

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 17 JULY 1894

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 17 JULY, 1894.

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

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

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

VACANCIES DURING THE RECESS.

THE SPEAKER said: I have to report that, since the termination of last session, the following vacancies have occurred in the House:—

1. By the death of George Robertson Burns, Esq., one of the members for the electoral district of Townsville.
2. By the death of John Macfarlane, Esq., one of the members for the electoral district of Ipswich.
3. By the resignation of John Hoolan, Esq., member for the electoral district of Burke;—That on the occurrence of each of the said vacancies, respectively, I issued my writ for the election of a member to fill the same; and that such writs have been returned to me with the certificates duly endorsed thereon of the election of the following gentlemen:—(1st) Anthony Ogden, Esq., as a member for the electoral district of Townsville; (2nd) James Wilkinson, Esq., as a member for the electoral district of Ipswich; (3rd) Thomas Glassey, Esq., as member for the electoral district of Burke.

MEMBERS SWORN.

MR. ANTHONY OGDEN and MR. JAMES WILKINSON were sworn in, and took their seats accordingly.

VACANCIES BY REASON OF INSOLVENCY.

THE SPEAKER said: I have further to report that by notification, dated the 10th day of November, 1893, signed by W. A. Douglas, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, and

published in the issue of the *Queensland Government Gazette* of the 2nd December, 1893, it was publicly intimated that a trustee had been appointed in the matter of a special resolution for the liquidation by arrangement of the affairs of William Lovejoy.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. M. Nelson): In accordance with the invariable practice of the House, I beg to move—

That the seat of William Lovejoy hath become and is now vacant by reason of the insolvency of the said William Lovejoy since his election and return to serve in this House as member for the electoral district of Aubigny.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER said: I have also to report that by notification, dated the 17th day of February last, signed by W. A. Douglas, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, and published in the issue of the *Queensland Government Gazette* of the 24th day of February, it was publicly intimated that a trustee had been appointed in the matter of a special resolution for the liquidation by arrangement of the affairs of Andrew Lang Petrie.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the seat of Andrew Lang Petrie hath become and is now vacant by reason of the insolvency of the said Andrew Lang Petrie since his election and return to serve in this House as member for the electoral district of Toombul.

Question put and passed.

DESPATCHES.

LOSS OF H.M.S. "VICTORIA"—FEDERAL COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER read a letter he had received from His Excellency the Governor forwarding a copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies conveying the deep gratification felt by Her Majesty at the spontaneous expression of sympathy contained in the Address of both Houses on the occasion of the loss of Her Majesty's ship "Victoria"; also a letter containing a copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies intimating that Her Majesty was graciously pleased to receive the Address of the Queensland Parliament praying for increased representation of each of the colonies in the Federal Council of Australasia.

Ordered to be printed.

ELECTIONS JUDGE FOR 1894.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a letter from His Honour the Chief Justice intimating, in pursuance of the provisions of section 12 of the Elections Tribunal Act of 1886, that Mr. Justice Real would be the Elections Judge to preside at the tribunal during the year 1894.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

SAVINGS BANK SECURITIES AND TREASURY BILLS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of letters from the Auditor-General relating to the auditing and investment of the Savings Bank funds and Treasury bills on the 31st December, 1893, and on the 30th June, 1894.

Ordered to be printed.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have to announce to the House that since we last met there has been a change made in the administration. Shortly after the end of last session Sir Thomas McIlwraith resigned his office as Vice-President of the Executive Council, and His Excellency was pleased to confer that office upon myself.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And I now lay on the table the *Gazette* containing the notification. In doing so I desire to say to the House that, occupying the position I find myself in,

I appeal for the sympathy of hon. members and ask for their assistance. I feel deeply my own insufficiency to fill the place which was occupied previously by men much worthier than myself.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on Opposition side: Question! No, no!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But with the kind assistance of my friends on this side of the House, and relying upon hon. members on the other side of the House putting the most generous and liberal construction upon my actions on all occasions, I hope to be enabled to maintain the dignity of the House, and also to conduct the business of the House and our debates with propriety and proper decorum.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POWERS: It is usual to make some reference to a notice of Ministerial changes; and, of course, one of the greatest that could be made is that which has now been announced by the present Chief Secretary. I am sure that although we on this side of the House differ from the hon. gentleman on many points, we shall be treated most courteously by him—as courteously as by any hon. gentleman who could be appointed to that position. So far as the hon. gentleman carries out legislation which this side of the House can approve of, I am sure that he and the Ministry of which he is the head will receive all the assistance that he can expect from an Opposition who do not believe in the programme of the Government as put forth. We believe that there is good to be found in every Ministry, and we will accept what is good and prevent the passing of whatever we believe to be bad in the interests of those we represent. Therefore I think the hon. gentleman may expect from, at any rate, the members of the Opposition—and I believe also from the members of the Labour party—every reasonable assistance so long as he conducts the business of the House in the way in which I believe he will conduct it.

