

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 25 AUGUST 1893**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 25 August, 1893.

Personal Explanation: Gregory Election.—Standing Orders Committee.—Trades and Labour Hall Bill.—Personal Expenses of Ministers.—Chief Justice's Salary Bill: Second reading.—Central Separation.—Adjournment.

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

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

## GREGORY ELECTION.

Mr. CORFIELD: With the permission of the House, I desire to make a personal explanation. The other evening, during the debate on Central separation, the hon. member for Flinders, Mr. McDonald, cast aspersions on me with regard to my action during the late general election. I did not catch the words at the time, as a number of hon. members around me were talking, or I should have answered the hon. member then. In *Hansard* of the 24th instant he is reported to have said that I talked about the electors I represent, and knew well that if I went before my constituents I would be rejected by them. I deny that altogether.

Mr. McDONALD: How do you know?

Mr. CORFIELD: I know that if I had gone to a poll I would have beaten my opponent by two to one; indeed, a paragraph in the local paper went so far as to say three to one. My reason for saying so is that I travelled far more over the district and addressed far more meetings at different places than my opponent, and I received votes of confidence at all of them. Another reason is, that I know a great proportion of my constituents prefer a local representative—one who, like myself, has lived in the district for over fifteen years, and who is therefore more conversant with its wants and requirements than a stranger who came there for the first time at the general election, and was not acquainted with the requirements of, or even had a vote in, the district. The hon. member then goes on to say that if I had acted in an honourable manner, I would have resigned when the illegality was discovered, and gone before the electors. In reply to that, I say that had I been treated fairly by my opponent, and the man whom he carried round the country with him as his canvasser and chairman, I would have given them an opportunity of correcting their mistake; but when threats were made against me, and falsehoods were disseminated about myself and my partner, who happened to be returning officer, in justice to him and myself, I could not do otherwise than compel my opponents to test the question by an action at law. But up to the present they have not done so.

Mr. McDONALD: They have not got the money.

Mr. CORFIELD: As to the statements made about my being conversant with the decision of the returning officer, I simply say that they are untrue. I first learned—and then through the local paper—that I had been returned unopposed for the Gregory at Diamantina Lakes, on the 3rd of May. I left Boulia on the 22nd April, where I received a wire stating that Mr. Wallace Nelson and myself had been nominated for the Gregory, and proceeded with my electioneering until the 3rd of May, when, as I have already stated, I learnt the real position for the first time. The hon. member then, after being called to order by you, Sir, said, "However, as his constituents only consist of one, very likely there will not be much weight

attached to his assertions." With regard to that, I shall merely say that if any more aspersions are thrown out, I shall ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I thank you and the House for granting me the privilege to make this personal explanation.

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**

Mr. ANNEAR, on behalf of the Speaker, as chairman, presented the report of the Standing Orders Committee.

The report was ordered to be printed, and to be taken into consideration on Tuesday next.

**TRADES AND LABOUR HALL BILL.**

Mr. REID presented the report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Bill, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

The second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Friday, 1st September.

**PERSONAL EXPENSES OF MINISTERS.**

Mr. FISHER asked the Colonial Treasurer—

1. What is the total sum of money paid as sundry personal expenses of Ministers of the Crown during the term of last Parliament?

2. The name of the Ministers who incurred the same, and their respective amounts?

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. H. M. Nelson) replied—

The matter referred to is one that does not come properly within the scope of a question.

**CHIEF JUSTICE'S SALARY BILL.**

**SECOND READING.**

Mr. PLUNKETT: In moving the second reading of this Bill, I wish to give my reasons for introducing it. There are a good many new members here, and I think it would be better to give a short account of how this matter originated last session. It is well known that rumours were in circulation that Sir Charles Lilley was going to resign the Chief Justiceship, and it was also rumoured that Sir Samuel Griffith was willing to accept the position, but at an increased salary. I was asked if I would support a Bill to that effect if introduced, and I said I would. I said so for two reasons. First, I thought he would make a first-class Chief Justice, and I thought we would be justified in voting an extra £1,000 a year for him. But at that time I made the reservation that this £1,000 a year should only apply to that gentleman if he accepted the office, and that we should not saddle the colony with the payment of that sum to future Chief Justices. The second reading of the Bill came on. I supported it, and it was carried on division by 26 to 10. The minority consisted of Messrs. Grimes, Salkeld, Glassey, McMaster, Barlow, Powers, Macfarlane, Hall, Gannon, and Aland. In committee the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, moved an amendment that the Supreme Court judges be reduced to four, and I warmly supported that; but it was lost on division by 26 to 6, the minority being Messrs. Glassey, Plunkett, Macfarlane, Hall, Barlow, and Salkeld. When promising to support the Bill in the first instance, I also said I would do my best to prevent it continuing after Sir Samuel Griffith vacated the office. I then saw the hon. member for Bulimba, Mr. Dickson, and asked him if he would introduce an amendment to that effect. He said it was his intention to do so, and he moved such an amendment. That amendment was lost on division by 29 to 12, the minority being Messrs. Dickson, Smith, McMaster, Powers, Murray, O'Connell, Plunkett, Morry, Barlow, Grimes, Macfarlane, and Foxton. I felt strongly on the

subject, and when the third reading came on I voted against it. It was carried by 23 to 14, the minority consisting of Messrs. Glassey, Powers, Salkeld, Stephens, Foxton, Plunkett, McMaster, Groom, Watson, Catell, Gannon, Hall, Macfarlane, and Barlow. After that I felt rather sore; and I promised, if I had a seat in another Parliament, one of my first acts would be to try and defeat that Act. Those are the circumstances that have led up to the introduction of this Bill. It is said it is premature. Well, I do not think that is the case. It is never too soon to do a right thing; and, though I hope the gentleman now occupying the position will live a long time to enjoy it, yet life is very uncertain, and I do not think it a right thing that the next gentleman who may occupy the position of Chief Justice should suppose that he is going to receive the large sum of £3,500 a year. If a vacancy happened, let us see what might occur. Say the next occupant of the position may get there when he is forty-five years of age. For fifteen years he may draw this additional £1,000. Then he retires, and may live for another ten years with an increased pension of £500 a year. That makes a total of £20,000 that the colony would lose. I think a thing like that is worth guarding against, and I am prepared to be one of those who will do his best to make such a thing impossible. I maintain that the clause introduced by Mr. Barlow deserved a good deal more support than it got—that is, that we should only have four Supreme Court judges. I think at the present time we have too many judges, but, to reduce the number now, a clause would have to be introduced in committee repealing the 7th section of the Supreme Court Act. In looking at the number of judges in the southern colonies, anyone must agree with me that seven judges would be sufficient for the colony of Queensland. We have now five Supreme Court and three District Court judges. The five Supreme Court judges are Messrs. Griffith, Harding, Real, Cooper, and Chubb, whose united salary is £11,500 per annum. We have also three District Court judges—Messrs. Paul, Miller, and Noel, at £1,000 per annum each; and I think they fully earn it. They do exceedingly good work for the money. The only one of them known to me is Judge Paul, and I think if all the other judges acted in the same manner, and got through their business as well as Judge Paul, we could very well do with four Supreme Court judges. When I state that the total cost of the Department of Justice for this year is £43,800, it will be seen that some retrenchment is necessary. In this large sum is included £1,200 for the travelling expenses of judges. I think it would be a wise thing to repeal the Act of 1880, and make provision for only four judges of the Supreme Court. There are more judges in this colony than there ought to be, considering our small population and our impecunious condition. We have one judge to 50,000 persons. In New South Wales there is one to 83,000 persons, and in Victoria there is only one to 115,000 persons; so that we have two and a quarter as many judges as Victoria in proportion to the population. This is a matter on which a layman cannot speak with full authority, but I am only voicing the opinion of all I hear speaking on the question when I say that we are paying too much for our Department of Justice. I cannot say any more. I think every hon. member fully understands the measure; and I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: I rise to support the Bill very cordially. It gives expression to the views I endeavoured to record in the Act itself when it came before the House last year. At that time there was a consensus of opinion—

and I think there is still—that the gentleman who was rumoured to be willing to accept the vacant position was one who was highly qualified for the duties—that after a long career in the public service he would not only find a dignified position to retire into, but could also fulfil the duties of such an honourable position with great credit to himself and benefit to the community. We all recognised, however, that it was no time to make a permanent increase in the salary of the Chief Justice or the salaries of the puisne judges; and some of us felt that the time was very inopportune to demand an additional £1,000 a year; but we felt that if it were granted it should be considered as an honorarium to a gentleman who had devoted the best years of his life to the service of the country, and had not improved his own individual estate by such devotion. It was in that light that I voted for the Bill; but I wanted to confine its operation to the gentleman who was about to accept the position; and if he had not been willing to accept the position subsequently, that the provision for an increase of salary should not remain in force. There was a feeling amongst hon. members at the time that they did not care to put it in the light of recognising public services, inasmuch as some of them had throughout their political lives been consistently opposed to him, and to put it in that light would be an unfavourable commentary on their past opposition to him. I think that was a narrow-minded view to take, because, though I may be opposed to some hon. gentlemen during my political life, I would be sorry to think that those gentlemen had not been acting in the truest interests of the country according to their lights. I view the enlargement of the salary of the Chief Justice in this light: that so long as it remains appertaining to the office of Chief Justice, so long will there be a feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the puisne judges on account of their comparatively small remuneration. From all I can observe, some of our puisne judges work quite as earnestly and as laboriously as the Chief Justice, and why there should be such a distinction as is made by giving £2,000 to one and £3,500 to the other passes all comprehension. I believe that the puisne judges are receiving fair remuneration, considering the circumstances of the colony; and I also think that in our present circumstances the sum of £2,500 a year is a most handsome and liberal allowance for the Chief Justice. In the United States the Chief Justice receives only 10,500 dollars, or £2,100 a year; and when the £3,500 paid here is compared with that amount, it seems out of all proportion for the services performed. I think I have explained fully why I did not join my hon. friend, the member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, in his amendment. I was desirous to see the Bill pass; and I have explained to my constituents that in voting for the Bill I did so to provide an honorarium to a gentleman who had devoted the best years of his life to the public service of the colony; but I now concur heartily in the proposal of the hon. member for Albert for restating the salary at £2,500 a year—not to touch the emoluments of the gentleman at present holding the office, or to reduce the pension to which he may be entitled on his retirement—I think that would be repudiation—but to restate the amount of the salary as £2,500 a year for the office, so that when the next vacancy occurs that will be regarded as the amount of remuneration. The reduction of the number of judges is not expressed in this Bill, and, while supporting the measure in the form it is now presented to us, I must reserve the right to consider whether it would be wise to reduce the number of our judges. I hardly think it would be, considering

[The Hon. J. R. DICKSON.]

the very great extent of this colony, and the necessity of courts of appeal being independently and fully formed. I do not know whether it is wise to exclude from courts of appeal the judge who previously heard the case; I have doubts as to the wisdom of such action, because such a judge might render very great assistance to his colleagues, even though he could not exercise a preponderating vote or influence. However, that is a matter to be discussed hereafter, but I should advise the hon. member not to prejudice his Bill by introducing any amendment dealing with the reduction of the number of the judges. We have a great extent of territory, and we wish to see justice fully, fairly, and expeditiously administered, and anything that would tend to retard such action should be very carefully avoided. It has just occurred to me that if the hon. member for Fassifern succeeds in carrying his Bill we may have to enlarge the number of judges. I concur in this Bill, because it represents the amendment which I proposed last year, and which I regret did not meet with the support I hoped for. But it is never too late to mend, and the hon. member has done right in introducing the Bill early. Life is uncertain, and should a vacancy occur during a parliamentary recess, a gentleman might be appointed to the office who would naturally expect to receive the salary provided by the legislature for his predecessor. I hope the Bill will be passed unanimously.

Mr. HOOLAN: This Bill is very simple in construction, and very stern in principle. It proposes to deal with some person, at present unknown, who on some future occasion may occupy the position of Chief Justice of Queensland. We cannot wonder at anything that takes place within the walls of Parliament. Actions have taken place there that will bear misconstruction. Actions take place now that will bear misconstruction; and in all future Parliaments such actions will take place. An Act of Parliament was passed last session, after due deliberation, raising the salary of the Chief Justice to £3,500 a year—£1,000 increase on the usual price; and it appears that since then some hon. members have changed their minds, and have come to the conclusion that the services are not worth the money paid. If those services are not worth the salary, why pay it at all? If the services of any distinguished gentleman are worth £3,500 at this very impecunious period, most decidedly those of some future occupant of that office will be worth that sum; in fact, following out a very proper chain of reasoning, they ought to be worth more, because the colony will contain a much larger population, will be much wealthier in every way, and there will be a great deal more work for the Chief Justice to do. It it were a clear, calm, and resolute decision last year to raise the salary of the office of Chief Justice whoever might fill the position, then it should be the wisdom of Parliament to keep it at the increased rate and not attempt to arrange for something that may never happen at all. Parliament maintains that the office is well filled now, and that we receive value for our money. The occupant of this position enjoys good health; he has not gone beyond middle age; he possesses boundless ability, splendid resolution, and it is likely that he will fill that distinguished position for many years to come. On the other hand, this colony is only a portion of the great terrestrial globe, and it may be burst up by some great convulsions of nature and split into eternal fragments. At that period, which is not defined, and which it is not in the power of anyone to state, except someone in the confidence of the present Chief Justice, there may be no colony of

Queensland, and we may want no Chief Justice. It is my humble opinion that it is quite time enough to bid good morning to a certain unmentionable old gentleman when you meet him on the track, and as we have not met him yet there is no reason to pass the salutations of the day at all; and if we continue in the present track we may never meet him. However, when that old gentleman comes, presumably there will be a Parliament, possibly composed of men more intelligent than this, and I dare say the Parliament of that period will be quite equal to the occasion. We know very well that the actions of Parliament are not satisfactory; at any rate they seem unsatisfactory to Parliament itself. This very important measure is brought forward in a very simple way, and nevertheless its simplicity does not cover its very vast importance. It is brought forward, and the Government refuse to have anything to say about it, and consequently the Government must be—I will not say ashamed—but possibly they are full up of their action. It is the duty of the Government and of the Government supporters to stand by their action, and either stand by the salary they voted to a certain gentleman, or let them reduce that salary, if they can reduce it. There is no doubt others can be got to fill the position worthily and well. If on the present occasion we are to be guided by what was done last year, then the political novices, or novel politicians, will not consent to the Bill for the simple reason that they are supposed to be a growing party, which possibly in a short time we may cheerfully prophesy will control this Assembly. Then there may be some member of the legal fraternity—say, the hon. member for Maryborough, for an example—who may be a dangerous political opponent, and this party may want to get rid of him. The position of Chief Justice may become vacant, and most decidedly the greatest inducement to offer a man is money. It is a hard thing to say, and I say it with no intention of disparaging the present leader of the Opposition, but it is the way of the world, and probably will continue to be the way of the world, that the biggest inducement which can be offered to a man to get rid of him is a very high salary. In the event, then, of such an extraordinary contingency arising, I trust that this salary will remain as it is. Speaking for myself, I possess the ordinary hopes, aspirations, and ambitions of mankind, and they lead me to believe that if I am here in the ordinary course of things I shall be a very prominent politician; and if any other prominent politician, who happened to be a lawyer, should come in my road, I will take the easiest means of getting rid of him. This is, according to the science of politics. If that means leads him to the prison cell, the pawnshop, or the chair of the Chief Justice, I shall be only too happy to do it; and such being the case, I trust the Chief Justice's salary will remain as it is.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am not quite sure what I can do with regard to this Bill. If it is a matter of retrenchment, on principle I ought to support it; but the retrenchment proposed is so very far ahead that there is not going to be much in it. I am afraid the retrenchment to be effected by the Bill will never come in my time. My objections to the Bill are these: At present it is unnecessary and uncalled for; it is a mere pandering and truckling to a popular prejudice, and an attempt to curry favour and to gain popularity. The hon. member for Burke has put the case remarkably well, and has exposed the meanness of the whole thing. He has shown that there are a number of people who would like to attack the Chief Justice's salary. They find they cannot do that—not having the power—and now, to show what they

would like to do, they wish to pass this Bill to reduce the salary of his successor. While that will do the present Chief Justice no harm, the whole thing is directed in a disguised and covert way against the present occupant of that high position.

