

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 1896

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER, 1896.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY LOAN ESTIMATES, 1896-7.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor, transmitting the Supplementary Loan Estimates for 1896-7.

The TREASURER: I move that the Estimates be printed and referred to the Committee of Supply. I may mention that I intend to bring these Supplementary Loan Estimates on for consideration in Committee of Supply to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS.

NEWSPAPER PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Home Secretary—

1. In view of the prosecution of the *Eagle* newspaper, Charters Towers, under the Indecent Advertisements Act of 1892, is it the intention of the department to prosecute all newspapers publishing the same or similar advertisements?

2. If so, when?

3. If not, will the department refund the ls. fine imposed upon the *Eagle* newspaper?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. It is the intention of the department to proceed against all publishers of newspapers liable under the Act referred to.

3. No reason whatever exists for a remission of the penalty.

NEWSPAPERS CONTAINING INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Home Secretary (for the Postmaster-General)—

Is it the intention of the department to refuse to transmit through the Post Office all newspapers containing indecent advertisements within the meaning of the Indecent Advertisements Act of 1892.

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

Yes. Notice has been given to the Post Office departments of the southern colonies that such newspapers will not be allowed to pass through the post in Queensland from and after the 1st January next. At the request of the southern colonies the matter has been set down for consideration at the Postal Conference now being held in Sydney.

QUEENSLAND NATIONAL BANK INVESTIGATION.

Mr. GLASSEY asked the Premier—

1. Has any action been taken by the Government to empower the committee recently appointed to examine the position of the Queensland National Bank, Limited, or other persons, to further investigate and report on the affairs of that institution, having special regard to its management since the date of the first agreement between the Government and the bank in 1879 up to the 31st of August, 1896?

2. If not, is it the intention of the Government to take such action as will secure such an investigation?

The PREMIER replied—

In answer to both questions: No further instructions have been given, nor is it deemed advisable to take action in the direction indicated until the views and wishes of the shareholders and depositors have been intimated to the Government.

SUPPLY.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the Committee of Supply,

The TREASURER: Mr. Speaker,—I move that you do now leave the chair.

Mr. GLASSEY: I hope the hon. gentleman will give the House some information as to when we are likely to have the Bill for dealing with the reconstruction scheme which the Government have in view in connection with the Queensland National Bank.

The TREASURER: I expect to be able to give notice to-morrow for the introduction of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £4,195 be granted for the Secretary for Public Instruction—salaries and contingencies. There was very little difference in the vote compared with what it had been in the past two years.

Mr. GLASSEY observed, taking the department as a whole, that there was a slight increase this year. That, he presumed, was intended to restore to some extent the reductions made in the salaries of a number of officers in the department some time ago. Taking into consideration the very severe reductions made three years ago, the necessary increase in the teaching staff due to the increase in the population, and the provision which was made to accommodate the teachers in all parts of the colony, the increase in the vote was extremely little, and he feared would not meet the reasonable anticipations of a large number of deserving persons in the department. He was very much disappointed that the increase was not much greater, considering the statements made by the Secretary for Public Instruction last year, and the opinions expressed by hon. members with regard to the inadequate salaries received by deserving persons in some instances in remote parts of the colony. In the item "State and provisional schools" there was a slight increase of about £8,000, which covered about 1,500 teachers. The provisional teachers, as he had mentioned time and again in the House, were by no means sufficiently paid, and he believed the time had arrived when members should express their opinions in no uncertain way with regard to the inadequate salary which many of those persons received. Taking into consideration the isolation which many of them

had to endure, the extremely high cost of living in the places where they were located, and their preclusion from the comforts and pleasures obtainable in more favoured portions of the colony, there was great room for increases in their salaries. He had in his hand some documents which had been sent to him by teachers speaking in the name of the teachers generally, and he found from the information there given that in every class the salaries actually paid were less than the Minister stated last year, and this information was culled from official returns. The Minister stated last year that the average salary paid to teachers of the first division of the first class was £388 with a house, whereas the actual amount paid was £313 18s. 2d., or £74 1s. 10d. less than was stated by the Minister. For instance, the salary of Mr. Synan, of the South Brisbane school, was £292, or £96 less than was stated by the Minister; that of Mr. Scott, of Ipswich East, was £270, or £118 less than was stated by the Minister. The names he was now giving were taken almost at random. Taking the first division of the next class, the teacher at Barcaldine was down at £256, or £104 less than was stated by the Minister; the teacher of the Bundaberg Central School also received £256, or £104 less than was stated by the Minister, and the teacher of the East School at Bundaberg drew £240, or £120 less than the Minister informed the Committee he was receiving last year. The average salary of teachers of that division was given by the Minister as £360, but it was only £250, or £110 less than was stated. The hon. gentleman also stated that, according to the regulations, teachers of class 3, division 1, received an average of £270 with a house. But they were not drawing anything like that amount. For instance, the teacher at Cunnamulla was only drawing £184, or £86 less than was stated. He did not know that officer, but from what he knew of the district in a casual way, and considering the cost of living there, his salary was by no means adequate. Then, coming nearer Brisbane, the teacher at Crow's Nest was drawing only £156, or £114 less than was stated by the Minister. The teacher at Fig-tree Pocket received £150, or £120 less than was stated by the Minister. The average salary paid to the seventy-eight teachers of that division was £110 less per teacher than was stated by the Minister. And equal discrepancies were to be found in the other divisions. Taking the amounts paid in only a few cases, the total came to £1,186 less than the Minister stated last year, or an average of £100 a year less. He presumed that the Minister would make truthful and conscientious statements according to the information supplied by the officers of his department, and some substantial explanation should be given for the glaring discrepancies he had pointed out. Either the Minister had been misled, or there was something radically wrong in the documents from which the information he had just given the Committee was culled.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON thought the case of the school teachers demanded explanation and consideration. As a class they had accepted the inexorable situation imposed on them in 1893, in common with other officers of the State, without remonstrance, and it was understood that when an amelioration in the financial condition of the colony appeared they would not be left out in the cold. Speaking generally, he did not think the teachers had received that consideration they should have received, and which had been shown to other public servants. He did not know why that was so. He looked upon the position of the teachers as the most important in the State. They were entrusted with the task of forming the character of the rising generation, and it

was satisfactory to note the general testimony to the creditable manner in which they performed their duty. They were deserving of special consideration, so that they might be encouraged and not disheartened in the performance of their duties by the thought that as a class they were treated with an amount of neglect which was suffered by no other class. He had received statements concerning the position of teachers in a large number of schools throughout the colony, and in a large number of instances these men had suffered very cruel reductions in their total emoluments. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee by going through the list, because the hon. member for Bundaberg had forcibly dwelt on the injustice under which those men laboured, but he thought it was the duty of the Government to give some assurance that their grievances would be removed. In some of the principal schools, where in 1893 the classification salary was £204 and the additional emoluments £216—an aggregate income of £420—they were now receiving £204 salary and £144 additional emoluments, or a total of £348, which was a reduction of £72. In another case a teacher receiving £156 salary and £168 additional emoluments—a total income of £324—had been reduced to £268, which was £56 less than his former income. This was really a cruel retrenchment for which there was no justification, unless it could be shown that the emoluments received by the teachers in 1893 were excessive. No attempt, however, had been made to show that such was the case. Other teachers who were receiving a salary of £126 and additional emoluments amounting to £60, or £186 altogether, were now receiving only £166. He could weary the Committee with such instances if he chose to do so. It was incumbent upon the Minister to explain why school teachers had not been restored to their original positions, as they had every right to expect when times improved; and he assented to the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg that the matter should be satisfactorily explained before they went any further. When officers had to suffer such reductions, and observed their colleagues in other branches of the service being restored to their original positions, it could not improve the morale of the service; and, although the Secretary for Education would, no doubt, feel bound to defend the action of the department, he was a man with large sympathies and a large heart, and must admit that these men had not been fairly treated.

Mr. CURTIS agreed with what had been said by the last speaker, and knew that the teachers in the Central division of the colony were very much dissatisfied with the manner in which they had been treated in regard to their salaries. In 1893 their salaries were retrenched to the extent of 10 per cent., and 33½ per cent. was taken from their other emoluments. Since then their salaries had been restored but the emoluments had not been, and they justly complained that they had not been treated fairly. In addition to that they had another complaint—that the system of promotion carried with it a higher rank but no additional salary. That seemed to be a substantial grievance, because if there were no increase in salary, there was no inducement to them to qualify themselves for higher positions. In other instances, he had been informed, men who were not worthy of promotion had been promoted, while others well worthy of it had been overlooked. In one case in Central Queensland a man of unblemished character and a good teacher, although promoted to a higher rank, had received no pecuniary benefit. Bearing in mind that their teachers had to train and instruct the youth of the colony—those who in time would have the destinies of the colony in

their hands—they should be treated very differently. They had made out a very strong case, and he hoped the matter would receive consideration.

Mr. STEPHENSON: Like the hon. member who had just spoken, he thought that the teachers deserved special consideration at the hands of the State. The State had, speaking generally, no more conscientious servants, and when it became necessary, for reasons of economy, to retrench their salaries and emoluments, they accepted the position loyally, and were quite contented to bear their share of the burden. Now, however, that times had altered somewhat for the better, the Secretary for Education might well consider whether a considerable proportion of those emoluments should not be restored. The amount (10 per cent.) that had been deducted from their classification salaries had already been restored, but nothing had been done in the direction of restoring the additional emoluments. Having regard to all the circumstances, the question arose whether it would not now be better to lump the salaries and extra emoluments together, and give the teachers who attained a certain classification a certain salary in connection with it. The present system of paying in two ways was unsatisfactory; it was calculated to cause more or less confusion, and should be done away with in order that the teachers might know their precise position. The extra emoluments depended upon the attendance of pupils at the schools; but many cases were conceivable in which the attendance might fall off without any fault on the part of the teacher. If a teacher were located, say, in an agricultural district where all the land was taken up, the children would launch out in life for themselves as soon as they came of age. As the whole of the land in some of these localities had been taken up, they had to go elsewhere, and, their parents growing old, they were not replaced by other children, with the result that the attendance at the school fell off, and the teacher's income from emoluments was diminished accordingly. Of course the defect could be remedied by the department transferring the teacher to a school with a larger attendance, but it was not always in the power of the department to find a vacant school. For that reason it would save both the Minister and the Under Secretary a great deal of trouble if they could arrange some scheme by which teachers, when they had attained a certain classification, should know that they would receive a certain salary. Another grievance was, when a teacher was transferred the conditions under which he was removed only permitted of his taking a certain quantity of furniture with him, and if he desired to take the whole of his household goods it made the removal so expensive that frequently teachers declined what would otherwise be fairly substantial promotion. Seeing that such transfers were made in compliance with the requirements of the department, it was only fair that teachers should be put to no expense. They should not be penalised for taking advantage of the promotion which was offered. He was quite aware that the department allowed teachers, when transferred from one school to another, a certain amount over and above the quantity of luggage permitted to be taken by ordinary passengers, but even that did not come to anything like an adequate provision for the cost incurred by a teacher in removing his household effects. If he submitted them for sale in the district which he was leaving, he had in all probability to dispose of them at a considerable sacrifice. If the reasonable demands of the teachers were considered by the Minister, he was sure the hon. gentleman would see that justice was done to an exceedingly deserving

section of the community. Seeing, too, that there were hundreds of teachers in the colony, the additional £8,000 which appeared on the Estimates this year would not go very far towards restoring the emoluments of which they had been docked in 1893. He trusted that the Secretary for Public Instruction would take into careful consideration the complaints which had been made by hon. members on both sides of the Committee, and that ere long he would be able to devise some scheme by which the teachers would receive a substantial modicum of justice.

Mr. GROOM had always held the opinion that the salaries of school teachers were not at all commensurate with the work they had to perform. They were entrusted with a great amount of responsibility, and their salaries were not at all adequate, especially when compared with the salaries enjoyed by teachers in the other colonies. It was difficult to compare them with the salaries of teachers in New South Wales, because there they received school fees in addition to the salaries they were paid by the State, and it required great care to arrive at the amount of the fees. Last year the Secretary for Public Instruction stated that teachers of class 1, division 1, received £388 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Quite correct.

Mr. GROOM: According to the information which had been communicated to him, there was only one teacher in the service who could receive £388 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No; only one does.

Mr. McDONALD: There is only one school of that class.

Mr. GROOM: The information supplied to him was to the effect that only one teacher received £388, and the hardest part of it was that in consequence of the system of classification only one teacher could receive that salary.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is a question of the size of the school. If ten schools had a sufficiently large attendance, there would be ten teachers with that salary.

Mr. GROOM: If the information he had received was correct, how was the system of classification carried out? No matter how competent a teacher might be, he could not receive that salary. Teachers who had been invited to come to Queensland from England, and who, in some cases, had been in receipt of larger emoluments than they received on their arrival in Queensland, could not attain to that position which they had been led to believe when they were engaged in England they would obtain. The retrenchment scheme of 1893 had seriously reduced the emoluments of teachers, and although the 10 per cent. special retrenchment had since been restored, they had not got back any of the emoluments they had enjoyed from the attendance at their schools. He could state from his own knowledge that teachers of competency and ability were now in receipt of £26 and £30 less than they were paid in 1893. That took the heart out of teachers who had the future of children entrusted to their care. Their responsibility was great, and they could not turn to anything else to add to their salaries. During the last year or two there had been a slight change for the better in the other departments, and he saw no reason why school teachers should not be permitted to share in the general improvement. The figures supplied by the hon. member for Bundaberg were of themselves sufficient to show that the teachers had a good claim for an increase of salary. People often unthinkingly spoke of the large amount the colony spent on education. After all it only amounted to £3 18s. 8½d. per head, whereas as much as £5 and £6 per head was paid in some of the other

colonies. In those colonies the teachers' salaries were considerably in excess of what they were here. In Victoria, for instance, there were eight teachers receiving £450 a year, seven receiving £400, nineteen receiving £350, six receiving £325, and seventy-five receiving £300. The legislature there had acted generously towards its teachers, and if Victoria could afford to do so, surely Queensland was in equally as good a position. He was not a believer in the system of paying teachers partly by a fixed salary and partly in accordance with the attendance at school. It would be much better, as advocated by the hon. member for Ipswich, to pay a fixed salary altogether, and then the teacher would know what he had to receive. According to the information supplied to him, under the present system of classification a teacher could not get over £388 a year. If that were really the case the classification required to be amended, so as to hold out some prospect to teachers that by assiduous attention to their work there was a chance of promotion and of receiving something like an adequate salary for the services they performed. He had in his mind's eye two or three instances where men, who had left good situations in the old country to join the Education Department here, were so disgusted with the slowness of promotion, and not being met in the spirit they hoped for, had left the service and gone back to England. One of those was now receiving 33 per cent. more salary than when he left England, and considerably more than he was receiving in the department. The expectations held out to them when they were engaged by the Agent-General had not been realised. It was possible the department recognised the claims of the teachers, but could not meet them on account of the way the Estimates were framed. If that were so why not put down a further sum on the Supplementary Estimates. The Estimates-in-Chief showed an increase of £8,000. He was sure that if an additional £10,000 were put on the Supplementary Estimates the House would deal with it in a generous spirit, and show that they had an honest desire that school teachers should receive an adequate remuneration. He hoped the Minister would give the matter his serious consideration.

Mr. ARMSTRONG was of opinion that the school teachers had the strongest case that had been presented to the Chamber by any department in the service. The retrenchment of 1893 had fallen very heavily on them. In his electorate there were thirty-three or thirty-four schools, and, as he had thoroughly discussed the question with them, he had come to their very strongly expressed opinion that there should be payment by classification, and no question of additional emoluments. Agricultural districts especially suffered by payment being made in accordance with attendance at school. At certain seasons children were useful on the farms, and at those periods nothing the schoolmasters could do would induce parents to send their children to school; and in that way his emoluments suffered. He hoped the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba would be accepted, and that the Government would place an additional sum on the Supplementary Estimates for increasing the pay of teachers. Such a course would meet the wishes of what he believed to be a majority of the Chamber.

Mr. FITZGERALD would draw attention to the meagre sum allowed to teachers in out-of-the-way places for extra cost of living. At Longreach, 420 miles from the coast, he believed the allowance was £10 a year. Anyone acquainted with the price of things there must know that such a small sum was totally inadequate; it would not be sufficient for more than three months. Men in other departments of the service were getting a considerably larger allowance, and it was only just that the same

liberality should be extended to them. At Aramac, he understood, the allowance to the head teacher was somewhat greater, but that sum added to the salary of £156 was quite inadequate for any person in the position of a head teacher living in such a place, where nearly everything had to be brought from the coast. He was sure the Minister had every desire to do justice, and he mentioned that matter in order that it might be taken into consideration with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Toowoomba in reference to placing an additional sum on the Supplementary Estimates for the teachers, which he was sure the House would readily vote.