Mr. FISHER: I believe it is customary to congratulate a new Premier on his first appearance in the House in that capacity, and the modest manner in which the hon. gentleman has made the announcement this afternoon will, I think, commend itself to every hon. member in all parts of the House. Speaking in the absence of our real leader, Mr. Thomas Glassey, the hon. member for Burke, who, I think, has earned the respect of all hon. members opposite—at least they have learned to fear him—on behalf of the Labour party I have to express our good wishes towards the present Premier and the object he is aiming at—the maintaining of decorum in this Assembly. We are all prepared to assist anyone who will endeavour to legislate for the good of the whole people. We are prepared to support any person, or any number of persons, who endeavour to do good. We are not what we are said to be—class legislators—nor are we prepared to support those who wish to carry out class legislation. We will endeavour to forward every measure that is likely to be for the good of the people, and we hope that under the leadership of the present Premier such measures will be introduced during this session of Parliament.

PUBLICATION OF HANSARD.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have to announce to the House that *Hansard* will, in accordance with the agreement recently made, be printed at the Government Printing Office as heretofore. It will be a bi-weekly publication.

Mr. DRAKE: That is not according to the agreement.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. Tozer): Yes, it is decidedly.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And that it will be published early every Thursday evening, and also in time to be posted every Saturday morning.

THE OPENING SPEECH.

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

[*Vide* page 1 of report of Legislative Council's proceedings.]

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Mr. CHATAWAY, in moving the adoption of the following Address in Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech:—

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

“We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection towards the throne and person of Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to tender our thanks to Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present session.

“We, in common with the rest of Her Majesty's loyal subjects, have learnt with great pleasure the tidings that Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York had given birth to a son, and we desire to record our satisfaction that the congratulations of the Government of this colony were communicated to Her Majesty and to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke and Duchess of York.

“We have deplored the untimely fate of the late President Carnot; and while deeply sympathising with the French nation in the loss they have sustained through his death, hope that the measures now being taken by the various Governments will have the effect of stamping out the anarchical sentiments which have prompted the outrage.

“We will give our most careful attention and consideration to the several measures which Your Excellency has specially mentioned, and to all other matters that may be brought before us, and it shall be our anxious endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may be conducive to the material and moral advancement and prosperity, and the good government, of this portion of Her Majesty's Dominions.”

—said: Before alluding to the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, I may say I have heard with the greatest regret—a regret which I am sure is shared by every hon. member—that since this House was prorogued two of our members have been called away. Mr. Macfarlane for many years represented Ipswich. He was a member who was held in the very highest respect by all those with whom he came into intimate relations. Mr. Burns had represented Townsville for one session only, but I make bold to say that there was not any new member who had earned higher opinions among the members of this House; there was no member who was more thought of by both sides. His earnestness and energy promised a bright future for him. His unswerving honesty was a guarantee that that future would have been devoted to the best interests of the colony. Like Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Burns passed away suddenly, and without any warning. Another face we miss to-day is that of the late leader of the Government. He has been stricken down with illness; but we are happy to believe, from the latest news, that it is possible it will not be so very many weeks—at any rate not many

months—before he again takes his seat in this House, of which he has so long been an ornament. One other member we miss; but as this is a voluntary retirement, perhaps it should not be alluded to—a member of whom it may be said the more one saw of him the better one liked him. I allude to the hon. member for Burke, Mr. Hoolan. As in the case of the late Premier, I believe I am safe in saying that it will not be a couple of years before we see him again in the House and sitting on this side.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Labour Party: Hear, hear!