Mr. PLUNKETT: No.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am perfectly prepared to take the responsibility of all that I have done in this matter. I have had the approval of the country on my action, and this is not the time to fight the battle over again. The hon. member for Albert and the hon. member for Bulimba have made a great deal of what was said last session, and they have given us the divisions that were then taken; but the Act fixes the salary for a certain term, and there is no reason, nor is there any prospect of any occasion arising to induce us to make any alteration. I must disclaim the motives attributed to others by the hon. member for Bulimba. I was not, and never will be, a party to raising a salary as an honorarium, or as a reward for political services, to any individual. I am entirely opposed to that principle. In this case it was shown to be necessary, and the country accepted it as necessary, to make such an alteration under the peculiar circumstances of the colony; and that was done, and done with great advantage to the colony. Certainly I see no harm in passing the Bill, I do not care whether it passes or not, as the contingency contemplated is so remote that it might never be put in force. The circumstances of the colony may have so changed, that instead of reducing the salary of the next Chief Justice, the salaries of the puisne judges may be raised to equalise matters, and that would be much better than what is proposed in the Bill. Many hon. members advocated that last year, and the junior member for Toowoomba insisted at the very first mention of the Bill that the salaries of the puisne judges should be increased by £500 a year, but the House would not accept it. I hope that that may yet be agreed to. Briefly, my objections to the Bill are that the time is not opportune; it has not been brought in in the interests of the Treasury, or in the interests of the country, but really to gain a little ephemeral popularity.

Mr. STEVENS: The Colonial Treasurer has been rather rough on the introducer of this Bill and the hon. members who have spoken in favour of it. They should be given credit for sincerity in what they have done and said. The hon. gentleman has also laid himself open to some severe strictures upon himself in regard to his political actions at that time. He says he is satisfied the country was with him, but I think he is entirely wrong. The people of the country are entirely against the high salary. I was in Melbourne when the Act was passed, and whether I would have supported the Bill or not is a matter of no consequence now, but I quite agree that the present Chief Justice is well worth the salary he receives, and I do not think there is a man in the colony more fully qualified for the position. At the same time I think that he is an exceptional man, and much more fitted for the place than any man we are likely to have for many years to come. The salary he receives is too high to be ordinarily paid, and I shall support the Bill. It is very much better to do so now than to wait until the occasion arises through the vacation of office by the present Chief Justice. If we wait, motives may be ascribed which cannot possibly be ascribed now, when the contingency seems so remote. There can therefore be no harm done by legislating on the subject now. The hon. member who has introduced this measure having stated that, although he assisted last year in increasing the salary of the present

Chief Justice, he did so with the intention that, as far as he was concerned, it should only apply to the present holder of the office, his conduct was quite consistent, and no unworthy motive should be attributed to him. On the contrary, we ought to give him credit for sincerity. I think he is quite sincere in his action this afternoon, and I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. POWERS: I was rather surprised to hear the Treasurer say that this Bill was a direct attack, on the part of those who introduced and supported it, upon the present Chief Justice. I voted against the Bill to increase the salary last year, and I said then that, although I considered the services of the present holder of the office might be worth £3,500 a year to the colony, the colony was not able to afford it. I could not agree to the proposal for that reason and other reasons. By voting for this Bill, I shall show those who did not believe in my action at that time that it was genuine. With regard to Sir S. W. Griffith, this Bill has nothing whatever to do with him. So long as the salary of the Chief Justice remains at £3,500 a year, we shall constantly have the question referred to by the Treasurer cropping up—namely, why should we not raise the salary of the other judges in proportion? The passing of this Bill will do away with that question altogether. There can be no doubt that when the Act of last year was passed the House had only one individual in view, and that the increased salary was not intended to be given to his successors. I do not know, from the speech of the hon. member for Burke, whether he is going to vote for the Bill or not. There is another Bill before the House which, if passed, will make every man in the colony a barrister, and immediately you make a man a barrister the door of the Chief Justiceship is thrown open to him. Whether the hon. member is looking forward to the £3,500 a year for himself I do not know. Seeing that there will be so many applicants for the office when that Bill becomes law, and to preserve the hon. member from temptation and possible disappointment, I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. FISHER: I may say at once that I am going to support the Bill for several reasons. One is, that there is a rumour abroad that the present Chief Justice will not be long on the bench. Another reason is, that it is a right and proper thing to do in justice to the colony and to the other judges. The Act of last session was practically an honorarium to the present Chief Justice. That gentleman may be worth £3,500 a year on the bench, and I dare say he could earn far more at his profession. He ought not to have accepted, for political services rendered in this Chamber to those men whom he opposed at the general election, what was really an honorarium for the work done. When we consider that £3,500 is more than an average working man receives from the time he begins work until the time when the undertaker takes charge of him, it seems far too big a sum to pay every year to any man. By the time the present Chief Justice has occupied the bench for the full term, the population of the colony will be much larger than it is now; there will be more work, and the position will be a higher one in point of honour and dignity. At that time it will be said that in 1892 there was a man more skilled in the law than all others of the legal fraternity, who was singled out as an ornament to the bench for all time. The children of those who are here now will never be able to occupy that position with the same amount of money, because the contention of the Bill is that he is the only person who is worth £3,500—a proposition I certainly

deny, because as able, or more able, men may arise in this and the other colonies than the present Chief Justice. It is often said that the amount paid for the administration of justice in the colony is far too high, and, as was very properly said by the leader of the Opposition, if we allow the Act of last session to remain in force, it will always be used as an argument on future occasions to raise the salaries of the other judges by £500 or £1,000. Indeed, we heard the Treasurer himself just now practically admit that it might be a just thing to raise their salaries at some future time. It has been pointed out that in the United States of America judges receive much smaller salaries than are paid in this colony. That is not a fair thing to the colony, and I am prepared, if the Bill goes to a division, to vote for it.

Mr. CALLAN: The hon. member for Gympie made a most extraordinary statement when he said it was rumoured that the Chief Justiceship would shortly be vacant. I hear a good deal of what is going on in the town, but I never heard any rumour of the sort. I hardly think a gentleman who occupies that position, and who has given up a very large practice, the emoluments from which were very much larger than his salary as Chief Justice, is likely to throw it up. When I voted last year for the increase in the salary of the Chief Justice, I did not do so in order to give an honorarium to a certain gentleman for services rendered, but because I thought he was the best man who, in the interests of the colony, could be placed in the position of Chief Justice. I had even stronger reasons for voting as I did, which, perhaps, it would be better for me not to give.

Mr. McDONALD: Give us some of the other reasons.

Mr. CALLAN: I am not afraid to give them. One was that I wanted to get the man who was then Chief Justice off the bench—a man who I had known for years had not been carrying on in a straightforward manner. The present Chief Justice is exceptionally fitted for the position, and I hope he will live to adorn it for the full term of fifteen years. As the Bill only refers to that gentleman's successors in the office, I shall vote for its second reading.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: I take exception to this measure as legislation altogether too much in advance. We are asked now to deal with the salary of the highest legal dignity of the colony, after the present occupant of the office has ceased to occupy it. I take the opportunity of expressing my opinion—and it is shared in by many hon. members of this House, and certainly by persons outside—that not only is £3,500 not an over-payment for the Chief Justice of this great colony, but our puisne judges are at present underpaid. I pointed out a good while ago that so long as the puisne judges are paid only £2,000 a year, a marked difference is made between their salaries and that paid to the Chief Justice. That should be remedied not by levelling down, but by levelling up. We have men in this colony perfectly capable of occupying the high position of judges of our Supreme Court, but we must remember that in occupying the office they surrender a great deal, when the salary is compared with what they might derive from practice at the bar.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why didn't they stick to the bar?

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: I might ask the hon. member why he did not stick to the occupation he followed before he came to this House? Surely the hon. member knows that there may come a period in a man's life when, after serving a long time as a great

advocate, he may aspire to a position of more rest which would be beneficial to himself, and in which he could confer enormous benefit upon the community in which he lives and the bar over which he would preside? The hon. member may as well ask me: Why do not judges in other countries stick to the bar? The reason I do not desire that they should stick to the bar is that it is most desirable, in the interests of the colony, that men who have made a mark at the bar, and who are recognised as leaders of the bar and great legal authorities, should be given an inducement to go upon the bench. The emoluments of the judges are less than they received when practising as barristers, and those are the reasons which have urged me to advocate liberal salaries for men who accept the high and onerous positions of seats in our highest court. Those are the reasons by which hon. members of the House were actuated in increasing the salary in the way it was increased for the present occupant of the office of Chief Justice of the colony. I only regret that the salaries of the puisne judges were not increased *pro rata*, as the arrangement made left a gap between the Chief Justice and the puisne judges. It was said that the Chief Justice was worth £3,000 and the puisne judges only £2,000, but I would level up rather than level down, and I certainly shall be no party to the passing of this measure, which, if passed, must remain inoperative until a state of affairs comes into existence that is not in existence now. It is proposed that we should legislate for the future, and that as soon as the office of Chief Justice is vacated—and long may it be held by the present occupant of the office—there should be a decrease in the salary attached to the office. If that is so, it is about the highest compliment the present Chief Justice could possibly be paid. It indicates, at any rate, that, in the opinion of this House, he is worth the adequate salary he at present receives. For the reasons I have given, I shall oppose the second reading of this Bill, and I shall continue to oppose it if it ever gets into committee.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I am going to support this motion for two reasons. The first is, that I opposed the advance when it was made, and I like to be consistent; and the second is, that I have always considered that £3,500 a year was too much for the community to pay for one man's services. Though, of course, I remember the Scriptural reference to the potter and his clay, I think all men are very much equal. The potter can do what he likes with his clay, and he may turn it into a beautiful ornament for the mantelpiece or into a very common utensil; but the common things are often very much more useful than the ornamental things. The man of great ability is often in a very different position from other men, because he has gifts he is not himself responsible for, and did not acquire. A man may improve his gifts, and he is, in fact, bound to do the best for himself and for the community. It has been hinted by a Minister and by a strong supporter of the Ministry that we should level up instead of down, and that the salary paid to the puisne judges should be in proportion to that paid to the Chief Justice. If £3,500 is too much for the Chief Justice, £2,000 is quite sufficient for the puisne judges, and by passing this Bill we may prevent the attempt which, no doubt, will otherwise be made to raise the present salary of the puisne judges.

Mr. BURNS: I intend to support this Bill most heartily. I have heard it expressed several times here that the feeling of the country was in favour of the increase made in the salary of the Chief Justice; but this is the first time I heard it. Nothing is more clear than that, if the

country was unanimous in anything, it was against that increase. I know the proposal caused a perfect furor of indignation in my constituency and in the North, and I was returned pledged to reduce the salary if possible. That does not appear to be possible; but we should see that the thing is not perpetuated. The Treasurer said that such a proposal as this was a sort of insult to the present occupant of the office, while the hon. member for Balonne characterised it as the very highest compliment that could possibly be paid to the Chief Justice. It cannot be both an insult and a compliment. But in any case I think the Chief Justice is far too highly paid at £3,500, and that £2,500 would compare favourably with the salary paid to similar officers in other countries of the world. As to the suggestion of the hon. member for Balonne that we should increase the salaries of such enormously paid officials as the puisne judges at a time when we are cutting down the salaries of much smaller paid men, it is out of all reason. I shall support the Bill.

Mr. BROWNE: I do not like this Bill, though I intend to vote for its second reading. I do not like it, for the simple reason that I do not think there should have been any occasion for its introduction; the salary should never have been raised to £3,500. Like the hon. member for Townsville, I entirely differ from the Treasurer when he says that public opinion was in favour of the increase. I have not heard of one person or paper in the North that had a favourable word for the increase. We have been told that the consensus of opinion in the last Parliament was in favour of it, but I do not see how that could be when it was carried by only 26 votes to 10. Since I have been in the House, I have heard a division in which fifty-eight members took part characterised as a catch division, yet we are told that because the increase was passed in a House consisting of thirty-six members, or just one-half the total number, there was a consensus of opinion in favour of increasing the salary of the Chief Justice. The proceeding was condemned by three-fourths of the people of the colony; and if there was any chance of reducing the salary, I would certainly vote for a reduction. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. DANIELS: I am going to vote for the second reading of the Bill. The opinion all over the country is that it was a shame to raise the salary. When it was done the country was in as bad a state as it is at the present time. We have, at different times, heard a great deal from some hon. members opposite against spoon-feeding, but the hon. member for Balonne seems to be in favour of spoon-feeding the judges. I am in favour of freedom of contract, though not perhaps in the same sense as those words are used by hon. members opposite. At all events, I believe that freedom of contract should apply to the judges as well as to the labouring classes, and that if men who are competent to take a judgeship were allowed to tender for the position, we should get as good judges as we do under the present system. The hon. member for Balonne talked about levelling up, but the policy of the Government is to cut down the wages of the lowest paid classes below what it is possible for them to live on. The judges are spoon-fed and treated as little gods, while other people starve, though in their own sphere they are doing their best according to their capacity. In America the highest salary paid to any judge is only a little over £2,000 per annum, and surely it is as easy to administer the law in this colony as it is in America. I hold that £2,000 a year is enough for any judge.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: If hon. members object to the increase in the salary of the Chief Justice on the ground that it was passed in a House consisting of thirty-six members, I would point out that that is exactly the same number as we have present now, and yet it is proposed that we should deal with this Bill. Therefore, that argument does not count for much. Neither does the argument that cutting down salaries in a certain direction is not justified, because we may have occasion to give very much higher salaries. If the hon. member who spoke so eloquently about freedom of contract will remember, there is such a thing as supply and demand. This House has not the power to cut down the wages of any man who receives £5, or £3, or £2 per week, if that man is fortunate enough to be in the position to get more, as the present Chief Justice is. I propose to support the second reading of the Bill, but not for the reasons some hon. members have advanced. The salary, as fixed, is undoubtedly exceptional so far as the colony is concerned, though it is the salary which is paid to similar officers in other colonies. I am not going into the reasons which the last Parliament had for increasing the salary by £1,000. I was not here and did not vote for it, so that I can speak without any prejudice in the matter; but I do not wish to blame the last Parliament. We have quite enough to do if we attend to our own business, which will probably involve finding fault with one another. When the salary was increased it was alleged that the merits of the present possessor of the Chief Justiceship were singular, and his ability to earn a larger salary was undoubted. But we are all mortal, and it may happen that the Chief Justice will die, and then the salary being established it will be the salary of his successor. I want to preserve the freedom of Parliament to settle such a question, so that it may be in a position to exercise its discretion as to whether this exceptional salary shall be paid to a future Chief Justice. For sound constitutional reasons we cannot reduce the salary of a judge, but whether the present salary is justified or not—I am not going into that question—I think it would be generally unnecessary to pay that amount; and I am quite sure that it is true, as many hon. members have said, that public opinion generally was not in favour of the increase. But whether that was so or not, the introduction of this measure is much more a demonstration than anything else, because, after all, if a vacancy should occur in the office, it will always be in the power of any future Parliament to give what salary they like. But, in order to emphasise my belief that the salary of £2,500 ought to be sufficient under ordinary circumstances to guarantee a gentleman of sufficient professional ability to fill the office of Chief Justice, I propose to vote for the Bill. If any future Parliament is going to give £2,500 or £5,000 a year, what we do on this occasion will, I imagine, have no effect whatever. Every Parliament will take its own responsibility. This measure is merely to guard against an appointment being made at the same salary, should a vacancy arise suddenly, when Parliament is not sitting. If I am not mistaken, similar Bills have been brought in in the Parliament of Victoria and New South Wales, and have been carried.

Mr. GRIMES: It seems to me a rather lamentable thing that we should be passing Acts one session and altering them the next. I voted against the amendment of the Supreme Court Act when it was before the last Parliament, but not because I had less respect for the present Chief Justice than those who voted for it. I believe I held him in as high esteem as any man, and was proud to follow him as my political leader for twelve or fourteen years but I did

not see at that time that the country was in a position to pay an extra £1,000 for the office. Neither do I think that the same inducement should be held out to future occupants of the office. I intend to support the Bill, and think it would be wise to reduce the salary, so that no one may be led astray.