The HOME SECRETARY would like to give hon. members a little of the history of the 33½ per cent. reduction. It was not a question of whether the teachers should have the 33½ per cent. restored, but what was a fair rate of pay. In 1890, when the Government came into office, the watchword was to meet the deficit that was growing year by year, and that was to be done by means of retrenchment in the Civil Service. In the Education Department, as in the Defence Department, they found a system of automatic increases in force which were paid by statutory authority. The Minister for Education, therefore, instead of coming down with decreased estimates to meet the times, had to fall in with the automatic increases provided by regulations which were part of the Act. That went on for four or five years until 1893, and the teachers had during that time been receiving regularly their £10 a year increase under the then existing system, in preference to all other men in the public service. In 1893 it became necessary to try and do a fair thing between them and other branches of the service, and the Government came to the conclusion, without knocking anything off the classification, to take a reasonable sum off the emoluments. What hon. members had to consider was: Was the standard fixed in 1893 a fair one? He had a member of his own family in the department who had since left, a man of very high attainments, an M.A. of Cambridge, and although that man's education must of necessity have cost him thousands of pounds, yet his salary now in another sphere was no more than that of an assistant teacher in the Education Department. The fact was that in no part of the world was the payment for that particular class of work very high. Ministers had tried to regrade the teaching staff, not to degrade them. If the House, considering all the circumstances, was of opinion that, compared with salaries paid elsewhere, the salaries of teachers were not high enough, then the Minister had a desire to pay them what the House in its wisdom decided. But they wanted to do what was just, because it was just, and not because of the pressure of teachers on members of Parliament. He had acted for the Secretary for Public Instruction, and had gone carefully into the question of salaries, and he must say that, taking the aggregate amounts paid, and comparing the total with the amounts received by other officers in the service, it seemed to him that the teachers got fair consideration. On the point as to whether or not there should be a fixed salary, there was much to be said on both sides. His great wish was always that officers should receive a fixed salary so that Parliament might know what they received; but there was this to be said about the Education Department: that if that was done they might remove from teachers the stimulus to exertion, and they might resolve themselves into men who adopted the Government stroke. The present system had its advantages in so far that according to the ability a man

showed he to some extent got extra remuneration. He believed the better plan would be to take the salary and additional emoluments and make them one salary. He knew the Minister had that plan in view, and hoped some day that he would be able to develop it into something which would commend itself to the teachers and to Parliament. Every Minister for Education had had the idea of doing the very best for his officers, and every Government that had been in power had recognised fully the work done by the department. He thought his explanation would satisfy hon. members that there was no undue cutting down in 1893, but that it had simply been attempted to adjust the salaries paid by the department and to make them bear some proportion to the amounts paid by other branches of the service.

Mr. O'CONNELL: It seemed curious that any argument in regard to boom wages should have come into the question of the restoration of teachers' salaries. As far as he could understand, the wages of the teachers had not been restored fully to what they were previous to 1893. What they particularly complained of was, not that their salaries were not adequate, but that they had been treated differently to other Civil servants who had been reduced by 10 per cent. and the reduction had subsequently been restored. What the teachers asked, and what he was prepared to advocate for them, was that the special reduction, or "regrading" as the Home Secretary called it just now, should not take place as affecting specially only one branch of the service, but should take effect all round, if at all. If it was a fact that boom wages existed prior to 1893, as contended by the Home Secretary, it was an extraordinary thing that they should have existed in only two departments—the Railways Department and the Department of Public Instruction. He noticed it as an extraordinary thing at the time that the Under Secretary of the Education Department should have been the only Under Secretary whose salary was decreased. He had never been able to understand why an officer holding so responsible a position in connection with the education of their children should have been specially singled out for reduction. It was not necessary to refer in detail to the different reductions made in that special branch of the service. What they asked now was not that individuals should be considered, but that the whole body of teachers should be placed in the position they were in before the reductions of 1893—that they should receive the same treatment as officers in other branches of the service. If the Home Secretary's contention that those men were receiving too high salaries in 1893 was right, then a stern inquiry should be instituted to discover whether boom wages did not exist in other departments of the service.

The HON. G. THORN: The hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Curtis, had brought a formal indictment against the Secretary for Public Instruction. The hon. member stated that teachers getting into a higher grade, for which he presumed they had to pass an examination, got no more remuneration than they got before they reached the higher grade. If that was the practice the department would shortly become demoralised. He hoped to see high grade schools established at once, and, as he had said on the motion of the hon. member for Musgrave, they could be established at no greater expense than the other schools; but if the hon. member for Rockhampton was right there was no incentive at all for men of higher attainments. Those school officers should not be singled out for exceptional treatment, and now that officers in other departments had had their salaries restored it was time that the *status quo ante* with respect

to the teachers should also be restored. It was not always the men of the highest attainments who were the best teachers, but men of high attainments and high teaching power as well were often shunted aside for men of an inferior grade.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Political influence.

The HON. G. THORN: He would not accuse the present Secretary for Public Instruction of anything of that sort, as he believed the hon. gentleman endeavoured to work the department honestly and fairly. After the statements made by the Home Secretary there could be no two opinions as to how the reductions were made. He had no doubt that it was that hon. gentleman who made the obnoxious reductions during the short time he was in charge of the department. The teachers asked for no favour, but that they should get fair play.

Mr. FOGARTY: It must be agreed that the reductions in this department were very great. In class 1, division 1, in which he believed there were only ten persons, the Minister, speaking in 1895, said that the remuneration attaching to that class was £388 a year, with a free house. The average at the present time was £313 18s. 2d. That was a very considerable reduction. A number of the men in that class had been engaged in England at a fixed salary, and their reduction in 1893 was repudiation pure and simple. It was understood that the retrenchment in 1893 was only a temporary measure, but it had proved to be permanent, so far as the teachers were concerned, up to the present time, and it was time the opinion of the Committee was expressed in no uncertain way with regard to the unfair treatment they had received. In class 2, division 1, the Minister had told them that the salary was £360 a year, with a free house, but the average received was £250, without the house. For class 3, division 1, the Minister had been kind enough to say that the salary was £270 a year, but the average received was £170. It might be said that members supporting the claims of the teachers were electioneering; but the teachers' vote in Drayton and Toowoomba was not great, and he would continue to hold the same opinion on that subject if he were defeated at the next election. The reduction in the case of other Civil servants was only a temporary one, and when the finances of the colony warranted it the 10 per cent. which had been taken off their salaries was restored. The reduction to which the teachers were subjected was considerably more than 10 per cent., their capitation allowances having been reduced to the extent of 33½ per cent.; so that if any persons in the public service had a real live grievance it was the teachers in State schools. He could personally bear out the statement made by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Stephenson, with reference to teachers who were removed a considerable distance being allowed only a certain amount of luggage. He believed the allowance was 15 cwt., and for anything in excess of that weight they were compelled to pay extra freight. He remembered the case of a teacher who was removed from the Downs to the Northern portion of the colony, and when he reached his destination a demand was made by the railway authorities for £10 16s. extra. He applied to the department for relief, but all the relief he got was a statement to the effect that if he had not the money it would be advanced by the department and deducted from the next payment of his salary. A Mr. Cruikshank drew his (Mr. Fogarty's) attention to the matter, and he approached the present Minister on the subject, but did not receive anything like an attentive ear to his representations. In fact, the hon. gentleman was so abrupt on that occasion that he did not now approach that department

unless he was compelled to do so. The officer in question was unknown to him, and had not approached him on the subject. However, the application he made on his behalf was refused. With regard to provisional schools, some house accommodation should be provided by the department for the teachers. As a rule, provisional schools were established in the neighbourhood of new settlements, and unfortunately the great bulk of the people were struggling farmers who had scarcely sufficient to keep body and soul together, and whose house accommodation for their families was in many cases not of a decent character. Yet they had to contribute towards the cost of erecting a provisional school, and the teacher of that school, who might have a family of three or four children, had often to occupy a back skillion room in one of their houses. He knew of a married lady who was now a teacher in one of those provisional schools, and supporting four children. Her husband was in indifferent health away in the interior, and she had not received a farthing from him for upwards of two years. Previous to her marriage she was a teacher in the department, and she applied for readmission. After considerable trouble, through the kindness of the Premier she was appointed to a provisional school, and was now living with a selector who had scarcely sufficient accommodation for his own family. He, therefore, thought the department might erect, say, a two-roomed building for the accommodation of such teachers, which would be an immense benefit to the teachers and would not cost much. With regard to the Under Secretary, whose salary was reduced by £100 at the time of the retrenchment, as far as his experience went, there was no officer in the public service who was more deserving of a first-class salary than that gentleman, who had devoted his lifetime to the business of his department. There was not in the whole of Australia a more competent officer in his particular work. He should certainly vote for restoring the teachers to the position they occupied previous to 1893.

Mr. FINNEY fully agreed with the remarks which had been made with reference to the very considerable reductions made in the salaries of State school teachers. He understood that in addition to the reduction of 10 per cent. which was made in the salaries of all Civil servants their emoluments were reduced by one-third. The 10 per cent. had been restored, but not the amount taken off their emoluments, and the consequence was that throughout the length and breadth of the colony many homes which were formerly places of comfort were now reduced to bitter poverty. He should certainly vote for the restoration to as large an extent as possible of the amount taken off their emoluments. He agreed with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Toowoomba, that £3,000 or £10,000 be placed on the Supplementary Estimates to enable the Minister to restore those salaries as far as possible to their former amount. He also wished to emphasise the opinion that it would be far more satisfactory for the teachers to have fixed salaries, because people could make their arrangements better when they knew what they were going to receive. When their income was an unknown quantity they could not make satisfactory arrangements and often got into difficulties through that very reason. He cordially agreed with the remarks that had been made in the interests of the teachers.

Mr. GRIMES: There was no use in repeating what had already been said by other hon. members, but he might say that he knew the grievance complained of was not imaginary as had been stated. He did not think the Home Secretary had altered the opinion of hon. members, and he

was sure that what the hon. gentleman had said would not alter the opinion of the teachers themselves. They knew that their salaries had been reduced more than those of any other Civil servants, also that their salaries had not been restored to the same extent as those paid in other departments, and it was impossible to disabuse their minds of those facts. It would be well if the Government would take the matter into their favourable consideration and treat the teachers in the same way as the rest of the Civil servants had been treated.

Mr. CRIBB agreed that the teachers should not be paid more than they ought to receive for their work, but he maintained that if their salaries were restored to the amounts received prior to the retrenchment, they would not be receiving more than was right and proper. He was willing to admit that there might be some teachers not worth the salaries they received, but that would apply to all classes of Civil servants. He regretted that no attempt had been made to place the salary of the Under Secretary on the old footing. The Education Department was a very important one; there was no doubt that the Under Secretary was as capable an officer as the permanent head of any other department, and he saw no reason why that officer should not receive as much as any other Under Secretary. The General Inspector also occupied a position of great responsibility, and he would be glad to see that officer's salary increased.

Mr. JACKSON had not been approached by a single teacher on this subject, though he recognised that the teachers had a grievance. The speech made by the Home Secretary was very plausible—the hon. gentleman was an adept at making plausible speeches—but it was not at all satisfactory to his mind. The hon. gentleman said that the salaries of the teachers compared very favourably with those paid in other departments; but he did not think that was so, and as a proof that it was not so he might mention that in 1892 Mr. Hodgkinson, who was then Secretary for Education, stated that the average paid to the teachers was £129, which was considerably less than the average paid in any other department. At present the highest salary paid to a teacher was £388, which could be obtained at only one school in the colony; and the salaries paid to our head teachers compared very unfavourably with those paid in New South Wales. The assistant teachers in that colony were not paid as well as the assistants in Queensland; but that did not affect the question. They ought to aim at paying the teachers as high salaries as possible considering the nature of their occupation. Even supposing the pay in the other Government departments was as good as that of the teachers, they were not to be put alongside the teachers as far as professional attainments were concerned. The ordinary Civil servant had to pass only one examination, which was not a very stiff examination. The teacher had to pass four examinations as pupil-teacher, and had to do a great deal of night study in consequence. He believed they had to pass an examination every year, and there were five examinations before they could be admitted into class 3. They could not be compared with other Civil servants. The General Inspector said that school teaching was drudgery; but he did not take that view of it; it was not more drudgery than ordinary book-keeping. There was also an opinion that it was rather light work, as the hours were short, they had a spell at the end of the week, and a long vacation at Christmas. All that made people inclined to think the work was not so arduous as it really was. He lived close to a school at South Brisbane, and had noticed that the head

teacher was there at 8 o'clock in the morning; it was about 5 o'clock before he left, and there were very few other Civil servants who worked such long hours as that. For those reasons the Committee should show their sympathy with the teachers, and the only way they could do that was by saying what they thought.

Mr. FINNEY pointed out that the salary of the Under Secretary was reduced by £100 in 1893, and last year £50 of that was restored to him, but he was now receiving only £750 instead of £800. This gentleman had some 1,500 teachers under him, and he had as much right, as far as I can see, to be restored to his original salary as any other Under Secretary in the service. Perhaps the Minister would give them some explanation as to why he should be treated differently from the others.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: This was a large department, and it was only to be expected that there would be complaints. It had been complained that there had not been sufficient expenditure; but that was rather a merit, because it was better to be charged as a Minister with too little expenditure than with extravagance. These complaints would have had more weight if it had been shown that there had been any loss in efficiency; but if the hon. member read the report—and he supposed he had—he would find that the department was in a very satisfactory state. It was extending, and on the whole the instruction was rather improved than getting worse in point of quality. He admitted that the teachers were very deserving persons, and that the function of a school teacher was an enormously important one both to the present and to the future of the State. In fact, as the Chief Inspector said, it would be difficult to value the teacher's services in money, and that would appear to be more true when they considered the influence these persons had upon the young. Although no hon. member had referred to the fact, it might be remembered that two years ago the salaries of the provisional school teachers were increased considerably—a very necessary and proper increase—but the hon. member for Bundaberg drew attention to the fact that a great many teachers had been removed to remote places where there was no society, and the cost of living was excessive. He might remind the hon. member that when a teacher entered the service he or she knew perfectly well what the conditions would probably be. There must be schools in the bush, and he did not see that it was a reason for complaint that a teacher could not live in Brisbane. He did not think it was hard upon any teacher to be sent West or North; from his point of view there was no suffering in it, and therefore no reason why any special recompense should be expected. The living might be more costly, but generally in the case of provisional school teachers, the people who got the school were generally desirous of making the teacher as comfortable as possible, and he did not think the board charged as arranged by the committee came to more than about 15s. a week. Allowance was also made in cases in which the cost was assumed to be considerably greater than that of living in Brisbane. The hon. member for Mitchell said the teacher at Longreach received £10 by way of allowance, and he did not think that sufficient. He was not prepared to argue that point with him, but some time ago the Under Secretary and himself went into the matter and came to the conclusion that the matter could be better dealt with by the department than by assimilating the system of allowances to that adopted in regard to other branches of the Civil Service. He merely mentioned that to show that the matter had received consideration. Another

matter which had been referred to by three hon. members was a statement which he made last year, and which was challenged by the teachers. The statement he had made was absolutely accurate, though he was not prepared to say that as it appeared in *Hansard* it might not convey a wrong impression. In the circular, which had been sent to him as well as to other hon. members, the teachers pointed out that whilst he had stated that the salary of head teachers of the highest class was £388 with a house, the average salary paid to teachers of that class—of whom there were eleven in the department—was £313 18s. 2d., with a house; but those two statements were entirely compatible. What he had endeavoured to show last year was not the average salary of teachers of the highest class, but the highest salary which could be obtained in that class. Both his statement and that of the teachers were perfectly correct. Mr. Kerr received £388, and it was also true that the average salary of teachers of the same class was £313 18s. 2d.

Mr. KERR: Don't you think your statement was rather misleading?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He did not intend it to be so. The statement that £388 was the highest salary paid by the department was true in one sense, but it was not quite accurate in another sense, because Mr. Kerr, in addition to his salary of £388, received £50 in lieu of a house, which made his total emoluments £438 per annum, because in the case of any ordinary Civil servant an allowance in lieu of rent was treated as a portion of his salary.

Mr. GROOM: Mr. Kerr was receiving £480 in 1893.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He was only dealing with the statements which had been made to-day. He would just quote some of the salaries received by some of the head teachers. There were none on the first page of the annual return showing the status and emoluments of teachers who were in receipt of more than £300 per annum, but on page 2 he found that, taking salary and allowances together, the head teacher of the Bowen Bridge School received £347; of the Breakfast Creek School, £305; of the Brisbane Central School—that was Mr. Kerr—£438; of the Dunellan School, £318; Fortitude Valley, £398; Ithaca Creek, £349; Kangaroo Point, £366. There was no necessity to go further. He did not wish to assert that teachers got more than a fair remuneration, but to show that the representations of hon. members had been made without due regard being paid to the fact that there were other allowances besides salary. The statements that had been made would lead people to believe that teachers were a great deal worse off in Queensland than they were elsewhere. He had seen it stated within the last few months that in New South Wales the remuneration of teachers had been reduced by £37,500, and there had been very heavy retrenchment in Victoria during the last twelve months. Taking them all round, he believed that the remuneration of the teachers of Queensland would compare favourably with that received in any other part of the world. The hon. member for Bundaberg had referred to a teacher in his district in whom he took an interest who was only getting the small salary of £193; but, as he only had an attendance of thirty-three pupils, it would be seen that that was equal to nearly £6 a head. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba that the department should build residences for provisional school teachers, for years and years it had been held that schools which did not reach a certain standard were not

contemplated by the Education Act, and the practice of the department had been that, if the parents erected a school and provided proper accommodation for a teacher, the department sent a teacher. During the last few years the department had acted more liberally, and had paid half the cost of the school buildings up to £50; but no provision had been made for erecting residences for teachers. In by far the greater majority of cases teachers of provisional schools were unmarried, for whom accommodation was gladly found with some respectable family in the neighbourhood. It was a very exceptional case where the teacher of a provisional school was married. The circumstances which had led the hon. member for Rockhampton and some other hon. members, he thought, to make an indictment against the department would not be sustained by an examination into the facts. What the hon. member had complained of showed, at any rate, that the department was impartial. He had complained that teachers who were worthy were not promoted.

