settled in the way indicated by the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Burrum there would be discontent among a large number of persons in the colony who would have no voice in the government of the country. It was very unfair to withhold the suffrage from them, more particularly when other members of the community could vote in three or four different electorates. He thought

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that one vote was sufficient for any man; and as to there being cause for any dread or fear that if the suffrage was extended it would lead to people attempting to take possession of property belonging to others, there was none whatever. Such a thing had not happened in other places where the principle of one man one vote had been adopted, and the people of Queensland were quite as desirous to see the colony prosperous as were the people of any other country to see their country prosperous.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD said he had been singled out by the hon. member for Bundamba as one upon whom he should pour out the vials of his wrath. He (Mr. Morehead) supposed he would have to submit to it, but he would not submit without hitting back. Some forty-nine years ago, or thereabouts, he happened to be born in the colony of New South Wales. At that time Queensland was a part of New South Wales, so that he might be said to have some sort of vested interest in Queensland. Some forty-two years after that he had to be taxed to import the hon. member who had just attacked him.

Mr. HOOLAN: An old story.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD said it might be an old story. Admitting, then, that he was a person of ordinary intelligence, which he was not going to dispute—he did not know whether any other hon. member was going to do so—and having some little knowledge of the colony, having lived in it all his life, with the exception of two years or a little more, he thought he ought to know something about the colony and its requirements, and that he was entitled to express his opinion about what was right or wrong for the colony with as much weight as, if not more weight than, the hon. member for Bundamba.

Mr. GLASSEY: But do not impeach other people of dishonesty.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD said he did not impeach anybody of dishonesty. He never charged the hon. member with dishonesty, and if the hon. member thought he did, and the cap fitted, he was very sorry. The hon. member had been imported into the colony, and had he done any good to it? Had the colony benefited by his advent? The hon. member himself had, no doubt, benefited by it to a considerable extent. He drew £25 a month, as salary, as a very proper representative of his constituency, no doubt; if he was not, he would not be there. The hon. member had also succeeded in getting two of his sons into the Civil Service, and he posed with his friends as the representative of the labour party. But they were not the representatives of the labour party. The labour party were represented by every member in that Committee, and not by those members who called themselves the labour representatives. He (Mr. Morehead) had had more to do with labour than the hon. member for Bundamba had ever had to do with it, and had paid as full a wage as the hon. member had ever paid. He wanted to point out that the hon. member had done remarkably well since he came to the colony. He had achieved a position of £300 a year, and had got two of his sons into the Civil Service. Was there any other member of that Committee who had two sons in the Civil Service? He (Mr. Morehead) did not think there was one. Yet that hon. member was the gentleman who got up and inveighed against the corruption that existed, while his sons fattened on that corruption, if there was any.

Mr. HALL said he rose to a point of order. Had the position of the two sons of the hon. member for Bundamba any relation to the question of one man one vote?

The CHAIRMAN said: I understood the hon. member for Balonne was replying to some remarks made by the hon. member for Bundanba. At present I fail to see the connection of his remarks with the question before the Committee.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he would show the connection. It was the connection between father and son. The hon. member for Bundanba had practically three votes, every one of which was paid for by the State. There was not the slightest doubt the hon. member had the power of influencing his sons.

Mr. HAMILTON: He has three sons.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said he was told that the hon. member had three sons in the Civil Service. He sincerely trusted the hon. member would stop that putting of his family into the Civil Service.