Mr. HARDING: I quite agree with the hon. member for Mackay that this is a demonstration of public opinion; and, at the same time, I must say that it was only one of many rather peculiar things done by members of the last Parliament. There was the removal of a gentleman from this side, and sending him home as special agent of the colony, and overtures were also made to another gentleman on this side of the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. HARDING: I think it right to vote for this measure, so that the power may be taken out of the hands of the Government to make a similar appointment at £3,500 a year.

The Hon. G. THORN: I will not give my opinion on the merits or demerits of the present Chief Justice, but I will say that I consider the salary paid out of proportion to our population. In Victoria the salary was reduced from £3,500 to £3,000, and they have a population there of 1,250,000. In New Zealand there is a population of between 600,000 and 700,000, and the salary paid to the Chief Justice is £1,700; and in South Australia, with a population very slightly inferior to ours, they pay £2,000. That being the case, I think we might come down. There is retrenchment in every other department of the service, and I do not see why there should not be retrenchment in this direction. If I had my way I would reduce the legal vote by one-half, and even then I believe justice could be just as efficiently administered. I shall support the Bill most cordially.

Mr. McDONALD: Without pandering to popular prejudice, as the Colonial Treasurer would have us believe speaking in favour of this motion is, I would like to say, in contradiction to what the hon. gentleman says—that he is of opinion that the country approved of raising the salary of the Chief Justice—that I think we have had it clearly demonstrated by most hon. members who have spoken that popular opinion was not as the Colonial Treasurer says it was. I personally spoke very strongly against the increased salary granted to the Chief Justice, simply because it appeared to me that there was a desire to get rid of a person who was a strong opponent of certain parties. We have been distinctly told by the hon. member for Fitzroy that the reason why he voted for the increase was simply to get rid of the late Chief Justice. As a matter of fact, that was not the reason for his vote, because three months prior to that the late Chief Justice had sent in his resignation, and it was some considerable time after that the question of the increased salary came on. Therefore, the hon. member could not have had that motive, or if he had that motive he must have got hold of some political rumour that was running round—that the late Chief Justice was likely to resign. I think it is very injudicious on the part of any hon. member of the House, simply because he wants to get rid of some person outside, to fritter away the funds of the colony. I contend we are sent here to protect those funds. We are told that the reason why this extra £1,000 a year was voted to the present Chief Justice was simply because he was the most fitted for the position. I have nothing to say as to his fitness for the position, but, although he might have acquired the best possible knowledge of law, yet

there was one virtue which that gentleman lacked, which did not qualify him for the position—he was a strong partisan as regards politics. In my opinion that will always be a weak point in his position there. It appeared to me a most extraordinary thing that the present Colonial Treasurer should bring in a Bill to increase this salary at that time by £1,000 a year. I know the papers at the time said a great deal about how well it was received in the Assembly and outside, and made a great mouthful of the fact that the Bill was brought in by the then leader of the Opposition. I know that it was regarded as a public scandal throughout the country; and it was currently rumoured that the reason why it was voted was to try and get rid of a powerful political opponent. If that is so, I say it was an act of which no Parliament ought to be guilty, and one that should stamp those who supported the Bill as men not fit to represent their constituents. I am going to vote for this Bill, because I think we should take steps to prevent such a thing occurring again. Personally—repudiation or no repudiation—I believe that the extra £1,000 a year should be taken away from the Chief Justice, simply because I don't think those who voted it had a right to grant it. I believe they did it against the wishes of the country, and there were only half the members of the Assembly present at the time; and if ever a motion is introduced to reduce the salary to the old standard of £2,500 a year, it will have my hearty support.

Mr. PHILLIPS: I agree with the Colonial Treasurer that this Bill will effect no practical retrenchment. Even if it is passed into law it will not limit the power of any future Parliament to increase the salary; besides, I regard the Bill as a covert affront to the present occupant of the office, and that being the case, I will not support it.

Mr. ARCHER: It is a question in my mind whether the present Chief Justice was a successful politician or not—that is to say, one whose political services benefited the country as a whole or not; but I have not the slightest doubt that he was the fittest man who could have been selected for the post he now occupies. I was not here at the time the appointment was made, but I understand that he naturally would not resign a very lucrative practice at the bar unless he were offered a higher salary than that paid to the former occupant of the office, and that he would not have accepted the position under any other terms than those which were offered. I do not think that justice can be too dearly paid for—that is to say, I would infinitely rather have a Chief Justice with the reputation for legal ability held by Sir Samuel Griffith than an inferior man at an inferior price. When Sir Samuel Griffith has given his judgment, even in the most intricate cases, people will probably be very chary of appealing, and the very fact of people knowing his great ability will probably save the country a great deal more than the £1,000 a year. Whether I should have agreed to the increase or not had I been here I cannot say; but the bargain is made, and I think it would be an injustice to Sir Samuel Griffith now to pass this Bill. If it is found necessary to make a reduction, a Bill can be brought in for the purpose when the next appointment is made.

Mr. AGNEW: The hon. member for Flinders, referring to all those who voted for the increase of salary to the present Chief Justice, said that if they were not ashamed of their action, at all events, the country was ashamed of them and was opposed to the increase. I do not think the constituencies have shown that they were opposed to the increase. We have had a general election since then, and a good many members who

supported the increase are still here. And I am surprised to find that the hon. member in charge of this Bill now before the House, who has declared his consistency in opposing the increase, actually voted for it on division. It is interesting to know how far, as evidenced by the result of the last election, the public have approved of the action of their representatives with respect to the increase. Here is what took place: Mr. Nelson moved that the Bill be read a second time. The House divided. Ayes: Mr. Agnew—I am here still; Mr. Allan is here still; Mr. Black is out of the colony, or he would have been here, too; Mr. Callan is here; Mr. Casey did not present himself for re-election. Mr. Cowley is our Speaker now; Mr. Dickson is here; Mr. Drake, the paragon of the party opposite, voted for it, and he is here. Mr. Dunsmore did not present himself. Mr. Hamilton is here; Mr. Jones did not present himself. Mr. Lissner was defeated, which is a great loss to the colony. Mr. Little is not here, nor is Mr. Luya. Sir Thomas McLlwraith is here; Mr. Morehead is here; Mr. Morry did not present himself; Mr. Nelson is here to oppose the motion; Mr. O'Connell is here, and hon. members opposite admire him. I am sorry Mr. Paul was not returned, or Mr. Perkins. Mr. Rutledge did not present himself. Mr. Tozer is here; Mr. Unmack is not here; Mr. Plunkett, who was one of the tellers, is here; and Mr. Annear is here. After all, I think the country has expressed its approval of the action of the last Parliament. Of those who voted against the Bill, Mr. Barlow is here, and has, no doubt, altered his opinions; Mr. Glassey is not here, nor are Mr. Hall, or Mr. Gannon, or Mr. Salkeld, or Mr. Aland; Mr. Grimes is here, and so are Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. McMaster and Mr. Powers. Five out of the twenty-six who voted for the Bill are out, and five out of the ten who voted against it are out. Therefore, I claim that the country approved of the action of the Government. I voted for the increase, and justified my action. The salary is not too high for the work the present Chief Justice is capable of doing in regard to the simplifying of the law and the lessening of its expense. In one day the Chief Justice could save sufficient money to satisfy the country, and, for all we know, he may have done it. I repudiate the assertion made by the hon. member for Flinders, that the country has disapproved of the action of the last Parliament in this matter. Besides that, I object to the waste of time in legislating for what may not take place for the next fifteen years. We have nothing to guide us as to what may be the value of the services of the Chief Justice to the colony at that time. Is not Judge Real very well qualified to be Chief Justice, and may not his services be worth the amount paid to the present occupant of the office? Who can estimate the value of the present Attorney-General as Chief Justice of the colony in another fifteen years? It is monstrous to think that we should be asked to legislate to fix the salary of a public officer fifteen years hence. We all hope that the present Chief Justice may occupy that position for the next thirty years, and it is utterly absurd to waste our time and try to pander to the mob in legislating so far ahead. We have plenty of other work to do, and I shall vote against this Bill.

Mr. PLUNKETT, in reply: It is unkind for the Treasurer to accuse me of pandering to the mob, because no one can charge me with being insincere in this matter. At the time I promised to vote for the increase, I stated that I desired that increase to apply to the present Chief Justice, and, more than that, I made enemies of some very powerful men by my action. The gentleman who asked me to vote for the increase knew that I would oppose the

increase being given to any future Chief Justice, so that I cannot be accused now of wishing to pander to popular feeling. I hope the Chief Justice will live a long time to enjoy his salary. The hon. member for Rockhampton spoke as if we were trying to reduce the salary of the present Chief Justice; but that would be repudiation. I am glad the measure has met with so much support. I was not wrong in the vote I gave then, and I would do it again under similar circumstances. I have only kept the promise I made then to myself and my constituents, and hope the Bill will be passed without any division.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

The committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Friday, 8th September.

#### CENTRAL SEPARATION.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the debate on Mr. Curtis's motion—

1. That the constituencies of the Central division of the colony of Queensland having, at the recent general election, declared in favour of territorial separation, in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the territory comprised within such division should be separated from the said colony and erected into a new colony; but so that the interchange of natural products between the new colony and the old one shall be and continue as free from tax or duty after such separation as if it had never been made.

2. That this resolution be presented to His Excellency the Governor for transmission to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies in the usual way—

The HON. G. THORN said: The hon. member for Rockhampton may rest assured that I am going to vote against his motion. One point I wish to touch upon is that the case of the Central district now is not at all analogous to the case of Moreton Bay when separation was granted from New South Wales. In those days communication was very imperfect and infrequent with Sydney. The steamer communication was most erratic, and there was no telegraphic communication. In fact it took as long to reach Sydney as it now takes to reach Normanton. How different is the case now with the Central district? It takes no longer to go to Rockhampton, or even Longreach, now than it used to take to go to Toowoomba. Rockhampton may be reached in thirty or thirty-six hours from Brisbane, and railway communication with Longreach at the head of the line does not occupy much time. Why, it is about as easy getting to Rockhampton as it used to be getting to Ipswich before we had the railway, and it will be even easier when the coastal railway system is extended to Rockhampton. I have a great respect for the great Central division of the colony, and no one has done more to build up that great district than myself. When I was in office the Central line was stuck at Westwood, and I was the means of extending it, and developing the resources of the great pastoral country at the back of Rockhampton, which at that time was only occupied by cattle. As soon as the railway went out it was put under sheep, which we know afford more profitable employment to the people, and also bring in far more railway revenue than cattle. That is the reason why the Central line pays so handsomely. In addition to that I gave the Rockhampton people that magnificent bridge which spans their river, and I gave them their post and telegraph offices. In fact, I believe I was too generous to them. Still in those days we had no over-expenditure as we have nowadays, and everything was done properly. I remember one time when the Treasurer, Mr. Hemmant, expected there would be a deficit in the revenue, the Government very quickly made it up, and the people did not find it out until months after-

wards. I am not going to tell the House how it was done; but, instead of the deficit that Mr. Hemmant anticipated, we had a surplus of £80,000 for the year.

Mr. HOOLAN: We will have to get you back again.

The HON. G. THORN: The Rockhampton people received so many favours from the Government during the four or five years I was in office, that during the succeeding Parliaments the separation cry dropped, and nothing was heard of it until just the other day. I shall now tell the House why the Rockhampton people are in favour of separation. The demand revived when they saw the coastal railway system approaching their town. The cry for separation has been got up by the people of Rockhampton alone. I was amused when the hon. member for Rockhampton talked of the Railway Commissioners having recommended the connection of the South and North Rockhampton lines. What earthly good would that do? Did the Commissioners not also recommend the speedy extension of the coast railway to Rockhampton? Why did the hon. member not advocate that as well?

Mr. CURTIS: So I will.

The HON. G. THORN: There are only about 100 miles wanted to complete the line, and its approach has made the land-boomers of Rockhampton renew the agitation for separation. They dread the completion of the railway between Brisbane and Rockhampton *via* Gladstone. I may tell the hon. member for Port Curtis that he is in the hands of the Philistines, and before very long he will find out that they are selling him, and that they are now only making use of him. I regret to see him joined with them, and I believe that had he gone against the Rockhampton "push," he would have been returned by a large majority instead of a slender one. I have been told that the separation question had nothing to do with his return, but rather damaged his cause, his return being due to the labour vote along the railway line. The election is not one that the people of Rockhampton should boast about.

Mr. BOLES: There were only six votes in Rockhampton.

The HON. G. THORN: As I say, the people of Rockhampton are afraid their very existence is at stake. They are like the people of Ipswich in the old days, who dreaded the railway being taken to Brisbane. Before separation, Ipswich was the only place in Moreton Bay that received any favours at the hands of New South Wales. When Brisbane became the seat of government, and the railway was opened, Brisbane began to go ahead, until the population now runs to about 100,000. So with Rockhampton. Its very existence is imperilled by this coastal railway system. They know that when it reaches deep water at Gladstone, or Port Alma, that the population of Rockhampton, instead of being numbered by thousands, will dwindle down to hundreds. There are no other resources in and around Rockhampton except those it receives from the Western country. The Central members actually propose to take a larger area of territory for their province than they propose to leave to the South. They propose to give themselves an area of 230,000 square miles, and to leave to the South only 190,000 square miles. If a division of that kind were proposed in Sydney, they would say the man who proposed it was mad. I do not say the hon. member who introduced this motion here is mad, but I do say he had no right to do it. The hon. members for Wide Bay and Burnett have just as much right to ask for separation. But the members for those districts have never been active politicians. They

have never been the great horse leeches that some other constituencies have sent to the House crying always "Give, give." I do not believe the Central members, as a body, are anxious for separation. This cry for separation is only got up by a few people at Rockhampton. I do not believe the Western men care the least bit about it. The hon. member for Fitzroy knows that what I am saying is perfectly true.

Mr. CALLAN: I know it is not.

The HON. G. THORN: Probably I myself, if I lived at Rockhampton, and was interested in it to a large extent, might also join them in this senseless cry for separation; but it would be a frightful mistake to the colony to grant it at this particular crisis. We are only just beginning to recover from a terrible state of depression. Hon. members must remember that we are not out of the fire yet, and any serious attempt to separate the Central division from the rest of the colony would only intensify the evil. It would certainly injure our credit abroad. In the old country they are watching everything that takes place here. This is no time even to raise the question of disintegration. I am not referring to the Northern part of the colony; that is altogether outside this particular question. As far as the North is concerned, I do not mind their getting separation of some kind. They are altogether too far away from the seat of government. It is far different with Rockhampton. They are only a third of the distance away, and we shall be able to shake hands with them when our railway system is complete. Their own railway taps both the South and the North, and they want the trade of the south-west as well. They have a branch line to Springsure, and another to Clermont, and a little railway that does not pay for grease for the wheels to Innis Park. In all directions they have lines running. No doubt they have done quite right in getting all they could. They have been favoured by every Government, from the time of separation from New South Wales until quite recently, and Rockhampton is to be congratulated on having always sent such able and active members to represent its interests here, and to get all that they have succeeded in getting. Speaking seriously, though there may be a good deal to be said in favour of Northern separation, there is nothing whatever to be said in favour of Central separation. The hon. member for Rockhampton has tacitly on to his motion a condition that if separation is granted there shall be reciprocity in the interchange of natural products between the Southern and the Central divisions. I question very much whether it is not against the Royal instructions for one colony to enter into a treaty with another without making it applicable to all the colonies. They may have been changed since, but those were the Royal instructions twenty years ago. I hope the motion will be scouted by the House, and I am almost sure it will be. I shall most decidedly vote against it if the hon. member for Rockhampton presses it to a division, as I presume he will do.