Mr. CURTIS: Not all of them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He was afraid that exceptional cases would be found throughout the universe. Unless the hon. member attributed wrong-doing to the department, he did not know how that matter could be dealt with. Every possible care was taken that the worthy were promoted, and, where it was absolutely necessary in the interests of the children and of the department, the unworthy were not only taken down, but were, if the circumstances demanded it, dismissed from the service. He did not know that anything more could be done in that matter. The greatest care was taken by the permanent heads of the department, and he had no interest in the world except to see that justice was done. If any hon. member had had a different experience, and would inform the department, they would be much pleased to profit by his knowledge. With regard to the complaint, which had also been made in the *Educational Journal*, that teachers who were classified and gained promotion were not advantaged thereby: The reason for that statement was that, some years ago, an allowance was given to head assistant teachers. That allowance was not given now. Experience showed that the regulation worked badly, and it was done away with.

Mr. McDONALD: Do not some of them get it still?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That was what he was about to explain. It was the policy of the State to pay some regard to vested interests. When it was determined that it was a bad policy to continue that allowance, it was considered that those who had been receiving the allowance should not suffer from the altered policy, which was made purely in the public interest. Their allowances were retained; what they had they kept. Since then some of those assistant teachers had been classified and entitled to more payment. But the department held that the allowance they got was not of the nature of a pension. It was simply the continuation of an allowance to prevent what would have been an injustice. But what was continued to them as assistant teachers would not be given to any assistant teachers subsequently appointed. Nor was it considered that, when they gained a rise which would entitle them to £30 more, the same allowance should be continued. To put it as concisely as possible, the thing was not a pension, and they had no claim upon the State for it. That was the reason for the statement that teachers had got promotion, but had not apparently reaped the reward of that promotion.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: When was that special allowance rescinded?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It was not rescinded. They got their promotion and classification, but they did not get the two things. Something was said with regard to the removal of teachers' luggage. It would be seen at once that there must be a limit on the luggage.

Mr. McDONALD: Why?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The reasons were obvious. Supposing a teacher were removed from Brisbane to Hughenden, and no limit was put to what the department should carry for him, the consequences might be serious. He might act as carrier for a wholesale house to the injury of local tradesmen. The limit formerly imposed was 15 cwt.

Mr. CROSS: That would hardly cover the grand piano.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It certainly would not cover an organ. He did not see why the department should carry things that were not strictly necessary. The inspectors were asked to report on the question of luggage, and they recommended that a larger allowance should be made; and the quantity had been altered from 15 cwt. to 1 ton. There was a great deal of difference between individuals. Some were satisfied with a reasonable amount of luggage. Others would take all their old chairs and tables and chests of drawers and bedsteads as long as the cost to them was nothing. He only mentioned that to show that some concession had been made. Allusion had been made to the fact that the Under Secretary, who was retrenched some time ago, had not been restored to his old salary. He yielded to no man in his appreciation of Mr. Anderson's ability, experience, and usefulness in the department, and would be glad personally to see his salary restored; but the fact that it had not been restored showed at any rate that no great favouritism had been displayed to one class of officers as against another. But the position of the teachers was improving. Last year the House voted £5,000 for the purpose. Although he had not been able to recommend that the whole of the one-third should be restored, he hoped that better times would enable that to be done. On the whole he thought the teachers had no very great reason to complain. If they were retrenched by the State, the vast majority of other people who were not in receipt of fixed salaries from the State were retrenched by circumstances, by business, and by nature. And it was not the whole body of teachers who suffered from the retrenchment; and those who did suffer suffered in common with all their fellow-citizens. If the House chose to pass the Estimates as they stood, then the head teachers who lost one-third of their emoluments would at all events have that reduced to one-sixth. One hon. member had referred to the system of paying teachers from two different classifications—one from their rank in the service and another in proportion to the number of scholars. That matter had been before several generations of Ministers, and he had gone very carefully into it this year with the Under Secretary. They had one or two alternative schemes which in his opinion it would be advisable to introduce; but he did not think it desirable to introduce any of them this year, thinking the House might distrust them as innovations. Personally he was exceedingly glad to find hon. members were in favour of a change of that sort, and no doubt whoever was in charge of the department next year would take the proposal into consideration.

Mr. GROOM : The hon. gentleman had told them that this was a question which more affected the head teachers, but it went much deeper than that. As a rule the head teachers could look after themselves, and it was the subordinates which deserved the consideration of the House. It was the young men who had been in the service for years over whose interests they should watch, because there was a feeling among them that there was a repelling influence that was keeping them back. They wrote to the office and asked why they had not received promotion, and they were told that the board which had considered the matter did not think they were entitled to it. The result was that teachers became dispirited and discouraged when they could not get that promotion to which their abilities entitled them. He would like to quote the salaries received by some men showing what their positions and prospects were. Take the case of a school with 350 pupils. The first assistant in 1885 received £180, plus £80 capitation fee. In 1893 he received £168, and in 1896 he was still receiving £168. The second assistant received £126 and £12 for capitation. In 1893 he received £126, and in 1896 still the same; no promotion and no encouragement. The third assistant received £114 in 1885, with £35 capitation allowance; in 1893, still £114, and in 1896 still £114. The fourth assistant received £102, with £24 capitation; in 1893 he had still £102, and in 1896 still £102. What was there in that treatment to encourage young men to work with anything like energy? An outsider might think £168 was a fair income, but the outsider did not know that there were difficult examinations to pass, and that a pupil-teacher entering the service at fourteen would, when he attained the age of thirty-four, receive £168. Was there anything in other branches of the service to equal that? He could not help thinking that in some respects the answer which the hon. gentleman had given was reassuring. It was a great comfort to hon. members who had devoted much time to the consideration of the education question, and who took a deep interest in the progress of their public schools, to know that when temperate criticism was offered to the administration, the Minister was anxious to meet hon. members in a temperate spirit. He was sure that public opinion would be with the hon. gentleman if he came down to the House with a better classification system and gave the teachers a fixed sum so that they would really know what they were to receive. He especially urged the claims of the younger members of the service. He hoped that every young man who entered the department had in view the possibility of becoming a district inspector some day. That was his goal, just as it was the goal of every native American to become a senator, and it was on their behalf that many hon. members and himself pleaded, because they knew they had reasonable grounds for the complaints which many of them had made.

Mr. STEWART agreed in a great measure with what had fallen from the hon. member for Toowoomba. He thought that upon the average the headmasters were fairly well paid, but the remuneration of the assistant teachers was altogether out of the question. Those young men had served a long apprenticeship to the profession, and after passing a severe examination, when they took up the position of assistants they received a wage less than that paid to the ordinary railway porter or lengthman or the common labourer. The headmaster of the North Rockhampton school, the largest in his electorate, received a salary of £306. That gentleman was fairly paid, but his two male assistants received only £102 each

or less than £2 a week. That was a state of things which the department should remedy. But, while the male assistants were badly paid the female assistants were in a very much worse position. The female assistant in the North Rockhampton school received only £96 a year, £6 less than the male assistants, though she was in the same class. That was not fair. All through the department female labour was very much cheaper than male labour. The head mistress of the girls' school at North Rockhampton got £185 a year, or very little more than half what the head master of the boys' school got. A female teacher doing the same work as a male teacher should get the same salary. The system of paying women less than men in the department was neither more nor less than a system of sweating. Women's labour was obtained at a cheaper rate, and the Government accordingly availed themselves of it. A great deal more encouragement should be given to the establishment of provisional schools than was given at present. In the Central division a very large number of children were growing up absolutely uneducated, having no opportunity of receiving even the most elementary education. Within fifty miles of Rockhampton there were families that had grown up to manhood without being able scarcely to read and write, and very little better in the matter of education than the children of blackfellows. That was a state of things the State should grapple with. In the large towns grammar schools were established, and every assistance was given parents to give their children a superior education. He did not object to that at all, but they should, first and foremost, see that every child in the colony—so far as they could possibly see to it—got an elementary education; was taught at least "the three R's." In some districts facilities were given to children to travel free to school on the railway lines, but there was a limit put upon the age, and children under seven years would not be taken. He thought when the children were of school age they should be taken, and the limit might well be reduced by at least one year. There was no doubt something in the objection to take very young children, but under the present system some children were being deprived of one or two years' schooling. It should be remembered in that connection, that in the rural districts children were early taken away from school to assist in earning a living for the family, and on that account every encouragement should be given parents to send their children to school at as early an age as possible.

Mr. GLASSEY wished to draw attention to the very small remuneration received by some teachers in remote parts of the colony. The teacher at Augathella, where there were fifty-eight pupils, got only £191 a year, and he had no hesitation in saying that a man in Brisbane was equally as well off with £100 a year. Then, again, the teacher at Banana, where there were thirty-three children, only got £175. He entirely agreed with the Home Secretary that, whatever might have taken place in the past, the question they had to consider was what was a teacher worth? He (Mr. Glassey) believed that many of them were not receiving a sufficient salary for the duties they performed, more particularly teachers in the remote parts of the colony. Certainly many of the provisional teachers were underpaid. At Adavale the teacher received only £100 a year, while at a place called Accommodation Creek the salary was only £90. The highest amount shown on page 18 as paid to a provisional teacher was £138. He believed that the department did the very best they could with the machinery they had at command to equalise matters in the way of promotions, etc.; but when they considered

the work performed by provisional teachers, the peculiarities of their surroundings, and the lack of privileges and enjoyments experienced in more populated centres, he thought it must be admitted that they were not remunerated as they ought to be. The Premier, who must have come into contact with many of those teachers during his travels in different parts of the country, must know that in consequence of the competition which existed in various professional branches men of high scholastic attainments were obliged to take charge of those schools. He noticed that the highest salary mentioned on page 22 was £120, which was paid to a teacher at a place called True Blue, near Croydon. Some of the teachers were receiving only £70 a year; and there was a good deal of dissatisfaction amongst the pupil-teachers in regard to their remuneration. Some of the Ministers said that as far as they knew the teachers were contented, but that was not his experience.

The PREMIER said that he had visited all the schools in the colony so far as he had the chance, and he could declare that no teacher of any school he ever visited had ever laid before him any grievance with regard to his or her salary. They had pointed out the want of further accommodation, play grounds, shelter-sheds, and so on, but on no solitary occasion had any one of them made any complaint as to his or her salary; and that was very much to their credit. Of course persons could go about the country manufacturing grievances, and they would get people to back them up; and he was told that in nine cases out of ten they were manufactured for a purpose.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is very complimentary to hon. members.

The PREMIER: Whether it was complimentary or not, he believed it was true. As far as he was aware, if the teachers—who were all well-conducted men of good qualifications and good citizens—were left to themselves, the bulk of them would be found to be contented.

Mr. McDONALD: Are there any agitators amongst them?

The PREMIER: There was every appearance of it. If they wanted to kill the Education Department, kill free education—which he maintained was a wrong description of the system, because under it the poor man paid for the education of the children of the rich—let it be made a political association; let the teachers join and use their political influence as far as it went. There was a very large number of men in the Education Department—as there was in the Railway Department—and if people made it their business to make those men disaffected, or if they said that a member of Parliament had power to increase their wages—which the teachers would not believe because they had more sense, though some of the railway men believed it—

Mr. KERR: The railway men are not such flats.

The PREMIER: Leaving the Railway Department out of the question, as soon as the political element was introduced into the Education Department, then that department was dead.

Mr. DUNSFORD: What has fair wages to do with politics?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member would leave the question of wages out of politics he would be willing to do so too. What he said was that if ever the teachers—which he did not believe would ever happen—if ever they made themselves a political association and a political force, that would be the beginning of the end of free education. As he said before, he had never on any occasion heard any teacher make any complaint with regard to his or her salary.

Mr. JACKSON: Did you not get a circular?

The PREMIER: He was not aware that he did. If he did receive one he had not read it.

Mr. McDONALD: You ignore their grievance.

The PREMIER: A circular was not a grievance. That was not the way any man with a grievance should come before the Government.

Mr. McDONALD: Do you believe that is not the proper way to set forth a grievance?

The PREMIER: Certainly.

Mr. McDONALD: Then why do you issue them from the Political Ass?

The PREMIER: That was a different thing altogether; it was a tremendous grievance to the hon. member, in fact, the Political Association had done him an injury he could never forgive. However, the great difference was that the association was not dealing with its masters. In this case he supposed the Government were the masters, and the school teachers the servants. If a servant had a grievance in regard to his service, that his wages were not adequate to the work he did, surely he ought to approach his master directly, and not by printed circulars, which were got up to excite some pseudo sympathy in the minds of the outside public. If the teachers had a grievance they should bring it directly before the Government.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Premier wished them to infer that because no grievances had been stated to him, therefore none existed; but he presumed that when the Premier visited the different schools he did so in his official capacity as a Minister, and teachers, like other State servants, were slow to approach their masters, as the hon. gentleman was pleased to term the Government. The Premier would agree with him that a man receiving £100 a year in a remote part of the colony was not sufficiently paid for the services he rendered; but the hon. gentleman wished them to believe that hon. members went about the colony endeavouring to create grievances and get these persons to take action. He had visited the schools in various districts in the colony, and had come into contact with considerable numbers of teachers, but he could honestly and truthfully say that he had never asked them if they had grievances and if they had to lay them before him. At the same time he had been waited upon by deputations of school teachers and by individual teachers, and asked to convey their opinions to persons in authority with a view to having their grievances redressed. He and his friends were not in the habit of creating grievances where none existed, as had been said by the hon. member for North Brisbane; and if that hon. member had such information as he evidently wished the Committee to believe, he should tell them who those hon. members were. The hon. member for Bulimba brought certain matters connected with this department prominently before the Committee; did that hon. member travel over his electorate trying to create grievances with a view to airing them before the Committee? Such insinuations were not proper or prudent, and he did not think the hon. members for Toowoomba or Toowong could be accused of such a thing either. The insinuation was not very complimentary to hon. members. He had never asked a teacher if he had a grievance, but if a grievance were placed in his possession, and he felt that an injustice was being suffered, he would feel it his duty to bring the matter forward with a view of having it redressed. The Premier asked why these people did not approach the Government, but he thought they had a right to communicate with him as their member.

The PREMIER: To get their votes.

Mr. GLASSEY: It would not matter whether they voted for him or not. If he knew a man would never vote for him he would endeavour to

assist him if he had a grievance, and he had assisted many persons whom he had never seen and was not likely to see. A man who would insinuate that an hon. member would assist people only for the sake of getting their votes must have a poor opinion of his fellow-men. No doubt the Premier and the hon. member for North Brisbane believed what they said, but they should be prepared with some proofs before they made such statements.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: You have created as many grievances as anybody in Queensland.

Mr. GLASSEY: He had heard the hon. member refer to the grievances of certain persons employed in the Harbours and Rivers Department, but he had never suggested that the hon. member created those grievances.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: I would not deny it.

Mr. GLASSEY: Neither would he if it was the case, but he declined to lie under the imputation that he had put words into the mouths of teachers in order that they might be conveyed back to him, and that he might then bring them before Parliament.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: The hon. member was under a misapprehension with regard to the whole tenor of his observations. If he only had one-third of the time that the hon. member had to devote to the promulgation of grievances he could fan them into a flame. He was surprised to hear what the hon. member had told them about the inadequacy of remuneration in the Education Department. He would repeat what he had said many years ago in that House, that was that the educational system of the colony was likely to break down absolutely if the views of the hon. member were carried out. It was not a question of what a man or woman was worth, but of what the State could afford to pay them. A first-class man might be worth £600 a year in London, but he might not be worth £60 a year in the position in the bush which they might be able to offer him. Hon. members had spoken of the price of victuals. Forsooth, victuals were cheaper in Queensland than anywhere else in the world! A man with £180 a year and a free cottage was in a very happy condition. If they looked at the Parisian papers they would see that the best engravers in the world could be got for the same money—men who had inherited the artistic tastes of many generations; but an itinerant schoolmaster in Blackall or somewhere else with £150 or £180 a year, they were told was very poorly paid. He was opposed to such a waste of time in discussing the matter. If the same policy was continued for another session or two, the whole educational system of Queensland would break down. They were spending in round numbers £250,000 a year on education. About 125,000 adults had to pay for the whole of that. Years ago he had stated that the leakage in the Education Department and the Post and Telegraph Department would break the financial backbone of Queensland unless the expenditure in those two departments was limited, and he was of the same opinion still.

Mr. GLASSEY: In order to test the feelings of hon. members and to give them an opportunity of economising, he intended moving a reduction in the vote. He was sorry to have to be plain, but he thought some of the officers in the department—more particularly the Under Secretary—were overpaid. He had not a word to say against the Under Secretary, but he would not be doing justice to himself if he did not think there was room for a reduction there. He would move the reduction merely as a protest against the injustice which had been meted out

to the officers of the department. In order to save time, he moved a reduction of £5, and that £4,190 only be granted.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: Move it on the contingencies.

Mr. GLASSEY: That would suit his purpose just as well. He would move that the item "Contingencies, £450" be reduced by £5.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: It had been inferred that hon. members who had expostulated with the Government concerning the non-restoration of their former salaries to the school teachers had been influenced by personal interviews. He wished to say distinctly that he had not been accosted by a single person in the department concerning his grievances. Anything he had said on the subject was entirely the outcome of his own opinions, and was uninfluenced in any way whatever by the personal opinions of those more immediately concerned. It was only due that that should be made known, for he should resent—

The CHAIRMAN: I would call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that there is an amendment now before the Committee to reduce the item of contingencies to £445. If the hon. member will turn to "May," page 582, he will see it laid down that when a question of that kind is before the Committee members shall speak to such question only until it is disposed of. I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the amendment now before the Committee.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: No doubt the Chairman was quite correct, but it would be only fair to allow hon. members to give their reasons for dissenting from remarks made at an earlier period of the debate. The Committee were placed in an unfortunate position. They were unable to express directly their desire to supplement the vote, and they were compelled to show by a negative vote their disapproval of the action of the Government in not considering the restoration of the teachers' salaries. He had no desire to interfere unduly with the condition of the Treasury. At the same time, he felt that the school teachers were suffering such a very grievous disability that he intended on that occasion to give his vote, contradictory as it might appear, for the reduction of the item, not with a view to diminish the expenditure of the department, but to emphasise the views he had already expressed.