Mr. CHATAWAY: Two new faces I am pleased to greet—the new member for Ipswich, and Mr. Ogden, the new member for Townsville. Both those members bring to the House the highest reputation for moderation, straightforwardness, and honesty, and I am sure that they will do everything in their power to earn and retain the encomiums that have been so freely passed upon them. It has been the custom of the member to whom is entrusted the duty of moving the adoption of the Address in Reply to go through the programme contained in the Speech seriatim—welcoming certain measures with extreme warmth, patting others on the back, and giving a more guarded approval to the rest. I do not propose to do this on the present occasion, as I only saw the Speech at a late hour this morning; and, further than that, I am not quite clear what some of the measures mean. Several policies have been recently offered to the country by young, earnest, and ardent politicians; but I am perfectly certain that there is no policy which has so thoroughly obtained the approval of the country at large as the policy of the Government whom I am now supporting. This was borne very distinctly into my mind when I noticed that, during the recess, some of the hon. members now occupying the Opposition cross-benches, gave a general approval to the constructive measures that had been passed by the Government, while others went so far as to claim that that party had compelled the Government to introduce them and carry them. This made it clear to my mind that it was not the measures that had been introduced by the Government in their policy to which they had any objection, but to the men who carried them out, and the means they took to carry them out. No doubt they thought that the Government, perhaps, in some cases, did not go fast enough, or that they administered what were excellent measures in a way which was not their way, with too much stringency, and with too great a regard for the public Treasury. However, the past policy of the Government has been endorsed by the greater number of the members of the House, and I believe, so far as I understand it, that this policy is the same which will be carried out in the future. It has been claimed by members of the Opposition that this policy has a socialistic tendency, whatever that may mean. It is one of those things which, as my hon. colleague, Mr. Dalrymple, would say, requires definition. It is one of those things I cannot quite understand without a more exact definition. At any rate, whether it has a socialistic tendency or not, it is in accordance with the spirit of the times. The key-note seems to me to be close settlement on the land and the encouragement of our primary industries. The three principal constructive measures of last session had those objects in view. They were, the Co-operative Communities Act, the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act, and the Sugar Works Guarantee Act. Those three measures, we are told in the Speech, have borne good results. Eleven separate communities have been established, which all conduce to the permanent settlement and

utilisation of the land. The Sugar Works Guarantee Act, we are also informed, has materially assisted in stimulating a meritorious and valuable industry, while the effect of the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act has been to almost duplicate the appliances for the treatment of meat and other produce. The same policy is to be continued, so the Speech tells us, in the future.

Mr. FISHER: What is the policy?

Mr. CHATAWAY: The policy is close settlement on the land and the encouragement of our primary industries. We are told that a measure will be brought before us with the view of inducing men engaged in pastoral and agricultural industries to acquire residential holdings, which it is hoped will go far to remove the difficulties which at present so frequently occur between capital and labour. Another clause states that there will be a Bill introduced for the purchase of land for agricultural settlement, and another for gold-mining on freeholds. These Bills all go towards the same object, and will further the policy which the Government laid down at the opening of last session. That this policy has proved a good one for the country is seen by a comparison between this day and this day twelve months. Prosperity is returning. The railway and Customs receipts are increasing, settlement on the land is increasing; and I believe a continuation of the same policy will be the very best thing for the country. I beg to move the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. DUFFY said: I am pleased to have the opportunity, I may say the honour, to second the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech delivered to-day; and while I regard the position as a mark of kindly feeling towards myself, I cannot help regretting that the duty did not fall to the lot of some older and abler public man. In inviting me to second the Address in Reply it is just possible that Ministers very justly thought that the very plausible, feasible, and I may say hopeful policy shadowed forth in His Excellency's Speech requires very little, if any, advocacy or encomium. I do not intend to tire you with a lengthy speech, as I do not believe I could make a long speech even if I tried to do so; but even though I were gifted with great powers of oratory, I would be sorry to inflict a lengthy speech upon you or upon this honourable House on the present important occasion, because I feel it would be a bad precedent, and a bad example to set at this early stage of our proceedings; for I am sure that hon. members and the people of the country generally are in hope that the session we have opened to-day will be one of action, not words. The first item in the Speech informs us that congratulations have been sent to Her Majesty the Queen, to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and to the Duke and Duchess of York, upon the latter having given birth to a son. For myself, seeing the large number of heirs to the throne already existing, I cannot for the life of me see why the latest addition to the Royal family should have called for any special mark of recognition at our hands, except perhaps as an act of courtesy. Possibly as loyal subjects we are expected on occasions of the sort to tender our congratulations, and as a loyal subject I offer my congratulations accordingly. The next item conveys to us the sad intelligence, news of which we have had before, but it is none the less sad on that account, of the cruel murder of that illustrious and kind-hearted Frenchman, President Carnot. I am sure you all regret, and that the English-speaking race the world over regrets, that unfortunate occurrence. When I notice by the Speech that drastic measures have been taken by the various Governments of Europe and all over the civilised