Mr. CROSS: The hon. member for Fassifern has, according to his own statement, been joking with the House. I can assure hon. members that, whether he was joking or not, he has not put the question in its true light. I do not belong to those Central representatives who are said to represent corner allotments. I represent a constituency 227 miles from Rockhampton, and yet at the recent election the question of separation was a most prominent one, and the one as to which public feeling was warmest and most unanimous. The only condition the electors insisted upon was that

their member, whoever he might be, should be pledged to electoral reform before separation; and it was the same in other constituencies where there was a contest. I resided in Rockhampton, and was connected with a newspaper there, and from personal experience I am in a position to say that at that time the movement was a people's movement; and I am certain it is now more than ever a people's movement. At one time I admit that the workers of the colony looked askance upon the movement as a class movement, initiated by the property-owners and corner allotment people of Rockhampton and its vicinity to secure control of the Central district for the purpose of improving their own properties. The question has since been discussed from all points of view, and now all sections of the community in Central Queensland are unanimous in their demand for separation. I do not intend to trench upon the ground gone over by Mr. Curtis, and the able speeches made in reply to him. The excellent speech of the Premier, from his own point of view, was an education to me in the opposite view of Central separation. I do not concern myself very much with the statistics of the question, but I have looked at it from the wage-earners' and workers' point of view, as to whether the people feel themselves in a position to manage their own affairs and are unanimous in a desire to do so. Those two propositions can be demonstrated. The people certainly believe they have full capacity to manage their own affairs, and they are unanimous in their desire to do so. The view the workers of Central Queensland take of the matter is the same as the view the workers of the North take of Northern separation, and the turn the question has taken in both districts is instructive. A number of Labour representatives have been returned from Northern constituencies, and the late chiefs of the separation movement in the North are dropping it like the proverbial hot potato. The leader of the movement there, Mr. Philp, after his appointment as Minister for Mines, wrote the following letter to his constituents. [The hon. member proceeding to read the letter]—

The SPEAKER: I must call the hon. member to order. There is a notice on the paper regarding Northern separation, and the hon. member may not speak upon that question now.

Mr. CROSS: I was reading the quotation to bear out my contention that, though at one time the separation movement did lack the support of the people, that is not the case now. They see, now, since the whole question has been discussed from all points of view, that if left to manage their own affairs they could manage them a great deal better than they are managed at the present time. I intend to move the following amendment on the motion moved by the hon. member for Rockhampton—after the word "made," at the end of the 1st paragraph to insert the words: "That the new Constitution be one under which a person cannot have more than one vote." I move that amendment, because it is the wish of a very large number of the people of the Central district that, whenever Central separation is brought about, home rule there shall be made as effective as possible by this electoral reform. The fact that the majority of members returned at the last election in Central Queensland were returned in favour of electoral reform is a justification for the amendment, and if those members are true to their pledges they will vote for it. If they do not, they will place themselves in the category, and it is a very large one, of pledge-breakers. One or two of the candidates did not face the hustings, but I think they are inferentially pledged to that.

The sponsors of the senior member for Rockhampton pledged him to support electoral reform, and they also told the electors that he was a rebel to McIlwraith. How far they were right in that, the experience of the last few months will show. With regard to the others, where the vast majority of the constituents had an opportunity of expressing their opinions on the matter, the members returned are pledged to electoral reform. Every Central member who wishes to see home rule for Central Queensland will vote for this amendment, and show that the desire for the separate colony is one based on and voicing the sentiments of the people.

The SPEAKER: I would point out to the House and the hon. member that the House has affirmed that the words of the resolution shall stand. It was proposed by the hon. member for Charters Towers to omit all the words after "that," in the 1st line of the resolution, and the House has decided that those words shall stand. Therefore, I do not think the hon. member for Clermont is in order in proposing his amendment, because it is practically going back on what the House has decided. Had he given notice of his amendment, as the hon. member for Croydon, Mr. Browne, did, I should have protected his interest in the same way as I did the interest of the hon. member for Croydon, whose amendment would have been put if it had been relevant, but now I do not think it is possible to go back upon the decision of the House, that the whole of the resolution shall stand.

Mr. POWERS: At present we are only up to the word "Central," the proposal to omit the words after that having been altered to protect the interest of the hon. member for Croydon.

The SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is mistaken. I said distinctly that if the motion, "that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question," were defeated, the amendment could be put if relevant; but I understood that in voting on that question the House was actually voting on the proposal that the whole of the words after "that" should stand part of the resolution.

Mr. POWERS: As a matter of fact, the question put to the House was that only the words up to the word "Central" be omitted. The House decided that those words should not be omitted, and the subsequent amendment was ruled out of order. Whatever the intention was, we are only up to the word "Central," and the amendment now proposed is to add certain words at the end of the 1st paragraph.

The SPEAKER: As a matter of fact, the hon. member is right, but I distinctly stated at the time that the House was practically dealing with the proposal that all the words after "that" be omitted. It was only because I wished, as I was bound to do, to protect the interest of the hon. member for Croydon, who had given notice of another amendment, that I put the question in the manner I did; and as this amendment has only just been proposed, I am of opinion that it cannot be put. However, I invite the opinion of hon. members on the subject.

The PREMIER: I have no doubt that the question was put in the form, that the words "the constituencies of the Central" be omitted, with the view of inserting others, in order to protect the interests of one member; but it was put in that way, so that, as a matter of fact, we have only decided that the words "the constituencies of the Central" shall stand part of the question. I have, however, another objection to take, but I should first like to hear what the Central members have to say on the matter, because their motion is being doubled up and mangled about, and they ought to speak. I shall leave it for them to say what action they are going to take with regard to this amendment.

Mr. ARCHER: If the hon. gentleman refers to the question of order, I would rather that it was taken up by the leader of the House. Of course, the hon. member who has brought forward this amendment is only exercising the right every hon. member has to move an amendment on any question before the House. But I strongly deprecate it, because it mixes up two questions in a way that does not tend to advance one or the other. However, I have no influence with the hon. member, and if his amendment is in order there is nothing to be done but discuss it, though I would much rather it had not been proposed.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: I am certainly under the impression that the portion of the resolution which it was decided should be retained was the words "the constituencies of the Central," and I am therefore of opinion that the hon. member is in order in proposing an amendment in a subsequent part of the resolution.

The PREMIER: If relevant.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: If relevant. I assume that to be an essential condition. Even if the whole of the resolution had been adopted, I see nothing to prevent him adding the words he proposes to add. I think we all desire every freedom of debate consistent with relevancy to the subject.

Mr. CROSS: Will you allow me to explain that I moved the amendment with the cognisance and consent of the majority of the Central members?

Mr. ARCHER: I only spoke for myself.

The PREMIER: When I ceased to speak on the question of order, and appealed to the Central members to disclose what their intention was, it was with the idea of giving those who are in charge of this business fair play. They ought to know their business, and how the amendment is going to affect their motion; and it is only right that we should know whether they are going to adopt it, or what attitude they will take in regard to it. I do not object to the amendment as being out of order; but I have to tell the hon. member for Rockhampton that he is getting further and further away from his original motion, for the discussion of which he induced me to give him a Government day, and on which he has always protested that he wanted to have a distinct vote. Now it is complicated beyond all question, and he is practically out of court as to getting a decision of the House on Central separation. I thought it only fair to put that matter before the hon. member; but, as a matter of order, I have no objection to take the amendment.

Mr. ARCHER: I see as clearly as the hon. gentleman does that the amendment will complicate matters, and I strongly deprecate its introduction. There are, however, a certain number of members pledged to a certain amendment of the electoral law, and they have chosen to bring in the amendment; but I would like to say to the Premier that when asking for a Government day for the discussion of Central separation I had not the slightest idea that anything further would be discussed.

The SPEAKER: As it appears to be the opinion of the House that the question on which the division was taken on Wednesday night was only to omit the words "constituencies of the Central," I shall put the amendment of the hon. member for Clermont. The question now is "That the words proposed to be added be so added."

Mr. CURTIS: I wish to say with regard to the amendment that it was known such amendment might be moved; but it has not been moved with my approbation, although I am one of

those pledged to vote against plural voting. Other Central members are not so pledged, and will vote against the amendment. I could not prevent the hon. member bringing forward this amendment; but my desire was, and still is, that the motion should be put by itself.

Mr. CAMERON: I understood the hon. member for Clermont to say that all the Central members approved of the amendment he has brought forward. So far as I am concerned, I beg to deny that. I do not approve of the amendment, nor will I be any party to it. It is true that I have given certain pledges with regard to electoral reform, and that I am going to support Central separation. With regard to electoral reform, when a definite motion embodying that comes forward I shall support it, but I shall not support the amendment of the hon. member for Clermont.

Mr. MURRAY: I understood the hon. member for Clermont, in moving his amendment, to state that he did so with the full consent of all the Central members. I wish to state that that is not a fact. I, as a Central member, cannot consent to any such amendment being embodied in the resolution of the hon. member for Rockhampton. My opinions are well known with regard to what is called "electoral reform," and I cannot consent to it being brought on in this way. I am prepared to discuss the question on its merits; but I am opposed to any such thing being attached to the motion now before the House.

Mr. CALLAN: I also understood the hon. member for Clermont to say that in this matter the whole of the Central members were with him. I was distinctly pledged at my election, as I am pledged now, against the principle of the amendment, and I shall vote against it. I distinctly deny that I am a party in any way to the amendment of the hon. member.

The HON. G. THORN: For the information of hon. members, I will read a paragraph from the *Gladstone Observer*, in which it is stated that the Brisbane correspondent of that paper wired to the effect that the Labour party held a meeting, and decided to give their vote in favour of Central separation if the desire expressed—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in reading an extract from a newspaper on the subject under discussion.

The HON. G. THORN: Then I will make a statement. This is the statement I make—

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member admits that the article in the paper comments on the question now before the House—

The HON. G. THORN: It does.

The SPEAKER: Then he is not in order in reading it.

The HON. G. THORN: It is not commenting on the question before the House, but on the question of plural voting. It states that the votes of the Central members are all pledged to one man one vote in connection with this motion; but I am glad that three of them have denied it.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not know whether it is right to go into all these matters of detail between ourselves and the Central separation members; but as so much has been said I may as well make a statement from my point of view. There was a meeting of the Central members, and there was some difficulty in the way of the three Central Labour members supporting the motion for separation without electoral reform; and it was thought that, with this amendment, we could conscientiously vote for it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Not otherwise?

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not say that. That is another matter. But I do not think I am doing wrong in disclosing this much for the sake of both parties; and I may add that the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Curtis, put the position very fairly. A member who is pledged to electoral reform before separation is placed in a peculiar position; but by this means he is enabled to vote conscientiously for the motion for separation. I know that some Central members are not pledged to one man one vote, and consequently they will not vote for the amendment; but those who are pledged to electoral reform as well as separation will vote for the amendment, and afterwards for the motion. I trust that there will be no further discussion on this matter, but that we shall at once go on with the consideration of the amendment, and after that is decided we can deal with the motion.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: I think there should be more discussion, because it discloses a very serious menace to the integrity of the colony. It shows that a considerable section of this House, seized with a desire to place on our statute-book a certain peculiar system of electoral reform, are prepared to subvert the stability of the colony, and see it torn up into fragments rather than its integrity maintained, if thereby they can give effect to their own particular special views in connection with electoral reform. I think there are much higher considerations; and if these hon. gentlemen were sincere in wishing to see us grant the Central districts that territorial independence and autonomy which they demand, they should not encumber the question by trying to introduce electoral reform in the direction they indicate, which they know is not the prevalent feeling in the country or this House at present. They have already had and will have further opportunity of discussing the question, and I think there is a very nice point of order involved in the question as to whether we are at present at liberty to enter upon this discussion. However, I did not rise to direct attention to that point of order, but the amendment must open the eyes of the colony to a certain extent, notwithstanding the disclaimers of the advocates of Central separation. It shows that the advocates of Central separation are willing to accept the support of a certain section of this House, who, for the purpose of obtaining an alteration in the franchise, are willing to accede to the dismemberment of the colony. I think it is a misfortune that the supporters of Central separation, to whom I give every credit for sincerity, and who are deserving of some sympathy, should have their contention surrounded by a question which must be embarrassing to them. At the same time it ought clearly to demonstrate to them and to the country the character of the support they are receiving from those who call themselves members of the Labour party. They should remember the old classical quotation: "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*" Of course they will accept that support, but we can clearly see the character of the support which will be given to Central separation by the Labour party.

Mr. HOOLAN: There is no duplicity with regard to either the original motion or the amendment, so far as the members for Rockhampton are concerned, or members for Central districts who do not favour the amendment. It does not concern Rockhampton or the Central district, but is merely introduced by the Labour party, knowing that a portion of them were going to support the Central members, whether the amendment were moved or not. It does not immediately concern that district, and it will not immediately concern it

when it is turned into a new colony, and I hope that never in the future will it immediately or particularly concern them, because I hope when they get their Constitution they will have it on a proper electoral basis. And if they do not get it embodied in their Constitution—if they are at all progressive, and worthy of the name of Queenslanders, or colonists, or citizens, or people—they will soon have a proper electoral Act, and do away with this iniquitous property qualification under which we now labour. Whatever support the hon. member for Rockhampton gains on his original motion, he will have won it in a proper and straightforward way, by his manly and consistent conduct since he has been here. He has won the admiration and respect of the Labour party, and will have it, whether he favours the property vote or anything else. We know that we will be able to win our reforms without the aid of the hon. member or that of any of his party, and what support we give him will be freely given. Our amendment puts him in an invidious position, and I wish to get him out of it. Certain negotiations have gone on between the hon. member and the Labour party. The hon. member has brought forward a very important motion, and desires all the support he can get by fair and honest methods. Whatever has taken place between the Labour party and the hon. member has been based upon fair and honest principles, and there is nothing for either party to be ashamed of.

Mr. POWERS: Before the amendment comes to a vote, I may say that I have always been in favour of this amendment to our own Constitution, on the principle of abolishing plural voting. The policy the Opposition placed before the country was that the question of separation should be referred to the people by a referendum, and that plural voting should be abolished. Some of the Central members hope that, if ever the Central people get a Constitution, it will be one in which plural voting will not exist. As that is all that is contemplated, I see my way to support the amendment.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Before we settle this question it is well the House should consider the character of the support the motion is likely to receive. The hon. member for Burke, in his speech just now, repeatedly told us that this had nothing at all to do with the Central districts. I presume the amendment is to have a general application.

Mr. HOOLAN: It is intended as an advocacy of a reform we all earnestly support.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: If so, it is entirely out of order. We cannot have it on those terms. So far as we have heard yet, all that the House is told is that certain words, "the constituencies of the Central," are to stand part of the motion. If we add the words now proposed, we will be committed to the whole clause as part of the question. I do not think the House knows it is in that position. Some hon. members may have amendments before that, and I am cautioning them that their chance will be gone if this amendment goes to a division, unless they bring them forward now.

Mr. DRAKE: Are you inviting amendments?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not care how many amendments are proposed. The effect of the amendment will be that the new colony, when it is formed, will have no choice as to its Constitution. This Parliament is to treat it like a child, and dictate to it before it starts what kind of Constitution it must have. It is a very poor compliment to the Central dis-

trict, as it amounts to telling them that they are not able to look after their own affairs. Probably that is the idea of those hon. members who are going to support the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS (Hon. A. H. Barlow): This debate is meant for a wider audience than this. It is meant for the British Parliament and the British public. The intention of the amendment is to create, if possible, in Central Queensland a community founded on what is called electoral reform—that is, entirely wiping out the voting power of property. The division which will take place on this amendment will no doubt be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to the British Parliament. I admit the right of every member who gives a vote in this House to vote exactly as he pleases; he is the judge of his own conscience. But, at the same time, people have a right to direct attention to the manner in which any member discharges his duty in this House, and there are four members representing Southern constituencies who are apparently going to vote against the interests of Southern Queensland.

Mr. REID: Who are they?

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: I do not wish to pick a quarrel with those hon. members, but their names will appear in the division list. That is quite enough for me.

Mr. REID: Hear, hear! We are not afraid of that.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: I direct the attention of this House and of the country, and of all who may see the division list, that those members are voting for tearing up this colony, in order to further the design of so-called electoral reform in the Central district.

The question having been put,

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Divide!