Mr. GLASSEY: He has six sons.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said the hon. member had six sons, with three, or half, in the Civil Service. He supposed that all those capable of passing the examination, or of getting into the service by dodgery or trickery of some sort, had been put there; so that the hon. member had four votes; and that was the man who passed as the advocate of one man one vote! He was "the Miller of Dee, with his children three riding along on his big roan horse." They had a multiple vote, absolutely concentrated in the man who objected to anything but one man one vote, and every one of those votes was paid for by the State. Yet the hon. member came there and said, "Everything is wrong, the people are overtaxed; the Civil Service is stuffed with the offspring of Ministers and members of Parliament, but I have only three sons in the Civil Service." That was the man who posed as the great patriot. It was too preposterous and absurd, but that was always the way with those patriots, especially the imported ones. He (Mr. Morehead) had been a member of the House for twenty-one years, and during that time they had never had a pure patriot until they imported one. He did not like the imported article—of that sort, at any rate. If it was a question of deporting them, especially at the present time, when the services of the hon. member would be very useful in England, he would be perfectly willing to subscribe to send him back. The hon. member had got a very ragged following, and did not seem to have succeeded in attracting towards him the class of men whom they might have expected to see from the speeches he had made. He had gone up and down the country, and had succeeded admirably in putting some of his poor dupes in gaol, and keeping them there by his after-action. A more perfect trapper of the unsuspecting working man they had never imported into the colony. If the hon. member could only trap rabbits as well as he could trap men, he (Mr. Morehead) would suggest that he should be sent out into the West. The hon. member had also lured men—he would not say to destruction—but to do that which had caused a black mark on their career which would last all their lives. He had been a successful schemer, and had kept his own head out of the noose up to the present, and done it very skilfully. But to come back to the original statement: Were those who really had some stake in the colony, and those who were born in the colony, to be misled by men who were imported at the expense of the country, who were worthless in the old country, and were shot out like some other rubbish? He believed that when they went to the electorates those men who thought they were so strong would be thrown out. He had been told that himself and others were to be ejected. He did not think so, and, at any rate, they would

not go down without a fight. The hon. member would not put them down by all his bouncing or by anything that appeared in the *Worker*, or by any of his proposals for managing the country which he knew nothing about, and over which he travelled only at the expense of his dupes. When the time did come he thought the hon. member would find himself in a smaller minority and with even a weaker following than he had at present.

Mr. HAMILTON said they had been told by the hon. member for Bundanba that he had never advocated a policy of levelling down, but they could only judge of that by results, and two members of the party to which the hon. member belonged had placed their resignations in the hands of the powerful association with which the hon. member was connected, and which advocated a levelling-down policy. The hon. member had, as usual, occupied a large portion of his speech in blowing his own trumpet and stating that every man in the Committee but himself made ridiculous statements. With regard to the levelling-down policy, they knew that about seven years ago everything was going on well in the colony, high wages were paid, and there was a friendly feeling between capital and labour. That went on until the advent of a few agitators, and since that time capital and labour had been at each other's throats, wages were lowered all round, and no one prospered but the agitators. He would like the hon. member to point to any action of the party to which he belonged calculated to build up the colony. The hon. member for Enoggera told them that those who opposed the amendment knew that the present system was unjust, and wished to retain it for their own benefit. It was unmanly to make such statements unless they could be proved, and that statement was an untruthful one. The men who were most prolific in such statements whined loudest when statements of the kind were made against themselves. He agreed with the hon. member for Balonne that the term "labour party," as applied to the hon. member for Bundanba and his followers, was a misnomer. Almost every member opposed to them had attained his present position by hard work, and in most cases by manual labour, while the member who led the so-called "labour party" had never done a day's manual labour since he had been in the colony.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. member that the question before the Committee is the proposed new clause.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member for Enoggera used one of the most unanswerable arguments against the amendment when he stated that the sober, intelligent, and thrifty man would always exercise a greater and a better influence than the idle and thriftless loafer; and the hon. member then proposed to level down the sober, intelligent, and thrifty man to the level of the loafer. It should be remembered that at present there was no colony in Australia, and probably no country in the world, in which greater facilities were given to people to become voters than in Queensland. Take the case of a gold mine, where one man held one share and another 20,000 shares, it was not thought unjust that the man who held the greatest interest in the venture should have the greatest voice in its management. To show the inadvisability of adopting the one man one vote principle, he need only refer to what took place in the Western districts when the strike took place. At that time a number of persons, because they did not get everything they wanted, held meetings, at which they stated they would bring Queensland to such a position that she would not recover for generations.