Mr. KIDSTON: To vote for the amendment was the only way in which the Committee could indicate their disapproval of the education policy of the Government. The Premier told them that the teachers had formed themselves into political organisations, and that that was the beginning of the end of their school system. That might be so, but there was no immediate danger to be feared from that source. But there was a danger to their school system from the policy of the Government; there was a danger that that policy would result in the inefficiency of the teaching staff. For that reason the Committee ought to insist upon the adoption of a more liberal policy with regard to teachers' salaries. Three years ago when other Civil servants' salaries were reduced by 10 per cent., not only had teachers to bear that reduction but also a reduction of 33 per cent. in their emoluments.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. member that he is not speaking to the amendment before the Committee. He is speaking to the general question.

Mr. KIDSTON: That might be true, but he was also speaking directly to the question before the Committee. He was trying to show that they should reduce the vote because it was the only way they had of indicating to the Government that they ought to adopt a more liberal

policy with teachers, who were suffering from the injustice that while other Civil servants had had their salaries restored theirs had only been partially restored. As the hon. member for Toowoomba had pointed out, it was a matter which very seriously affected the position of assistant teachers. The case that hon. member gave of pupil-teachers—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will see that in the vote before the Committee there is no sum for teachers. That is in the next vote. I trust the hon. member will see the reasonableness of my remark that he must confine himself to the question of the reduction of the item of contingencies by £5.

Mr. KIDSTON: He would refer to the matter later on. He would support the amendment as a protest against what he believed to be unwise economy on the part of the Government.

Mr. GRIMES: The reduction of the vote by £5 was a most extraordinary way of enforcing the claims of school teachers. Many hon. members had advocated that the vote should be increased, and now the hon. member wanted to enforce that by moving a reduction. He would content himself with the remarks he had made that afternoon, and was not going to stultify himself by voting for any such motion as this. He was quite satisfied that the Minister would take the question into his serious consideration.

Mr. CHATAWAY refused to be dragged into any such form of protest, strongly as he felt upon the matter of the reduction of teachers' salaries. The same plan had been tried on former occasions, and it would be just as reasonable to move a reduction of £200 in the Under Secretary's salary to enforce the same principle. The amendment was simply ridiculous, and he refused to vote for it.

Mr. TURLEY remembered that in 1893, when the Post Office Estimates were under consideration, the hon. member for Oxley moved the omission of the salary of a new letter-carrier as a protest against the system of sweeps. [The hon. member here quoted the remarks of the hon. member for Oxley.] The position was practically the same now, but if the hon. member could tell the Committee of any other method by which they could make clear to the Government their wishes they would be very thankful. Hon. members on the other side strongly protested against the treatment to which the teachers had been subjected, and it was very strange to see them back down when the only possible method of enforcing their views on the Government was adopted.

Mr. GRIMES: If the hon. member would refer to *Hansard* he would see that a statement was made at the time he spoke of that the correspondence had become so large in consequence of the existence of sweeps that it was necessary to employ more letter-carriers. He called attention to the fact that if a certain clause in the Postal Act was enforced more letter-carriers would not be necessary, and he therefore moved the omission of the letter-carrier's salary. That was a different case altogether to the one before the Committee.

Mr. TURLEY: The two cases seemed to him to be on all-fours. The hon. member was opposed to sweeps, and therefore moved the omission of a letter-carrier's salary. On the present occasion the hon. gentleman spoke one way, and then apologised for what he had said previously, and wished to go back upon the principles he had enunciated.

Mr. GROOM: The amendment of the hon. member for Bundaberg was strictly in accordance with the practice of the House of Commons. Some twelve months ago inquiries were instituted into the alleged shortage of ammunition—cordite—in England. The answers given by

representatives of the Government were deemed unsatisfactory, and a reduction of £100 was moved in the salary of the Under Secretary of the department. The amendment was carried; the Government were defeated, and that was what led to the last general election in England. On the occasion quoted by the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Turley, the hon. member for Oxley acted well within his rights. That was the ordinary course adopted in order to get an expression of opinion when the administration of the Government was at fault, and it was of no use the hon. member for Oxley attempting to show that there was a difference between the two cases. He should have liked to say something in reply to what had fallen from the head of the Government if the hon. member for Bundaberg had not stopped the discussion on the main question by moving his amendment. He felt strongly on the way in which the teachers had been treated, and to give expression to his views on the subject he would certainly vote for the amendment.

Mr. DRAKE: The precedent quoted by the hon. member for Toowoomba was a case in point, but he did not think the result here would be the same; even if the amendment was carried he did not think the Government would resign. Cordite had served the purpose in the British Parliament, but he did not know what sort of explosive would be required here to produce a similar result. This was really the constitutional method of focussing the expressions of dissatisfaction at the method in which the department had been administered. They were told sometimes that redress could be obtained by tabling and carrying a resolution, but that in this Parliament was ineffectual, as in an analogous case a resolution dealing with the treatment of the railway lengthsmen, though carried by the House, was set at defiance by the Government. The only method remaining was to move a reduction in a vote with the distinct understanding that it did not imply any desire to reduce the amount, but to give effect to the expressions of dissatisfaction at the way in which the department had been administered. He intended to support the amendment with that object, but it would be useful as a test to show whether the windy declamation they had listened to on the other side really meant anything, or whether it meant that hon. members opposite had been let out for the evening with strict injunctions to be in at 10 o'clock.

Mr. HAMILTON: No man who had any respect for himself would allow himself to be tested in such a way. Hon. members opposite had actually ridiculed the hon. member for Oxley for having two years ago adopted the course they were now adopting, but all they proved was that they had only now reached the stage of intelligence which the hon. member for Oxley had reached two years ago in his chrysalis condition. It would be just as logical to reduce the vote for contingencies as proposed because schoolmasters' emoluments had not been restored as it would be to kick a school child because schoolmasters had been treated improperly. He had reason to believe that the Minister had already decided to restore the emoluments of teachers to one-half of what had been knocked off.

The PREMIER: In case there should be any misunderstanding, he begged to intimate at once that if the amendment were carried the Government was not going to resign. The case referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba was not analogous at all, because in that case the House of Commons was dealing with a Government that had been carrying on for over a month with a majority of not more than ten.

Mr. TURLEY: You have carried on with a majority of one.

Mr. DAWSON: By a casting vote sometimes.

Mr. DRAKE: What majority had you last night, when you had only three behind you?

The PREMIER: The British Government had been carrying their measures with a majority of not more than ten in a House of 670 members. He did not know of any Bill or resolution the present Queensland Government had carried with a majority of only one. The case was not analogous at all. The hon. member for Bundaberg simply wanted members on the Government side to vote with him. That was all. He wanted to make a show by inducing hon. members on the Government side to vote against their principles. That was what the hon. member for Bulimba was going to do; he intended to vote for the amendment after saying he did not believe in it. If the hon. member for Bundaberg had taken the usual parliamentary course of moving a reduction on the first item in the vote, there might have been something in that. The hon. member moved a reduction in contingencies, which had nothing at all to do with the general subject. He would leave hon. members alone, let them express their opinions, and if they said the vote ought to be reduced the Government would accept it.

Mr. DAWSON: It did not matter much upon what item the reduction was moved so long as it was moved as a protest against the action of the department, and the Premier had admitted that that was the only course open to them to protest. The hon. gentleman said that the rule of Parliament was to move a reduction on the first vote.

The PREMIER: No, on the first item.

Mr. DAWSON: That meant that that was the only method of protesting in the power of any member of the Assembly. The hon. member for Bundaberg was going to move a reduction of the first item, but, in deference to the expressed wishes of members on both sides of the House, he moved the reduction on the item of "contingencies," and for the very good reason that he did not desire to put members who wished to protest against the action of the department in the position that they would be compelled at the same time to vote for the reduction of a salary they did not wish to see reduced. The Premier had stated that the precedent of the House of Commons quoted by the hon. member for Toowoomba was not analogous to the present case. He would remind the hon. gentleman that they had another precedent in this House in 1893, when the vote to subsidise the refreshment-rooms was reduced by a small amount, and the then Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, intimated that he would accept a nominal reduction as a protest against voting that sum in future. The Committee could not increase any vote on the Estimates, and the only course open to them to give expression to their protest against the system adopted by the department in that matter was that which had been followed by the hon. member for Bundaberg. He was very glad that the members sitting behind the Government would be able to breathe freely and give a conscientious vote on that occasion, without being overshadowed by the fear that the Government would resign.

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member for Charters Towers had stated that when a motion was carried reducing the subsidy to the refreshment-rooms the then Premier took it as an expression of the opinion of the Committee that the vote should be reduced.

Mr. DAWSON: No; against the system.

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member stated that the Premier took it as an indication that the Committee desired to reduce the amount.

Mr. TURLEY: To alter the system.

Mr. McMASTER: It was not the system that was mentioned; it was the amount. The

hon. member for Charters Towers now asked the Committee, in order to show that they were of opinion that the salaries of the teachers should be increased, to reduce the item of "contingencies" by £5. When the hon. member made quotations from hon. members he tried to twist what they said in order that he might get it into *Hansard*, but he did not mean what he said, and this proposal was simply absurd.

Mr. GROOM did not know where the Premier would get a case that was more analogous to the one before the Committee than the one he had quoted from the House of Commons. In that case the House were in Committee of Supply, and were considering the Army Estimates in one lump sum, when Mr. Broderick, who was now one of the Under Secretaries of the War Department and an expert, made some inquiries from the Under Secretary, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, with regard to the supply of ammunition, more particularly with regard to cordite. The answers given not being deemed satisfactory, a reduction of £100 was moved in the Under Secretary's salary.

The PREMIER: That is all right; that is the correct course.

Mr. GROOM: That incident was perfectly analogous to the case before the Committee, the only difference being that in the present instance the reduction was moved in the item of "contingencies," instead of in the salary of the Under Secretary. When the hon. member for Bundaberg proposed to take £5 off the Under Secretary's salary by way of protest, members on both sides signified by interjections that they did not wish the reduction moved in that item, which they would rather see increased than reduced, and the hon. member then moved the reduction of the item for "contingencies." In doing that he was strictly following parliamentary practice in cases where it was desired in Committee of Supply to express dissatisfaction with the action of the Government. He would remind young members that they were forming their own precedents in such matters, and he hoped that by-and-by they would have those precedents compiled together for the convenience and guidance of the House.

Mr. DAWSON objected to the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, deliberately misrepresenting what he had said, and refusing to accept his correction.

Mr. McMASTER: Because the correction was not correct.

Mr. DAWSON was not enough of a Scotchman to understand how a correction was not correct. What he stated was that in 1893 Sir Thomas McIlwraith, as Premier, advised the Committee, if they objected to the system of conducting the refreshment room, to state their objection in a concrete form by moving a reduction.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that there is no objection to the course taken. There is an amendment before the Committee, and the hon. member should speak to that amendment.

Mr. DAWSON: If he was not permitted to reply to misrepresentation, the best thing he could do was to go out of the House. If he was to be interfered with in that manner—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member need not use any threatening language to me. I am here to do my duty, and I draw the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 311, which says that "When a motion is made in Committee of Supply to omit or reduce any item of a vote, a question shall be proposed from the chair for omitting or reducing such item accordingly, and members shall speak to that question only until it has been disposed of."

Mr. DAWSON asked for the Chairman's ruling as to whether he was not permitted to reply to misrepresentations made by another hon. member. If not, he repeated that he had no business in that House.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no ruling to give, because there is no point of order. It is my duty to state the question, and I leave it to the hon. member's good sense, of which he possesses a good deal, to speak to the question before the Committee.

Mr. DAWSON repeated that what was laid down by Sir T. McIlwraith in 1893 was that if the Committee desired to make their protest effective they should move a reduction on the proposed vote for carrying on the refreshment room, and a nominal reduction was moved as a protest against the system of carrying on the refreshment room. That was a precedent he quoted in support of the hon. member who moved this reduction.

Mr. McMASTER: You are asking for an increase; that was for a decrease.

Mr. DAWSON: It did not make any difference; it was a protest against the system adopted by those responsible to Parliament.

The Hon. J. R. DICKSON: The Committee might be relieved from a somewhat embarrassing position, which might not be understood out of doors, if the Premier or the Secretary for Public Instruction, after having heard the expression of opinion, were to intimate that the Government would accede to the general request that a supplementary estimate be introduced to provide for a moderate increase in the amounts paid to the teachers, and also that they would adopt the excellent suggestion in regard to the payment of fixed amounts in this department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The amendment was said to have been moved as a protest against the action of the Government; but instead of the Government proposing a reduction they were giving back to the teachers one-half of what they had been retrenched. Last year they put £5,400 on the Estimates to keep going the system of promotion; this year they proposed to apply about £5,000 towards diminishing the retrenchment, and probably in future the question might be considered again. The amendment might just as well be taken as a protest against the Government exercising liberality as far as the finances of the colony would allow. As he had already said, they were providing about £5,000 for the removal of grievances.

Mr. TURLEY: Where is it shown in the Estimates?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member might take his word for it that the matter was being dealt with. Instead of having one-third of their emoluments deducted, they would merely have one-sixth.

Mr. TURLEY: Where is that shown in the Estimates?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It was shown there. There was an item of £23,500 in the next vote.

Mr. TURLEY: The difference is only £2,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The whole sum voted last year was not appropriated. He could assure hon. members that it was the intention to restore to the teachers half of what they lost by the retrenchment. It seemed as if hon. members were disposed to act as if no attempt at restoration had been made at all. He hoped the amendment would be defeated, but was not surprised that it had been moved, because it seemed to be the policy of some hon. members to propose reductions whatever Estimates were brought forward.

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This appeared to be more part of a habit than anything else, because there was no real ground for complaining that the Government had not shown fair consideration.

Mr. McDONALD felt sorry for those hon. members who had spoken in favour of the teachers, and hoped it would be a lesson to them not to speak so early, because now they had expressed opinions they must back them up by their votes. The Premier tried to quibble over the amendment; he said it was not constitutional, and that the hon. member for Bundaberg should have raised the question on the first item. He had a distinct recollection, however, of the hon. member for Oxley moving that the vote for letter-carriers be reduced by £10 as a protest against carrying letters relating to sweeps through the post office. On that occasion the Premier voted against the hon. member for Oxley, although the vote for letter-carriers was more than half-way down. There was no difference between the position taken up then by the hon. member for Oxley and that taken up by the hon. member for Bundaberg now. When they wanted to protest against anything this was the only form in which they could express their opinions, and it was no use the Premier saying it was a most unusual course, because they could find dozens of cases in which a similar course had been pursued.

Mr. BROWNE: The Secretary for Public Instruction had said there was £5,000 on the Estimates to increase those emoluments, but it seemed to him that there was a great deal less. There was £2,000 for extra emoluments, and £2,800 for salaries and allowances to teachers, but there were also thirty-two new teachers, and if their salaries were equal to the others there would not be much left for restoring these emoluments. He should support the amendment as an expression of opinion.

Mt. GRIMES: This case was very different from the one referred to by the hon. member for Flinders. When he moved his motion three years ago, he was advocating that the Government should enforce section 49 of the Postal Act, which provided that the Government might decline to carry letters for certain persons engaged in the promotion of sweeps, and he pointed out that if 1,000,000 letters less would be carried they would not want so many letter-carriers. Therefore the case was very different.

Question—That the item "Contingencies, £450," be reduced by £5—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 23.

Messrs. Dickson, Kidston, Kerr, McDonnell, Hoolan, Curtis, King, Jackson, Cross, Groom, Fitzgerald, Turley, Fogarty, Browne, Drake, Dibley, Stephenson, Hardacre, Daniels, Dunsford, McDonald, Stewart, Glassey, Keogh, Bartholomew, Sim, Dawson, and Finney.

NOES, 29.

Sir H. M. Nelson, Messrs. Tozer, Byrnes, Dalrymple, Philp, Foxton, Collins, McMaster, McGahan, Newell, Bridges, Stumm, Cribb, Smyth, Bell, Smith, Corfield, O'Connell, Lissner, Hamilton, Castling, Lord, Crombie, Story, Grimes, Callan, Stephens, Tooth, and Chataway.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. TURLEY was very sorry hon. members had seen fit to save the Government on that occasion by a majority of one, so that there should be no expression on the part of the Committee that the policy which the Government had adopted in connection with the Education Department was not in conformity with the opinions of the Committee. His opinion for years past had been that a majority of the members of the front Treasury bench had no sympathy whatever with our system of education. Their every action since 1893 had tended to confirm him in that opinion. He believed they had done everything they could, without raising the ire of people outside to render

the department as inefficient as possible. Without wishing to be personal, he would take the hon. gentleman at the head of the department. The hon. gentleman had expressed the opinion many a time that he did not believe in systems of that sort at all. He believed in everyone assisting himself, and did not believe that everyone in the State should be educated by the people themselves paying for the cost of that education. Then, how could they expect the hon. gentleman to administer the department in a sympathetic manner? He believed that if the system had not been in force when the present Government took office they would never have stirred hand or foot to institute a similar system.