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Some hon. members seem to deprecate discussion on this subject. I certainly do not want to waste time; but such deprecation of discussion does not come very well from hon. members, some of whom have introduced amendments, possibly justifiable to them, but to me appearing to be foreign matter to a very large extent. We have a debate coming on in a very short time, of which the leader of the Opposition has given notice—a debate dealing with the question raised by this amendment, and which makes it exceedingly difficult to deal with the motion as it now stands, because there are many hon. members who take an intelligent interest in the question of one man one vote, and who would like to know what is the opinion of this House, and who would like to know the opinion of the people of Queensland. Those hon. members are unwilling to inflict upon the Central district opinions which we are not certain are held by a majority in this House or in the country. Yet we are asked to make it a condition with a colony that is to be established in the future, that they must be dominated by opinions which we are not certain we are going to adopt ourselves. That appears rather a singular position for this House to take up. It would be very peculiar to impose conditions upon people who demand freedom and the right to carry out their own wishes and their own desires. Yet that is the contention of hon. members opposite, who are bringing in this amendment. At the same time that they make this demand to be free, they say, "No; we won't allow these people to enjoy the freedom which we profess we wish them to have." We dogmatically assert in this Assembly, before the Constitution of this new free Parliament and this free

people is granted, that they shall be enslaved and compelled to do that which we think right, and not be permitted to use that very freedom for which separation is being demanded. Even after they have departed from the parent colony, they are still to be governed by the opinions of what they, doubtless, will say was their old and obsolete parent. I have no hesitation in saying that it is entirely incompatible with the wish of the people of Central Queensland. I am not saying that the hon. member who has brought in the resolution, and who spoke very ably on behalf of his contention, was a party to this. There are very strong reasons why, I feel sure, that while he honestly desires the independence of Central Queensland, he should strongly object to this House taking upon itself to decide what Central Queensland is to do when it calls itself free and independent, and will perhaps hoist a blue flag with one or two stars upon it. The hon. member is, singularly enough, entirely thwarted in his desire to obtain an expression of opinion from this House, by those members upon whose assistance he has to depend. His object has distinctly been to obtain an expression of opinion from this House, not because he believes that that opinion will be favourable, but because a decision of some sort he must have. He has told us, as the House has been told on many similar occasions, that the decision of this question does not depend upon this House; but, in order to get his case in proper order to place his petition at the foot of the Throne in proper constitutional form, he desires to exhaust the remedies to be obtained from the Constitution and people of Queensland. The very members upon whom he leans for support are those who now prevent him getting a decision upon the question by dragging in other subjects which certainly are foreign to his motion, and which might be more effectually discussed if they were brought in on their own merits. We have this one-man-one-vote controversy brought in, and at a time when the controversy is impending. We also have had the question of Northern separation dragged in, and that also is a matter coming before the House. One would suppose the friends of the hon. member for Rockhampton are the very persons who wish to prevent this House from coming to any decision at all upon the question he has at heart. Whoever may be blamed for the procrastination in coming to a vote, it cannot be hon. members on this side, because we have had very little to say upon the subject. It is too much that hon. members who have brought in two contentious questions of their own free will, after having dilated on those questions, should begrudge to hon. members on this side the liberty which they take to themselves of speaking on matters which affect the public interests. Whatever may follow from hon. members on this side, we certainly are not the aggressors. We have not brought these two amendments forward, nor am I at present posing as a friend of the Central separation movement. At the same time, I should like to see a division taken on the motion of the hon. member for Rockhampton, which it was fully expected would have been taken the other night. There is this objection to the amendment: that although the hon. member for Rockhampton contends that the people of Central Queensland have suffered wrongs and inconveniences, and are desirous of being separated from the rest of the colony in order to have those wrongs and inconveniences cleared away, yet apparently the support he is about to get is not on account of the wrongs which the people of Central Queensland are said to have suffered, but on account of something altogether different. For many years those who are called the workers—a

term I entirely object to as covering far more than it ought—of that part of the colony have been dead against this movement. The issue has been to a great extent changed. The object of those now in favour of the separation movement appears to be not to undo any wrongs which may have been suffered in the past, except so far as it affects the electoral law; and the petition which is to be sent to the Queen ought to be framed in such a way as to show that those who are now backing up the people of Rockhampton in their demand for separation—

Mr. CALLAN: I rise, Mr. Speaker, to a point of order. The hon. member is speaking to the main question, and according to your ruling he ought to confine himself to the amendment before the House.

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member for Mackay is debating the original motion he is decidedly out of order, but I am under the impression that he is confining his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: If any hon. member is under the impression that I am speaking on the main question, my remarks must have been exceedingly obscure. I do not like my remarks to be obscure. I have heard of a gentleman who, after he had executed a large painting, put under it, "This is a windmill." I have no wish to emulate that gentleman, but, apparently, it will be necessary for me in future to let the House know when I am speaking to an amendment. I was under the impression that I was showing that the amendment at once changed the whole aspect of the separation question—that, from the amendment, it would appear that the claim which has been set up for Central separation does not rest in the least on the allegations contained in the memorial, but upon what is set forth in the amendment—not that they may obtain relief from any material injuries or wrongs that part of the colony may have suffered, but in order that they may bring about a state of things in which every man shall have one vote. I take the meaning of the amendment to be that before Central separation is granted at all—however great the desire of the hon. member for Rockhampton may be for Central separation—the people at large, the workers, who are the great majority in that part of the colony, do not want separation from the rest of Queensland until previously a certain boon has been accorded to them, or a certain right for the people of the colony as a whole. This they make a *sine qua non*, and they practically say that if they do not get it they will not have separation. The only justification for the amendment is, that however badly they want separation, they want one man one vote very much more. That is the only conclusion I can come to with regard to it. Therefore, the amendment really relegates the question of separation into the background. They say, "We do not care so much for the principle; we do not care for the interests of the North or the Central, or the colony as a whole; what we do care for is a party benefit, which we expect to gain for ourselves." They will not subordinate the question of what may happen in the future with regard to voting to another question which they assert demands the attention of the House so much that a special day has had to be set apart that it may be discussed. I will not delay the House by speaking further on the amendment, which I regard as the introduction of matter foreign to the question before us. However necessary it may be to discuss the subject matter of the amendment, this is not the time for it, especially as there is another motion on the notice paper which covers the entire ground, and which will come on for further discussion in due course. I have stated at sufficient length the grounds on which I shall oppose the amendment.

Mr. BELL: My position in this matter is identical with that of the hon. member for Mitchell. What is the position this amendment creates? Upon a discussion as to whether a Constitution shall be created for Central Queensland, we are asked so far to anticipate events as to decide what policy the people of that province shall pursue in the event of a Constitution being granted to them. It is very doubtful whether the amendment is in order, and I do not myself think it is; but, even if it is, it is not an appropriate proceeding to tack it on to a discussion on the Central separation question. While loyal to my convictions in favour of the abolition of plural voting, which I shall support when the time comes, I must vote against this amendment.

Mr. KINGSBURY: I cannot see why we should attempt to force upon Central Queensland anything which the people have given a decided mandate against. They have returned an insignificant minority in favour of one man one vote, but an overwhelming majority has been returned against it, and in the face of such a mandate it would be cruel to give our beloved friends in the Central district, who desire to set up on their own account, a skeleton in the closet—something that will bring them to destruction, that must cause discord, and something based upon no scientific principle at all. We are told that one man one vote depends upon common humanity, but we are not told what common humanity is. Is it intelligence or non-intelligence? and is it white, brown, or yellow in colour? For the sake of giving some people credit for a little common sense, let us presume that it is intelligence, and then let us ask: When does this period of political intelligence commence? If we presume that it commences at the age of sixteen years, we will see that at the age of twenty-one an elector has five years of this intelligence centred in his brain. That entitles him to one vote, and only one vote. Let us discard property and thrift altogether, and fix our minds upon this question of intelligence. Then when a man is twenty-six years of age he has got ten years of political intelligence, and should have two votes, and so on until we reach the period of decay, and then as he goes down the hill the elector should have one vote taken off for every five years of decay. That would be a scientific method of fixing one man one vote on a basis of intelligence. Still leaving property out of it, are we also to discard the question of his sobriety, his industry, his honesty, love of order, sanity, and humanity? All those matters should be considered if we are going to alter our electoral law, because I presume that when we make the alteration we shall produce something which shall be scientific and challenge the admiration of the civilised world—not this rough and ready "one man one vote," given to the gaol-bird twenty-four hours after he has left the gaol, to the man who has never done a day's work all his life and has lived by begging, and to the man who is a disgrace to the community and is seldom sober. How can we possibly think that this is fitted for Central Queensland? I think so much of Central Queensland and of her members that I can be no party to forcing upon her such a lasting disgrace.

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

AYES, 20.

Messrs. Cross, Powers, Hoolan, Drake, Curtis, Dawson, Daniels, Dunsford, Jackson, Turley, Browne, Rawlings, Harding, Boles, Reid, McDonald, King, Fisher, Kerr, and Hardacre.

NOES, 34.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Barlow, Nelson, Archer, Philp, Byrnes, Dickson, Thorn, Annear, Midson, Watson, Morehead, Allan, Crombie, Kingsbury, Smith, Grimes, Agnew, Corfield, Murray, Cameron, Dalrymple, Callan, Macfarlane, Plunkett, Stevens, Bell, Thomas, Battersby, Burns, Phillips, Duffy, Chataway, and McMaster.

Question resolved in the negative.

On the original motion,

Mr. MURRAY: As one who has taken some interest in the question of territorial separation for Central Queensland, I desire to say a few words in support of the motion moved by the junior member for Rockhampton in his very able and exhaustive speech. He dealt with the subject in a very able and comprehensive manner, and so far I have not heard any effective reply made to it. The Premier gave a very lengthy reply to his statements, and urged many objections why the motion should not be adopted; but I think the bulk of his objections can be very easily swept away. The question of territorial separation for the Central division is not a new one; it has often been discussed in this House, and most hon. members are acquainted with its general bearing. Last session the then Chief Secretary, Sir Samuel Griffith, introduced what was called the Queensland Constitution Bill, which had for its object the erection of three separate States in the colony. In introducing that measure, he dwelt upon the necessity of Southern members doing their utmost to discuss his proposals in a fair and impartial manner, and not to use their numerical strength to defeat them, but to deal with them in such a way as to prevent the necessity of a higher authority taking it out of the power of the House to deal with the matter. They have the same numerical strength now, and I fear that any arguments I advance will not have the slightest effect on the decision which is likely to be arrived at by the House on this question. It has been stated during the debate, particularly by the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. Duffy, that this was essentially and entirely a Rockhampton movement—in fact, that it was a one-man movement. He accused the junior member for Rockhampton, who introduced the motion, of being the father of the separation agitation, of having nursed it, and of now bringing it to a premature grave. Just after the close of last session, you are aware that His Excellency the Governor made a visit to the Central division, and I think he was induced to go there more to satisfy himself as to the aspirations of the people of the district than anything else. You, Mr. Speaker, accompanied him, and I think the evidence that was brought to bear during that journey must have had a very convincing effect upon His Excellency. From the time he left Rockhampton he travelled 425 miles in the interior, and at every place of call he was presented with a petition praying for the right of the people to govern themselves; and at Longreach, the terminus of the line, where the hon. member for Bundaberg said the pastoralists and residents treated the matter as a joke, the feeling was just as strong. During the discussion on the Queensland Constitution Bill I mentioned that the question had complete hold of the people of that district, and I can assure you I was rather surprised myself to discover in that remote district the keen desire for self-government that had taken hold of the people. No sooner had His Excellency stepped from the carriage than he was presented with a petition by enthusiastic crowds of people, praying for the right to local government; and on his return to Rockhampton the people gave him such a brilliant reception that he told me himself that it surpassed anything he had ever experienced in his life. This had a double object. It was to assure His Excellency of the loyalty of the people to the Crown and Constitution of the Empire, and also to express their pleasure at his presence among them; but also because they had an opportunity of laying their grievances before him, and representing to him the great desire of the people for self-government. That, I think, is one evidence of the

sincerity of the people of the district, and the unanimity that prevails among them on this question. Again, they have sent in a petition signed by 9,000 of the male adults of the district, which was followed by a petition signed by 4,000 of the adult women of the district, and such petitions coming from a community of 50,000 people is the strongest evidence of their sincerity that could be given. The general election followed close upon this, and on the debate on the Constitution Bill it will be remembered that a great many members said that, seeing the election was so close at hand, they would prefer to see the question remitted to the constituencies for their decision. I approved of that, feeling convinced, against the opinions of many of my colleagues, that our contention would be justified. I expressed my keen desire to see that course followed. The question has been remitted to the constituencies, with the result that every one of the Central members, I may say, without exception, have been returned in favour of territorial separation.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: There was no contest for Gregory.

Mr. MURRAY: There was not, but I presume the hon. member for Gregory is a separationist. It matters little that there was no contest. He has his own little grievance that the boundary line is not exactly as he wishes, but that goes for very little. It is only a question of detail; but this fact remains: that no community that has ever asked for the right of self-government was ever so united in their demands, nor do I think any community ever had a better case. It has been said, I think by the *Courier*, when this debate was approaching, that the onus of proof rested with the Central members. Well, I think it will be found that never has such a complete and overwhelming case been made out by any people under the British flag for the right to manage and control their own affairs. It is well known that at the time this colony secured the privilege of self-government, the districts now known as Central and Northern Queensland were almost unknown, and I believe the first Government that sat here at that time never for one moment thought that Queensland would remain as one colony. At that time Brisbane and the Darling Downs practically constituted the whole colony; and I believe the Government of that day recognised the fact that when conditions altered other colonies would be created, and that with the spread of settlement must come separation. I hold that the Government of that day were merely acting as trustees over that territory, which was then almost unoccupied, and felt it would be their duty, when settlement extended, to recommend that the right of self-government should be granted. I think it is the duty of this Parliament, as trustees, to hand over that territory now. We say we are the pioneers of the district, and I maintain that the people who occupy Central Queensland are the people who are making the future colony. It has been said by the Premier that he could point to half a dozen men on the Darling Downs who have gone into Central Queensland and done more to promote the welfare of the district than the bulk of the people there now. But that is no argument whatever, because I believe when Queensland got separation it was entirely owned and developed by the people of New South Wales. The Premier, in dealing with this question, said, "Who gave you a title over this territory of Central Queensland?" and pointed to the line of demarcation between the Northern and Southern territory. He said that was mere accident, and he had some difficulty in tracing its origin; that some clerk in the office had done it; but I say that whoever traced those lines

did so with a great amount of discretion. At all events, from that time to the present every Government that has been in office, in their desire to bring forward some scheme to satisfy this demand for local government, has brought forward various measures—the Financial Districts Bill, Decentralisation Bill, and Constitution Bill; and in every instance those lines have been followed, and we now ask that those should be the lines. However, that is by the way. I firmly believe this question will be settled before very long, but the adjustment of the boundary line is mere detail, and can never be settled by the people interested. If there is to be any settlement of boundary line, it must be settled by some disinterested tribunal. Therefore any attempt by this House to settle those lines would be utterly futile. I have no intention of going into statistics or into any side issues in dealing with this question. I consider that the most important aspect of the question is this: Are the people in possession of that district at the present time not entitled to the management and control of their own affairs upon the very same lines as the people who secured that privilege when Queensland was made a separate colony? We have 220,000 square miles of territory; we have a population of 50,000, and a revenue of something like £700,000 per annum. That is far in advance of the condition of the people of Queensland when they acquired the privileges for which we now ask. The colony of Victoria has a territory of only 85,000 square miles, and with that small territory she is to-day the most influential colony of the group.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No; one of them.

Mr. MURRAY: I think she is. At all events, wherever these concessions have been granted to people in these colonies—and, I believe, everywhere under the British flag—they have always been followed by the most satisfactory results; and I feel sure that, if this colony is divided into three self-governing States, it will be to the benefit of all concerned. I feel sure that this question has taken such complete possession of the minds of the people of the Central district that there will be no peace or beneficial legislation conducted in this Chamber until it is settled. It may be put off now; it may be put off from time to time; but I believe that if the Government do not take this question up and deal with it upon its merits, the Imperial Government will be called upon to do so.

The PREMIER: They are dealing with it now on its merits.

Mr. MURRAY: Its merits are superior to the merits of Queensland when it was first dealt with, or to the merits of any of the other colonies when they were dealt with. I do not wish to prolong the debate, because nothing is to be gained by further discussion. It is only natural to expect that an overwhelming majority of Southern members are against us, but those who have taken the trouble to investigate the whole case, and to study the speech delivered by the hon. member who introduced this motion, must come to the conclusion that our case is the most overwhelming case ever made out in favour of self-government, and I hope sincerely that those hon. members will rise to the occasion, as Sir Samuel Griffith said last year, and deal fairly with this case, and try to have it settled. I take this opportunity of expressing my regret that this question was not introduced by the Government. At the close of the last general election, when the Premier was addressing his constituents, he distinctly stated that this was a question of pressing moment, and required to be immediately settled in one way or another; but I regret to say that when Parliament was called together there was no mention of the question in the Governor's Speech. Seeing that the Government did not take steps to deal with

the question, there was nothing for it but to take the matter in hand ourselves, and do the best we could. We have done that, and we can do no more.