They were to do that by exerting political influence or by the fire-stick; but if those men had a stake in the colony they could not afford to act in that manner. It was a strong argument against the amendment to say that a man who had only been in the colony six months should have equal political power with a man who by hard work had acquired some property, and whose interests were bound up in the colony. A man by dint of hard work might have assisted in sending a district ahead, in developing its resources, and giving employment to a large number of people in it, and after accumulating property in it he might come to Brisbane to live, and yet that man, though he might know every man, woman, and child in that district, and all its wants, would have no vote in it, while a loafer who had only been there six months and who had gathered his knowledge of politics by loafing about public-houses would be entitled to a vote. The men who advocated the one man one vote principle were also the men who advocated that the only tax in the colony should be a tax upon land and property. That was to meet all the expenses of the State, and yet the people from whom it was to be taken were to be denied a vote in respect of their land or property. In connection with that subject it was strange to notice how circumstances altered cases. Before the last Ministry was formed one man who had a wild dream of becoming the holder of a portfolio actually voted against the property tax, and that was the hon. member for Bundamba.

Mr. GLASSEY: And he gave his reasons for it.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said it was of very great importance to the Committee to know whether the arguments submitted to it were sound or not; and if he deemed it right to challenge the accuracy of any hon. member's argument, he trusted that it would be understood that he did not do so with the intention of being offensive in any way. The hon. member for Burrum argued in support of his amendment that if they extended the franchise they would stop strikes—that the mere fact that the franchise was not extended to all persons in the colony was the cause of strikes. If the hon. member would only look at the facts to be observed in other parts of the world, he would see that exactly the contrary was the case; that in countries where the franchise was the most extended the largest and most numerous strikes took place. The test of a theory was its correspondence with facts. The hon. member told the Committee that in Great Britain there had been 880 strikes in twelve months. In the United States of America the franchise was still more liberal than in the United Kingdom.

Mr. POWERS: You proved the other night that it was not.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said that was in three States only. In the report of the chief of the Labour Bureau of the United States it was stated that during the six years ended December, 1886, the number of men on strike was 1,323,200—a great deal more than came out in the United Kingdom—and that the actual loss to the nation through those strikes amounted to not less than £24,000,000, or an average per annum of £4,000,000. In the United Kingdom the strikes during the ten years preceding 1880 amounted to 2,352, the average per year being 235. In Italy during the five years ended in 1876 they amounted to 206, or an average per year of 40, as compared with 235 in the United Kingdom. The electors in Italy were 21 per 1,000, while in the United Kingdom they numbered 155 per 1,000, yet in Italy there were far fewer strikes. He might also remind the hon. member that in British India, where there did not