globe to stem the tide of sedition which is now flowing, I say I sincerely hope the Governments alluded to will also try and devise some wise and useful measures for the amelioration of the condition of the people, so as to prevent any possible chance of such a horrible occurrence in the future. The next item refers to the proposed increase in the number of representatives to the Federal Council. I am sure we all hope that the increased membership will enable the Council to bring about the speedy federation of the whole of the colonies; and by that means put a stop to the unpleasantness now existing through hostile tariffs. I am satisfied that when the federation of the colonies is an accomplished fact we will be able to interchange our products without being harassed by the vexatious regulations now existing in the various colonies. The next clause in the Speech relates to the Canadian Conference recently assembled at Ottawa; and I am sure it must be very gratifying and pleasing to us to know that the bringing about of that conference is in a great measure due to the recent kindly visit to our shores of the Canadian Minister, the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell. I specially mention this because about the time that hon. gentleman paid his visit a great fuss was being made about what was then considered, by some people, unnecessary expense incurred in providing special trains to enable distinguished strangers to visit various parts of the country and inquire into our resources. For myself I think an expenditure of that kind is a profitable advertisement, and I feel sure that if the deliberations of the conference which recently sat at Ottawa should be the means of bringing about reciprocity between the two countries, by which we would be enabled to send our sugar, wool, and other produce into Canada free of duty, we will have reason to congratulate ourselves upon the action of the Government in appointing two delegates from Queensland to attend that conference. The next clause in the Speech refers to the apparent passing away of the depression that has been troubling us. Although there is a good deal of poverty and depression still existing, I am sure most of us believe that the prospects of the colony are on the upward grade. I am convinced that is so. We all know the unfortunate position in which the colony was placed some twelve months ago in the opinion of our financial authorities. I have no hesitation in saying—and I am sure the House will agree with me—that it is in a great measure owing to the wise legislation of the past session, and the careful and cautious administration of Ministers during the recess, that the poverty which existed twelve months ago is passing away. I feel that it is a matter for congratulation that Queensland, by the careful legislation I have referred to, and by the dogged determination of her people, is fast shaking off the depression we, in common with the other colonies, have been suffering from. Of measures passed last session, the principal ones from which good was expected were the Sugar Works Guarantee Act and the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act. Referring to the Sugar Works Guarantee Act, I can speak feelingly on the subject, and I have no hesitation in saying that that Act has worked a vast amount of good, and although it has not been taken advantage of to the extent that was anticipated when the Bill was passing through the House, still it has been the means of restoring confidence to such an extent that private enterprise and capital is now coming forward to develop the sugar industry, and is in a great measure doing all that the Government and the Act itself were expected to do. In this connection there is one little matter on which I wish to especially congratulate Ministers; that is, on the firm stand

that has been made in refusing to guarantee debentures where the security offered and the locality in which it was proposed to grow sugar did not appear good enough. I know of my own knowledge that on more than one occasion undue pressure was brought to bear on Ministers by designing land-owners.

Mr. POWERS: By designing mill-owners.

Mr. DUFFY: With regard to the Meat and Dairy Produce Act, of course, as you all know, not much progress has been made. We have seen by the Speech that an early amendment of that Act is hinted at, and I do hope that when it is amended it will be in such a way as to exempt from the stock tax those who are now contributing towards the establishing of freezing works. I wish to see them exempted in proportion to the amount so contributed, for I hold that it is absolutely unfair to those men who initiate meat-works to be called upon to contribute twice over, because that is what it really means. The squatter who simply contributes to the stock tax reaps almost equal benefit by the enhanced value of his cattle. The next item in the Speech refers to the financial position of the colony, and I think that Ministers deserve our warmest praise for their successful efforts in making both ends meet, in the face of the general depression prevailing and of the general falling off of revenue in every department of the service. In the case of the Railway Department alone it shows a shrinkage of some £80,000 or £90,000. I think in the face of that we have every reason to congratulate and compliment Ministers on the present position of the finances. With regard to the various Bills, amending and otherwise, mentioned in the Speech, I do hope that Ministers will receive warm support from both sides of the House, so that the expectations outlined therein will be realised to the fullest extent. Before I conclude my remarks in seconding the adoption of the Address, I shall refer to one or two omissions in the Speech. The first one is that no explanation has been offered to the House as to the reason for Parliament not being summoned earlier. Personally I feel that Ministers had good reason for not calling us together at an earlier date, still I think some short explanation was warranted. The next omission I wish to refer to is that no mention has been made of the unfortunate absence of our distinguished fellow-colonist, the ex-Premier, Sir Thomas McLlwraith. Although no mention is made of him, I am sure no one regrets his absence from the House more than Ministers themselves. I am sure we all regret his absence, and hope for his speedy recovery, so that he may take his place amongst us, if not to engage in debate, at any rate to assist Ministers with his wise counsels. I have to express my regret at the death of the late member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, and also of the late member for Townsville, Mr. Burns. I have further to express my sincere regret at the absence of another esteemed friend—although in opposition—the late member for Burke, Mr. Hoolan. I always had the greatest regard for Mr. Hoolan, and if I had a regard for him before I have a great deal more for him now, because—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition:
Oh, oh!

Mr. DUFFY: Do not misunderstand me. I say I have a great deal more respect for him now, because he has shown himself a most generous and disinterested man. He has set a good example to all parties in this House by retiring from the honourable position he occupied, and making way for his political chief. I have much pleasure in seconding the Address in Reply.

Mr. POWERS: I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to 5 o'clock.