Mr. DANIELS: I may say that I am going to vote against this motion. The Central members say the people of the Central district want separation, and that they are unanimous on the subject. If so, I cannot see why they should have voted against the referendum. Another thing, I believe in one man one vote, and that amendment has been negated. I am not voting against this on account of any selfishness, but I think we ought to do all we can to get one man one vote.

Mr. KERR: I must say that the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Curtis, made out a very able case in favour of separation, and the Premier very ably tackled the question, and brought forward a large array of figures to show that the hon. member was mistaken. The Premier, in illustrating one of his arguments, said that in the Southern part of the colony the sum of 9s. 4d. per head is spent in strong drink; in the Central district, 16s. 0½d.; and in the Northern district, 19s. 0¾d. He thought the Central men would drink as much or a little more than the Southern men; but I question that. I believe there are as many temperance men in the Central district as in the Southern district according to the population. Then he said he believed the Northern men did not drink any more than the Central men, though he said that the duty collected in the North amounted to more than that collected in the Central district. I think he endeavoured to show that the duties were paid in Townsville, and the spirits were sent into the Central district. I beg to differ upon that question, and think there is a leakage in the Southern portion of the colony. Duty is not paid upon all the liquor consumed in the Southern division. There must be some private stills that will account for the difference. I was amused to hear the hon. member for Gregory say there was no feeling in favour of separation at Longreach; but I think the hon. member for Normanby answered that remark very conclusively. He also suggested that the building of a branch line of railway from Hughenden to Winton would solve the separation question for ever. But he must have very small ideas, or must have travelled very little in the Northern portion of the colony, if he thinks he can satisfy the people as easily as that. The Premier said that the mining centres had decided against separation; but I can speak with a little knowledge upon that point. I was in Croydon when that by-election took place at which the hon. member for Burke was returned, and the question was dead at that time. But why was it dead? The reason was that the miners and workers feared that if separation were obtained the "octopus firm," as it is termed—Burns, Philp, and Co.—would be in favour of black labour. A coalition Government had just been formed, and Mr. Hodgkinson, having become Secretary for Mines, had to go back to Croydon for re-election. He wired to Croydon, and asked to be nominated by some business people there. The cry was raised that the coalition Government was formed to introduce cheap labour from Italy and Germany, and the present hon. member for Burke sent a wire to Mr. Hodgkinson, for which I can vouch, informing him of the cry, and also telling him that if such were the case Mr. Browne was going to oppose him; and he would, no doubt, have defeated him. Mr. Hodgkinson wired back to the effect that the coalition Government was only formed to straighten up the finances of the colony, and the rumours that they intended to introduce coloured labour were false. When the coalition Government reintroduced the kanaka question, the opposition of the working people to separa-

tion broke down, because their only reason for opposing it was that, if it were obtained, the North would be flooded by black labour. The last elections showed conclusively that the North is now in favour of separation, and we are told that there is one Central member who is not in favour of it. But if that hon. member had had to contest his election, he would have had to pledge himself in favour of separation. There were three candidates for the electorate which I have the honour to represent—the Barcoo. Mr. Parnell, the other local man, was in favour of separation, and I think he is a member of the Separation League, which I am not. Mr. Brown, the Brisbane man sent up to contest the electorate, was not in favour of separation when he spoke in Tambo; but during the journey from Tambo to Blackall, eighty miles, he became converted.

Mr. AGNEW: I rise to a point of order. Has the action of Mr. Brown anything to do with this discussion?

The SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is in order.

Mr. KERR: I am only leading up to my point. The conversion of Mr. Brown showed conclusively to my mind, and to the mind of every right-thinking person, that, unless he advocated separation, he would have no show for the Barcoo electorate. I have resided in the Northern and Central districts for the last eighteen years, and cannot be taunted, as the hon. junior member for Rockhampton has been, with being the owner of corner allotments in that city. I have never speculated in any corner allotments there, although I have had the chance and the money also. I did not think it was worth while to invest money there, as I could invest it better outside. We must remember that nothing has been said about making Rockhampton the capital of the Central district; and the hon. member for Warrego, who interjected that it would, must be a prophet. I notice that he was not game to contest Mitchell on the separation question. I consider the taunts thrown out against the hon. junior member for Rockhampton very uncalled for. The hon. member has only invested his money where he has made his home, and where on earth would he have such an interest as in Rockhampton? There are many hon. members who have invested their money in Brisbane, and who are only too ready to applaud anything said against separation, as they are considering their own interests. They are very unwilling to allow the people in the Central division to manage their own affairs. It seems to be the opinion of some that because a number of Labour members have been returned for Central constituencies that they do not want separation. Now, I have travelled over a good part of Central Queensland, and have as much knowledge of the district as the hon. member for Gregory, and I also have a considerable knowledge of North Queensland, and I can positively state that it is the residents of Central Queensland, and not the few property owners in Rockhampton, who want separation. They have come to the conclusion that they cannot be governed from one corner of the colony. As an illustration of the delays caused, I may mention that in the end of November last, I applied in Tambo to have a sale of town allotments. The allotments had been surveyed, and had been withdrawn after having been put up at a previous sale. The sale of that land only took place on 28th May of this year, just at the time the Queensland National Bank closed, and then only after a good deal of writing and wiring. If it takes six months to get a little affair like that attended to, how long it will take to settle matters of more vital importance I do not know. Sometimes residents in the Central district have business which necessi-

tates a visit to Brisbane. It takes at least a week to come down, and though the business may only occupy a few hours, there is a delay of another week, at least, before they can get home again. There is a loss of nearly three weeks, besides the great expense incurred. We claim that we have a right to separation, in order that we may look after our own affairs, and we only ask that which is fair—that we in law-making just have a share.

Mr. CAMERON: It is my intention to support the motion. The case for Central separation has been so fully and ably stated by the hon. member for Rockhampton and other speakers, and every forcible argument in favour of the cause has been given, that I do not think I can say anything to put the House in a better position for arriving at a decision. I must take exception to certain statements which have been made. The hon. member for Bundaberg stated that the people in the pastoral districts of Central Queensland are not in favour of separation, but the voting at the general election is sufficient evidence that the people of the Central division as a whole are in favour of it. The hon. gentleman also made some reference to the amount spent upon railway construction in the Central district. I do not know where he got his figures from, but they seem hardly accurate. He said that, according to the last Financial Statement, out of £16,000,000 spent, no less than £4,500,000 has been spent in the Central division on railway construction. The figures I have taken from "Votes and Proceedings," vol. iv., pages 505 and 506, put the expenditure in the Central district at £2,726,064; and in the Southern division, £10,182,305. The amount per square mile is £13 for the Central division, and £48 for the Southern division. I further take exception to the statement of the hon. member for Gregory that, by the people in the pastoral districts in and about Longreach, Central separation is looked upon as a fad, and that any agitation in its favour would be treated with indifference. My experience is quite in the contrary direction. The people of Longreach, and of all the towns in the district which I have the honour to represent, are perhaps not unanimously in favour of separation, but a very large majority of them are in favour of separation; and that applies to all other portions of the Central division.

Mr. BOLES: As the representative of a district in the Central division, I rise to announce my support of the motion. In common with other hon. members of the Central division, I am desirous of coming to a division to-night, so I do not intend to prolong the discussion by speaking at any length. The question was introduced by the hon. junior member for Rockhampton in a very elaborate and masterly manner. I congratulate the hon. member upon his speech, which is worthy of himself, worthy of the question, and worthy of Central Queensland. There is no doubt that that speech put the Premier upon his mettle, and brought him out in his full warpaint. His reply was remarkably strong and vigorous, but I thought at the time, and think still, that a good deal of it savoured very much of special pleading voiced from the standpoint of Southern opinion. The hon. gentleman gave us the genesis of the separation question, so far as he is acquainted with it, from 1871. He pointed out that at one time the question was a remarkably lively one and burnt with a considerable glow, that the following year the thermometer of separation went still higher, that the next year it went down a little, and that during other years the question was in abeyance. But he told us the reason why during those years the question was in abeyance. The Central district had received certain large sums in the shape of public expenditure. Evidently the hon. gentleman recognises

the fact that since 1871 separation has been a burning question, and that in order to stave it off it was necessary to give something in the shape of a sop from time to time. For some years past the question has burnt with a steady glow, and it is now burning with a higher flame than ever. The Premier denies the inherent right of the people of the Central division to manage their own affairs, and said that in matters of this kind there should be some reciprocity of sentiment between the parties. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman really believes in what he says, because, if it is correct, both Queensland and Victoria would still be integral parts of New South Wales. The question of the public debt, like King Charles' head, is always introduced into these discussions. It is always held up as a kind of bogey to lead us to believe that there can be no separation while the colony is in debt. I am not prepared to go into that question, but I have heard the opinions of some very able thinkers on it, and they have come to the conclusion that the thing can be easily enough settled. The Premier also referred to the injustice that the separation of the Central division would do both to the North and to the South. Why? Because those two divisions are dependent upon the Central division for something. I believe the real reason why the hon. gentleman wishes to prevent Central separation is that he wants to use that division, which is a wealth-producing division, in the interests of the Southern part of the colony. The hon. member for Bundaberg made a most extraordinary speech, in the course of which he made a personal attack upon the hon. junior member for Rockhampton. I do not know whether the hon. member desires to get into notoriety with the people of Rockhampton. If he does, I am afraid he will be mistaken. They can only be drawn out when the question of a Crombie or a Barlow is brought before them with regard to the effigy business.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: We are here still.

Mr. BOLES: The hon. member for Bundaberg should have looked into the question, and ascertained the reasons for the conclusions the Rockhampton people have come to on this matter. But it is not necessary for me to go into that subject, as there are Rockhampton members present who know more about it than I do. With regard to this attack on the hon. junior member for Rockhampton, I presume that in all great questions some persons must lead; and if that hon. member, by his zeal and intelligence, has been appointed leader in this movement, is that any argument against territorial separation? I do not suppose there is, at the present time, a better abused man in the whole world than Mr. Gladstone; but I do not suppose that because he is desirous to assist a down-trodden race it will be used as an argument against home rule. It surprised me to hear the hon. member speak in the manner he did; and it surprised me still more to witness the hilarity on the Treasury benches while he was attacking the hon. junior member for Rockhampton. The hon. member quoted some figures with reference to last year's financial transactions; but if hon. members will look at the Treasury apportionment for the past five years, which is a fair time, they will find that the Central division shows a surplus of £120,000 over and above its expenditure. That money has gone somewhere, and we can only believe it has gone into the coffers of the South. Then the hon. member trotted out the white elephant of Port Alma. But the Premier was the father of that. He forced it upon the people of Rockhampton, and would have given them a railway to it as well, only they were too sensible and would not have it. Very

likely it was one of the sops thrown out by the Southern Government to stave off the question of separation. I quite agree with the hon. member for Bundaberg that the Port Alma wharf or jetty is a white elephant; but is that any argument against separation? I might point to another white elephant in the uncompleted section of the railway between Bundaberg and Gladstone, which has been cartooned and ridiculed by the whole of the Press of the South. This goes to prove, to my mind, that the colony is too unwieldy for either the late or the present Government to grasp, and it is a strong argument in favour of separation. The hon. member for Bundaberg also made reference to the money squandered in the Fitzroy River. I agree with him that money has been squandered there, but "people who live in glass houses should not throw stones," and I may reply to the hon. member that a good deal of money has been thrown away in the Burnett and other rivers. I admit that money was squandered in times past in the Fitzroy, but we have gained experience since then in the matter of dredging. The expense for dredging has been a continued drain on the public purse, and even the present Government, instead of giving the people of Maryborough and Bundaberg access to a natural port, where shipping facilities are unrivalled, by completing the remaining section of the Bundaberg-Gladstone Railway, are dredging portions of the Burnett river, which in three or four months will have silted up again. The hon. member for Fassifern paid me a little jocular attention; but the hon. member often says what he does not mean, and he did not mean what he said this afternoon. Separation has not been a very burning question at Port Curtis; but it was so at the last election. The people of Gladstone are a quiet easy-going, come-day, go-day people, with a morbid dread of anything new or revolutionary, but a younger element is springing up amongst them with a knowledge of the way Port Curtis has been treated in the past by the centralising policy of Southern Governments. They see their harbour, recognised as one of the first in Australia, lying dormant, while the Government persist in throwing money away in dredging rivers.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: The Fitzroy?

Mr. BOLES: No; the Brisbane and Burnett rivers. I am not arguing in favour of the Fitzroy, but there is very little money being spent there now. The people are fully alive now to the importance of the question, and the everlasting centralisation of Southern gentlemen who heap taxes upon the shoulders of the Central and Northern people under the cloak of protection, which is really intended to bolster up industries around this city. We see that the conditions of Central and Southern Queensland are totally different. The Centre has all the elements of the South, and has, in addition, a wonderful belt of auriferous country which for years has given enormous returns. In order that we may develop our resources in the best way and with the best results, we require the management of our own affairs. Further, we see sums of money accumulated in the Central district squandered in the South, which should be utilised in carrying out public works of utility we are deprived of at present, and which would give us quicker access to the southern colonies than we now possess. I will not further prolong the discussion, as I desire to see the matter settled to-night.

Mr. CROMBIE: I have listened very carefully to the speeches made on this motion, but I have noticed that there is not the same ring in them that there was in the speeches

made on the subject last year; and even the hon. member for Normanby has not argued the question with any warmth. I have heard the hon. junior member for Rockhampton address a Rockhampton audience on this question; but he put very much more fire into his speech there than he put into what he said here. I have not heard the hon. member, Mr. Archer, speak in Rockhampton on the subject, but I was disappointed with the speech he made here the other night. Though I expected him to bring forward very strong arguments, he failed to bring out any in favour of the question. I think I know the reason for that. Even the Rockhampton Press is weakening on the subject, as they are finding out that Central separation would not be such a grand thing for them as they used to think it would be. There is an element coming into the question now that did not exist before; but I saw it before, and was always against it. If I have changed at all it is in that I am more than ever against Central separation. I have a big interest in Central Queensland, as all I have in the world is there; and, though I am not a representative of the district now, I was once, and I am still one of the constituents of the district, and take as great an interest in it now as ever. I know also the feeling of the people of the district as well as I did when I represented it, and I know that they are anything but unanimous in a desire for separation. When the general election started, separation was not the question at issue. The instructions and advice given to the candidates in favour of law and order was to defeat the Labour men; but they were to be free on other matters. There are separationists in the Central district, I admit, and it was to gain the votes of those people that some candidates advocated separation; but they did not want it themselves. I have been twitted by the hon. member for Barcoo with having been afraid to go back to my own electorate, and go against separation. I may inform the hon. member that two years and eight months ago I told my constituents that I was willing to withdraw at the next election if they had a man they considered would carry more votes than I would, and they chose the present member for Mitchell in my place. But I am confident that, if I had gone back to the electorate, and gone against separation, I would have been returned. The present member is against separation in his heart. I know the hon. member well; when he was going for that electorate he told me that he did not believe in separation. But when he got to Rockhampton he was suddenly converted, and became an ardent separationist. When he went to the northern part of his electorate he found that the people there did not look upon separation very favourably; in fact, they were opposed to it, and when the hon. member got back to Longreach he had to trim a little. He told the electors at that place that he found that separation as proposed in Rockhampton would not be fair to the whole of the Mitchell district, and that they would have to have the capital at Longreach or Barcardine. There was loud applause to that, and the hon. member further said he did not think they could get justice for the Western district from a Parliament sitting in Rockhampton. I do not think they would either, and I am sure the members of the Central district are beginning to get their eyes opened on the question; they are beginning to be frightened that the socialists may get the upper hand, and that they may have a socialist Government at Rockhampton. From what I know of the socialists, the property-owners in the Western district would have a very poor show if Rockhampton got Central separation. The value of property in the Central district would

go down 33 per cent., and I believe the people in Rockhampton would take away our leases. I know that the unionists, or socialists, do not consider that a contract is binding when it does not suit them, for I heard the leader of the socialist party in Australia declare that himself.

Mr. McDONALD : Where ?