happen to be any electors at all, there were no strikes. Therefore, so far as that argument was concerned, it had failed most lamentably. It had been pointed out that the amendment was not altogether clear, or that if it was clear it involved another question. It was not only the question that no man should have more than one vote, but that every man should have a vote. They had heard it argued that everyone had an inherent right to one vote. If that were so, why should it be denied to anyone—why deny it to kanakas, or lunatics, or gaolbirds? The real fact was that the franchise was given to a certain portion of the community because it was deemed to be for the good of the whole that they should exercise it. If it were deemed advantageous for a certain number of people to have no votes, it would be perfectly right to withhold them. They acted on that principle in the colony. The people who had no votes were persons who had no fixed homes, and there was a very good reason for it. The people who voted for legislators ought, when they exercised such an important duty, to be responsible for what followed. A man without a settled home could escape all the trouble which had legislation and foolish extravagance might bring upon the whole colony. If he were allowed to govern the country and to escape the consequences he would be in the position of a captain who, when his ship got among the breakers, got on shore, leaving his passengers and crew behind him. They had no confidence in captains of that sort; but they had confidence in captains who sank or swam with the ship, or were the last to leave her when she had to be abandoned. It had been remarked by the hon. member for Enoggera that their present electoral system was not altogether logical. He (Mr. Dalrymple) admitted that there were things in it that might be objected to. But whether a system was logical or not mattered very little. The question was, how the system worked. The Constitution of the United States of America was symmetrical and logical and worked well, because it suited the people who lived under it. But Bolivia, Venezuela, and Argentine, in South America, had exactly the same Constitution as the United States, and it worked the reverse of well. The British Constitution was distinctly a most inconsistent piece of work; it was anything but symmetrical or logical. From what he had read of the French Constitution he believed it was most consistent—it was thoroughly symmetrical; but yet Sir Henry Maine said, "Since the introduction of political liberty in France the Government has been three times overturned by the mob, three times by the army, and three times by foreign invasion." Now, he individually preferred a system which perhaps was not altogether good, but which would work, than the most perfect system in the world which had only one fault and that was that it would not work. In Spain since 1812 there had been forty serious military risings, seventeen of which were perfectly successful. Those cases happened in countries where doubtless the Constitution was an admirable one. The Constitution there was similar to that of the United States. Then again out of fourteen presidents of the Peruvian Republic thirteen had been assassinated or had died in exile. The Constitution there was perfect, but then it would not work. It had been said by a man of some eminence that where equality and security, which were both good things in their way, came into conflict, equality must go to the wall. They must have security first, because equality would only give them a part of what security would give. If it added to the permanence and stability of the country to give to those people who were responsible for its debts, and who

could not well shuffle away, an extra vote, then he said he did not care whether it was logical or not to do so. What they wanted—and it was an essential element in the existence of every Government—was stability. In Victoria it had been proposed to give a vote to the individual and a vote also for what they called thrift. Practically that was a vote to people who had some description of property. It had been pointed out by some hon. members that a great many people in the colony did not get a vote, and he believed they had come to that conclusion from the return read out by the hon. member for Bundanba; but no one ever laid sufficient stress on the fact that the census was taken on the 5th April. The strike was then in full operation—and to show the state of the country, and how impossible it was to draw the conclusion which had been drawn from that census—on the 1st of April Abor Creek bridge was cut. The people were excited, and numbers were massed together for military purposes, and the men who compiled the census said that in consequence of the strike it was impossible that their returns could be as satisfactory as they otherwise should be. He said there that the conclusion based on the figures given was wrong. But assuming that a great many people had not got votes in this colony, whose fault was that? In the main, it was their own fault. If they refused to give people votes under certain circumstances; if it were possible for every man to have a vote—and he distinctly said it was, unless he was afflicted by the Almighty—then he could get a vote after six months' residence. In his own district, although there were a number of men who annually went shearing, still they had homesteads. The difficulty they saw among people, generally speaking, was not in regard to the difficulty of birth or the difficulty of what they would earn, but what use they made of what they earned; and he said it was within the power of every man in the colony to obtain not only the vote which he held by virtue of his individuality, but to obtain another vote by virtue of his property. The objections, therefore, that had been urged, did not appear to him to be conclusive. The amendment really would not dovetail into the other part of the electoral laws. It had been pointed out that the question raised had been of no consequence, but that latterly it had assumed considerable space in the eyes of the people. The amendment of the hon. member for Burrum was not of vast importance of itself, he admitted, but he took it as the advance guard, and a great many other people took it as the advance guard, of something else which it was proposed to establish here—that was, to give to every man a vote. They found that a certain section of the community that had a great hand in the industrial disturbances were the party that attached most importance to the proposal. They said, first of all, they would get the reform proposed; then, every man a vote; and then, having got the government of the country into their own hands, they would disfranchise everyone else. That was what they themselves anticipated. That was what they preached, and he said, therefore, that with that doctrine before them it was their business to endeavour to conserve all those institutions of the country which tended towards stability; and seeing what they saw, and hearing what they heard, he thought they might apply the proverb—"Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." It had been also said that in South Australia no particular difficulty had occurred in consequence of the enactment of a similar provision. He could not say how many different Governments they had had there within a few years, but one thing was certain, and that was, that the tenure