The PREMIER: Stick to facts.

Mr. TURLEY: He believed that was a fact. He believed that ever since 1893, when the Government had had the power to interfere with the system, they had done everything they could to lessen the efficiency of the department. It was well known to many people that it was a very hard job to get young men to enter the service, and there were considerable numbers of persons in the department who were very glad to avail themselves of any opportunity to leave it—not necessarily to better themselves, but if they saw an opportunity of making a decent living outside the department they were very glad to leave. The General Inspector, in his last report, said—

“We continue to have plenty of female candidates for the position of pupil-teachers, but boys do not offer freely, and in a few schools suitable candidates of either sex could not be obtained.”

Was there any difficulty in any other branch of the Civil Service—any difficulty found in getting young people to enter? It was altogether the other way. All over the colony they were only too ready to enter the service of the State. Why would they not enter the Education Department? Because it was not made attractive, because the salary was not commensurate with the work as compared with salaries paid in other branches of the service. That was proved by the gentleman who was Secretary for Public Instruction in 1892, when he pointed out that while the average of salaries in the Education Department was £129 the average in other branches of the services was £157. That showed that while they had a Government that was not in sympathy with our system of education they would not do anything to render the system attractive, so that the best people would engage in it. It was the fault of the Government, because the persons engaged in that department had been treated altogether differently from those engaged in the other departments. Motives might be imputed to him because he spoke in that way; that would not trouble him in the least. The Premier might accuse him, as he had accused other members of the Labour party, of going round the country manufacturing grievances; he did not take any notice of that. The Government, by their action, were bringing the education service into a state of inefficiency. If the bringing up of grievances was going to wipe out the education system, the sooner it was wiped out the better. Every person, whether in the Civil Service or out of it, should have an opportunity of stating the grievances under which he believed himself to suffer. He did not believe it would do any harm to the system, but he did believe that the action the Government had taken since 1893, in making the service as hard and as unattractive as possible to young people, would do more to destroy it than anything else that could be devised.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: From a party point of view the hon. member's speech might be a very interest-

ing contribution; it was certainly an indication of extreme bias. The hon. member read an extract from the report of the General Inspector in which he alluded to the fact that there was some difficulty in getting pupil-teachers, and wished it to be inferred that the Government in some way were opposed to the education system of the colony. That was mere party spleen. The hon. member also said that if a Minister was not particularly in favour of some system, and was entrusted with the maintenance of that system, his bias would lead him not to do his duty. That statement, from beginning to end, was unworthy of the hon. member. He would read a little further, and show the cause to which the general inspector attributed the temporary difficulty in the way of obtaining pupil-teachers—

“The prosperity of the colony may have something to do with the scarcity of male candidates: that is, the boys or their parents think that they can do better elsewhere. The service is not attractive to boys, probably. The enforced mental strain looks too much like a prolongation of uncongenial school tasks; and the moral restraint prevents them from spending their evenings and their sixpences in the way they see other young fellows doing, often with a cigarette at the street corner. I am not sure that we shall get more boys or better boys for more money; but I believe we shall have to revert to previous practice, and pay our pupil-teachers from the date of their probationary appointment, so as to remove at least the excuse that the boys cannot afford to work without a money equivalent, in addition to whatever other inducement the department has to offer.”

The whole thing was a matter of fluctuation over which the Government could have no control. At a particular time there might be more candidates than were required; at another not enough. As a matter of fact, a sufficient quantity were coming forward at present. Formerly, when more offered, there was no occupation for them; they had to wait two or three years for employment. Now, when they had served their time, they very speedily obtained employment in a provisional school. In reference to those preposterous charges—that the department was in some way suffering because, presumably, the hon. member did not administer it—it was well known that when hon. members were in opposition they had one great mission, which was to be uncompromisingly hostile to the Administration, because their prospects of obtaining office depended upon convincing the public that the Government were corrupt. The hon. member quoted the chief inspector, a most able man and the right hand of the department, who probably knew ten thousand times more than the hon. member. Did he say that the efficiency of the department was suffering? Certainly not. If the hon. member displayed as much industry in connection with the departmental report as he did with that uninteresting publication *Hansard*, he would find that the chief inspector said that he saw but little difference in the schools from year to year, but, judging from observations, they seemed to be gaining. That really gave a flat contradiction to the hon. member. The hon. member had overlooked that statement, but would be able to put his finger on it in a moment if it happened to be damaging to the Government. That was the very best refutation of the hon. member's remarks. It simply amounted to this: that the hon. member's party were not in office, and he was compelled to abuse those who were. If the hon. member would also look at the reports of the inspectors he would find that their verdict was on the whole that there was an improvement in the schools; they did not indicate that anyone was endeavouring to damage the administration of the department. As for asserting that he as Minister was inimical to the Education Department—

Mr. TURLEY: Not sympathetic.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Did the hon. member mean "gushing"? He was not gushing; but so long as he had a department to administer he would endeavour to do so faithfully, and would do what he judged to be best for the department. He was perfectly sympathetic in the sense that he knew the department was doing good work, but not sympathetic in the sense of trying to promote the welfare of his party or gain votes by decrying the administration. That was all the sympathy they had heard to-night. The teachers were not well paid. A short time ago the hon. member said that the teachers got £100 a year less than they could get elsewhere. That might be so; but he forgot that many of them were extremely young, and were receiving salaries when persons elsewhere received none. With regard to the salaries, of which they had heard so much, he would like to give hon. members a comparative statement of the salaries paid in a much greater place than Queensland or Australia. The hon. member for Bundaberg complained that a teacher teaching thirty pupils only received £133 a year. All he could say was that when teachers left the department they were often exceedingly glad to come back again. But the hon. member of course referred to provisional schools, and in reference to that he would point out that provisional school teaching was generally extended probation. A lad became a pupil-teacher. Afterwards he was eligible for a provisional school. They got provisional schools in a very short time, and when they were classified they came back to the State schools as assistant teachers. As a matter of fact among the pupil-teachers who matured in 1893 there were only two who had not come back to State schools. They stopped at provisional schools for a couple of years, and then if they desired they came back to State schools provided they classified. Coming back to the charge of exceedingly small pay, in the United States—a most democratic country which had got Coxeyism and which might have had Mr. Bryan as President, just as this colony might have had the hon. member for South Brisbane as Premier—there were 13,510,719 children attending school, and 380,110 teachers employed. The hon. member for Bundaberg spoke of the contemptible pay of school teachers, but their pay compared very favourably with the rates of the other colonies, and in countries where there had been high pay what had been the result? The public had stepped in and retrenched them. But in the United States the average pay was 46 dollars and 46 cents per month for male teachers. That was the average according to the latest report. The next figures he would quote would perhaps assist hon. members to discover why it was that males and females were paid differently. While the salaries of males in the United States averaged 46 dollars 39 cents, the salaries of females averaged 38 dollars 46 cents—a very considerable reduction. Roughly the figures represented per annum, say, £80 for female teachers and between £90 and £100 for males.

MR. SIM: Quote Great Britain.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member was at liberty to furnish himself with any weapons he liked, but he took the United States as the country possessing the largest population allied to ours in their ways and manners, and he ventured to think that country afforded the best illustration. There was no ground for the vigorous attack of the hon. member for South Brisbane, except probably party necessity. As to the statement that the department was endangered or lessened in value through his happening to hold the office, all he could say was that the hon. member had not proved his case; he was entirely mistaken, and

the testimony of the man most competent to furnish a report on the subject was against him.

MR. TURLEY: The statement of the chief inspector that the department would have again to resort to the system previously in vogue of paying teachers when first employed so as to make the service attractive bore out his contention. What he had said was that the policy pursued by the Government prevented the best scholars in their schools from becoming pupil teachers, and it was only persons who were not able to get any sort of decent employment outside who would take employment in the State schools at present. The chief inspector's report fully bore out that statement. He had not read this year's report of the department very carefully, but he knew that in the last two reports the inspectors stated that great credit was due to the teachers for the work they had performed seeing the manner in which they had been treated by the Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I have not seen any such passage.

MR. TURLEY: The hon. gentleman would not see exactly that passage; but that was the tenor of some of the inspectors' reports. The hon. gentleman had said that he had had no consideration for the children; but it was because he (Mr. Turley) had consideration for the children that he wished to see the most efficient persons procurable placed over them in school, and that the teachers should receive special consideration, because they had such a serious responsibility placed upon them by the State. The statement made last year, in giving the highest salary paid to a teacher, had led the people to understand that that was the salary generally received by teachers, when, as a matter of fact, there was only one teacher under the department receiving that salary. In the same way the hon. gentleman had quoted the highest salary paid for a provisional school teacher, and in so doing had not dealt fairly with the question, as he should have quoted the average salary paid. According to the hon. gentleman's illustration, the United States male teachers received an average salary of £115, and they could compare that with the average paid in 1892—£129. But when they considered that in the United States a very great proportion of the people were centred in the towns, as compared with the scattered nature of the Queensland population, the comparison was not fair, and when it was remembered that since 1892 the Queensland teachers had had one-sixth of their salaries taken from them, it was clear that the American teachers had by far the best of the bargain. The hon. gentleman said he had made a great party speech, but it was nothing of the sort, as he had always expressed the same opinions inside and outside the House upon the policy of the Government and their want of sympathy with our system of education. What they were endeavouring to show was that, as compared with persons in other branches of the public service, teachers had not been fairly treated, and that they should, in common with the Civil servants, be restored to the position they were in prior to 1893.

MR. O'CONNELL would like now to refer to the report of the Under Secretary on the subject of superior public schools, with the view of getting some information from the Government as to whether they would do anything in the way of having higher subjects taught in the State schools than were taught at present. He congratulated the Under Secretary upon having piled into his report a large amount of useful information on matters which he had tried on one or two occasions to bring before the House and the country. The report proved conclusively that our system of education was completely behind the times, and that owing to having no

university they had extraordinary ideas as to what was a good education in a primary school. The report also bore out the statement he had made over and over again that the New South Wales Act was entirely permissive, and gave the Minister full power to alter the school curriculum, if he thought it desirable to do so. The Under Secretary quoted the clause of the Act under which superior public schools might be established. It stated that there might be established and maintained under the Act certain classes of schools, including—

“Superior public schools in towns and populous districts, in which additional lessons in the higher branches of education may be given under such regulations for the purpose as may be approved by the Governor.”

Some such permissive provision was required in this colony, so that the Minister might administer the department to the best advantage, and not be tied within the four corners of an Act. An objection had been raised that the establishment of superior schools in Queensland would interfere with existing grammar schools, but he contended that if an equally good class of education could be given to the general community in those districts where the attendance was not large, free of charge, or at any rate at a very much smaller cost than the subsidy now paid to the grammar schools, it would be a distinct gain to the colony. The attendance at several of the grammar schools was now very small; the endowment amounted to from £20 to £30 per scholar, and he maintained that the establishment of superior public schools in such places would be an advantage, even if they did away with the grammar schools. On this question the Under Secretary said—

“I have quoted above the statement of the Minister that the superior public schools supply the place of high schools; and there is no room to doubt that they have practically superseded the need of high schools. I learn that in certain towns strong pressure has from time to time been made on the department to establish high schools, but the requests have not been complied with, and those locally interested now express their entire satisfaction with the superior public schools, pains having been taken by the department to select a good staff of teachers. There are now only five high schools in New South Wales.”

From that it would be seen that in New South Wales the education given in superior schools had been sufficiently good to do away with the necessity of establishing what they called “high schools,” which were the equivalent of our grammar schools. The endowment to our grammar schools was £10,000 per annum, and the attendance was something less than 500 scholars. The question also arose as to whether fees ought to be charged in case of superior schools being established, and he was glad to see by this report that the unwisdom of such action had been practically demonstrated in New South Wales. [The hon. member quoted the last paragraph on page 2 of the report, in which it was stated that the extra fee had proved a hindrance to success, and had in no way benefited the State, and that the higher fees for higher subjects had been abolished after a trial.] If a charge of this sort were made in the case of children who reached the top form—in the event of superior schools being established—it would destroy the symmetry of our Education Act, and would have the same effect as in New South Wales. A large number of children would have left school before getting to that form, and others would be precluded from getting there on account of their inability to pay the fees. Therefore, if any attempt was made to enlarge the sphere of our education, he hoped no attempt would be made to charge a fee in one class more than another. He was surprised to find that the Under Secretary and the chief inspector of schools seemed

to think that the aim of education was to make £ s. d.; and he must say it was extraordinary that they should appear to advocate limiting the extent to which children should be educated in our schools, not because of the cost or because of inability to give a good education, but because they would become unwilling to work if they received a fair education. He found this on page 7 of the report—

“I was informed, on authority which admits of no questioning, that the capital of the southern colony is overrun with young men locally reared, well educated, graduates of the University, who are unable to find work congenial to a man of education. . . . It may be said that a youth will earn a better living with his hands if he is well educated; but it is a pretty common opinion that to do well at a trade a boy should begin at fourteen, and that if he delays till he is seventeen he is not likely to settle down kindly to manual labour. It would be lamentable if the New South Wales system of public and university education, admirable as it is, conducted to the formation of a class mentally disqualified to earn a living under the conditions of the time, and brought on the State the dangers of an educated proletariat. I may have been unduly impressed, but I came to regard the danger as not improbable.”

That seemed to point very strongly to the idea that if children were fairly well educated manual labour might be distasteful to them when they were old enough to go to work. But the failure of men who have received a good education to earn a living was not on account of their education; it was not that they were unfit to do manual work; it was probably because they chose to remain with their parents hoping to get more congenial employment. In his opinion a well-educated man would turn out better work in the long run than one who went to work at fourteen years of age without having acquired the same amount of information; he would see that it was his duty to make use of the information he possessed to do his work in this world to the best of his ability. That was the proper idea of education, and that would be the result if public opinion did not intervene and say that certain classes of work were derogatory. It was not a man's education that prevented him from doing the work of an artisan or a mechanic; it was because a certain class had chosen to put their backs up, and say that if a man did a certain class of work he must not expect to be received in society.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is dying out.

Mr. O'CONNELL: It was an absurd idea, and he hoped it was going to die out. It was time that these distinctions were done away with completely, and men were valued according to the way in which they performed their duties in the sphere in which they were working. If it were accepted as a rule that education should only be valued for the pecuniary benefit it would bring, instead of educating the pupils' minds, they should turn their schools into factories and teach the children to be bootmakers, bricklayers, carpenters, and so on—everything which would assist them to make a living when they went out into the world. But what they really wanted was to cultivate their minds before they commenced to learn trades, so that they would be guided in their duties as citizens. In these colonies the government of the country was largely in the hands of the artisan class, and it was the duty of the State to see that the rising generation were sufficiently well educated to enable them to deal with the important subjects that were likely to come before them. For that reason he held that the education they now gave was insufficient. Mr. Ewart in his report dealt with some of the subjects he would like to see taught, but he disapproved of the teaching of history. He could not see how any man who wished to see a child's mind expanded and regulated could object to

history being taught. Mr. Ewart said on page 16, referring to the history taught in the New South Wales schools—

"The history prescribed is far beyond our range. . .

I am not ignorant of the broadening, elevating, ennobling, informing, educating influence of the study of history on the human character; but I am not by any means sure that children of the age now in question are capable of effectively studying history as laid down for the junior, let alone the senior, which latter may also be taken in the New South Wales fifth class; and the University examiners do not speak highly of the intelligence and grasp of the examinees in this subject."

While he distinctly admitted the beneficial and educating influence of the study of history, he deprecated it because children at the age of fifteen years were not capable of dealing with the subject in the fullest manner. Nobody expected that children would be able to grasp the enormous importance of some historical events and the great results of some trivial action. Something more than the broad outlines might be taught before the children left school altogether. Generally they should have a fairly good idea of the history of England, as to how the Constitution was built up, and what was now being done in the old country towards building up a Constitution for the empire. It would also be a good thing if the many heroic deeds of their countrymen were known to the children of this country. Nothing would be more attractive; it would be a stimulus to them to try to follow in their footsteps and make themselves not unworthy members of a race that had made the greatest name in the world since it had been a world. He did not intend to speak at any great length, because the subject had been fully and ably discussed in the local and the southern papers. According to the *Courier*, the question was whether it was desirable that the curriculum should be enlarged, and also what the effect of increased education would be, and whether it was due to over-education that unemployed well-educated men existed. He did not think that was due to over-education, but because it was thought that education was a bar to their doing certain classes of work in consequence of public opinion. If public opinion looked at all classes of work as being satisfactory, one of the bars that prevented educated men from going into different kinds of employment would be removed. There was an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which was copied into one of our local papers, and which dealt with this objection of the Under Secretary. It asked if Mr. Anderson was acquainted with any country where there were not highly educated people unemployed, and if the Queensland system preserved the community from the dangers of an educated proletariat, and also pointed out that the New South Wales system gave every child the best education the State could afford. New South Wales was content to chance the not too apparent evils of an educated proletariat for the sake of the greater efficiency of a community whose every unit was an educated man or woman, which was necessary if it was to face the competition of the world, and it concluded by saying that in the long run the only protection that answered was by every art they knew to increase the efficiency and ability of their people. That had been his sole object in advocating an alteration in our Education Act. Owing to having no university, and to having believed that they had a wonderfully perfect system, they had not tried to better it. He believed that it would stand a great deal of improving, and he hoped that under the Minister's guidance an amendment would be made in the Act, so that if they were not able to adopt the superior school system of New South Wales they would at least be able to add other subjects to those now included in the curriculum.