Mr. CROMBIE : I could tell the hon. member where. They do not look upon a contract as worth a straw if it does not suit them, and for that reason I consider that our leases would be very much reduced in value if we had a socialist Government in Rockhampton. I might say more on this subject, but I do not wish to detain the House any longer. I shall vote against separation, as I have always done.

Mr. KINGSBURY : It is hardly a fair thing to presume that the Central district is the part of Queensland that is most intimately associated with or interested in what the junior member for Rockhampton has called robbery, because I regard this claim to cut the centre out of Queensland, and drive a wedge into the middle of the colony, which has hitherto been a self-contained community, as nothing better than an effort to rob the rest of the community of the right that has hitherto been a communal right. We are to be denied access to the North unless we pay taxation or protective duties in traversing the lines that may cross the Centre, or we are to be forced to take to sea and go by water. The so-called arguments used in favour of the supposition that the Centre have a right to take this big slice out of the colony and call it theirs, are hardly arguments at all. But there was one that struck me as very forcible. I do not think the hon. member for Rockhampton intended to have mentioned it, but he quoted it with a number of others. It was as follows :—“ Though the agitation was stronger in Rockhampton and Townsville, which expected to obtain greater importance from being capital cities, the feeling was also strong in the inland centres.” They want to repeat in Rockhampton the mistakes that have already been made in Brisbane. We are told that these mistakes were due to the infancy of the colony, because we were ignorant in our infancy. That is a good reason why the Central district should not start an infancy of its own. We have built up at great cost public buildings and all the paraphernalia of Government to govern the entire colony, and we are now to be left with institutions three times as large, perhaps, as they need be if these other districts are taken from the South; and Rockhampton is to be rebuilt. Not only is it to be rebuilt, but a population less than one-fifth of the population which is proposed to be left to Southern Queensland are to have six times the area of land per head left to the South. Of course, they will start to sell it at once; and, not only will there be a building boom in Rockhampton, but there will be a land boom, as every man will have six times as much land as he wants in the Central district; and they will have a repetition of all the troubles which have arisen in Southern Queensland and the other colonies, owing to speculation and fictitious prosperity. No one knows that better than the hon. member who has brought this before the House, who inadvertently told us of the deep interest of Rockhampton. The interest of Rockhampton has been always a selfish interest. It has opposed the construction of a line to Gladstone. It has crippled the best port in Queensland. Why? For the sake of the men who want to get unearned increment from main street frontages, and the holders of corner allotments. Now, their influence is so strong that it stretches out away from Rockhampton, as one of

their members has told us, “ octopus-like”; and it even reaches Gladstone, and we find the hon. member for Port Curtis so overcome by Rockhampton influence that he is prepared to destroy the future promise of that port. What is the future promise? That the railway line from Bundaberg, running to Brisbane through Gympie and right into Southern Queensland, which would have found its terminus at Gladstone, is to be blocked by a fictitious boundary line; blocked by protective duties; blocked until Gladstone is not worth the name of a port. That line is pushed on at the expense of the entire colony of Queensland. The only part of the colony that opposed it, on the selfish so-much-a-foot principle, is Rockhampton. The finest port in Queensland is to have its future cut up and destroyed to please Rockhampton, and its own member turns round and helps to do it. A line without a port; a line running to a port; a line paid for by all Queensland useless until it reaches a port. Not only is the port to be destroyed, but the prime service of the line is to be destroyed—a port into which the largest steamers of the world can go; a port which possesses advantages which ought to make the Rockhampton people proud of it. That shows the character of the justice and the character of the people, speculators, land-grabbers, syndicators, and men who neglect the interests of their fellow men, and care nothing for labour and one man one vote, or anything but unearned increment for Rockhampton. And what are the arguments of the hon. member for Rockhampton? He has told us that Nature has decreed this: Nature has divided the country into tropical, semi-tropical, and temperate. Would he kindly tell us what degree of temperature separates the tropical from the semi-tropical, and where the exact point is that this degree of temperature is located? He does not exactly know the difference in temperature between tropical and semi-tropical, so he falls back on Dawes Range. He says, “ Nature meant us to stop at Dawes Range.” Why has not Southern Queensland the right to say, “ We shall go as far north as we like,” when Central Queensland says, “ We will come as far south as we like?” If Nature stuck up Dawes Range to separate the two colonies, what an extraordinary thing it is that 50,000 or 60,000 square miles of land is the ideal size of a State. It is proposed that Central Queensland shall be 220,000 square miles in extent, and yet the hon. gentleman tells us that 50,000 or 60,000 square miles is the ideal size of a State, and says that America has set the world a great example in dividing territory and creating fresh States. Consequently it is right to make a State five times that size. The American States have gone in for freetrade, but this Rockhampton port, in its selfishness, declines to have anything to do with freetrade. It says, “ We will have the trade in our natural products, because we are rich in them; but we will not take any of your manufactured stuff. We will have all the advantages on our side, and give you none.” They tell us they love us, and that the increase of love will go on by separation. It proposes to put on protective duties, erect Customs barriers, do everything it can to harass, and then we are told by that means we will be more friendly, and do more trade with each other. But where is the inherent right the hon. member tells us of? Hitherto this colony of Queensland has been held as a sort of co-operative communal land settlement, and a certain section of what has hitherto been a brotherhood, has discovered that the area held by it is much richer than it had previously anticipated. They have discovered Mount Morgan and richer pastoral lands; their seasons are more favourable, their railway line

is paying, and they have six times the area of land per head that South Queensland has, and they now turn round and say, "We will burst up this communal settlement, and make allotment to ourselves of this best land; we will fix the boundary north and south; we have the best railway, the biggest export trade, the biggest future; therefore, because we have the present enjoyment of all these good things, we will have separation. We will grab all, because we want to grab all and enjoy ourselves in the spirit of inherent selfishness; this is our natural right—the right to rob our co-settlers." Separation is to be a bond of brotherhood, and we are told the idea of separation has sunk down deep into the minds of the people of Central Queensland. This is a very fine idea, this bond of brotherhood; but it is simply throwing dust in the eyes of the people of Southern Queensland. They are to be robbed because a handful of people in Rockhampton have discovered that they have a rich territory which has hitherto been held in communal holding, and they want to turn it into individual holding. They talk about their surplus revenue, about their railway lines and their land; but they do not care to tell us that the land in Southern Queensland has been sold to make their railway lines. They do not care to tell us that our money has been pitched into their river and lost. They say their exports are £2,713,000, or £54 per head, and if for that reason they have the right to commit this wholesale and perpetual theft of the colony, then there are no ethics in argument and no argument in ethics. They tell us they have a duty to themselves; but they have no duty to their brothers who have hitherto held the land in common. Why, the bulk of the capital that has forged Central Queensland ahead has come from the South; and yet they say their duty is to themselves—the duty of inherent selfishness. We are told we cannot possibly govern Queensland from Brisbane. Brisbane, we are told, is as far from the Central district as London from Gibraltar; therefore, as London does not govern Gibraltar, we cannot govern the Central district from Brisbane. But Gibraltar is governed from London very comfortably.

Mr. MURRAY: And we are misgoverned from Brisbane.

Mr. KINGSBURY: The whole thing may be summed up in a word—Rockhampton, and supreme selfishness and unearned increment; individual fortunes and absentees. Money will be made; land will be sold, and buildings will be put up; but the debt will remain, and the interest will hang like a millstone round the necks of the people of the Central district and those Labour members who are being deluded by the speculators of Rockhampton into assisting them to perpetrate this perfidy.

Mr. CALLAN: I must say that the hon. member who last spoke is out of place in this House; he ought to be on the stage. The hon. member who preceded him—the hon. member for Warrego—made a most extraordinary speech; but I shall leave him to be answered by others. I do not intend to go into the question of separation. I wish to reply to the statement made the other night by the Premier, who told us that, if the Central portion of the colony became separated, the result would be that we would be under the domination of our employees. I cannot see what ground the hon. member had for making that statement. There are only three Central Labour members in the House, and they would not have been here if their opponents had managed better. As far as Barcoo is concerned, there is not the slightest ground for

stating that the Labour party gained a victory; on the contrary, they were completely defeated, if we take into account the votes polled by the candidates on the other side. I want to show that the Labour party would not have gained a single seat in the Central district if the squatters had not been, as they often are, pig-headed and obstinate. Mr. Kerr, for the Barcoo, polled 294 votes, Mr. Brown 258, and Mr. Parnell 227. Mr. Parnell stood at the request of a number of squatters, and Mr. Brown at the request of a number of squatters, and the result was that the votes on their side were split, and Mr. Kerr was returned. At the Leichhardt election Mr. Hardacre polled 207 votes, Mr. Paul 117, and Mr. Forrest 87.

Mr. HARDACRE: I had 217; I had five more than the other two put together.

Mr. CALLAN: I am only giving these facts to show that Central Queensland as a whole has not returned Labour members. Clermont owes the return of a Labour member to the laziness of its former representative, who was up there about three and a-half years ago, and did not visit the place since. During my election I fought as hard a fight as any candidate, and was elected by men, four-fifths of whom, according to the programme of the Labour party, should have been opposed to me. I am satisfied that, so far as Central Queensland is concerned, the Premier's remark that we would be ruled by our servants and have no say in the administration, in the event of separation, is quite incorrect.

Mr. McDONALD: It will come about.

Mr. CALLAN: The Premier also said that these Central members preached separation, but prayed God that it would not come about. I never state in this House a single word in which I do not believe. I believe in separation thoroughly; I believe it will be the making of Central Queensland; and I believe there are plenty of men there who cannot come to this House, but who would be able to take part in the legislation of the country if the seat of government were within reach. The Premier also stated that he and others had taken part in developing the Central district. I know he has; but so have others. I do not want to give the House my autobiography; but I may say that, thirty-four years ago, I delivered a mob of cattle at Toorilla, which was then the farthest out-station in Queensland; and I delivered another mob the next year at Columbra, the farthest out-station on the Mackenzie. Since then I have been almost all my life in Central Queensland, and what property I have is there. I believe that our resources would be developed by separation far more rapidly than under the government of South Queensland.

Mr. BROWNE rose to speak,—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. BROWNE: Not on the resolution.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member spoke, and moved an amendment.

Mr. BROWNE: The amendment was ruled out of order.

The SPEAKER: Although the amendment was ruled out of order, still the hon. member has spoken.

Mr. PHILLIPS: In common with the great majority of members of the House who represent Northern and Central constituencies, I hold views in favour of separation; but there is separation and separation, and I cannot possibly support the motion before the House, for the reason that it would have the effect of completely dismembering a large portion of Western

Queensland, which I hold will ultimately carry on its trade through ports in the Gulf of Carpentaria. If members representing Central districts had come down with a demand for the area to the east of the watershed dividing the Diamantina and the Thomson, and south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, I should have supported them. Any proposal to divide Queensland or Australia generally is very largely a geographical problem, and without trespassing on the time of the House, I may briefly state some of the mistakes made in the past in connection with the boundaries of the colonies. New South Wales, the parent colony, having the greater power, has contrived, whenever any territory was separated from her, to push the offshoots as far from Sydney as possible. For instance, on the south-western boundary we find a very large and rich territory, the Riverina, the settlers on which pay their rents to the New South Wales Treasury, but their trade goes to Melbourne and Adelaide. Again, on the western boundary we find Broken Hill, the rents of which find their way into the New South Wales Treasury, while the trade goes to Adelaide. One of the greatest mistakes made in connection with the separation of Queensland from New South Wales, was the delineation of our southern boundary, which should have been as far south as Grafton. We should have taken in the whole of the Clarence, Richmond, and Tweed River districts, and have included also a very large slice of New England, comprising Inverell, Glen Innes, and Tenterfield—or altogether a territory containing 33,000 additional square miles. This motion is based upon the old tripartite division of Queensland, and some very curious anomalies exist in connection with the proposal. For instance, the Southern division contains an area of 210,000 square miles, and I find on an examination of the map that  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of that territory is nearer to Melbourne than Brisbane; 4 per cent. is nearer to Sydney; 5 per cent. is nearer to Newcastle;  $15\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. is nearer to Normanton; 20 per cent. is nearer to Adelaide; 31 per cent. is nearer to Townsville; and 66 per cent. is nearer to Rockhampton. If we take into consideration that the Southern division includes the ports of Maryborough and Bundaberg, I find only about 27 per cent. of the total area of Southern Queensland is nearer to Brisbane than to any of the ports I have named. It almost seems as if Rockhampton should try to annex the South, seeing that 66 per cent. of the Southern division is geographically nearer to Rockhampton than to Brisbane. Now, when we come to consider the boundaries of the Central district, we find that two-thirds is nearer to Townsville than to Rockhampton, and 40 per cent. is nearer to Normanton. In fact, the northern boundary of the Central division goes within eight miles of the Northern railway, as pointed out by the Premier, and such a boundary as that is totally out of the question. The Central people would be wise if they restricted themselves to a reasonable northern boundary as well as a reasonable western boundary. With regard to Western Queensland, as hon. members may have seen from the map the other night, that territory contains fully one-third of the whole area of the colony, and no part of it is nearer to any port on the east coast than to ports in the Gulf of Carpentaria. But I find that 6 per cent. of Western Queensland is actually in the Southern division, and 31 per cent. would be included in Central Queensland. They propose to take away from the Gulf this large and rich territory, but will not take its ports. I may point out also that Boullia, which is inside the Central division, is 358 miles nearer Burketown than Rockhampton—practically a day's ride on a railway. So that if there were a railway

from Burketown to Boullia, and an extension of the line from Longreach to Boullia, a man starting from Boullia would reach Burketown a day before a man starting from the same place at the same time would reach Rockhampton. The one who went to Burketown would certainly be a week nearer Europe, with anything like direct communication from the Gulf, than the man who went to Rockhampton, to say nothing of the dangerous and intricate navigation inside the Barrier Reef. Then, again, take Urandangie, another town in what is proposed to be the Central colony. That is no less than 120 miles nearer to Burketown than to Longreach, and Longreach is 424 miles from Rockhampton, so that Urandangie is no less than 544 miles nearer to Burketown than to Rockhampton. I hold that the back country of Queensland should not be divorced from its natural ports. I would like to see—what I think the Premier foreshadowed in his very able defence of the unity of the colony—some measure of financial separation, so as to prevent the recurrence of grievances which settlers in the remote portions of the colony labour under. I can speak from personal experience, having for the last thirty years done little else than travel about Queensland. I know that the settlers in the remote parts of the colony labour under very great disabilities, and I sincerely hope that the Premier will see his way to introduce some measure which will obviate some of the mistakes of the past. Realising as I do the earnestness of the members representing the Central district, and, being a separationist, I really regret that I cannot support the motion.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: When this question last came before the House I treated it, to a certain extent, as an abstract motion, but I am now going to treat this as a concrete motion. I am very much of the same opinion as that expressed by the hon. member for Carpentaria. There is separation and separation. Separation with no specific knowledge or certainty as to the boundary, except so far that the boundary laid down would be hostile to the interests of my constituents, is a form of separation which it is utterly impossible for me to accept. When the provincial districts scheme was brought forward, embodied in the Queensland Constitution Bill, I supported the Bill, imagining that when we came to the schedule in which the boundaries were defined some attempt would be made for an arrangement between Northern and Central Queensland. I found, however, that no such attempt was made. I found that the hon. members representing the Central district claimed everything they could, and, although they were loud in their complaints against the octopus of the South, they were disposed on their part to play the octopus as far as we were concerned. Now, therefore, before I vote for a motion of this sort, I must be perfectly certain as to what I am voting for. It would be impossible for me to trust, as I did before, to the justice of the Central members with regard to the interests of my constituency. Having learned from experience that I cannot trust to a sense of justice on the part of our neighbours, being forewarned I am forearmed. It is perfectly well known that for a long time the 22nd parallel was regarded as the line of division between Northern and Central Queensland, and so far as the wishes of my constituents are concerned, and so far as the opinion arrived at by the people of the North assembled in convention, that is the boundary line. We find now that there is another line favoured by Central members. The line of division follows the watershed, and pays no attention to the old line. Starting from Cape Palmerston, it does not run West, as some people might imagine. It is not proposed that the

North should be that portion of the colony above Cape Palmerston, and the Central that part to the south of Cape Palmerston; but the Central members claim to follow the watershed, which takes them to the south-west of Mackay, and would enable them to intercept the trade of Mackay at about twenty-seven miles from the sea coast. Then we have another form of Northern separation. According to a paragraph in the papers during the last day or two, a meeting was held at Charters Towers, at which about 500 were present. It was said to be a Labour meeting, and the division between the Central and Northern divisions was placed at the 21st parallel, which means that half of the Mackay district is to be intercepted. The North, then, apparently, is willing to leave us in the Central or the Southern division, whilst the Central division proposes to take away all our back country.