of office in that colony was singularly unstable. If they wanted to alter the laws they must show that some advantage would follow, and it was not sufficient to say that no harm would be done if they did alter it. In any case, what occurred in South Australia was only partially the effect of the system of one man one vote or any legislation. A great deal of the position of South Australia was attributable to the development of its resources, and it was quite possible that a mine like the Broken Hill might carry the colony through in spite of legislation which, on the whole, was injurious. The hon. member for Bundanba said he had never coveted any man's property. He did not charge him with having done so; but, according to the manifesto which was published by the Australian Labour Federation, of which the hon. gentleman was a distinguished member, and possibly one of the chiefs, they distinctly claimed all the boats of the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company—boats built on the Clyde or the Tyne, and which had been paid for by foreign money—to which the labourers of the colony had not contributed one farthing. They said, "That belongs to labour; we are labour; give us the boats." Supposing that he went to the hon. member for Bundanba and said, "You did not make that watch, labour made it; I am labour, give me the watch." That was a sample of the doctrines which were being promulgated or announced by the organisation of which the hon. member was really the principal representative. And there was another thing that he remembered. The hon. member was addressing some persons at Bundanba, and he pointed to a house on a hill belonging to Mr. Lewis Thomas, and which Mr. Thomas paid for; and he was informed that the hon. gentleman said, "Now, there, boys, all that belongs to you; labour made it—in other words, confiscate that house." Therefore, he said that nothing was more plain than that the party which called itself socialistic proposed to erect itself upon the ruins of the present social edifice. They appeared to have no idea of getting on themselves, unless, like parasites, they had something else to begin with. The world was very wide, and if those principles were sound—that labour did everything and capital nothing, and that therefore capital should be confiscated—there was ample opportunity to put them into operation. It would not be necessary for them at any rate, first of all, to go about like pirates and say, "Stand and deliver;" but they would build up a social system for themselves. He believed, and there was no more reason to disbelieve it than a good many other things which they knew to be true, that there was a party here such as there was in France and Germany, whose opinion was that it was much easier to confiscate what other people had than to earn it themselves. That was a much more feasible scheme for enriching themselves for the time being. They would have a good time for a week, until it became necessary for somebody else to work; and as nobody would work, there would be an end of it. Believing as he did, and as others did, that there was a party within the colony holding those views, he thought it was in the interests of all society, the poor in particular, as well as the rich and the middle classes, to prevent what that party proposed—namely, the reconstruction of society. So far as he could see, there was only one part of that work they were capable of performing, and that was the destruction of the present system; he did not believe they could reconstruct it. All that being considered, it was their business to particularly watch those movements which that party themselves said were necessary as the first step, and which were to be followed by other steps, which would be

succeeded by the last step, which was called "nationalisation," and that meant confiscation. He did not think the hon. member for Burrum intended this as the first move, but it had been repeatedly announced that this was the game. First they played one card, and then another, and then they took the pool. This was the first advertised step towards the domination of one portion of society over the whole of the rest of it. He did not believe it would be successful for the simple reason that he had too much reliance upon the sound common sense of the people. They would be no more successful permanently than Robespierre and Marat of the Paris revolution. They were competent to be a temporary horror, and that was all; but believing that that was the aim, and this was one of the steps they proposed to take, he should not have the pleasure of supporting the amendment of the hon. member for Burrum.

Mr. POWERS said when the hon. member for Mackay first rose he expected that his arguments were about to be knocked to pieces, because there was no man more capable of doing it than the hon. member; but the hon. member entirely failed to do that, so he believed his arguments must have been very strong indeed. One argument dealt with was that he had said that the adoption of the principle would not help to settle the present difficulty. He (Mr. Powers) claimed that it would do so, and he instanced South Australia, where it had been in force for twenty-six years. If this was only the first step, and it had been taken twenty-six years ago in South Australia, why had they not gone on with the other steps? He was only asking them to abolish plural voting. Before the shearers' strike was on in Queensland, there was a conference on the subject between the squatters and the shearers in South Australia, and the difficulty was settled. It was settled in South Australia before it commenced in Queensland at all.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They are trying to sneak in behind us now.