On page 15 of the report the General Inspector admitted the advanced nature of the work done in the superior schools, and the success of the pupils of those schools in the university examinations, but he stated that most of the higher work done appeared to be the fruit of excessive effort on the part of the teachers—that it did not flow legitimately from the departmental programme—and he deprecated Queensland following that lead, as it was allowing the university and the ambition of teachers to control the schools. It was hardly fair, he thought, to able teachers who might be quite conscientious but unwilling to go the pace, and he considered that in the long run it could not be good to proceed at the break-neck pace shown by the examination records in New South Wales, the results of which were manifesting themselves in the undesirable plethora of unemployed young people highly educated in subjects which they could not turn to practical account. Yet on page 4 the Under Secretary expressed the opinion, on the contrary, that neither in the reports of inspectors in New South Wales nor in the remarks of teachers he had met did he find reason to doubt that the programme, which included sixteen or seventeen subjects, was fairly well overtaken in the school hours; and he went on to say that that opinion gained support from the passes in the university examinations, and from the fact that officers of the department did not recommend a change. There was a diversity of opinion on the subject in the two reports. The reports made him come to the conclusion that the interest of those two officers in the subject of education had after many years at the work become blunted, and that they were not excessively in earnest in desiring to see the public schools of the colony made as efficient as those in the mother colony. He could come to no other conclusion than that they shrank from asking the department to take up the onerous work that was apparently being done without any opposition or regret by the teachers in New South Wales. He was sorry if that conclusion was correct; but, reading between the lines of the two reports, he could not see any eagerness on the part of the Under Secretary and the General Inspector to make the educational system of Queensland second to none. That was the spirit he would have liked to see breathing in every line of their reports. He hoped that the public would insist that our educational system should not be behind that of any of the other colonies.

Mr. STORY: In speaking upon the vote he had been so far fortunate as to have read the reports of the Under Secretary and General Inspector before the discussion had come on. He had some doubt as to the wisdom of making any alteration or expansion in our educational system, his principal reason being that when a thing worked well it was always good policy to let it alone. No man who saw the children coming into Brisbane to attend the schools by train, by tram, in 'bus, or afoot—all classes of children, from those nicely dressed, well booted and gloved, to the children with bare hands and feet, meeting on an equality in school, and probably the barefooted child taking a higher place in the class than his more fortunate classmate—could doubt for a moment that our educational system worked well. The same scene was enacted in the farming districts and out West, barring the different means of locomotion; and they might consider themselves fortunate in living in a country and a time when primary education was free to all who were able to avail themselves of it. No one admired our system more than he did, and no one had felt its advantage more in his family than he had. Still there was nothing so perfect that it was not capable of enlargement and wider application, and good

as our system was it should move with the times and adapt itself to the peculiar requirements of the country. The suggestion he had to make was rather in the nature of an extended application than an amendment or alteration of our present system. The district he represented might be taken as a typical example of a West-country district. In the Warrego district, which contained roughly about 33,000 square miles and 5,200 inhabitants, there were four schools, one at Cunnamulla, one at Bollon, 120 miles away from Cunnamulla; one at St. George, eighty miles from Bollon; and one at Mungindi, eighty miles from St. George, and the aggregate attendance was 251. It might be asked why he had not applied to the Minister for more provisional schools? He could only reply that under the Act they had no claims for more schools in the district. The population was so scattered that the Act could not possibly help them no matter how well it was administered. He came now to the particular feature of the Western country, which made the extension of the Education Act a necessity if the bush children were to be taught anything at all to enable them to discharge with intelligence their duties as citizens. Everybody seemed agreed that the best thing to do was to settle people on the land, and the Government were throwing large areas of country open for selection. Naturally the country nearest the centres of population was taken up first, but they were now face to face with this position: that men who took up grazing farms recognised clearly the fact that unless the State provided other means of education for their children they must be allowed to grow up ignorant, for it would be impossible for them to avail themselves of the advantages offered either by State or provisional schools. Men occupying small farms on the coast were apt to imagine that persons occupying 10,000 or 20,000 acres of land would naturally be in a position to send their children away to school. That was not the fact. A man with 160 acres near Brisbane was generally in a better financial position than a man holding 10,000 or 20,000 acres out West. The area, large as it was, only meant about 5,000 sheep, and there was only a very moderate living in that. Then there were the contractors, the boundary-riders, the grooms, the mail changers and others scattered over the Western country, living long distances from one another and receiving an average of 25s. a week with rations; how were they to provide for their children to meet the children of artisans and business people resident in the towns on an equality of education? The result of the present state of things was that the children of our yeomanry were growing up the most ignorant section of the commonwealth. The way out of the difficulty was so simple that there could be no harm in giving it a trial. It would cost little money and could be applied almost immediately. His suggestion was that any person living beyond seven miles of a State or provisional school should first go to the township and interview the head teacher or the police magistrate and inform him that he had a certain number of children whom he intended to bring in for examination at the inspector's next visit. If necessary he should get some responsible person to guarantee that his statement was correct. He would then get the necessary books. When the inspector paid his next visit he could bring his children in for examination, and if they had made satisfactory progress the inspector would give a certificate to that effect, which certificate should rate as an order on the Treasury for the same amount that it would have cost the State to educate the same children at a public school. Of course the children would have to pass the examination before the money was

available; the payment would be by results. The State would only pay for exactly what it got. If the children made no progress, the parents would have no claim, but the system would induce the parents to keep their children regularly at school. There would be no extra cost, beyond a reasonable addition to the inspector's salary. An objection might be urged against the proposed system that the teachers would have no status in the Education Department, but that was not an objection of importance so long as the children got the necessary tuition. So long as the results were obtained, it was absolutely of no consequence how they were obtained, so long as proper means were adopted. Another important point was that the charge would not be a perpetual one on the country, because, as settlement became closer fresh provisional schools would arise, and the assistance given could be withdrawn. The children on the outskirts of civilisation had in his opinion a better claim on the State than those more fortunately situated. Their parents were carrying out the policy of the Government in settling on the Western lands, and were at the same time sacrificing the future of their children. If the Government would do as he suggested one of the greatest and most serious obstacles to settlement would be removed, and men going out to settle in the far West would know that their children would not grow up barbarians. Squatters, managers of stations, and well-to-do selectors would not, of course, avail themselves of the system, but contractors, grooms, boundary riders, rabbit-fence inspectors, and wayside publicans would regard the adoption of some such system as the greatest boon. Many an intelligent man who spent the whole of his life in the far-distant West was painfully conscious of his children growing up in ignorance, and when the children arrived at man's estate, if the plan he advocated were adopted, they would not have to depend upon other people for that assistance which it was so humiliating for a grown-up man to ask for. He was asking for nothing but the rudiments of education for the children. When they grew up they could, as Inspector Ewart pointed out, take up those subjects for which they had the greatest inclination. All he asked was that the children should be put in a position to improve themselves. There was no lack of teachers, and he believed that in South Australia pupil-teachers of the second class taught sixty children, and were paid £40 a year. In the district he spoke of they could be offered a free life and better pay, and with a number of them scattered over the district a spirit of friendly rivalry would arise, and the man who produced the best results would be in the greatest demand. It could also be so arranged that selectors would board and lodge the children of other selectors, and thus a number of children might be gathered together and a provisional school started. The only difficulties to be overcome were mere details; the only money needed would be about £2,000, and that would educate about 600 children. He believed last year it cost £3 10s. to educate each child in the State schools, but it was not likely that all the settlers would avail themselves of the system when established. Therefore they need not count upon the whole number of children as possible pupils. If the Secretary for Education—whose ability was well known and whose alleged want of interest in his department he did not believe, but who was widely and justly recognised as an able administrator—would take the matter in hand he could make a success of it, and Parliament he was sure would readily grant the necessary funds. One suggestion had been made to him which he was afraid would not work very well; that was to have

itinerant teachers. Homesteads were twelve, twenty-five, and thirty miles apart, and the difficulties of travelling in the Western country during drought and flood were so great that the small amount of schooling accomplished would be hardly worth mentioning. If the Minister opened his hands to those Western children and gave them the same chance as the children of the towns so far as the rudiments of education were concerned, he would establish almost a new order in the West, and if he impressed upon the Government the necessity of doing it his name would be handed down to succeeding generations, he would not say with honour and glory, as he was certainly not speaking for effect but out of the earnestness of his desire to secure some education for the bush children. So earnest was he about it that any hon. member who would help him might, so far as he was concerned, take all the credit of carrying the thing through, so long as it was brought to pass. Town children were not more intelligent or better born than bush children, nor were their parents in better circumstances, speaking generally, than the parents of the bush children, but they had all the advantages of the education system which the Western children had not, and they had in addition technical schools, lending and reading libraries, a school of arts, a museum, and a picture gallery, and everything that stirred, and every paper they read was an education to a certain extent to the town child. Every train and tram that ran, and every ship that came up the river taught the town child something. The bush children, on the other hand, had no chance whatever. There were scores of children out in the West whose highest excitement and glory was the passing of Cobb and Co.'s coach about once a week in a cloud of dust. Some men out there nearly his own age had never seen a mountain, had never seen the sea; and to show that there was some hunger amongst the Western people for more than their daily life brought them, one could scarcely go into a hut in the West without finding the walls pasted all over with pictures from illustrated papers which the people contrived to get. If they extended the advantages he suggested, books would become a necessity out West, there would be libraries created in the townships, and the people would have a chance of seeing books, maps, and papers. It was worthy of the attention of the House to do something to make the life of the Western children something above the life of animals, which it was at present. He would be sorry to pose as a man with a grievance, or a man of one idea upon which he desired to speak whenever he got a chance. He had spoken on this subject before, and though the speech he made was poor enough it had been taken up and made more of in letters and by every paper he received from the West, and what he proposed was recognised as the one thing needful. Only yesterday he had received one letter in which the writer said that his ideas for the education of the children of the "Never Never" had the consent at any rate of every man in the writer's district. He had spoken from actual knowledge of his own district, but he was sure that other country members could say that similar conditions existed in the Flinders, the Mitchell, and the Barcoo districts. He was not talking for his own district alone, but if they gave the system a trial, and it was found that the people took it up, that would be an argument for its further extension. It was the duty of a member knowing the disabilities under which his district laboured to call the attention of the House to them, and it was certainly the duty of country members to call attention to the disabilities under which their districts

laboured in the matter of the education of the children living in them. They voted large sums of money for railways, and £200,000 was nothing for some national work. Was there any national work more important than the education of the children of the country or anything which should appeal more to hon. members who knew what the Western country was than the education of the unfortunate children living there?

Mr. JACKSON had the utmost sympathy with the hon. member for Balonne, but the hon. member's scheme was scarcely workable. It would result simply in squatters, who could afford to pay governesses or tutors, getting paid for the teaching of their children. The hon. gentleman said it would mean payment by results, but that was the way in which it would terminate. He had personal experience of the great inconvenience bush people suffered who resided at a considerable distance from a school. His own children were twenty miles from the nearest provisional school, and he had either to employ a governess or to send them to that school, or eighty miles to Charters Towers to attend school. He would like to draw attention to a few points in connection with the reports of the department, and particularly the report of the General Inspector, who had made a name for himself throughout Queensland for the very able reports he laid before Parliament. First of all, there was a very large number of neglected children who were not attending school, and the Government ought certainly to enforce the compulsory powers they had under the Act. Then there was the suggestion of the General Inspector that they should try to make some provision by which pupil-teachers could obtain an hour's relief during the daytime. At present they had no opportunity to study for their examinations except in the evening; and it would be conducive to their health if they could get away for a time from the strain they must suffer in being employed all day teaching children, and then having to study in the evening. Another point was mentioned by Inspector Gripp, who said there was too much of the rule of thumb in their system of education, without a proper apprehension of principles, and his experience confirmed that statement. Pupils very often did not properly understand the subject put before them. As long as they got through their particular lesson the teacher was satisfied, and did not take pains, probably he had not time to take sufficient pains, to give them the instruction they should have in order to apprehend the principles of the lesson. Then both the General Inspector and Inspector Gripp referred to the variety of copy-books in use in different schools. That was undesirable, as it would not tend to make the children good at penmanship. Inspector Gripp further referred to the desirability of having drawing schools for teachers at Townsville or Charters Towers, or in some other central place in the North, and he hoped the Minister would give that matter his attention. Another matter was the payment of pupil-teachers. In New South Wales pupil-teachers of the first year received £40 a year, whereas in Queensland they were paid only £30. Another point was the carelessness which was sometimes shown in correcting home exercises. Inspector Canny mentioned that, and he (Mr. Jackson) had noticed it in the case of his own children. He did not say that it was due to incompetence on the part of teachers, but simply, as the inspector pointed out, to the fact that they had so much to do during the short time they had at their disposal for correcting home lessons that they were bound to overlook some points. With regard to the question of adopting the New South Wales system of superior education, he would like the Government

to tell them what they intended to do respecting the recommendations made by Mr. Anderson. He did not think Queensland was ready for a very advanced system of education, and considered that the compromise suggested by the Under Secretary was a fair one, which would about fit the circumstances of Queensland. His recommendation was as follows:—

"I do not think it advisable and desirable to incorporate in the State Education Act of 1875 all the provisions of the Public Instruction Act of 1880 of New South Wales relating to superior public schools; but I consider it advisable and desirable to amend the Queensland Act so as to permit the teaching of mathematics, higher English, science, and drawing to the few children who reach the higher class, and to give power to the Governor in Council to add other subjects in the direction of manual training and technical instruction as occasion may arise."

While he had always contended that the present system of grammar school scholarships was not a fair one to the people living in the country, away from towns where grammar schools were situated, yet he believed that if an alteration were made in that system it would do away with the necessity of adopting the New South Wales system of superior public schools. Though the Under Secretary made no special recommendation on that subject, yet on page 10 of his report he spoke of the New South Wales system of bursaries, which were of the value of £30 a year, and said—

"When the bursar must necessarily board from home, an allowance not exceeding £30 a year will also be made. Bursars must be the children of parents whose income is under £3 a week, or of persons receiving over £3 a week, but whose income is not more than £30 per head of the family."

He would like to see some such system as that adopted, and he hoped that the Government, if they adopted Mr. Anderson's suggestion, would also change the system of grammar school scholarships. In Queensland those scholarships were open to the rich as well as to the poor, but that was not the case in New South Wales. He was not quite sure whether it was a correct principle to give higher education to all whether they could afford to pay for it or not. In the schools under the London County Council there were scholarships of £20, £30, and £60, available only to the children of the poor or middle classes; and he believed that the system in New South Wales, where the children of the wealthy were excluded, worked out alright. At the same time he would be in favour of free scholarships to the children of the wealthy as well as to the children of the poor if he thought that no bad feeling would develop amongst the children. In conclusion he repeated that he would like to hear what the Government intended to do in connection with the reports made by Messrs. Anderson and Ewart. Speaking generally, he agreed with both.

Mr. GROOM congratulated the hon. member for Balonne on having done good service to his constituents and to others living in distant parts of the interior in having brought forward the question of providing some education for the children there, but it was a question whether the scheme suggested by the hon. gentleman would commend itself. In the adjoining colony they had given this matter their serious consideration, and had tried the principle of employing teachers who went from house to house and from station to station. In his report for 1893 the Minister for Education in New South Wales said that there were fifty-seven of these schools in operation during the year, and 91 per cent. were reported to be up to or above the standard. The instruction was confined to reading, writing, dictation, and arithmetic; and though necessarily expensive, the schools were doing much good and met the wants of a large number of families. The scheme

suggested by the hon. gentleman would be a departure from the system prevailing in Queensland, and would probably necessitate the passing of an Act of Parliament. Another thing, if the system of payment by results were applied to one class it would have to be applied to others—schools conducted in connection with churches, for instance.

Mr. STORY: They are within a reasonable distance of other schools.

Mr. GROOM: Granted; but distance had nothing to do with the principle of payment by results. The hon. gentleman had made out a good case for something to be done; but he was of opinion that the system which had been found to work well in New South Wales would be better than the system of payment by results. He thought our regulations were sufficiently elastic to allow the department to carry out the principle at once, but to adopt the system of payment by results would be opening the door very widely for others to come in and claim equal privileges for themselves. Fifty-seven schools had been established by itinerant teachers in New South Wales, and that was sufficient to warrant us in giving the system a trial.

Mr. STORY: His suggestion was that persons living more than seven miles from a State or provisional school should have these teachers, who should be paid by results. He was very much obliged to the hon. member for Toowoomba for the information he had given, and he had not the least doubt that that information was correct. Itinerant teachers would be better than none, but it would be the distance that would trouble them. The children might be twenty-five or thirty miles apart, and he did not see how men would get round them at all. It did not follow that every selector would be a married man with children. The next selection might be held by a bachelor, and the next by a married man without children, and so on.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He could not say until he received more information whether itinerant teachers would be useful. As had been said, the long distances would stand in the way of their success.

Mr. GROOM: You could have half-time schools as they have in New South Wales.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Several half-time schools were carried on now. He would take an early opportunity of looking into the matter, but he did not think the system of itinerant schools would be practicable. However, he could assure the hon. member that if he could get a sufficient number of children to justify him in appointing a teacher he would be very happy to give him a half-time school. There was no opportunity of going further than that under existing conditions. It had also been said that in some cases the education was very much on the rule-of-thumb principle.