Mr. MURRAY: You are quite safe there.

Mr. DUNSFORD: The resolution says "not further North than the 21st parallel." It qualifies it.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: One thing is certain. Even were I ardently in favour of the separation of the Central district, it would be impossible for me ever to vote for such a measure until it was clearly determined where my constituents are to be placed. I am not going to vote for pigs in pokes. I want to know what I am going to get. The Centre and South together, for a great many years, have been acting as one, and during the whole of that time anything to which Mackay has laid claim has invariably been opposed. Last session the Northern members voted to a man in favour of the three provinces, and the moment we were outvoted, and the Central province was thrown out, we found the Central members, almost to a man, deliberately voted against us. The Central members appear to have been satisfied with the position of the Central district so long as the railways were paying 13s. 1d. per cent., and to have hotly gone in for separation as soon as the lines began to pay well. But, through the expenditure of Government money, they have been able to annex Northern country and Southern country. They have taken away, by means of the general expenditure, trade which belongs naturally to Bowen, trade which belongs to Brisbane, trade which belongs to Broadsound, and trade which belongs to Mackay; and having then got apparently all they could get, having got their railway extended out West, having extended their arms to the North and to the South, then it occurs to them to say: "We have got as much out of our neighbours as we can possibly get. Now let us have a Central colony, and by-and-by we shall be able to pass a Border Tax Bill, when it will be utterly impossible that the trade we have obtained by our superior political power from our neighbours can be taken away." The claim is made by virtue of the enormous quantity of imports and exports, artificial not natural, for to a large extent that is due to the expenditure of Government money. The trade they get from Clermont is trade that belongs to Mackay. Much of the trade they get from Springsure is trade which never would go to them naturally, and is not due to the energy of their inhabitants. It is purely by the Government expenditure on railways that they have been enabled to profit. Therefore, I say that part of their claim falls entirely to the ground. They have become a prosperous community by being able to put pressure on the Government in Brisbane. With regard to Gladstone—although that does not interest me very much—it is a notorious fact that the natural outlet for the Central district is distinctly Gladstone, which is one of the

finest ports in the colony. If the interests of the West had been properly considered, there is not the slightest doubt that the trade of the West would have concentrated at Gladstone instead of having to put up with the vast inconvenience it at present has to go through in order to get an outlet to the ocean. It is evident the people of Rockhampton desire to continue the policy they have hitherto pursued with great success. They have even refused to accept Government expenditure which, unless they had some sinister object in view, they would have been only too delighted to take. They refused to allow the Government to construct a railway to Port Alma, not because they considered the trade of the West that came to Rockhampton, but because they only considered Rockhampton. Under such circumstances there are some grounds for charging a portion of this agitation to selfish motives of a most extreme kind. Whether the theory of the Chief Secretary with regard to the contributions to Customs revenue from the three districts of the colony is right or wrong I do not know, but it is quite certain that a portion of the imports which come into Mackay, which is in the Northern division, are most decidedly for the West. They go to Nebo and other places. Nebo, though no longer a place of importance, is a town of some considerable antiquity, and we in Mackay look upon it almost as our mother. We have a sentimental feeling with regard to Nebo which, although now a venerable ruin, once stood in that relation to us. With regard to this proposed free interchange of natural products—and I especially wish my constituents to understand this—the junior member for Rockhampton cannot pledge the colony of Central Queensland for all time. He cannot decide how long freetrade may continue there. It may at any time happen that the people of the new colony may say, "Our revenue requires to be replenished; we are going to charge duties on goods coming over the border." Can the hon. member give any guarantee that they will not do that? He can give no such guarantee. Therefore, knowing well that the representatives of the Central district, on the last occasion when a protest was made by the members for Mackay against the border line, simply presumed upon their strength, and said practically that all they got they intended to keep, we shall know very well how to vote on a claim of this kind. On the same occasion the hon. member for Fitzroy argued that because a certain quantity of Northern cattle went to the meat works at Rockhampton, therefore Rockhampton was the natural centre for the Mackay district. He might just as well argue that because cattle were driven from the Gulf to Melbourne, therefore the Gulf country ought to be annexed to Victoria. They have shown clearly that we cannot trust them, and therefore as long as they claim the boundary line that they do claim, whoever may represent the district of Mackay will be bound to oppose them in every possible way. I shall oppose them, and my colleague will, on this occasion.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: The motion as it stands states, first, that the constituencies of Central Queensland have declared in favour of territorial separation, and that for that reason it is desirable that the district should be erected into a new colony. That is absurd enough in itself. But let us go a little further, and see what else this hon. member—whom I am glad to see here, and who has made as much noise in the House, considering the short time he has been in it, as anyone I ever knew—proposes. He says that the separation shall be "so that the interchange of natural products between the new colony and the old

one shall be and continue as free from tax or duty after such separation as if it had never been made." Those are two rather large orders to be contained in one resolution. With regard to the declaration in favour of territorial separation, that is an assertion which may or may not be susceptible of proof. I am not at all sure that it was absolutely made a test question in the Central division; but even if it were, and assuming that the statement is correct, it will, I fancy, take something more than a majority of the representatives of the Central division to dismember the colony. Up to the present Queensland is an undivided colony, and there are other persons to be considered whose views may not coincide with those of the majority of the representatives of that section of the colony. With regard to the second part of the resolution, I have seen many impudent propositions put upon the business paper of the House during the twenty-one years I have been a member of it, but I think that is about the most impudent. Have we got a Bismarck from Rockhampton amongst us who is going to dictate to us what is to be done with regard to this portion of the colony? I speak almost with bated breath; but I must ask: Did Rockhampton create the Central district? Rockhampton is but an excrescence on the Central district, which was made by the people who went out into the great interior of the colony and made those great pastoral holdings which are now the backbone of Rockhampton. Rockhampton has been created to a great extent by those holdings having been taken up and materially assisted by Government money obtained not by taxation from the people of Rockhampton, but from the general taxpayers of the colony. The phrase I previously applied to Rockhampton is applicable now, and I say Rockhampton is the daughter of the horse-leech, continually crying "Give, give." The money wasted in the Fitzroy and in bridges over it; the money spent in the construction of railways out from Rockhampton, which I admit has been a good expenditure; the money wasted on wharves at Port Alma, and the proposed further waste of money in extending the railway to that place from Rockhampton, are all things Rockhampton has had, or is continually asking for, and if it were possible to excise Rockhampton, and give it a pandemonium for itself, I would give a most hearty vote in that direction.

Mr. ARCHER: Brisbane is not in the same position?

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: No; there has not been the same lavish waste of money in Brisbane that there has been in Rockhampton.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: I repeat the statement, and nobody knows it better than the hon. member for Rockhampton himself.

Mr. ARCHER: I do not know it.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: The hon. member has no cause to find fault with anything that has occurred to Rockhampton or its surroundings. Rockhampton has always been more than well treated. There was a map on the walls of the Chamber; but the hon. members for Rockhampton have apparently taken good care to see that no map of the colony shall remain on the walls of the Chamber during the discussion of this question. What has become of it I don't know. What we are asked now to do is to take a ribbon out of the centre of the colony for the benefit of Rockhampton, a proposition with which I entirely disagree. There was, and perhaps is, some reason why there may be a severance between the Northern portion of Queensland and the Southern portion, but there is certainly no reason why Rockhampton should be allowed to cut itself adrift. The money

wasted in the Central district speaks for itself, and Rockhampton and its back country is as much a component part of the Southern portion of the colony of Queensland as Brisbane itself.

Mr. CURTIS: For all time.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: For all the hon. member's time, at any rate. The resolutions moved by the hon. member are such as I hope will not find favour with a majority in this House. What has Rockhampton, or the people of Rockhampton, ever done for the country? The country back from Rockhampton was discovered and explored by people who never went out from Rockhampton, but by men of energy, intellect, and, perhaps, a little capital. One of these three things may be found to exist now in Rockhampton. Rockhampton—because it is the accident of an accident, and happens to be at the head of a river which at one time was fairly navigable, but has since, through the exertions of the members for Rockhampton, become a series of sandbanks—wants to be in a position to bleed those who use Rockhampton as a port. We are asked to give all these things, and separation to Rockhampton; and I say God help me if I was within that division which embraced Rockhampton as its capital. I shall vote against this resolution, and shall do all I can to prevent, even if it is passed, any action being taken to carry out the crude ideas contained in it. I dare say I know more of the back country of Rockhampton than the hon. member who moved this resolution; and I say for the great producers, the great pastoral tenants, grazing farmers, and small farmers west of Rockhampton, that they have no sympathy at all with the motion moved by the hon. member.

Mr. ANNEAR moved the adjournment of the debate

The PREMIER: We have had a very heavy week's work, and I have no intention of encouraging the House to stop much longer over the debate to-night. We gave the best Government night during the week for the discussion of this motion, and those interested in it have also, by the kindly hand given to them by the Government, had almost the whole of a private night. I think they might have contrived to have finished the debate by this time. When I offered a Government night, I cautioned them particularly that, should the debate not be concluded, as I believed it would not be on that one night, I should take good care that they should not snatch a division. If they are prepared to go to a division right off to-night, the Government are prepared to do so, and that ought to be an end of it. I do not want to prevent discussion at all, but I do not wish to see a matter of this sort prolonged, especially when the hon. member who brought it forward urged, as a special reason why they should have a Government night, that they wanted the division upon it on the one night, so that they might have a decision before the end of the week. I am putting every facility in their way; but I am not going to keep a House and assist them to prolong the debate until some members have gone home.

Mr. ARCHER: It is not with any desire on our part that the debate has been prolonged. I have spoken shortly, and most of the Central members have spoken briefly, and if the House would listen to a short reply from my hon. friend, the junior member for Rockhampton, I have not the slightest doubt that the Central members would be perfectly willing to go to a division.

Mr. HARDACRE: If that is done, I will forego my desire to speak, as we are all anxious to go to a division and have the question settled.

Mr. ANNEAR: If the hon. member wishes to reply, I will, with the permission of the House, withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. CURTIS, in reply: As it is the desire of the House that the debate should close as soon as possible, I shall be debarred from speaking as fully as I should have liked to have done in reply to the Premier and several other hon. members, more especially the members for Mackay and Balonne. The reply of the Premier was made up mainly of special pleading; there was not a valid argument advanced by him against the proposition for Central territorial separation. It was merely a reiteration of the assertion that it should not take place, and a revival of the bogey cry about the difficulty with regard to the bondholders. The hon. gentleman argued that separation could not eventuate unless some arrangement were previously come to between ourselves and the bondholders; but we know that there is one Imperial Act which provides for a division of the debt between the parties, and that the security of the bondholders would never be impaired in the slightest degree. On the contrary, instead of being impaired it would be a constantly expanding and increasing security, because the security of the bondholders is the revenue of the country, and with separation the revenues would be constantly expanding. There would, therefore, be no difficulty, as far as the bondholders are concerned. In the Constitution Act given to Western Australia some three years ago provision was made, notwithstanding that they were given absolutely responsible government and entire control over the land, for a division of the territory and the settlement of the public debt. The mode of procedure there provided is that, upon separation taking place, the accounts should be gone into, and whatever amount was found to have been spent on the separating colony should constitute a debt due by it to the old colony. Further provision is made in that behalf, so that the security of the bondholder would not be impaired in any way, but he would still have his claim against both colonies jointly and severally. I presume that the same thing could be done in our case, and if it were necessary for us to give any indemnity to the old colony for taking the responsibility of our share of the debt, we could do it by means of a special guarantee fund. For instance, we could set apart the proceeds of the sales of land in the Western district as a sinking fund for the payment of our share. The Premier said that I got on rather delicate ground when I commenced to speak of the history of the separation movement, and endeavoured to make out that the present movement had no affinity with the original movement in 1866 and 1867. I say that it is practically the same movement, and that our boundary then, as now, was Dawes Range. But it was expressly stated that the Northern portion was only included "until such time as further subdivision became necessary." Although the petitioners asked for that separation, they knew perfectly well that they could not expect to hold for ever the whole of the territory extending northwards to the Gulf of Carpentaria. In our letter to Lord Knutsford, in 1890, we stated that the movement then was practically a revival of the original movement of 1866. Mr. Morehead, who was then Chief Secretary, wrote a letter to the Governor in which he stated that what we alleged was calculated to mislead, as the object of the movement then set on foot was by no means identical with the agitation of 1890, and that the purpose of the petition in 1866 was to obtain the separation of Northern Queensland from the Southern portion of the colony by the line of the Tropic of Capricorn. I

can assure hon. members that no such boundary was ever proposed as the Tropic of Capricorn. The boundary proposed then, as now, was Dawes Range. The Premier stated that the separation movement was dead in 1873, and remained as dead as the roses that perish from that time until 1890. The hon. gentleman will find that he was wrong in making that statement. A petition was presented by the people of Central Queensland in 1887, praying for the establishment of provincial legislatures, and a manifesto was issued in which it was stated that, unless this was done, territorial separation would be sought. The desire for Central separation was never dead in Central Queensland. The hon. gentleman also spoke of the boundaries now shown on the map as being a mere accident, which was caused by some error in the Crown Law Offices. If that is so, it is an extraordinary thing that Sir Samuel Griffith adopted them in his Local Registries Act. With regard to the sales of land, the hon. gentleman stated that £5,000,000 worth had been sold in the Southern district, and £1,300,000 worth in the Central district, and that until £5,000,000 had been sold in the Central district the account would not be square, thereby implying that the whole of the £5,000,000 raised in Southern Queensland had been spent in the Central division. Possibly a portion of it has, and that would be a debt due by Central Queensland; but I think the amount has already been covered by sales effected there, so that there is nothing in that argument. If there is any connection between the railway construction in a district and land sales, I would point out that £10,000,000 have been spent on railways in the Southern district, and that £5,000,000 have been received from the sales of land, while £2,700,000 have been spent on railways in the Central division, and the land sales there have produced £1,300,000. A great deal has been said about border duties, as if I suggested anything of the kind. We did not say anything about them, and have no desire for them. That has been imported into the discussion for the purpose of damaging the cause in the eyes of the Southern and Northern people. That we have no idea of anything of the sort I wish distinctly to say, and we would be satisfied to be debarred from levying border duties. I do not think it necessary to say anything further in reply to what fell from the Premier. In reference to what was said by one hon. member with regard to the coast line to Rockhampton, I, for one, would be glad to see it brought forward, and I think that would be one of the first works carried out by independent Central Queensland. With regard to what the hon. member for Balonne said about Central Queensland, in looking up *Hansard* I notice he stated, in the debate towards the close of the discussion on Constitution Bill No. 2, that he would be no party to altering the boundaries of Central Queensland. The Government also defended the boundaries in opposition to the amendment brought forward by Mr. Philp, who proposed to take about one-third of our territory. The hon. member for Balonne also opposed it. We look upon the boundaries as a matter of detail, which should be settled by an impartial tribunal. I would like to have spoken at greater length. There are many assertions that have been made in opposition to the motion, which I should like to have replied to; but, as we are all anxious to come to a division, I shall conclude.

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 15.

Messrs. Archer, Dawson, Hardacre, Kerr, McDonald, Hoolan, Murray, Callan, Harding, Curtis, Browne, Cross, Jackson, Dunsford, and Cameron.

NOES, 32.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Byrnes, Barlow, Philp, Dickson, Morehead, Duffy, Nelson, Thorn, Thomas, Plunkett, McMaster, Stevens, Battersby, Bell, Foxton, Macfarlane, Grimes, Kingsbury, Drake, Smith, Fisher, Corfield, Chataway, Phillips, Dalrymple, Allan, Agnew, Crombie, Midson, Watson, and Annear.

PAIRS.

For the motion—Mr. Boles and Mr. Hamilton.

Against the motion—Mr. Tozer and Mr. Stephens.

Question resolved in the negative.

ADJOURNMENT.

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