Mr. POWERS said that it had worked well in South Australia. When the question had been debated at the Federal Convention, and the question of taxation came on, and how the federal revenue should be raised, it had been pointed out by the Chief Secretary that so frugal and contented and cheaply governed were the people of South Australia that it would not be a fair basis, so far as Queensland was concerned, to tax them on the same level.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not remember anything of the kind.

Mr. POWERS said that the taxation per head in South Australia was very much less than it was in Queensland.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is all new to me.

Mr. POWERS said the hon. gentleman knew that the taxation there was very much less, and that the people were more contented, more frugal, and were governed at less expense than in Queensland. Then, if they took the laws of South Australia, they would find that the laws relating to capital and labour were nowhere more fair than in that colony. The Real Property Act had been introduced there. He contended, therefore, that where the system had been tried it had proved a success. Hon. members had debated the question as if it were an innovation, but the same arguments had been applied in every Parliament in Australia except Tasmania, and always ineffectually. The people in the other colonies had heard and weighed all

the arguments in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, and New Zealand; and they had decided that the arguments against were not so strong as those in favour of the abolition of plural voting. It was not an alteration of the qualification at all. Those who were unable to get on to the rolls now would not be able to get votes if the clause were passed.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: That is a restriction.

Mr. POWERS said that it was a restriction on those who wanted two votes. It was a matter for consideration afterwards whether the electorates should be of equal value, but that had not been found necessary in other places where the principle was in operation. It would give no votes to those who could not pass the ordeal under the Bill. The whole thing, therefore, was narrowed down to the question whether plural voting was a good thing for the constituencies or not. As one who believed that it was not a good thing, and that people, and not allotments, should have the vote, he had moved the clause; and no argument that had been brought against it had proved that he was wrong. The strongest argument against it, and the one he had felt the most, was that raised by the hon. member for Port Curtis; but the argument was not so much what the amendment would do in itself, but what it might lead to. It had not led to anything in South Australia, and it could not lead to anything in Queensland unless they decided to allow it. He had felt that hon. gentleman's argument very much, because he had lived all his life in the colony, and intended to live here in the future, and had a stake in the country, and had children living here. He would not ruin them nor the colony if his clause were carried, as that would be a greater consideration with him than any other interest he could possibly have. But he was satisfied it would be for the good of the colony that plural voting should be abolished; and holding that opinion, it would have been cowardly had he not proposed the clause. He was very much obliged to hon. members for the temperate manner in which the debate had been carried on; it would allow the public to form some idea as to whether one man one vote would be a good thing for the colony or not. The question had been raised at the recent elections in the electorates of Bundaberg, Bulimba, and Barcoo; and it would be raised in every electorate at the general election. No question should have been debated more before the dissolution of Parliament than that of one man one vote. He had understood the Colonial Secretary to say that he calculated there were 15,000 plural voters, which was too large a proportion out of the number of electors in the colony.

Mr. BARLOW: That was the number of freehold voters—not plural voters.

Mr. POWERS said that was what the Colonial Secretary had said. He would point out one thing to the Chief Secretary—he did not know whether the hon. gentleman was aware of it—but persons were claiming votes as shareholders in companies owning land.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Nonsense!

Mr. POWERS said it was true. They only registered themselves as interested in the land, and they were not asked the questions which he had suggested should be put in, and which would have prevented them being registered on the rolls.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman did not suggest any question that would raise that matter.

Mr. POWERS said that in clause 7 of the Elections Act it provided—

“When premises are jointly owned, occupied, or held on lease within the meaning of the last preceding section by more persons than one, each of such joint owners, occupiers, or lessees shall be entitled to be entered on the roll in respect of the premises in case the value of his individual interest therein separately considered would, under the provisions of the last preceding section, entitle him to be so entered.”