Mr. JACKSON: The inspector says so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He did not question the fact. It was very difficult to instil principles into the minds of children, and therefore underlying rules could not be taught them. As to carelessness in correcting home lessons, he might inform the hon. member that periodically meetings had taken place of the whole of the inspectors in conjunction with the Under Secretary, and matters of detail had been carefully considered, which there had been great difficulty in deciding. In fact, in many cases opinions had been very evenly balanced, although in some cases the decision arrived at had been unanimous. As to the question of putting the compulsory clauses in force, there were many objections to that. One was that attempts

to do so in New South Wales had been very costly and by no means effective, besides inflicting great hardship in many cases. It was very easy for the parents to make excuses which resulted in the courts dismissing cases, and he might also point out that there had been no generally expressed opinion in any portion of the colony in favour of putting those provisions in operation. Sometimes it was suggested, but the suggestion received no support. If it was the general desire of a community that those clauses should be enforced, he should probably accede to a request of that nature, but without some such action he did not feel disposed to diverge from the line of action adopted by his predecessors. The next matter of consequence was in reference to the reports of the Under Secretary and the General Inspector. The remarks he had made when it was first suggested that those officers should investigate and report upon the superior school system of New South Wales, with reference to the difficult position they would be placed in, had been fulfilled. He knew that Mr. Anderson had left here without holding any definite views on the subject; and if there was any tinge of colour in his opinions at all, it was in favour of adopting the New South Wales system. He had investigated all the circumstances which would enable him to form a conclusion, and when he reported, honestly and fearlessly, upon the state of things he had found his report was at once called in question. It was hardly fair to call upon officers of the department to discharge such a duty, and then take exception because their conclusions did not coincide with those of persons who had suggested that they should make inquiries and report. The New South Wales system was much more complete than they could possibly make it in Queensland. They began with primary schools, then came superior schools, then high schools—there was only one grammar school—and then ultimately there was the university. As a matter of fact the superior schools, through not being carried out in the manner originally intended by Parliament, and by dint of competition, were gradually elbowing the high schools out, and it was likely that similar consequences would ensue in Queensland to the grammar schools. Officers of the department could not ignore the existence of things as they were in this colony when reporting upon the New South Wales system. The most important point was the information which the hon. member for Musgrave required as to what action he intended taking in the matter. There were two recommendations in the report—one made by Mr. Anderson and one by Mr. Ewart—but neither of them agreed with what the hon. member for Musgrave proposed. Mr. Ewart was in favour of teaching additional subjects, but not altogether the subjects which were taught in the New South Wales superior schools. Such subjects as Latin and French he would not teach at all, because very little could be taught, and it was hardly worth devoting time to them when it might be more usefully applied to other subjects. He suggested that it was desirable that they should add some science and mathematics to the present curriculum. He did not think it proper at the present time to bring forward any scheme, or to refuse to bring one forward. All he could say was that the report—so far from being objectionable—was a very sensible report, and he was far more inclined to bring the scheme suggested into operation than that first proposed by the hon. member for Musgrave. In the meantime they were considering the matter, and really it was wiser to delay a little than to act before full consideration had been given to so important a subject.

Mr. GLASSEY: Does the department as a whole look upon it with favour?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He did, as head of the department. The conclusion seemed a rational one, and one which would improve their system, and he did not at present see any insuperable obstacle in the way of carrying it out.

Mr. BROWNE asked whether anything had been done with regard to the matter of compiling and printing school books in the colony?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION had promised the two deputations introduced to him by the hon. member that he would make inquiries into the matter. He had made those inquiries from the publishers in England, but the answers had not yet arrived.

Mr. CROSS: Earlier in the evening the Minister instituted a comparison between the salaries paid in the United States and in Queensland. In making that comparison had the hon. gentleman taken into his calculations the facts of the wages paid to nigger teachers, that the schools were not utilised during the winter months, and that nearly all teachers were allowed to engage in other occupations? It was only fair to the teachers of Queensland that those facts should be made known.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION would give the hon. member one fact with regard to the New England State of Vermont, where the black population was almost *nil*. There, the average salary was—for males, 38 dollars 40 cents, and for females, 24 dollars 80 cents per month.

Question put and passed.

STATE SCHOOLS—INSPECTION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £6,000 be granted for State schools—inspection.

Mr. GLASSEY: As a rule he was not anxious to increase salaries, but in that particular vote there was room for an increase. He referred especially to the five inspectors, who received only £350 a year. Considering their attainments and the work they had to do the pay was too small, and he hoped that next year's Estimates would show an increase.

Mr. GROOM: The salaries paid to the inspectors in Queensland were lower than those paid in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia. In New South Wales the chief inspector received £675; in Victoria the secretary and inspector-general received £850; and in South Australia the inspector-general received £900. In Queensland the general inspector received £600. In New South Wales the deputy chief inspector got £605; in Victoria the senior inspector got £650; in South Australia the assistant inspector-general got £525. The senior inspector of Queensland got £450. In New South Wales there were four inspectors at £515, nine district inspectors at £560, and twenty-one country inspectors at from £380 to £470. In Victoria there were twenty inspectors at from £380 to £600. In South Australia there were three inspectors at £475 and three at £450. In Queensland there were three district inspectors at £400 and five at £350; and one district inspector at £350 had been in the service for years without receiving any increase. The remark he had made with regard to the teachers applied with equal force to the inspectors. It did not give the inspector heart to do his work if he had no prospect of reward. He hoped the matter would be taken into favourable consideration.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW asked what was the allowance for travelling expenses? He understood it had been reduced from a guinea a day to 10s.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Inspectors were allowed 15s. per day for travelling expenses. He admitted that the salaries in proportion to the arduous and continuous duties of inspectors were not large. If the financial position improved he should be glad to see those very valuable officers receive more recognition for their work.

Question put and passed.

SCHOOLS (SUBDIVISION).

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £109,340 be granted for schools (subdivision).

Mr. HARDACRE asked what was the reason for limiting the amount contributed towards provisional schools to £50? Ordinary schools contributed only one-fifth of their cost, and there was no maximum, but in case of provisional schools the people who had the biggest burden to bear got the least assistance. He knew of instances where provisional schools required additions, but the maximum having been reached the people had to bear the whole cost of the additions. He thought the Minister should take the matter into consideration and give £1 for £1, with a higher limit than £50.

Mr. GLASSEY observed that there was no increase in the vote for extra cost of living. At Roma other Civil servants received 1s. per day as an extra allowance. He should like to know whether school teachers were treated in the same manner and paid on the same scale?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The teachers were not paid on the Civil Service Board scale. A scale had been framed by the department which it was thought met the necessities of the case.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Minister could not argue with any justice that school teachers should receive a less allowance for increased cost of living than other employees of the State. The Civil Service Board had, he believed, recognised the necessity of increasing the scale in certain places. There was considerable dissatisfaction on the subject, and he could not see why those engaged in the important duties of instructing the young should be placed at a disadvantage as compared with other Government officers. In the early part of the evening the Minister had said they were allowed £10 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes; and up to £50.

Mr. GLASSEY: The officers of other departments at Roma were allowed £18 a year, or £8 more than the teachers, if they were allowed anything extra there. He wanted to know when the increase for emoluments was to come into operation?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It would come into operation from the 1st July of this year. The hon. member for Leichhardt would remember that really provisional or temporary schools were not contemplated under the Act as forming any charge whatever upon the State. It must be admitted that the £50 provided by the department, supplemented by another £50 subscribed by the parents, would put up twenty out of twenty-one of the provisional schools of the colony.

Mr. BROWNE: The provisional schools were the pioneers of the education system of the colony, and the present Minister stuck to the hard-and-fast rule penalising people wanting provisional schools more than any other Minister he knew. The last provisional school erected in his electorate was at Golden Gate; it cost very little under £200, and yet the department only granted the maximum of £50, though the regulation insisted that the school must come within the requirements of the Act, and any hon. member must

know that to build a school in the Gulf country that would meet with the requirements of the Act would cost £200. When the teacher was sent up to the Golden Gate the attendance at the school was forty, and it increased inside of a month to sixty, the number required to entitle the place to a State school. The attendance was now ninety, and when the attendance was seventy Mr. Gripp, the district inspector, was there, and an application for some further assistance was met by the statement that they could not get more than the £50. At the same time, by subscribing £200 the people could call upon the Government to expend £800 there on a State school; and though they were prepared to contribute £1 for £1 for a grant of £25 to accommodate thirty more children, they had the regulation quoted to them, and were told that they had got the £50 and would get no more. Another difficulty arose in connection with the accommodation which had to be provided for the teachers of provisional schools. If a female teacher was appointed to a school, the parents were informed that suitable accommodation must be provided for, but the people in such places could not provide palatial accommodation for female teachers. In another portion of his electorate the people desired to provide accommodation for a good teacher, which they reckoned would cost £30. They subscribed £17, and an application to the department for the balance was refused, under the hard-and-fast regulation. That was not the way to advance education, or to get people with families to open up the country. The least they should do for such people, when they did not give them exceptional consideration, was to give them equal consideration with those who squatted down in the towns where they had every advantage at hand. This matter had been brought before the Government time after time, and it was pretty nearly time it was altered, and people in the far-out places given some chance of educating their children.

Mr. TURLEY asked in what item was included the amount that was to restore to teachers one-half of what they were retrenched in 1893?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It was in the item "Additional emoluments, £23,500." The amount voted under that head last year was £21,300, but only £18,550 was expended, so that the increase this year was £5,000.

Mr. HARDACRE: There was nothing at all to justify the department in continuing its present attitude in regard to provisional schools, and they should have some promise from the Minister that the regulations would be altered. The total amount set down in aid of provisional schools was £1,500, and it would not ruin the State to vote twice or three times that amount, while it would be a great benefit to the people in the outside districts.

Mr. STEWART: The condition of a great number of children in the bush districts was a disgrace to the colony, and it was their duty to give every child in the colony an elementary education before anything further was attempted. He would find no fault with their spending £15,000 a year on grammar schools if they could afford it, but they could not; and in those schools they were really giving a higher education to the children of people who were quite able to pay for that education out of their own pockets. Every man in the colony was supposed to take part in the government of the country, and he hoped the day was not far distant when every woman would take part in the government; but how could they do that intelligently if they were not educated? No man or woman in these days could engage in the simplest occupation with any prospect of success without at least some

sprinkling of education. Everything in the colony was in an experimental stage, and what was the use of circulating the pamphlets issued by the Agricultural, Lands, and Mines Departments if their young men and young women in the bush were not taught to read? The paramount duty of the State was to teach the children of those people, who were the pioneers on the goldfields and the lands of the colony, and it was only fair that as liberal provision should be made for the establishment of provisional schools in outside districts as was made for the establishment of State schools in populous centres. He had no objection to schools of arts; but in many cases they were simply lending libraries where people could obtain books at a cheap rate.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. member that the vote for schools of arts is not now before the Committee.

Mr. STEWART: He was comparing one thing with the other, and it was of much more consequence to provide an elementary education for the young, especially in the rural districts, than to provide people living in towns with the means for novel reading. In many provisional schools the attendance was between twenty and thirty, and the Minister said the cost was about £100. In order to accommodate forty pupils in a State school at Charters Towers it was proposed to spend £900, and for a State school at Capella, with an attendance of forty, it was estimated that £869 would be required. If the Government could afford to spend so much on State schools to accommodate forty pupils they ought not to grudge £200, if necessary, for a provisional school to accommodate between twenty and thirty. Some of the provisional schools were totally unfit for the purposes for which they were used. One thing that weighed particularly with parents was the question of getting their children educated; and the State should offer every facility to people living at a distance from towns to get their children educated, because by so doing they would be encouraging people to settle on the land.

At 12 o'clock,

The CHAIRMAN, in accordance with the Standing Orders, called upon Mr. Bell, the hon. member for Dalby, to take the chair.

Mr. STEWART: The question of appointing itinerant teachers should receive more attention than it had hitherto done. He remembered them in the North of Scotland teaching from hamlet to hamlet, a week in one place and another week in another, and he did not see why the system should not be established here.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There are eight half-time schools here now. Two were appointed this year and six last year.

Mr. STEWART: The system could be very much extended, and instead of eight there ought to be eighty. He hoped the matter of provisional schools would be attended to.

Mr. BOLES agreed that greater assistance should be given to the provisional schools, which were essential in the country districts, and a great factor in inducing people to settle on the land. He believed the department offered many facilities, but still much greater privileges were allowed to people living in the towns, which was not a good thing for the country. The whole matter was worthy of attention.

Mr. KERR was very glad to hear the hon. member for Balonne refer to the education of the bush children. Only those who lived in the bush knew the disadvantages that were suffered in that direction, and although he did not believe in the plan suggested by the hon. member some means might be devised by the department for educating bush children. There were two townships in his electorate, Jundah and Stonehenge, which had been townships for a long

time, but there were no schools there, and the hon. member for Leichhardt put his finger on the sore place when he pointed out that the subsidy given to provisional schools was insufficient. In the cases of the towns he had mentioned the whole amount would be swallowed up in the carriage of timber for the erection of the buildings. Owing to the great cost of living in the West people never started to collect money to put up a school, and children grew up without any education unless their parents were either in a position to instruct them or to employ a tutor or a governess. Seeing the Government derived so much revenue from the country lands, they should take the isolation of the bush townships into consideration, and make larger grants than they did in the coast districts and in the neighbourhood of large towns. In a coast town where there were forty or fifty children the department never proposed to put up a provisional school. Pressure would soon be brought to bear to get a State school, when the local contributions would only be one-fifth of the cost, and the buildings would be maintained by the department. The department not only insisted that people in the country districts should find three-fourths of the cost of a provisional school, but they insisted on the school being built according to their plans and specifications. The whole evening had been taken up with a discussion on superior education, but in the West they could only get a miserable pittance of a provisional school, and naturally the people felt that they were hardly treated. If members representing Western constituencies held their tongues, even at this late hour, they would not be representing the interests of their constituents.

Mr. BROWNE: The people in the country districts wanted to know the reason for the existing cast-iron regulation. They often heard of the way in which the people in the towns were favoured in comparison with people in the bush, but the Education Department was the only department which had the effrontery to draw a distinct line and tell the country people that they would not be treated the same as other people. The people in the country were required to contribute three-fourths of the cost of provisional schools whilst townspeople had only to find one-fifth of the cost of their schools; and the provisional schools had not only to be built in accordance with the plans and specifications of the department, but the Government paid nothing until the buildings had been inspected by a departmental officer, and then if the people did not keep them in repair the department could shut them up. More consideration should certainly be shown to people in the outside districts.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The question had nothing to do with far-out districts. It was a question which would always be affected by the factor of population. They could not start a school with one child, and it would be just as great a hardship to that one child as to a community to be without a school. The hon. member was finding fault with a regulation. Without that regulation a district would have no claim whatever to a school unless there were thirty children to attend it. When the department had the effrontery to frame the regulation it was providing for cases that were not provided for by the Act. With regard to the school building, it was not unreasonable that the department should have some regulation, having in view the health and comfort of the children, seeing that they contributed £50 towards its cost. If the residents quarrelled with the regulation, there was nothing to prevent them putting up any kind of building, only they could not come on the department for the subsidy. Where timber was dear and

carriage expensive, they could make shift with such materials as the district provided, and the department would send a teacher. There was nothing to prevent them erecting a slab hut or an adobe structure. To please everybody they would have to disregard the law, and he preferred the condemnation of acting in accordance with the law to exposing himself to the risk of being accused of favouritism. The regulations were an advance on what previously existed, and he did not see why the hon. member should be so very hot because he adhered to them.

Mr. STUMM agreed with the complaint about the assistance given to provisional schools being too small. He thought they should be put on the same basis as State schools. He also disagreed with the regulation which made it compulsory to close State schools when a holiday was proclaimed for a race meeting. The practice was an annoyance to a lot of people whose opinions should be respected.

Mr. BROWNE did not think the Minister fair in accusing him of abusing the department or of wishing to break the regulations. He was only contending for what he had contended repeatedly, both in and out of the House—that the cast-iron regulation limiting the contribution to provisional schools to £50 should be abolished. In a colony like this, where the circumstances varied so much, such a regulation operated most harshly, because while in the South the allowance made by the department might be ample, yet in the North, where material and carriage was dear, it was miserably insufficient. Even if £1 for £1 were given for provisional schools that would be some improvement, although they would not even then be on the same level as State schools.

Mr. KEOGH: It struck him that the only contentious matter raised during the debate was in regard to provisional schools, the vote for which was only £1,500. That was a very insignificant sum compared with the amount spent on State schools, and it was decidedly wrong in principle, because the same, or even a more liberal provision should be made for provisional schools than was provided for State schools. In connection with provisional schools the department should also try to provide accommodation for the teachers appointed to those schools, instead of putting them under a compliment for accommodation to unfortunate people who had scarcely sufficient accommodation for themselves.

Mr. CROSS: Some hours had been taken up in dealing with the subjects raised by the hon. members for Musgrave and Balonne, and while he gave those hon. members credit for a desire to extend the system of education, he was sure hon. members would admit that the complaints made with respect to the provision made for provisional schools were justified in every particular. In many parts of the colony the provisional schools occupied the same position in the public mind as the State schools did in the towns, and the department could remove all contention by altering the regulations and making a more liberal allowance for provisional schools. The present allowance was inadequate, and if the department would only contribute £1 for £1 that would be a concession that would be appreciated. Of course the department were excusable in keeping a tight hand on expenditure for provisional schools on goldfields, where it was uncertain whether the large population would be permanent; but in other cases more generous assistance should be granted for the erection of buildings, and he would ask the Minister to give the Committee an assurance that favourable consideration would be given to the matter.