He could tell the hon. gentleman that under that clause claims were being put in and allowed for persons who owned an interest in a company over £100. The members of corporations had votes, although they could not vote under the municipal law.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The law does not allow them to do so; those people must make false declarations.

Mr. POWERS said that they claimed because they were interested up to £100 as shareholders.

Mr. BARLOW: That refers to freeholds, and not to registered companies.

Mr. POWERS said that a registered company was the registered owner.

Mr. BARLOW: That is wrong.

Mr. POWERS said that they held an individual interest.

Mr. BARLOW: That ought to be put a stop to.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The law is all right, but that is contrary to the law.

Mr. POWERS said that was one of the ways in which plural voting was being used.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why is it not objected to?

Mr. POWERS said that when they put in their applications they stated that they were interested as members of companies in which their interest was upwards of £100.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Anybody can get on the roll by committing perjury.

Mr. POWERS said that it did not state that members of companies could not do it, and that was one way in which plural voting was being abused. If no one could have more than one vote, that objection would be removed. Another argument that had been used against the principle was that it would allow Brisbane to rule the country; but no place was ruled more by plural voting than Brisbane. The people of Brisbane could have a say in the elections in thirteen different constituencies, and some had three or four members; and if plural voting were abolished, Brisbane would not have the control it had at present. In Victoria, at the last election, there had been only the questions of one man one vote and one man two votes when he had property.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Were those the only questions raised?

Mr. POWERS said that those were the two questions raised upon that matter by the Conservative party. The people would see the arguments that had been used, and would weigh those arguments, and he believed the verdict would be in favour of the abolition of plural voting.

Mr. CALLAN said that the effect of the amendment would simply be to increase the power of the Southern constituencies where there was most population, and he had heard no reason why it should be adopted.

Mr. McMASTER said he was going to vote against the amendment, because he objected to being brought down to the level of the hon.

member for Bundamba by having one of his votes taken from him. Besides his vote for the Valley, he happened to have a vote for Nundah, having acquired his freehold qualification in that electorate by working late and early for many years, and he would ask what right had anybody to take that vote from him? He did not believe in that levelling-down process. He agreed with the hon. member for Bulimba that to a great extent one man one vote was a fad. After having worked many years in the colony, and having assisted to lay the foundations of the colony—he had been nearly thirty-eight years in Brisbane—he had a right to have a larger privilege than the hon. members who came here a few years ago. He lived in an electorate where there were as many working men as in any electorate in the colony, many of whom had invested their savings in properties in other electorates; and he was satisfied that the majority of the more sensible working people did not want one man one vote.

Mr. HALL said he was going to vote for the amendment, because he happened to represent men, not property. Some people were very much afraid of the preponderance of Brisbane in an election; and there was no doubt that under the present system there was a preponderance of voting power, because moneyed men could exercise their right to vote in every one of the surrounding electorates in which they held property. Population was usually taken as the basis of representation; but it appeared that some hon. members wanted to have it more on a property basis. With reference to what the hon. member for Port Curtis said about drunken men, he did not believe that anyone would like drunken men to exercise a very great influence on the legislation of the country; but under the present system there was nothing to prevent a drunken man getting on the roll, recording his vote, or becoming a member of that Chamber. Therefore, if the amendment was carried, it would not affect the status of drunken men in reference to politics. It really was amusing to hear the references made by some hon. members to importations to the colony from other countries. The colony went to the expense of perhaps £60,000 or £70,000 per annum to introduce people—white and black.

Mr. ALAND: The colony goes to no expense to introduce blacks.

Mr. HALL said he did not know exactly to what expense the colony went in introducing kanakas, but there was some expense.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The colony does not introduce them; the planters introduce them.

Mr. HALL said if the Government did not, the expense fell on the country.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No.

Mr. HALL: Well, it falls on the industries of the country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; the employers pay the whole cost.

Mr. HALL said he understood that some one had to pay for it, and what somebody had to pay for the industries of the country had to pay for. Anyway, they went to considerable expense to introduce a large number of white people, who had the franchise in the country whence they came, and who were very much wanted here or they would not have been introduced, and yet when they came to the colony the Government seemed very anxious to prevent them having the franchise as long as possible. The hon. member for Cook referred to the resignations of certain members of the Committee. One would think

that he was the custodian of those resignations. He would like to ask the hon. member if he could produce his (Mr. Hall's) resignation, or if he knew anything about it.

Mr. NORTON said he would like to give one word of warning to the hon. member for Burrum, who seemed to have been caught by the specious arguments of persons who had lately come to the country. The hon. member appeared to think that the illustration he (Mr. Norton) used was too far fetched, because in South Australia the one man one vote principle had been in force for a number of years, and nothing else had come of it. But he would remind the hon. member that the conditions under which it was proposed to introduce it in this colony were very different from those which prevailed when it was introduced in South Australia. The hon. member, who had come from school somewhat later than himself, would probably remember that there was at one time a set of navigators who when they got to the pillars of Hercules thought they had got to the end of the world. They pointed to the sea-line and said that was the end of the world. The hon. member sailed quietly up to the pillars of Hercules and persuaded himself that when he got there the sea-line was the end of the world. But when those navigators passed away and another set came after they went a bit further and discovered that instead of getting to the end of the world they had only got to the beginning. He would ask the hon. member for Burrum to take that warning to heart. The hon. member could read between the lines and see that there was more than he had expressed in the words he had made use of.

Mr. ALAND said he would like to say a word or two in reference to an impression that had got abroad with respect to the cost of introducing kanakas. An impression was being forced upon people at street corners, and disseminated by various newspapers—the proprietors of which ought to know a great deal better, and did know a great deal better—that the country was spending money year after year to bring whites and blacks to the colony. He had said that the very first opportunity he got he would most emphatically deny that statement, and he did so now. There was not a member of the Committee, not even the hon. member for Bundaberg, who did not know that the country had never spent one farthing in bringing kanakas to the colony. Every item in connection with kanaka immigration had to be provided by the persons who required that labour. He was not sure whether the commission of inquiry appointed some years ago was paid for out of the revenue of the colony, but he thought it was possible that it was. But they knew that all the expense in connection with kanaka labour was paid by those who required the labour; and it was unfair for members who knew better, and for newspaper proprietors who knew better, to promulgate such statements. In his own electorate he had been astonished by persons asking him if it was really a fact that the colony paid for kanaka immigration. With regard to the question of one man one vote, he had not pledged himself, like some hon. members. He had given no expression of opinion on the matter in public. No doubt if his colleague were present he would vote for the amendment, but he (Mr. Aland) would do nothing of the sort. He would plainly say that the party introducing that matter aimed at too much altogether. They were seeking to subvert everything that was right, to set up everything that was wrong, and to destroy what they could not build up. If they did build, it would be an edifice which would

topple over as soon as it was built. However, he saw it was ten minutes to 11 o'clock, so he would not detain the Committee further.

Question put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 11.

Messrs. Sayers, Hyne, Ryan, Hall, Hoolan, Glassey, Salkeld, Gannon, Drake, O'Connell, and Powers.

NOES, 43.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Sir T. Mellwraith, Messrs. Cowley, Nelson, Dickson, Black, Morehead, Pattison, Unmack, Tozer, Paul, Aland, Barlow, McMaster, Callan, Crombie, Murray, Corfield, Philp, Palmer, Annear, Little, Agnew, Laya, Dalrymple, Grimes, Macfarlane, Stephens, Jones, Lissner, Norton, Perkins, Plunkett, Campbell, Smith, Stevenson, Battersby, Dunsmore, Wimble, Jessop, Casey, Watson, and Hamilton.

PAIR:

For the amendment—Mr. Mellor. Against—Mr. Smyth.

Question resolved in the negative.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 11 o'clock.