Mr. DANIELS: There were about fifteen provisional schools in the Cambooya electorate; and he believed that two out of every three provisional schools in the colony were in farming

districts. It seemed rather hard that the people in districts where provisional schools were established should have to contribute one-half of the cost of the buildings, while in large centres of population, where State schools were provided, the inhabitants should have to contribute only one-fifth of the cost. If it were necessary to pass a Bill to enable the Government to give greater assistance to provisional schools, he was sure that nine out of every ten members of the Committee would be in favour of such a measure.

Mr. CASTLING had heard a great deal about the exertions made and the hardships experienced by people living some distance from towns in order to provide education for their children; but his experience was that the money was generally collected from the people in the towns. And the people who reaped the benefit of the State schools in towns were the people who contributed very little. The business people of the town found seven-eighths of the money. And the same thing applied to the grammar schools. Even when money was wanted for arbor day a levy was made on the business people of the town.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member might be speaking of Townsville, but Townsville was not the whole colony. A nice time collectors for a provisional school at Stonehenge would have going to Longreach for money. The hon. gentleman forgot that people living in the country had to contribute towards the taxes for maintaining the State schools and the grammar schools too. When the grammar school was started at Rockhampton the people in the country as well as those in the town were asked to contribute.

Mr. STORY had heard nothing yet which would tend to help the large number of children who could not be helped by either State schools or provisional schools, or even by half-time schools.

Mr. STEWART: If the Secretary for Public Instruction was such a stickler for the regulations, and insisted that the utmost limit of assistance to provisional schools was £50, why did the department give £100 to the Windorah school?

Mr. HARDACRE said he would give an example of the unfairness of the present system. In his district there were two schools, both in permanent settlements twenty-five miles apart. One was a State school and the other a provisional school. The State school had just received considerable additions which had not cost the people there 1d., but no addition would be made to the provisional school until the people subscribed the necessary funds. That showed the hardship of the situation, and he did not see any earthly reason for the distinction.

Mr. STEWART asked for an explanation regarding the £100 paid to Windorah?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The school and the school of arts had amalgamated and received £50 each. The same thing happened at the Coen, where the one building was used as a court-house, school of arts, and day school.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Minister must admit that the regulations regarding provisional schools were insufficient, and it could not be logically argued that regulations should be made which compelled poor districts to pay very large sums of money as compared with those paid in large centres of population. If the present system were continued it would cause irritation which should not exist.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He did not think any irritation had been caused. The people in the bush took more interest in these matters than those in the towns, and the result was that thirty-three provisional schools were built last year, and only three State schools. It

was only during the last five years that any money at all had been given to provisional schools, and the grant of £50 had been very largely availed of. At present teaching in the State schools cost about £3 9s. per head, while in provisional schools it cost £4 14s. per head. The grammar schools cost £10,000 a year, but that was largely owing to the great number of scholarships given to State school scholars.

Question put and passed.

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £4,094 be granted for grammar schools.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW understood that £300 was set aside every year for university exhibitions for males, and lately it had been agreed that females might gain any of those exhibitions. He had no objection to allowing females to win bursaries, but he thought that they should retain the original three exhibitions for males, and grant another £200 for female students.

Mr. GROOM hoped that during the recess the Secretary for Public Instruction would offer two or more scholarships at the agricultural college, to be open to the pupils attending any State school. Young men were beginning to find that the other professions were becoming overcrowded, and some of them would prefer to go to the agricultural college. If the State set the example of founding such scholarships private individuals might follow suit.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said that he had no objection to recommending the suggestion to the Treasurer.

Mr. KEOGH contended that grammar school scholarships should be open to children attending other than State schools. Possibly hon. members were under the impression that scholarships were available for the children attending other schools.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So they are.

Mr. KEOGH: Yes, with the proviso that the schools should be inspected by State school inspectors, but that proviso was most arbitrary. Why should not children attending a school belonging to the Church of England, for instance, be allowed to compete without having to be subjected to State inspection? The examination for the scholarships would prove that the children were educated up to the standard required. The parents of children attending such schools had to help to support the State schools, and if those schools did not exist the cost to the State would be much greater than it was. He hoped the Secretary for Public Instruction would see that the present restrictions were removed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The only restriction he was aware of was that the schools should submit to inspection. Many private schools and some Catholic schools were now inspected. He did not feel disposed, without notice, to promise to make any alteration in the present system.

Mr. GLASSEY would be sorry to do anything which would disturb their excellent system of education, but he fancied the grievance complained of by the hon. member for Rosewood might be remedied without detriment to the system. If children educated at private schools were proved to have come up to a certain standard of education he did not see why they should not be able to compete for scholarships, even though the proprietors of those schools, from conscientious motives, objected to examination by the State inspectors. He hoped the Minister would give the matter the serious consideration it deserved.

Mr. KIDSTON: In the matter of granting scholarships they ought not to consider where the children were taught, but whether they had been taught; and if particular schools objected

to examination by the inspectors that ought not to stand in the way. There was an evident grievance that ought to be removed.

Mr. STEWART could find nothing in the Under Secretary's report with regard to grammar schools. Were they inspected by the Government inspectors? Seeing that the country contributed £10,000 a year for the maintenance of those schools, they ought to know what value the country was getting for its expenditure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Grammar schools were not inspected by the inspectors of the department. They were vested in trustees who were assumed to be competent to manage their own affairs. The heads of the schools were men of an Australian reputation, and the education given was of a very high standard.

Mr. STEWART: The standard of education might be very high, but they had not a scrap of evidence as to the fact. The country was entitled to all the information possible in reference to its grammar schools.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION was not prepared to promise that grammar schools should be subject to State inspection. The hon. member must know that they were very different to elementary schools. The ordinary inspector, he imagined, would not be qualified to examine in advanced classics, but there was a test every year of what the grammar schools did supplied in the results of the senior and junior university examinations.

Mr. GROOM: The grammar schools were established by Act of Parliament and were under trustees, and the headmasters supplied annual reports to the trustees. There was nothing in the Act compelling the trustees to report to the Government. The Government did not entirely support the schools. A certain amount had to be subscribed by the public, and the Government were represented on the board of management. It was no sinecure to be a trustee. He had known gentlemen to pledge their personal credit at the bank to keep the schools going.

Mr. KEOGH asked whether the scholarships to the agricultural college mentioned by the hon. member for Toowoomba would be open to others besides State school pupils?

Mr. GROOM: As far as he was concerned he had no objection to the scholarships being thrown open to all schools, but that was a question for the Government.

Question put and passed.

SCHOOLS OF ARTS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £8,700 be granted for schools of arts.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW understood that £500 of the £3,000 for grants in aid was for the Brisbane institution.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Assistance was given to schools of arts to the extent of 10s. for every £1 subscribed, and in aid of technical education to the extent of £1 for every £1 raised locally.

Question put and passed.

MUSEUM.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £888 be granted for the museum.

Mr. KIDSTON saw no reason why similar grants should not be made for museums in other towns than Brisbane, which had already been specially favoured by a vote of £500 for a public library. A museum had been established in connection with the school of arts at Rockhampton, and he saw no reason why it should not be assisted as well as the Brisbane Museum. Would the Minister recommend grants of a similar character to museums in other parts of the colony besides Brisbane?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION had not previously heard that the people of Rockhampton required a museum. Collections of specimens of various kinds were made in connection with schools of arts in various parts of the colony, but the funds were provided by, chiefly, subscriptions. If it was shown to be indispensable to the welfare of the inhabitants of Rockhampton that they should have a museum, no doubt the hon. member's request would be taken into consideration.

Mr. KIDSTON assumed that it had been found indispensable to the well-being of the people of Brisbane that there should be a museum here. He thought the votes for museums should be made on the same principle as the votes for schools of arts, and it was certainly a legitimate demand to make that the museum at Rockhampton should be assisted.

Mr. STEWART agreed with the hon. member, and he need not repeat what the hon. member had said. With respect to the Brisbane Museum, he thought it should be opened an hour earlier in the morning and kept open an hour later in the evening than at present, as well as on Saturday afternoon.

Question put and passed.

ORPHANAGES AND MISCELLANEOUS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved that £22,057 be granted for orphanages and miscellaneous.

Mr. KEOGH asked whether any officer had been appointed to succeed the late Mr. Horrocks as Inspector of Orphanages?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: There was no permanent inspector yet appointed to fill the position of the late Mr. Horrocks.

Mr. GROOM desired to refer to the policy pursued by the late Inspector of Orphanages, of whom he wished to speak in terms of the highest possible respect, as he was a gentleman who had discharged his duty to the country with fidelity and zeal. In the boarding out of children Mr. Horrocks had followed the lines adopted by the board in Sydney appointed under the State Children's Relief Act of 1881, and boarded them out with strangers rather than their own widow mothers. At the request of the Ladies' Benevolent Society of Toowoomba he (Mr. Groom) now brought the matter under the notice of the Committee, and would point out that a petition had lately been presented to the Parliament of New South Wales signed by Cardinal Moran, the Anglican Bishop of Sydney, the Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, the President of the Wesleyan Conference, the President of the Baptist Association, and others, in which it was urged that it was unnatural and cruel to board out children with strangers rather than with their own widow mothers, where it was clearly shown that they were respectable, but unable to provide for the maintenance of their own offspring. When he was in Sydney a few weeks ago he found that there was a conflict of opinion with regard to the merits of the system, but that the preponderance of opinion was in favour of a change being made; and he thought that when a successor was appointed to Mr. Horrocks he should be instructed to discriminate between deserving and undeserving cases, and, where possible, board the children with their own mothers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He was indebted to the hon. member for Toowoomba for his courtesy in notifying his intention to bring this matter forward. It was desirable that the Minister should have notice in such cases, so that he might give the subject the attention it deserved. The hon. member had shown that the practice in New South

Wales was the same as the recent practice here, and also that some eminent persons there had suggested that some alteration should take place. There were two sets of consequences which required to be studied if they wished to avoid evil results: those which were immediate and those which were ultimate. Some people took the view of the hon. member, but the view taken by Mr. Horrocks commended itself to his mind. The object to be kept in view was the welfare of the children exclusively. But this proposal laid down the principle that, instead of the children being supported by their parents, or in default by the State, the parent or relative should be supported by the children. It would be impossible to draw any distinction between the worthy and unworthy with any degree of certainty, because there were many cases in which the State was called upon to interfere in cases of desertion. There had been cases in which a man had gone away knowing that the State would pay his wife 6s. per week for each of the children, which would be sufficient for the mother too, and he would be earning £1 a week for himself. The system proposed by the hon. member would offer inducements to people to get rid of their obligation to maintain their families, and render them less disposed to trust to themselves, and more disposed to trust to the State. We should try to alleviate the distress caused by weakness and misfortune in such fashion as to stimulate the recipient to exertion instead of cultivating or fostering a habit of dependence. If mothers were allowed to keep their own children, it would increase distress where it existed, and most certainly would have the effect of inducing people to defraud the State. It was a positive premium to people to depend on the State.

Mr. KERR: There was a good deal of supposition in what the hon. gentleman had said. He (Mr. Kerr) had had occasion to make an appeal on behalf of a highly respectable widow with three children, and in a very gruff manner Mr. Horrocks had refused to allow the mother to keep her children if she received any State assistance. Strangers were not likely to treat the children as well as their own mother, but because in one or two cases the inspector had discovered that the mothers of State children were not fit to have charge of their children, no mother was to be allowed to keep her children. He had taken one of the children from the young woman of whom he spoke, and another friend had taken another, while the mother herself had the third, and was earning her living on a station in the electorate of Balonne. The hon. gentleman asked why the State should keep the children of men who deserted their wives; but while a man would have to show that he was incapable of maintaining his children before he could receive assistance from the State, a woman might be unable to earn her livelihood, because she might have a young child.

Mr. DANIELS had spoken on the subject nearly every session since he had been a member of the House, and the more he saw of the disposal of orphan children by the State the stronger was his conviction that they ought to be boarded with their mothers in cases where the mother was a respectable person. He did not like to say anything against the late Inspector of Orphanages, but he must say that Mr. Horrocks was not a very sympathetic man. It was possible that Mr. Horrocks's successor might differ from him in that respect, and that his feelings might be touched on behalf of mothers with fatherless children, and would recommend what had been suggested to the Minister, who would not always be in office, for which they would have to thank goodness, if he was always to remain in the same frame of mind he was in that night.

Mr. HAMILTON knew Mr. Horrocks to have been a remarkably sympathetic man. Mr. Horrocks was practically father and mother to many of the State children, and if he had the least suspicion that a child was not properly treated by the person in charge of it he would remove it and never give that person charge of another child.

Mr. BOLES fully endorsed the contention that mothers should be allowed to have charge of their own children. The Minister had certainly not given any satisfactory reason why that should not be allowed. The whole question could be controlled by certain regulations, and there should be no difficulty in allowing the mother the same amount for the keep of her children as would be allowed to any other person.

Mr. GLASSEY had always been in favour of the views advocated by the hon. member for Toowoomba. It had always struck him as a most inhuman thing that children should be taken from their relatives and handed over to the care of strangers. The Minister had made out a very weak case indeed. How would the hon. gentleman himself view the possibility of his own children being taken from their mother and given over to the care of those to whom they were strangers? Surely it could not be argued seriously that the adoption of the principle which had been advocated could lead to the desertion of children by their fathers. He was glad to think that there was but a very small percentage of parents who were so inhuman as to desert their children because of the paltry sum which would be allowed to their mother to keep them. He hoped the Minister would reconsider the matter and put an end to the present iniquitous regulation during his term of office.

Mr. FITZGERALD could not understand the position the Minister took up on this question. From his experience as a solicitor, he could quote the case of a poor woman whose husband left her with a child, and went to New Zealand. The woman could not afford to take the necessary proceedings to secure a divorce from the husband, and she was forced to live in adultery, simply to enable her to keep her child with her. There was no use then in saying that those women had the protection of the law, as the law was good only where it could be given effect to. He trusted the hon. gentleman would give way a little and allow a widow, or a deserted woman, to board her own children and receive a subsidy from the State. There were many mothers in the colony who, when deserted by their husbands, could not afford to keep their children, and in such cases it was only reasonable, if the woman was respectable, that she should bring up her children herself, and receive an allowance from the State.

Mr. McMASTER had a great deal of sympathy with the desire of the hon. member for Toowoomba, but experience had taught the Government that they would be doing wrong if they acted on the advice which had been tendered to them. He would like very much to see arrangements made by which mothers who kept their children in their own homes could be assisted, and knew for a fact that that was done in a number of cases, but at the same time he was aware that there were instances where it was better that the children should be kept apart from their own mothers and boarded out with strangers. No person need suffer hunger if the case was represented to the proper authority, but hon. members opposite insisted that if children were to be assisted it must be in the homes and under the control of their mothers. He did not take notice of the character of the woman referred to by the hon. member for Mitchell, because she could have received assistance from any police

magistrate in the district, and had no excuse for living in the condition described by the hon. member.

Mr. KIDSTON : In connection with an interjection which the Home Secretary had made, he would ask whether the rule, which was hard and fast as regarded the rest of the colony, was not so in Brisbane?

The HOME SECRETARY : They get relief out of another fund, but they do not get money—they get food.

Mr. KIDSTON did not suppose they cared what form the relief took. Every good man in the Chamber must feel that the rule was cruel, and should not be enforced. Quite sufficient had been said by the hon. member for Toowoomba to lead to some discrimination being shown in the case of trustworthy women.

The HOME SECRETARY : This subject had agitated the public mind not only in the colonies but in England and elsewhere. A conference had been held in Australia for the express purpose of considering the question; and though the sentiment expressed was in favour of the idea the hon. member for Toowoomba had enunciated, the experience of many years had shown that the system was faulty. The orphanages in all the colonies were conducted on the same principle, but in Queensland they went a little further. In Brisbane there were about 250 families in receipt of relief from the Government Relief Department, and the Government also endowed the benevolent societies at the rate of £2 for £1 with a view to providing relief outside the orphanage. Last week's bill in Brisbane came to £62. On looking through the list he found that the principal persons receiving relief were widows and women with children whose husbands had deserted them. He hoped hon. members would be contented with the assurance that quite outside the orphanages, both through the instrumentality of the Government relief bureau and through the ladies' benevolent societies, the cases referred to would be provided for.

Mr. DANIELS : That might be all very well as far as Brisbane was concerned, but there were places where there was no benevolent society, and where the police magistrate, if applied to, would probably order the children to be sent to the orphanage.

Mr. GROOM was willing to accept the assurance of the Home Secretary, which was in unison with the public feeling of the colony and the expressed opinion of the Committee.

Mr. GLASSEY hoped that when the next inspector of orphanages was appointed he would be a man of experience, tact, judgment, and discrimination, and that one of the assistant inspectors should be a female.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION had every desire to meet the wishes of the hon. member with regard to the next inspector of orphanages. With regard to the other suggestion, he would point out that in every locality where orphan children were boarded out there was a ladies' committee who periodically visited the children and reported upon them. With regard to the State children generally, he believed they were better looked after than the average child in the colony. A great many people were desirous of getting the children to board on the terms offered, and if it was found that they were not properly treated they were immediately removed. The same rule was observed with reference to those children who had been hired out. There was a large demand for those children, but every care was taken to see that they were well cared for.

Mr. GLASSEY was sure the Minister would admit that ladies connected with benevolent societies would much more readily communicate

to a female inspector than to a man any peculiarities they observed about the State children under their control. He hoped the hon. gentleman would give consideration to his suggestion for the appointment of a female inspector.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, and obtained leave to sit again at a later hour of the day.

The resolutions were ordered to be taken into consideration at a later hour of the day.

The House adjourned at thirteen minutes to 4 o'clock a.m.